



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONNECTION SUMMER 2008

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Welcome to UCI

Dear Student,

Welcome to UCI! We are pleased that you will be a member of our academic community. The UCI International Center would like to extend our warmest greeting to you and we are confident that your stay at UCI will be a rewarding and memorable one. Please read this newsletter for information about your trip to the US and immigration updates you should be aware of. We are looking forward to meeting you and we wish you a safe and pleasant journey to the U.S. and UCI.

Sincerely,

The UCI International Center Staff

UCI International Center's Mission Statement

The International Center promotes and facilitates international education by providing services to advance the University's mission and to support the academic goals and objectives of international students, faculty, and researchers. The International Center staff provides quality services to ensure compliance with government regulations and promote intercultural understanding through programs and workshops for the international population, the UCI campus and community.

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Important Information You Need to Know Right Now

Student and Exchange Visitors Information System (SEVIS)

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) is designed to help the Department of Homeland Security and Department of State better monitor school and exchange programs and F, M and J category visitors. Exchange visitor and student information is maintained in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). SEVIS is an Internet-based system that maintains accurate and current information on non-immigrant students (F and M visa), exchange visitors (J visa), and their dependents (F-2, M-2, and J-2). SEVIS enables schools and program sponsors to transmit mandatory information and event notifications via the Internet, to the Department of Homeland Security and Department of State (DOS) throughout a student or exchange visitor's stay in the United States.

Your SEVIS record must be registered by the International Center when you arrive in the U.S. If your record is not validated in a timely manner, your SEVIS

I-20 will become invalid, thus jeopardizing your employment eligibility and your ability to remain in the United States.

Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Fee

As part of the visa application process you are required to pay two separate fees: the visa application fee which is paid to the U.S. Dept. of State and the SEVIS fee which is paid to the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security. The visa application fee is paid at the American Embassy or consulate where you apply for your visa so please follow the specific guidelines of that post for paying that fee. The SEVIS fee can be paid via the Internet or by mail. (Please note that F-2 dependents DO NOT pay a separate SEVIS fee).

Instructions on How to Pay the SEVIS Fee

Online payment by credit card- The fee will be paid over the Internet by credit card and submission of Form I-901. This can be completed by accessing the SEVIS fee website at <http://www.fmjfee.com>

Two options allow payment by check or money order. **Option 1:** An internet generated coupon can be printed out after entering basic information at the fee payment website (<http://www.fmjfee.com>). Mail this coupon along with a check to a lock-box address. **Option 2:** Complete Form I-901 and mail it with a check or money order.

The Information below is provided as a guideline to the process of applying for a F visa stamp, you must contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will be applying for the visa for further information and for specific documentation requirements.

What You Will Need to Apply for an F Visa

- Visit the U.S. Department of State website's section on "Student Visas" at: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html
- Form I-20, the International Student must complete and sign the bottom portion of the I-20

- If your family is applying for F-2 visas, they will need an I-20 of their own.
- Evidence of financial ability to meet expenses
- Evidence of residence abroad and intent to depart the U.S. after completion of the program
- Valid Passport
- "Non-Immigrant Visa Application"
- Photographs
- Visa Fee
- SEVIS Fee
- Visa Reciprocity Fee (if applicable)

The U.S. Embassy or Consulate may require additional documentation. You should verify requirements with the embassy or consulate where you will be applying.

Upon arrival at the U.S. port of entry, you and your accompanying family members must present a valid passport with visa and Form I-20. Be sure to carry all immigrations documents with you on the plane (not in your luggage) as you will need them at the inspection station.

It is recommended that you also have the following:

- Evidence of financial resources
- An original or copy of your Admissions Letter
- Receipt for the SEVIS fee
- Name and contact information for your department contact and the UCI International Center

On-Campus Housing Information

International Students who are enrolling at UC Irvine to complete a degree program can apply for housing through the same channels as students from the U.S. Please visit the Housing website for information about the application process and deadlines. <http://www.housing.uci.edu/prospective/international.asp>

Off-Campus Housing Information

If you choose to live off campus, the Housing Office, located in the UCI Student Center (4th Floor), offers commuter students information and advising regarding housing concerns. The office is open Monday through

Friday, from 8am to 5pm. The following are some of the services available: Information and advising regarding issues for first-time renters, tenant rights and responsibilities, and landlord/tenant issues; Liaison with the Fair Housing Council of Orange County; Publishes Living Around UC Irvine, a guide to locating housing, selecting roommates, securing rentals, and dealing with landlord/tenant concerns.

Important Information You Need to Know When You Arrive in the U.S. and Irvine

Welcome to Irvine

The University of California, Irvine is located in Orange County and is approximately 50 miles from Los Angeles and about six miles from the Pacific Ocean. Irvine is one of the nation's largest planned urban communities and is home to a population of over 180,000.

UCI is located in the southwestern part of the city and is bordered on one side by a freshwater marsh reserve and on the other by a small community of apartments, condominiums, and shopping centers. The climate is very mild year-round. Occasionally, there are some high winds, a few days of rain, and an earthquake or two, but that is the extent of the harsh conditions.

When You Arrive

When you exit the plane, you will be directed by airline personnel to the Immigration Station. On a busy day, you may have to wait in line up to an hour before you reach the immigration officer. The officer will ask to see your passport, I-94 card, your SEVIS I-20 form, and possibly your proof of funding. The I-94 card will be given to you by your flight crew. It is a short form that says, "Welcome to the U.S." at the top and requires you to fill in your name, (enter your name legibly exactly as it is on the biographical page of your passport), country, passport number, and address in the United States. If you do not have a definite address, write the name of your university (University of California, Irvine), the city, and state. The immigration officer will review these forms and may ask you questions regarding the nature of your stay.

This is routine; simply explain where you will be a student at UCI. You should also expect to experience US-VISIT's biometric procedures- digital, inkless finger scans and digital photographs. After inspection, your passport, your portion of the I-94 card, and your SEVIS I-20 form will be stamped with the date you entered the U.S. You will be given back the I-20, I-94, and passport. Keep these documents in a safe place, together. These documents combined identify your visa status in the U.S.

After you pass through immigration inspection, your luggage will be on a moving carousel in the baggage claim area. There will be luggage carts available for your use to transport your baggage from the carousel to the Customs Desk. Some airports charge a small fee for the use of these carts, so have some U.S. dollars available! At the Customs Desk, show your passport and the customs declaration form which should have been given to you by your flight attendant. The officer may ask you to open your bags for a random check. Customs regulations do not allow you to bring fresh fruit or plants into the country, so you should leave them at home. Other items that are prohibited or restricted include meats, vegetables, clothing made from skins of endangered species, lottery tickets, obscene articles and publications, weapons, and drugs without a doctor's prescription. If you have questions concerning U.S. customs regulations, please consult with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your home country.

Following are some transportation options and hotels where you may wish to stay on your arrival night. If possible, try to make reservations in advance before you leave home. It is best to get a good night's sleep at a nearby hotel before embarking on your journey to UCI. If you are arriving at any international airport in the U.S., you should try to obtain a connecting flight to the John Wayne Airport in Orange County (also known as SNA). This airport is located approximately three miles from the UCI campus. However, if you arrive at the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), the following transportation services are available from LAX to the John Wayne/Orange County Airport. **Please see the next page for Transportation Information.**

Arriving at Los Angeles Airport (<http://www.lawa.org/lax/>)

Irvine is approximately 43 miles (69 kilometers) south of Los Angeles. Students/Scholars who arrive may need to rent a car, take a bus, train, or shuttle to Irvine.

Arriving at John Wayne/Orange County Airport (<http://www.ocair.com/>)

Irvine is approximately 3 miles (5 kilometers) south of John Wayne (SNA) airport. Students/Scholars who arrive may need to rent a car, take a bus, train, or shuttle to Irvine.

Shuttle Services

SuperShuttle http://www.supershuttle.com/	XPRESS Shuttle http://www.xpressshuttle.com/home.htm	PrimeTime Shuttle http://primetimeshuttle.com/
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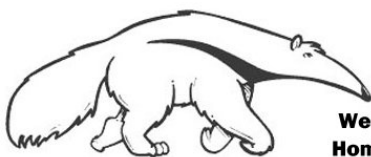
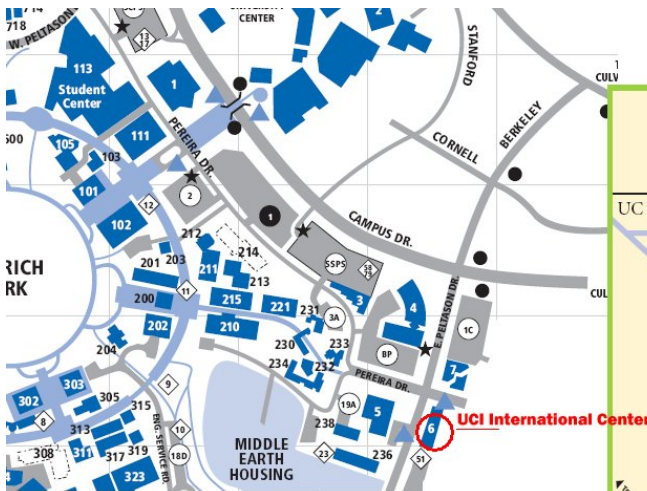
For a more extensive list of local shuttle services, please visit the airport websites for more options.

Los Angeles Hotels (located near LAX)

Crowne Plaza Hotel – LA Intl. Airport 5985 Century Blvd. Los Angeles, CA (310) 642-7500	Hilton Los Angeles Airport 5711 West Century Blvd. Los Angeles, CA (310) 410-4000	Holiday Inn – LA Intl. Airport 9901 La Cienega Blvd. Los Angeles, CA (310) 649-5151
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Orange County Hotels (located near Orange County Airport)

Airport Travelodge 1400 South East Bristol St. Costa Mesa, CA (714) 557-8700	Best Western - OC Airport 2700 Hotel Terrance Dr. Santa Ana, CA (714) 432-8888	Costa Mesa Marriott Suites 500 Anton Blvd. Costa Mesa, AC (714) 957-1100	Crowne Plaza – Irvine 17941 Von Karman Ave. Irvine, CA (800) 593-5434
Doubletree Club Hotel – OC Airport 7 Hutton Center Dr. Santa Ana, CA (800) 644-2582	Hilton – Irvine/Orange County 18800 MacArthur Blvd. Irvine, CA (949) 833-3331	Residence Inn – Irvine Airport 2855 Main Street Irvine, CA (800) 331-3131	



**Welcome to UC Irvine
Home of the Anteaters**

What to Do When You Arrive in Irvine

- Get some rest!
- Unpack. Then proceed to take care of your affairs.
- If you have not yet received registration information, please contact your academic department.
- Be sure to register for a minimum of 12 units and pay your tuition/fees by the deadline
- Complete check-in procedures at your orientation or at the International Center.
- Attend the Mandatory New International Student Orientation

How to Apply for a Social Security Number

If you have a job as an F-1 visa holder you will need to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN). A Social Security Number is necessary for you to be employed at UCI. You can apply for this number by visiting the nearest Social Security Administration office located at **26051 Acero Road in Mission Viejo, CA**. When you apply for a SSN, you will need to provide the following:

- Form I-20
- Passport with visa stamp
- I-94 (white card usually stapled in your passport)
- "Social Security Student Verification Form" signed by your department and IC. The form is available at: www.ic.uci.edu/forms/ssn_student_verification.doc

You can visit the website of the U.S. Social Security Administration at www.ssa.gov/pubs/10120.html for more information about social security numbers. It takes about 30-45 days from application to receive a social security number.

MANDATORY ORIENTATION FOR NEW GRADUATE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT UCI

Friday, September 12, 2008

8am-2pm

Emerald Bay A-E

(UCI Student Center)

Building #113 on UCI Map

MANDATORY ORIENTATION FOR NEW UNDERGRADUATE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT UCI

Monday, September 22, 2008

2-4pm

Doheny Beach A-B

(UCI Student Center)

Building #113 on the UCI Map

All new international undergraduate/graduate (F-1 and J-1) students are required to attend this orientation. At the Orientation, you will receive an overview of important immigration regulations. You will be required to complete the check-in process which will maintain your legal visa status. **You will NEED to bring with you one set of photocopies of the following: I-20 or DS-2019 Visa Document, front and back of I-94, passport (only pages with biographical information and expiration information), visa stamp, and proof of full-time enrollment.** Failure to attend may jeopardize your visa status. You will also receive information on services and programs on and off that will enrich your life at UCI. In addition, you will meet UCI administrators, other new international students and meet International Center Staff, who are eager to offer their assistance.



Driver's License Information

If you plan to drive an automobile in California, you must obtain a California Driver's License. You will need to visit the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to apply for the license. You will be required to take a written test, driving test, and vision test. Cars driven in California must be registered through the DMV. You must have automobile and liability insurance to drive in California.

If you do not plan to drive in California, but want an official identification card, you can apply for a California Identification Card from the Department of Motor Vehicles. For more information, visit the California DMV website at <http://www.dmv.ca.gov>.

California requires that drivers and vehicle owners carry the following minimum monetary limits:

- \$15,000 for injury or death of 1 person per accident
- \$30,000 for injury or death of 2 or more persons per accident
- \$5,000 for property damage per accident

Evidence of financial responsibility must be carried at all times in the vehicle. Most Californians maintain financial responsibility through insurance companies, which provide the policy holder with an identification card as evidence of coverage. The card must state the insurance company's name and address, the period of coverage and policy number.

Persons operating a vehicle in this state who are unlicensed or have an invalid California or out-of-state driver license are subject to the same financial

Important Information You Need to Know About the F-1 Student Visa

As a student in F-1 status, you are responsible for learning, understanding and complying with U.S. laws and regulations that apply to you while you are in the United States. Maintaining legal immigration status is your responsibility. Be aware of expiration dates of your visa document and your passport. Be sure to meet all registration deadlines each quarter.

UCI is required to report all personal, financial, employment authorization and academic information that may affect your visa status into SEVIS. This reporting occurs on a quarterly basis and as needed throughout your stay at UCI. Please be sure to adhere to all F-1 visa regulations to insure that you maintain your status.

Below is a list of some of the immigration requirements for international students.

- **Students may enter the U.S. no more than 30 days before the beginning date listed on the SEVIS I-20.**
- Undergraduate and graduate students must be enrolled in 12 units each and every quarter, with the exception of the summer vacation. Reduced course load permission is highly restricted and can only be authorized by an advisor in the International Center before (NOT AFTER) dropping below full-time enrollment.
- Notify the International Center of your change of address or name change within 10 days.
- Students transferring from other schools in the U.S. must follow required transfer procedures. The first step is to report to the International Center after you arrive on campus. Failure to follow procedures could put you "out of status".
- Pre-authorization is required for off-campus employment. Information on employment is available at the International Center.

- If you fall out of status, grounds for reinstatement are very limited. There is LITTLE ROOM FOR ERROR, so knowledge is critical!
- Students can only be issued one I-20, which means that you must decide which school you will attend.
- Please be advised that you may encounter increased security procedures and processing delays at U.S. Consulates and Embassies and at the Port of Entry due to heightened security and anti-terrorism measures.
- Please account for any delays.

Checklist for New International Students

- Register for your Fall Quarter classes using WebReg. Last day to pay registration fees is September 15, 2008.
- Attend the **MANDATORY** Undergraduate/Graduate Orientation
- Complete On-line Immigration Orientation
- Complete Check-In Procedures for new students.
- Update your address with the Registrar's through Student Access. In addition to changing your address through the Registrar's Office, you must notify the International Center of your new address each time you change your address.
- Obtain your UCI Student Identification Card at UC Items.
- Activate your e-mail account
- For housing information please visit their web site at www.housing.uci.edu
- Apply for a Social Security Number only if you have a job offer. A letter of introduction and a map to the Social Security Office can be obtained from the International Center. F-1 or J-1 Students without a job offer can apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)

from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw7.pdf>

- Purchase your course books and UCI Catalogue at the UCI Bookstore. Be sure to have your class schedule with you, so that you purchase the correct books.
- Apply for a California Driver's License. In order to drive, you must have a valid driver's license

Services and Programs at the IC

Services

The International Center is part of the Office of the Dean of Students, a unit within the Division of Student Affairs. The staff of the International Center advises and assists international students, faculty, and researchers with immigration regulations, orientation employment and adjustment needs throughout their stay at UCI. In addition, the International Center brings together International and American members of the UCI community for a variety of cultural and educational activities.

Programs

International Friendship Circle

The International Friendship circle helps members of the UCI international community and their families with conversational English in an informal setting, while also offering an introduction to American culture and customs. International visitors to the community also are welcome to attend on a limited basis. There are three regular 10-week sessions (fall, winter, and spring), as well as a shorter program in the summer. Students pay a small fee for each session to help cover the cost of materials. However, all the instructors are volunteers from the community. For more information, please pick up a flyer from the International Center.

English Corner

English Corner is a brand new program for students that will begin this Fall. This program will meet once a week at the International Center and be an amazing

opportunity to meet new people as well as become familiar with the English language. For more information visit the IC, and look for upcoming information on the IC website.

International & American Friendship Partner Program

The Friendship Partner Program offers new international students an opportunity to become friends with an American who would like to help enrich your experiences in the United States. Friendship Partners are people from the local community who are interested in meeting UCI international students and assisting them with various aspects of their stay in the U.S. There is no charge for this service. However, the number of friendship partners is limited, so priority is given to those who sign up early. For more information, please contact the International Center.

International Student and Scholar Association (ISSA)

The International Student Association is composed of UCI students, faculty, and staff from all over the world. The group plans many social, cross-cultural, and recreational activities each quarter. Membership is FREE! All UCI associates are welcome! For meeting times and locations and calendar of activities, please contact the International Center.

Workshops

Tax Workshop

A tax workshop is coordinated by the International Center and presented by an IRS expert to all international students, faculty, and staff. Important information pertaining to non-immigrant tax laws is provided, as well as the necessary tax forms and instructions. For more information, please contact the International Center.

Important UCI Phone Numbers

Dean of Students	(949) 824-5181
Counseling Center	(949) 824-6457
Disability Services Center	(949) 824-7494
Gottschalk Medical Plaza	(949) 824-8600
Human Resources	(949) 824-5210
International Center	(949) 824-7249
LGBT Resource Center	(949) 824-3277
Ombudsman	(949) 824-7256
UCI Police (non-emergency)	(949) 824-5223
Emergency	9-1-1

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