INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS

2012 - 2013
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Publication Information

This publication has been prepared by the Office of International Students and Scholars at the University of New Orleans. All information is current as of May 2012.

Edited by: OISS Staff

This publication is available in alternate formats upon request. Please contact OISS staff at 504.280.6021.
Dear New Student and Scholar:

Welcome to the University of New Orleans. You have chosen to attend a dynamic university in a dynamic city. The rich historical legacy of our city is built upon the contributions and influences of Native peoples, West Africans, Haitians, Spanish, French, British and scores of others from Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. This mixture we like to call “gumbo” is still reflected in the present day culture of our city and its higher education institutions.

The University of New Orleans has a wonderful “gumbo” of more than 700 students and 100 international faculty and staff representing over 90 countries. Thus, your presence adds immensely to the intellectual and cultural diversity of this great institution.

We are proud of our outstanding faculty who have built numerous nationally ranked academic programs. Students will receive a high quality education built on a foundation of rigorous academic standards. Our visiting faculty and staff will join a community of internationally recognized scholars in their respective fields.

The staff of the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) is committed to ensuring your academic and professional success. This begins with a smooth transition to our institution and to our community. Living in the US is fun and exciting as well as challenging. We hope that the information contained in this handbook will assist you in overcoming the challenges of adjusting to our culture and community. Our primary piece of advice is to be sure to consult with OISS staff prior to making any major decisions that could affect your status in the US.

We know that your experience here will be that much richer if you avail yourself of all the social, cultural and recreational opportunities offered on campus. These include concerts, plays, student and faculty recitals, films, art exhibitions, poetry readings, scholarly lectures and seminars, and exciting athletic games, to name a few. We strongly encourage students to participate in one or more of our numerous extra-curricular student organizations, such as the International Student Organization, or any one of the many academic, social or recreational organizations. This is the best way to meet Americans and to understand our culture.

We look forward to interacting with you in the years to come and trust that you will find your association with UNO to be rewarding.

Christiana J. Thomas
Director
The OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS & SCHOLARS (OISS)

OISS serves approximately 800 international students & scholars at UNO.

Services we offer include:
- Immigration advising
- Cross-cultural and academic advising
- Help with academic concerns
- Social, cultural and educational programming
- Immigration workshops and seminars
- Orientation programming
- Sponsoring International Night
- Advising international student organizations
- Writing certification letters to verify status
- Working with sponsoring agencies
- Help in getting money wired to the University

IMPORTANT FALL 2012 SEMESTER DATES

April 10; Registration begins
August 17; OISS Orientation 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
August 18; Saturday classes begin
August 20; Classes begin
August 24; Final date for adding courses or changing sections
September 3; Labor Day Holiday (University Closed)
October 1-5; Mid-semester exam period
October 11-12; Mid-semester break
November 5; Final date for dropping courses or resigning from the University.
November 22-25; Thanksgiving Holiday begins (University Closed)
November 30; Last day of classes
December 1-7; Final examinations
December 15; Commencement, (Schedule can be found at http://registrar.uno.edu/commencement.cfm)

IMPORTANT SPRING 2013 SEMESTER DATES

November 7; Registration begins
January 13; OISS Orientation
January 12; Saturday classes begin
January 14; Classes begin
January 18; Final date for adding courses or changing sections
January 21; Martin Luther King Holiday (University Closed)
February 9-12; Mardi Gras Holidays
No Classes
March 4-8; Mid-semester exam period
March 9; International Night
March 25-31; Spring Break-No Classes
April 1; Final date for dropping courses or resigning from the University
April 27; Last day of Saturday classes
May 3; Last day of classes
May 6-10; Final examinations
May 17; Commencement, (Schedule can be found at http://registrar.uno.edu/commencement.cfm)
STUDENT SETTLING IN CHECKLIST

☐ Check in at the OISS Office
☐ Find accommodation — For information on off-campus apartments and roommates, go to Student Involvement and Leadership, Milneburg Hall, room 159. For on-campus housing, go to the Student Housing Office in Pontchartrain Hall or Privateer Place.
☐ Immunizations — Submit proof of immunization to the Student Health Center in the Human Performance Center, room 109. If you need additional shots, ask for information about the public health clinic.
☐ Health Insurance — Students with their own coverage that meets the University’s minimum requirements may request a waiver of the insurance fee by submitting the F-1 or J-1 Insurance Coverage Evaluation form (available at http://oiss.uno.edu/UNOinsurancereq2.cfm) to their insurance company for verification of coverage. The form then must be signed and submitted to OISS no later than the fifth class day of the term or you will automatically be charged for the UNO health insurance.
☐ Banking — The two closest banks to the UNO main campus are below. Students are permitted to open an account without a US social security number by requesting a letter from OISS.
   UNO Federal Credit Union, Homer Hitt Alumni Center.
   Capital One Bank, 6307 Elysian Fields Avenue.
☐ Social Security Number — Not all students are eligible to receive a Social Security Number (SSN). Only F-1 and J-1 students who will be employed are eligible to apply for a SSN. For more information and application procedures, speak with an OISS advisor.
☐ Academic Registration — Review your copy of the Class Schedule Bulletin. This bulletin provides information on registration and fee payment, and includes information on how to get an e-mail account at UNO. See your academic advisor in your department before registering for classes. Course offerings are on the UNO website and in the catalog.
☐ UNO ID Card — A UNO identification card can be obtained in the Recreation and Fitness Center during Center during registration after you have paid your fees. After the registration period, you can go to the University Computer Center (UCC) room 112 to obtain an ID.
☐ Sign Up for the OISS List Serv — Once your e-mail has been activated, sign up for the OISS electronic mailing list. This will allow you to get up-to-date information on special events, immigration seminars, and more. To sign up for the mailing list follow the instructions below:
   • Go to http://listserv2.uno.edu
   • Follow instructions to create a login, if needed
   • Select online mailing list archives
   • Select OISS-L and register
☐ Become a fan of OISS on Facebook — http://www.facebook.com/oiss.uno
☐ Register for UNO’s emergency text notification service—http://ucc.uno.edu/notification/.
☐ Post Office Box — P.O. boxes are located on the first floor of the University Center. The P. O. Box rental office is located in the Campus Police building.
☐ Louisiana Driver’s License Or State Identification — In order to get a Louisiana Driver’s License, you must take both a written and a practical driver’s license test. You will need to have proof of identification, your social security card, proof of Louisiana address, passport, I-94 and I-20 or DS-2019, and your UNO fee bill. For more information, call the Department of Motor Vehicles at 1-877-DMV-LINE or visit their website at http://omv.dps.state.la.us/.
☐ UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS!
   • You must notify OISS within 10 days of moving and give us your new street (physical) address.
   • You may use Webstar to update your
     • Mailing address where you will receive postal mail
     • SEVIS Physical address where you physically reside. This may not be a P.O. Box or campus office.
     • SEVIS Foreign address, the address in your home country.
☐ Tax Compliance — If you will be receiving remuneration (stipend, salary, honorarium, scholarship, etc.), you must meet with King Chan, International Tax Coordinator. His office is in ED 122B. Please bring your passport and all immigration documents. To set up an appointment, please call 280.3207 or e-mail him at: kchan@uno.edu.
SCHOLAR SETTLING IN CHECKLIST

☐ Check in at the OISS Office
☐ Tax Compliance — If you will be receiving remuneration (stipend, salary, honorarium, etc.), you must meet with King Chan, International Tax Coordinator. His office is in ED 122B. Please bring your passport and all immigration documents. To set up an appointment, please call 280.3207 or e-mail him at kchan@uno.edu.

☐ Social Security Number — You must apply for a US social security number (SSN) as soon as possible. The SSN is required for the University to pay you. It is also needed to maintain a bank account, to obtain a driver’s license and to arrange connection of utilities (telephone, electricity, etc.) You must wait until you have been in the U.S. for at least 10 days before applying for a SSN.

☐ Find Accommodation — for information on off-campus apartments and roommates, go to Student Involvement and Leadership, MH 159. For information about on-campus housing go to the Student Housing office in Pontchartrain Hall or Privateer Place.

☐ Benefits Package Orientation — If you will be employed by UNO, schedule a Benefits Orientation in Human Resources, located in the Administration Building. This orientation will acquaint you with the various insurance and pension plans available from the university.

☐ Health Insurance — All faculty and staff should carry appropriate medical insurance. However, exchange visitors are required by federal law to maintain insurance for themselves and their dependents. Therefore, the OISS requires exchange visitors to complete the Medical Insurance Compliance form available during check-in.

☐ Banking — The two closest banks to the UNO main campus are below. Scholars are permitted to open an account without a US social security number, but do require a bank letter from OISS.

  UNO Federal Credit Union, Homer Hitt Alumni Center
  Capital One Bank, 6307 Elysian Fields Avenue

☐ UNO ID Card — Your department will submit a personnel action form 101 for you. This will generate a UNO ID number. After receiving this number, you may obtain an ID card in the University Computer Center (UCC), room 112. Note: OISS will generate an ID number for J-1 exchange visitors.

☐ Sign Up for the OISS List Serv - Once your e-mail has been activated, you should sign up for the OISS electronic mailing list. This will allow you to get up-to-date information on special events, immigration seminars, and more. To sign up for the mailing list follow the instructions below:
  • Go to [http://listserv2.uno.edu](http://listserv2.uno.edu)
  • Create a login ID, if needed
  • Select online mailing list archives
  • Select OISS-L and register

☐ Become a fan of OISS on Facebook— [http://www.facebook.com/oiss.uno](http://www.facebook.com/oiss.uno)

☐ Register for UNO’s emergency text notification service—[http://ucc.uno.edu/notification/](http://ucc.uno.edu/notification/).

☐ Louisiana Driver’s License Or State Identification — In order to get a Louisiana Driver’s License, you must take both a written and a practical driver’s license test. You will need to have proof of identification, your social security card, proof of Louisiana address, passport, I-94 and I-20 or DS-2019 form. For more information, call the Department of Motor Vehicles at 1-877.DMV.LINE or visit their website at [http://omv.dps.state.la.us/](http://omv.dps.state.la.us/).

☐ UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS!
  • You must notify OISS within 10 days of moving and give us your new street (physical) address. This may not be a P.O. Box or campus office.
  • You may use PeopleSoft to update your mailing address. This is the address the university will use to send important correspondence. **If you fail to do this, you will not receive important mail from the University.**
  • Scholars are also required to notify immigration directly of changes in address using form AR-11 found at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).
IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

Basic Definitions:

**Passport:** Your passport, issued by your country of citizenship, should always be kept valid at least six months into the future. To renew your passport, contact your home government.

**Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019):** This certificate is an immigration document that correlates with the particular immigration status you hold. An I-20 is used for F-1 students and F-2 dependents. A DS-2019 is used for J-1 exchange visitors and J-2 dependents. Even after you have left the United States, you should retain these documents as they serve as an official record of your immigration history. They are also useful for tax purposes.

**Visa:** The visa is the most commonly misunderstood immigration document. It refers to the stamp in your passport that is obtained at the US Embassy or Consulate outside the U.S. The validity of the visa stamp only pertains to the period during which you may use it for admission to the US. It does not indicate the length of time you may remain in the US. In general, you may remain in the US with an expired visa as long as your I-20, DS 2019 and/or I-94 card is still valid and you are still pursuing the objectives of your stay in the US. Additionally, the visa stamp indicates the number of entries permitted, usually one, two, or M for multiple entries.

**Immigration Status:** This is generally related to the type of visa you were issued, and is reflected on your I-94 card. If you change your immigration status, this will be reflected on a new I-94 card that USCIS will issue.

**Form I-94:** This is the small white card (Arrival/Departure record) given to foreign nationals at the port of entry to the United States and which an immigration officer validates and staples in the passport. This is a very important document as it indicates the immigration status you are given upon entry to the United States and the length of time you may stay. Most students and exchange visitors are given “D/S” as the length of stay. This means that you can stay in the US until you complete your program of study as long as your I-20 or DS-2019 is valid.

**F-1 Students:** The F-1 classification is used for students pursuing a full course of study at an academic or language institution. This status is used solely for the purpose of study.

**H-1B Temporary Workers:** This classification allows a foreign national to work in the US in a “specialty occupation” for a maximum of 6 years.

**J-1 Exchange Visitors:** The J-1 classification is used for exchange visitors. In the University setting, this status is used for visiting faculty, research scholars, short-term scholars, specialists and exchange students.

**TN:** This classification allows citizens of Canada and Mexico to work in the US in certain occupations specified under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

**USCIS:** United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, formerly known as the Immigration and Naturalization Service, is the agency that is responsible for the administration of immigration and naturalization adjudication functions.

**DOS:** Department of State, is in charge of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program, US Embassies and Consulates.

**SEVIS:** Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a database that schools use to communicate required information to the Department of Homeland Security and the DOS.

**Record Keeping:** *ALWAYS* keep your immigration documents safe. This includes keeping *ALL* copies of your I-20s and/or DS-2019s, as well as other immigration documents. Do not throw away these important documents as you may need them in the future.

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USCIS used to be called what?

Answer: INS (Immigration & Naturalization Service)
UNDERSTANDING YOUR IMMIGRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

While you are in the United States, you must follow US immigration regulations. To be “in status” means that you are following all of the guidelines that pertain to your particular status (F-1, H-1B, J-1, TN-1, etc.). The following guidelines will provide you with a general understanding of some immigration rules. You will not, however, gain an understanding of the actual procedures which must be followed in order to fulfill your obligations. Consultation with and assistance from the staff of OISS is necessary to comply with all of your immigration responsibilities.

Please be aware that the Department of Homeland Security ultimately holds you responsible for maintaining your immigration status. Therefore, please consult with OISS staff prior to making any major decisions.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS

Immigration Documents
Be sure that your passport, I-20, DS-2019 and/or your I-94 remain valid at all times. In other words, you should periodically check the expiration dates on all of your immigration documents.

Your passport should remain valid at least 6 months into the future. If you need to apply for an extension of your permission to remain in the US, please do so at least 3 to 6 months in advance of the expiration date on your I-20, DS 2019 or I-94 card.

Traveling
For travel within the US, always take your passport and other immigration documents. If for any reason you are stopped by the authorities, you may be required to show proof of your permission to temporarily reside in the US. While in the New Orleans area, keep your documents in a safe place and carry copies.

Outside the US. Visit the OISS at least two to three weeks prior to leaving so that staff may inspect your immigration documents and provide you with any support documents needed to re-enter the US. If you have a pending immigration petition, may want to consult with OISS staff several months in advance of any planned travel.

Employment
With some rare exceptions, your immigration status limits your employment eligibility to the University of New Orleans and only for the specific purpose for which you were invited to the University. Never accept any additional and/or outside employment or consultancies without consulting with OISS staff. More information about employment benefits for students is found in the employment section of this Handbook.

Change of Address Notification
The US government requires all foreign nationals to report a change of address within 10 days of moving to a new location. Depending upon your status this reporting requirement may be met as follows:

F-1 Students and J-1 Exchange Visitors. Notify OISS using the Address Change Form available from OISS. This information is then recorded in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).


Medical Insurance Compliance
Federal regulations require all J-1 exchange visitors and their dependents to carry appropriate medical insurance for the duration of their exchange program. However, the university requires all students in F or J status to carry medical insurance. Thus, insurance charges are automatically placed on student fee bills.
UNDERSTANDING YOUR IMMIGRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Changes in Job Duties
Please notify OISS prior to any changes in your job duties, research program, salary, title or work location. Any significant changes in the terms and conditions under which you were invited to UNO, may affect your immigration status.

Changes in Your Academic Program
Please notify OISS prior to changing your major, program level, transferring to another university, taking courses at another university, engaging in employment, or reducing your course load. Such changes will need to be properly annotated in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Attendance and Courseload Requirements
Attendance. You must register and attend classes for all normal school terms except summer term or mini session. If the summer term is your first semester, then you must also register and attend classes. Audited courses are not counted toward full-time status.

Courseload Requirements for F-1 Students
Full Courseload. You must be registered for 12 hours if you are an undergraduate student or 9 hours if you are a graduate student.
You must maintain full-time enrollment for the entire semester.

Exceptions. You must register for a “full course load,” as defined by immigration, unless: (1) you are a graduate student who has completed all your coursework, except thesis or dissertation hours or (2) an OISS staff member approves, in advance, a reduction in course load for one or more of the following reasons:
   a. Difficulties with the English language (initial semester in US)
   b. Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods or reading requirements (initial semester in US)
   c. Improper course level placement
   d. Illness or other medical condition which compels you to interrupt or reduce your course of study
   e. You will complete all degree requirements by the end of that school term.
You must resume a full course of study when the difficulties or conditions listed in items a-d above have been resolved.

Courseload Requirements for J-1 Students
Full Courseload
   a. Degree Students. You must be registered for 12 hours if you are an undergraduate student or 9 hours if you are a graduate student. You must maintain full-time enrollment for the entire semester.
   b. Non-Degree Students. You must be engaged “full-time” in a prescribed course of study as defined by your program sponsor. In most cases, UNO is your program sponsor and will generally require full-time enrollment as defined above. Other program sponsors have similar requirements.

Exceptions. You may be exempt from the full course of study requirement under the following conditions, some of which require advance approval: (1) medical problem, (2) bona fide academic reason, (3) enrollment in a non-degree program, (4) participation in academic training, or (5) you will complete all degree requirements by the end of that school term.

On-Line Classes
No more than the equivalent of one on-line class or 3 credits per semester may count towards the "full course of study" requirement.

This means that undergraduate students must have a minimum of 9 credit hours on-site and graduate students must have a minimum of 6 credit hours on-site.
OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT FOR STUDENTS

This section explains how “employment” is defined by the US immigration regulations and describes the types of employment that may be available to you.

Eligibility and Application Requirements
A basic requirement for all types of employment is that you must maintain continuous and lawful status. To remain eligible for most types of employment you must limit your work to no more than 20 hours per week while school is in session. Do not assume that you are eligible to work without first contacting the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS), Education Building, room 122, 280.6021.

Definition of "Employment"
"Employment" is work performed or services provided in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, food, or any other benefit. If you receive no pay or other benefit for an activity, it may be considered "volunteer work" instead of employment.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS IN F-1 STATUS

On-Campus Employment "Incident to Status"
General. Work on campus is usually permissible if it meets certain requirements. Immigration regulations state that this employment is automatically authorized for any student in lawful F-1 status. If this is your initial entry to begin a new program of study, you may begin on-campus employment up to 30 days prior to the start of classes. If you are transferring from one US University to another, you may only work on-campus at the school having responsibility to monitor your F-1 status. In order to work on campus, you must fill out the on-campus employment eligibility form at OISS and submit it to your employer.

Type 1: Employment from UNO. On-campus work is always acceptable, whether it is employment in your academic department, the library, the computer center or the housing office. Work required by a scholarship, fellowship, or assistantship is also acceptable.

Type 2: Other Employment on UNO's Campus. Work performed on UNO’s grounds or premises for an outside contractor or firm is considered to be on-campus employment as long as the employer provides direct services to students. Examples of this are UNO’s food service, Aramark, Privateer Place or UNO bookstore.

Type 3: Work Off Campus Which Qualifies as On-Campus Employment. Immigration defines some types of employment off campus as "on-campus employment." For employment to be so defined, there must be an official relationship between UNO and the off-campus employer, the work must be associated with your college’s curriculum or related to a graduate level research project, and the employment must be an important part of your program of study.

Off-Campus Employment Based on Severe Economic Hardship
If you are suffering from severe economic hardship based on unforeseen circumstances beyond your control and have been in valid F-1 status for 1 year, you may be eligible to apply for off-campus employment permission.

Off-Campus Employment under Curricular Practical Training
Some work experiences which are an important part of your study program may be considered "curricular practical training." These experiences may include alternate work/study programs, internships, cooperative education programs, and practicum experiences. Any student who works for one year or more in full-time curricular practical training is not eligible for optional practical training.

Off-Campus Employment based on an Internship with an International Organization
If you are maintaining lawful F-1 status and want to participate in an internship with a recognized international organization, such as the United Nations or the World Bank, you may obtain written permission to engage in this work. You must maintain your F-1 student status while employed by such an organization.
OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT FOR STUDENTS

Off-Campus Employment under Optional Practical Training (OPT)

You may be eligible to be employed in a job which is directly related to your major field of study for up to one year. Such employment may take place at any location in the United States. It falls into four categories: (1) employment during your annual vacation if you were enrolled and intend to register for the next term; (2) employment while school is in session, provided that you work no more than 20 hours per week; (3) employment after you have completed all of your course requirements except your thesis or dissertation; and (4) employment after you have completed your studies. Due to recent changes in regulations governing OPT, please discuss your plans in advance with an OISS advisor. Permission to work on OPT is granted by USCIS.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS IN J-1 STATUS

General
You must not be employed in any capacity unless the specific employment is authorized in writing in advance by your J-1 Program Sponsor. If employment authorization is granted, the nature, amount and duration of work must be in accord with that which the Program Sponsor has authorized and in no case may exceed 20 hours per week while school is in session. Please note: J-1 students may not begin working until employment is authorized in SEVIS. Please consult OISS staff.

1. Employment Due to Economic Necessity: While you have the right to request that your Program Sponsor authorize employment off campus if you experience urgent financial need, you must not be employed without having written permission.

2. Academic Training Employment:
   a. Definition: Academic Training is work which is directly related to your major field of study, which is engaged in during or after completion of your program of study, and which may take place anywhere in the US for up to 18 months or 36 months for post-doctoral training.
   b. Application and Authorization: You must make application and be granted written authorization for Academic Training before beginning employment.

INFORMATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

Tax Concerns
In general, international students who have been in the United States less than five years are exempt from Social Security (F.I.C.A.) taxes. However, your earnings are subject to applicable federal, state, and local taxes. All employees must complete the Foreign National Tax Information Form with the International Tax Coordinator. Students must file a tax return on or before April 15 of each year. Students may be entitled to a refund of taxes withheld from their wages if the amount of tax owed is less than the amount withheld.

A Note of Caution
While immigration regulations provide a variety of opportunities for you to be employed during your time as a student, working improperly or without authorization is a serious violation of your status. You should therefore consult with OISS before taking up any employment. It is your responsibility to comply with all immigration regulations that apply to students. OISS staff is responsible for advising and counseling you regarding your rights and responsibilities. If you fail to meet your responsibilities, you may not be eligible for benefits normally granted to students with your immigration status.

Employment for Dependents
Immigration regulations allow J-2 dependents to apply for work permission, as long as the money they earn will be used to support the J-2 and/or their children. Immigration regulations prohibit all employment for F-2 dependents (spouses and children of F-1 students).
INTERNATIONAL TAX COMPLIANCE

As an international student or scholar, it is important that you comply with US immigration and tax laws. The University is required by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to fulfill various tax reporting obligations and to withhold appropriate taxes from all payments. Those individuals who receive any form of payment from the University will be subject to federal and state taxation unless reduced or exempted by an income tax treaty.

These payments may include wages; the housing and meal plan portion of scholarships and fellowships; travel expense reimbursements; cash awards; stipends; contractual services and honorariums; etc. Therefore, it is important that you obtain a Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number and complete the Foreign National Tax Information form upon arriving at the University.

For more information regarding tax issues, please visit our UNO Financial Services Tax Compliance website at http://financialservices.uno.edu/tax/index.cfm or contact the International Tax Coordinator at 504.280.3207, in ED 122B.

WHEN ARE STATE AND FEDERAL TAX FORMS FILED?

**Federal Income** taxes must be postmarked by April 15th of each year.

**State Income** taxes are due by May 15th of each year.

**HELP!!**
UNO usually has a volunteer program called Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). The VITA program is federally funded and can only help with the federal tax returns.

VITA volunteers usually conduct 6 sessions each spring to help international students complete their tax forms.

The volunteers are UNO accounting students and they have some experience with international tax treaties.

Look for more information in January 2013.
Social Security Number (SSN)

Eligibility for a social security number:
- Only individuals who are authorized to work in the U.S. are eligible to obtain a social security number.
- If you work on campus, or if you obtain permission to work off campus (through an internship or a co-op agreement), you will need to apply for a social security number.
- F-1 and J-1 students must have a job before they can apply for a SSN. You will need a letter from OISS and from the on-campus department or employer to apply for the SSN

Other information:
The SSN is used by employers to identify you, report earnings to the IRS and more. The SSN is also used by banks, utility companies, cell phone companies, insurance companies, and more. You will need a social security number when you file your annual tax return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

UTILITIES: In many cases, if you don’t have a SSN you will have to pay a deposit to connect utilities at your residence. Utilities can include: phone, cable, electricity, gas and water. Deposits vary in price by company.

CELL PHONES: If you want to obtain a cell phone, the companies will do a credit check by using your SSN. If you do not have a credit history or do not have a SSN, they will ask for a deposit. These deposits can range in price from $50 to $400+.

PROTECT YOURSELF: Keep your Social Security card in a safe place—not in your wallet or purse.

INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (ITIN)

An ITIN is a tax processing number issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). IRS issues ITIN’s to individuals who are required to have a US taxpayer identification number, but who do not have and are not eligible to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN).

ITIN’s are issued regardless of immigration status. Individuals must have a tax filing requirement and file a valid federal income tax return to receive a ITIN, unless they meet an exemption.

An ITIN is for federal tax reporting purposes only; they are not valid outside of the US tax system. They are not valid for identification purposes and are not valid for work purposes. However, you can use an ITIN to maintain an interest bearing checking account.

How many kilograms in a pound?

1 pound = 0.453 592 37 kilograms
Living on campus will conveniently locate you near all classes and the resident dining facilities. You will also be provided with the opportunity to form new friendships in an atmosphere that promotes growth, study and participation in a wide variety of residence hall programs. Becoming a resident also offers a multitude of conveniences and services such as on-site laundry facilities, a recreation area, cable television connection in each room, and discounted long distance phone services available on domestic and international calling.

UNO has two separate types of air-conditioned, on-campus housing to meet the needs of the diverse student body at UNO.

The deposit and application fees that are required for all student housing accommodations vary.

TWO ON-CAMPUS CHOICES

Privateer Place

Located in the northwest corner of campus, Privateer Place is an apartment-style complex offering 4-bedroom, 2-bedroom and efficiency units. Each unit includes a kitchen and common living room. The complex has coin-operated laundry facilities, a swimming pool, clubhouse for student activities and a volleyball court.

Phone: 504.282.5670
Fax: 504.282.7839
Web: www.privateerplaceUNO.com

Pontchartrain Hall

UNO’s newest Residence Hall, Pontchartrain Hall, provides single, double, and four person occupancy accommodations with personal bathrooms. Both buildings have an Honors Wing, in addition to Disabled Accessible suites. Local telephone service, furniture, all utilities, internet and cable television connectivity are included in the room rate for no additional charge. Pontchartrain Hall is for single students.

Contact the Office of Student Housing for additional information on Pontchartrain Hall, and the resident food service meal plans.

Phone: 504.280.6402
Fax: 504.280.5584
Web: http://housing.uno.edu
OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

TIPS FOR FINDING OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

If you are looking for an apartment, a roommate or both, here are some tips that might help.

- Check with Student Involvement and Leadership in MH 159 for information on off-campus apartments for rent and students looking for roommates. You can also add your own information to this database.

- Search the Bulletin Boards—Carefully examine the bulletin boards around campus (and especially in the University Center) for apartment and roommate advertisements. Remember that sometimes old ads are left on boards for a long time, so don’t stop looking with the first one you find. Make your own flyer to post on bulletin boards.

- Check the newspapers—The Times-Picayune, Gambit and Driftwood newspapers all have classified ad sections where you can look for apartment ads. You can also check websites such as www.nola.com to find information about apartments in New Orleans.

- Explore the neighborhoods—Many of the apartments for rent in nearby neighborhoods are only advertised with a “FOR RENT” sign posted to the front of the house. Since Hurricane Katrina, some of these apartments are no longer available, however many landlords are rebuilding and more apartments will become available with time. Take a walk through the streets south of campus (between Leon C. Simon and Filmore). Don’t forget to check the streets east of Elysian Fields Avenue.

- Check the phone book yellow pages—If you will be driving a car, you can look for apartments outside of the University area. Look under “Apartments” in the yellow pages and you’ll find locator services as well as apartment complexes.

- Attend the New Student Orientation Activities—At the orientation you will meet other new international students, and talking to other students is one of the best ways to solve the problem of living arrangements. When you work together you can find an apartment much faster.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RENTING AN APARTMENT...

You may have to fill out a rental application. This is merely a page of information about yourself (including your financial status) which the landlord uses to decide whether or not he or she should rent the unit to you. A rental application is not a lease, but you should read carefully any document you are asked to sign—and don’t hesitate to ask questions.

The lease is the legal agreement which establishes the relationship between the landlord and the tenant (the person who is renting the apartment). A written lease usually contains the following parts:

1. Naming the parties (you and the landlord).
2. A description of the property.
3. A statement of rent and the dollar amount of the security deposit.
4. The term of time for which you have agreed to rent; it can be a specific term (6 or 9 months or 1 year) or an indefinite term (usually month-to-month). Most leases say how many days ahead written notice must be given to move out.
5. A set of rules and/or conditions.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW..... Cont.

Read your lease carefully before you sign it. We suggest you take a copy of the lease, read it and think about it for 24 hours before you sign it. Make sure you understand every part of the lease before you sign it. Do not let the landlord pressure you into signing the lease before you are sure you are ready.

An oral lease is a contract made by talking about terms instead of writing them down. Oral leases are usually a bad idea. Often the tenant or the landlord forgets the terms agreed upon. To protect yourself, ask for a written lease. When there is no written lease, the law states that there is a month-to-month lease. If you or your landlord want to change any agreements, you have to do so 10 days prior to the end of the rental periods.

A security or damage deposit is required by the landlord in case you damage the apartment in any way. When you move out, the apartment should be left in its original condition. If it is, you should get your deposit back. If it is not, the landlord can keep your deposit. You will probably have to pay the deposit along with the first month’s rent before you move into the apartment.

Other types of fees that can be charged include: a non-refundable cleaning fee, a pet deposit, pest (bug spraying) fees and more. You should ask the landlord about these types of fees, because they could increase the cost of your monthly rent.

SETTING UP UTILITIES

Depending on your landlord, you may or may not have to pay utilities directly to the company. Some landlords include the cost of all utilities with the rental price. Others may include water, but not gas/electricity. Telephone service will always be your responsibility. Water service, energy (gas and electric), and telephone service must all be handled separately by calling the following numbers:

Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans 504.585.2000 or 504.52.WATER

If you have a social security number, you can do this by phone. You will have to pay a deposit of at least $75.

Entergy (Electricity and/or gas) 1.800.368.3749

If you do not have a social security number, you must take your passport and lease to the local customer service center. In New Orleans, it is located at 3400 Canal St., on the corner of Canal and Jeff Davis Blvd. A deposit of $75.00 for electric or gas service or a deposit of $150.00 for both electric and gas service will be charged to your first month’s bill. It will take 1-2 business days to get these utilities turned on.

Cox Communications (Cable television, internet, telephone) 504.304.8444

Cox provides cable TV, internet, local and long distance telephone service. Additional information is available at www.cox.com.

AT&T (Telephone) 1.888.757.6500

You can call Monday through Saturday from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm. If you do not have a social security number you must pay a deposit of $100 at an AT&T collection location. If you do have a social security number you can make all arrangements by phone. During busy times it can take up to a week to receive telephone service.

AFTER YOU MOVE IN

Don’t forget to let OISS and the University know your new mailing address. Come to OISS or use Webstar or PeopleSoft to update your Mailing and SEVIS Physical address.
TRANSPORTATION

BUS INFORMATION

The bus fare in the city of New Orleans is $1.25, exact change only. If you will be changing buses, give the driver an additional 25 cents to obtain a bus transfer. When you get on the second bus, just give that driver the transfer. Express buses cost $1.50 — they do not make as many stops as the regular buses.

Bus stops are marked with a white sign with purple, green and gold stripes. They say BUS STOP and most of them (not all) list at the bottom of the sign the numbers of the buses which stop at that location.

If you’ll be riding the bus several times during one day, you can buy a one-day pass for $5 from any of the bus drivers. With this you can take unlimited rides for the day. You can buy a three-day pass for $12, for unlimited rides during that period.

If you ride the bus on a daily basis, you might want to buy a monthly bus pass for $55 in the UNO Bookstore. The passes are color-coded by month, so you should buy the pass at the beginning of the month. Check the bus system web site for a route map and individual bus schedules www.norta.com.

Note: Fare prices subject to change without notice. Please check website to confirm current rates.

3 POPULAR DESTINATIONS

To French Quarter/Downtown:
Take #55 Elysian Fields from UNO to Decatur Street in the French Quarter or to Canal Street near the River. You can catch this bus at the bus stop in front of Administration Building.

To Tulane and Loyola Universities, Audubon Park and the Zoo:
Get on the #55 Elysian Fields at UNO and buy a transfer. Get off on Canal Street, cross the street, and walk to the corner of Carondelet and Canal to board the streetcar heading uptown on St. Charles Avenue. The streetcar ride is slow, so give yourself plenty of time. NOTE: Graduate students can check books out of the Tulane and Loyola University Libraries; ask at the UNO library circulation desk to obtain a LALINC card.

To Lakeside Mall and Veterans Boulevard Shopping:
Get on the #55 Elysian Fields at UNO and buy a transfer. Take the bus through the French Quarter and get off at the first Canal Street stop. Cross to the middle of Canal Street (the bus lane) and walk to the nearest bus stop. Catch any of the following buses: #40, #41, #42, #43, #44 or take the Canal streetcar. Take the bus or streetcar to the end of Canal Street and get off at the area called “Cemeteries” (you’ll see why when you get off the bus). When you get off, walk just around the corner to your right. At this bus stop you’ll catch the E-1 Veterans Boulevard bus. For the shopping mall, you get off just past Causeway Boulevard.

NOTE: You have to pay another fare when you board the E-1 bus ($1). If you buy a one-day RTA bus pass for $5.00, however, you can use that for all the buses you ride. The trip to the mall takes about an hour and a half — the earlier in the day you go, the faster the trip.
OTHER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

TAXI CABS
Taxi prices can vary from one company to the next, but all taxis should have a working meter visible to the customer. It is customary to tip the driver between 10% and 15% of the fare.

United Cabs 504.522.9771
Metairie Cab 504.835.4242

Checker-Yellow Cabs 504.486.9967

RENTAL CARS
National Rent-A Car
http://www.nationalcar.com/
877.222.9058

Enterprise Rent A Car
www.enterprise.com/car_rental/
800.261.7331

Avis Car Rental
http://www.avis.com/
800.230.4898—Assistance
800.331.1212—Reservations

Thrifty Car Rental
http://www.thrifty.com/
504.463.0800

Hertz Car Rental
http://www.hertz.com/
800.654.3131

Dollar Rent A Car
http://www.dollar.com/
800.800.3665

Alamo Car Rental
www.alamo.com
877.222.9075

Please note that it is cheaper to rent a car if you are at least 25 years old. Don’t forget to buy the car insurance (unless your regular auto insurance policy covers cars that you rent).

AIRPORT SHUTTLE SERVICE
The airport shuttle provides transportation from UNO to the airport for $20 per passenger. You should call at least 24 hours in advance to reserve your spot — they will ask for your flight number and time of departure. The shuttle will pick you up in front of the University Center.

New Orleans Airport Shuttle
Phone: 866.596.2699
Web: http://www.airportshuttleneworleans.com/

Okay, I don't have a car and I want to take a trip to see the sights in Louisiana.
LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE SERVICE

There are many different companies in the United States that offer long distance telephone service. Some of these include:

- AT & T
- Sprint
- MCI
- And more

Another option for long distance service includes the use of Calling Cards. Many international students find it most convenient to use calling cards when calling home. Cards can be purchased at any local pharmacy, and many local dollar stores. Campus area locations to purchase discount calling cards are:

- Rouse’s: 6600 Franklin Ave.  288.1600
- Walgreens: 6201 Elysian Fields Ave.  283.2891

Dialing Long Distance within the US:

1 + Area Code + Number

Dialing Long Distance outside of the US:

011 + Country Code + City Code + Number

WATCH HOW MUCH YOU SPEND ON INTERNATIONAL LONG DISTANCE CALLS. YOU MAY FIND THAT YOUR CHARGES ADD UP TO HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS EACH MONTH, AN AMOUNT THAT YOU DID NOT BUDGET FOR.

One of the favorite options of international students for long distance is Skype. This service allows free voice calls over the Internet, instant messaging, file transfer and video conferencing. If both parties have computer and internet access, Skype is very convenient and affordable! See www.skype.com for additional information.

SPECIAL PHONE NUMBERS

911 is the phone number for emergencies throughout the USA. Dial 911 to reach emergency medical services, fire department or police.

3.6666  UNO’s Campus Police
280.6666  UNO’s Campus Police (from off campus)

1.800, 1.877, and 1.888 numbers: Telephone numbers that start with either of these four numbers are usually free for you to call. The institution or business that has this number pays for the call.

1.900 and 1.976 numbers are very expensive. You are not only charged for the phone call, but also for some special service offered via telephone per minute of your call. You may want to consider getting 900 and 976 numbers blocked so that no one can make such calls from your telephone. Blocking the use of these numbers is a free service. **BEWARE of 1.900 AND 1.976 NUMBERS.**

DIALING ON CAMPUS

Internal UNO Campus Calls

UNO uses five digit dialing to call internally among three of its locations:

- Main and East Campus:  280-xxxx
- Jefferson Center:  849-xxxx

To call internal UNO extensions within and between any of these locations dial 3 plus the desired four digit extension.

To call outside from these three UNO locations dial 9, listen for the dial tone, then dial the seven digit number desired.
CHOOSING A CELL PHONE

Unless you already have a U.S. Social Security Number, your first cell phone will be a pre-pay plan. There are many service providers, and each one offers different service plans and options, including “pre-pay” plans that do not require you to pay a monthly fee (you buy your airtime minutes in advance). The following is a list of terms to help you in your choice of a service provider:

Coverage area = area where your phone will be in service.
Roaming = ability to travel throughout the US and still be able to use your phone.
Activation fee = a one-time fee you pay to start your service.
Credit check = the service provider looks at your credit history before starting service.

SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- T-Mobile
- AT&T
- Nextel
- Sprint
- Verizon Wireless

TIPS TO REMEMBER:

1. Most service providers will check your credit or require a DEPOSIT to begin service (may not include “pre-pay” plans).
2. Be aware of any ACTIVATION FEES that they may charge to begin service.
3. Except for special offers, you generally must purchase the phone (does not come with the service).
4. Once your free airtime minutes expire during the month, you are charged a fee for each minute of use thereafter. AIR-TIME MINUTES REFER TO BOTH INCOMING AND OUTGOING MINUTES. If someone calls you, YOU spend your minutes (free or not) on the call.
5. Unless it is covered in your plan, you may be charge an extra per minute fee when using the ROAMING feature.
6. Unless it is covered in your plan, you will be charged extra money for LONG DISTANCE calls in or out of the state.
7. Ask about INSURANCE in case the phone is lost or stolen.
8. Be aware of additional charges for sending and receiving text messages.
9. Check for availability of other plans, such as flex plans, that combine the benefits of traditional and prepaid cell phone plans.

ACCESSING THE INTERNET

E-MAIL: As a UNO student or staff member, you will receive your own computer account. This will enable you to have access to the World Wide Web and to e-mail. Students receive an e-mail account after paying their fees. Faculty and Staff receive an e-mail account after the appropriate personnel action forms have been completed by their departments. To activate your account, go to Room 101, the UCC Help Desk in the Computer Center. You can check your e-mail at several locations on campus, including the Computer Labs in Kirshman Hall, the UCC, Library, Education, Milneburg Hall Buildings and the Learning Resource Center. If you own a personal computer with an Ethernet card, you can access UNO’s server from your own home. For more information see the University Computing & Communication’s (UCC’s) website: http://ucc.uno.edu/ or call 504.280.4357

Please note that your UNO email address is the university’s official electronic method of contact. Check your UNO email account every day.
BANKING

TYPES OF ACCOUNTS

CHECKING ACCOUNT
In the United States we pay many bills, i.e., rent, telephone, utilities, etc., or make purchases with a personal check. Checking accounts are very convenient. Many supermarkets allow you to cash checks over the amount of your food purchases when you need additional cash. When paying for a purchase by check, you will be asked to show proper identification such as your passport, school identification card, driver's license or a Louisiana Identification Card. Depending on the bank and the type of checking account you have chosen, you may be charged a monthly and/or per check written service fee. Some banks offer free checking accounts if you maintain a minimum amount of money in the checking or savings account. Some checking accounts earn interest, others do not. Always ask. All banks will charge you a fee if you have "bounced" a check usually referred to as NSF, not sufficient funds. A "bounced" check is one that you have written for more money than you have available in your account.

SAVINGS ACCOUNT
A savings account is useful if you have funds that you do not immediately need. You will earn interest on a savings account, but the amount varies from bank to bank and depends on what type of savings account you have opened.

ATM MACHINES
Most banks have Automated Teller Machines (ATM) that allow you to deposit, withdraw, or transfer funds without going into the bank. ATM machines are conveniently located in shopping malls, supermarkets, and even on campus. When you open an account with a bank that operates ATMs, you will receive a plastic service card. You will be given a Personal Identity Number (PIN) that identifies you as a bank customer. NEVER GIVE ANYONE YOUR PIN NUMBER. Banks have begun to charge a service fee each time you use another bank’s ATM. Again, ask about any charges for services rendered and read all materials carefully.

DEBIT CARD OR CHECKING CARD
When setting up your checking account, you should also ask your banker about the debit card, also known as a check card. This type of bank card allows you to pay for groceries and other items without writing a check or withdrawing cash from your account before going to the store; money is automatically transferred from your checking account to the store or restaurant. It's very easy!

You will find it safe and convenient to use your debit card from your home country bank. However, if your stay will be longer than a semester, it is more convenient and cheaper to open a bank account in the U.S.

WIRING FUNDS TO THE UNIVERSITY
Funds may be wired from your bank account in your home country directly to the University of New Orleans. The bursar’s office has a form to help facilitate this process at http://bursar.uno.edu/wire_payments.cfm
Everything is so expensive….what can I do to save money?

Buying used furniture can save you a lot of money. Here are some places to contact:

- **Canal Furniture**
  4021 Tulane Avenue
  504.482.1185

- **Pelican Thrift & Furniture**
  4045 South Carrollton
  504.483.9996

- **Bridge House Thrift Store**
  1160 Camp St
  504.522.4475

Buying used clothing for you and your family can save a lot of money. You will also find kitchen supplies, plates, etc. at these stores.

- **Goodwill**
  123 Robert E. Lee
  504.286.1858

Shopping at recognized discount stores can also help you to save money. Some of these include:

- Walmart
- Target
- Dollar General
- Big Lots
- K-Mart

MONEY MANAGEMENT TIPS

TIPS FOR THOSE WITH A LOW BUDGET

Since you know how much your income and basic expense are, pay all bills at the beginning of every month. You will then know exactly how much remains.

- Keeping track of your expenses in various categories (food, books, utility bills, telephone bills, etc.) will help you identify where most of your money is being spent. Be especially aware of how much you spend on long-distance telephone calls.
- Keep track of money taken out with your ATM card.
- If you have cash in your pocket, your tendency may be to spend it more quickly. Use a debit/checking card.
- If you plan to own a car, budget all expenses related to the car (gas, parking, insurance, regular maintenance, emergency repairs).
- If you have a credit card, beware of overspending. Remember you may pay 15 to 22% per year in interest for the unpaid balance on your account.
- Credit card companies may call or send you information that you are eligible for their credit card. Read all of the information thoroughly before deciding on getting the card. Most companies have high annual fee charges.
- Cooking meals at home is not only cheaper, but also healthier than eating out at fast food restaurants.
- In the summer, electric bills can be very high because of the use of air conditioning. If your apartment has a window unit, turn it off during the day when you are not at home. If you have a central air unit and do not want to turn it off completely, turn up the temperature on the thermostat when you are not at home.
- Keep an eye out for coupons in newspapers and local magazines.
- Whenever you are planning to buy an expensive item, SHOP AROUND. Don’t just buy at the first place you find it. Often, you can find what you are looking for at another store for a lower price.

In the summer, electric bills can be very high because of the use of air conditioning. If your apartment has a window unit, turn it off during the day when you are not at home. If you have a central air unit and do not want to turn it off completely, turn up the temperature on the thermostat when you are not at home.

- Keep an eye out for coupons in newspapers and local magazines.
- Whenever you are planning to buy an expensive item, SHOP AROUND. Don’t just buy at the first place you find it. Often, you can find what you are looking for at another store for a lower price.
HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION

Health insurance is a complex issue for everyone, especially for international students and scholars who come from countries that offer national health plans. Health care in the United States is one of the most expensive in the world and having health insurance is necessary. All UNO students are required to have medical insurance. Additionally, it is mandatory for everybody who comes to the USA in J-1 and J-2 status to have health insurance coverage even if you come for a short period of time. As a UNO student, your account will automatically be billed for health insurance each semester unless you have completed a health insurance waiver form by the 5th day of class.

Health insurance requirements, instructions for completing a waiver and the insurance coverage evaluation forms are available on our website at http://oiss.uno.edu/UNOinsurancereq2.cfm

SOME HEALTH INSURANCE TERMS

Co-insurance/Co-payment: The portion of a covered medical expense that must be paid by the insured person after the deductible is paid. This is usually expressed as a percentage; for example, if the insurance company pays 80% of covered charges, the co-payment is 20%. Also referred to as "out of pocket expenses."

Deductible: The initial portion of a covered medical expense that must be paid by the insured person before the insurance company pays its part of the expense.

Exclusion: Any condition or medical expense for which, under the terms of the insurance policy, no coverage is provided and no payment will be made.

Medical Evacuation Plan: An insurance policy that covers your transportation home in the event that your illness is such that doctors in the United States feel that your illness would be better treated at home.

Repatriation Coverage: Insurance that would pay to send your remains home should you die in the United States. Medical Evacuation and Repatriation insurance coverage are mandatory by law for all individuals in J status (J-1, J-2).

Pre-Existing Condition: It is a condition that existed prior to the beginning of insurance coverage, including pregnancy. Treatment of pre-existing conditions are generally not covered by most insurance plans.

Usual and Customary Rates: Some insurance plans will state that certain expenses cannot exceed a predetermined amount. This amount may, or may not, be sufficient to cover expenses. Usual, Customary, and Reasonable are those expenses that the majority of providers would charge for the same treatment in the same geographic area.

Prescription Drugs: Prescription drugs can be obtained from a pharmacy only with a doctor's written prescription. You may purchase a Name Brand drug that is an original drug or a Generic Drug, a copy of a name brand drug made by another company (i.e. Coca-Cola vs. other colas). Generic drugs are usually cheaper. Over-the-Counter Medications are available without prescription from the pharmacy or food store. A pharmacist cannot prescribe drugs.

Public Assistance: Public assistance is given by the government to needy people through such programs as welfare, food stamps, medical assistance and charity care. International students, scholars and their dependent children are not permitted to receive these benefits or else risk violating their immigration status.

IMMUNIZATIONS

UNO requires that all students be immunized and that they provide proof of their immunizations. If you should need immunizations, you can get them at:

- Student Health Services in the HPC 109  280.6387
SAFETY

In general, UNO is a pretty safe campus. However, it is very important to remember that you are in a big city and that there is crime. There are some things you can do to make sure that you do not become a victim of crime.

WHILE WALKING

Always be alert while walking. Look up and down the street for suspicious people walking or on bikes or in cars. Keep an eye on bushes and stay in lighted areas. On campus, try to walk near campus emergency phones (those with blue lights on top).

Walk purposefully like you know what you're doing and know where you're going. Watch where you are going. Be alert to your surroundings.

Do not carry valuables or important documents (i.e. passport) with you. Only have enough cash with you for your immediate needs, including some change for phone calls and for the bus/street car.

Try to walk with someone else.

Do not leave your books, backpack, or purse unattended anywhere, including the library.

Avoid Shortcuts through isolated areas or areas that are not lit well.

Accept rides ONLY from persons you know and trust. If harassed from a car, walk swiftly or run in the opposite direction to safety. If you’re really frightened, scream for help.

IN YOUR APARTMENT OR RESIDENCE HALL

Lock your door whether you are in the room or not. Even if you are just going down the hall for a minute, lock the door.

Do not keep large sums of money in your office, apartment, or residence hall room.

If an item can be easily stolen, keep a list of the serial numbers, model numbers and descriptions. Items that can be stolen easily include TV’s, stereos, laptop computers, cell phones and more.

Immediately report any broken windows or lights to the landlord or the security staff of the residence hall.

Take care of your keys! Do not give anyone the chance to duplicate them.

If you see unusual activity or an actual crime like burglary, vandalism or assault, report it to the campus or local police. Their major responsibility is to protect you.

To contact the UNO Police call
3-6666 (from on-campus)
280-6666 (from off-campus)

For off-campus emergencies call 911.
WHILE DRIVING AND BICYCLING

DRIVING

Lock all doors and close all windows when leaving your car, whether it’s for a few minutes or several hours.

Park in well-lighted areas and try not to walk alone in the parking areas at night.

Have keys ready when you approach your car. Check car for intruders before entering and lock the door immediately after getting into your car.

Always keep your gas tank at least half full.

Store valuables out of sight and lock them in the trunk when the car is parked.

If your car breaks down in an isolated area, raise the hood. Stay in the locked car. Ask whoever stops to call the police. Sound your horn if you feel threatened.

NEVER PICK UP HITCHHIKERS! A person walking along the road with their thumb out or with a sign asking for a ride is a hitchhiker.

BICYCLING

Park your bicycle in well-lighted areas and try not to walk alone at night.

Always LOCK your bike when leaving it unattended, even if it’s only for a few minutes.

Invest in a kryptonite “U-Lock” for your bicycle. These are the most secure and most difficult to break and therefore it is unlikely your bike can be stolen.

TELEPHONE TIPS

List only your first initials and last name in telephone directories.

Be suspicious of surveys or wrong number calls, and do not give out your name or address. NEVER give out your credit card numbers or social security number to anyone who calls and asks for that information.

Never reveal that you are home alone.

Hang up immediately on obscene phone calls.

If you are receiving harassing phone calls, keep track of when and what time you get the calls and then give the information to the police.

Making harassing phone calls could cause you to lose your ability to have a telephone number.

List only your first initials and last name in telephone directories.

Be suspicious of surveys or wrong number calls, and do not give out your name or address. NEVER give out your credit card numbers or social security number to anyone who calls and asks

IF SOMEONE TRIES TO ASSAULT YOU

Stay as calm as possible. Think rationally and evaluate your options: escape, self defense, negotiation or screaming to attract attention.

It may be more advisable to submit than to resist and risk injury or death. You will have to make this decision based on the circumstances, such as the presence of a weapon and the type of person you are.

Try to get an accurate description of the assailant’s appearance, what was said and a license number to assist the police.

If you are robbed, threatened, or raped, call campus and/or local police immediately.

You may save someone else from becoming a victim.

Call a victim assistance service or rape crisis hotline to help you deal with the trauma that any assault causes.

For off-campus emergencies call 911.
HURRICANE EVACUATION INFORMATION

Hurricane season lasts from June 1 to November 30. Because New Orleans is below sea level and virtually surrounded by water, people who live here pay special attention to weather reports during these months. Before a hurricane enters the Gulf, you should develop your own evacuation plan. You don’t need to panic! A hurricane moves slowly, giving us time to implement our evacuation plan. Individuals who reside in trailers will be required to evacuate their trailers in the event of severe tropical storm or category 1 or 2 hurricane. New Orleans city officials will call for a city-wide evacuation if Southeast Louisiana is directly threatened by a category 3 hurricane or above. Of course, UNO would close in this situation and all buildings would be locked. Students and scholars living on campus would have to leave their dorm rooms and apartments. Students are encouraged not to make airline reservations for winter break until the end of October due to the possibility of the fall semester being extended for university closure during an emergency. Here are some suggestions for getting out of the city if an evacuation is ordered.

FIRST, STAY INFORMED

The local news stations will have detailed information about the storm. The following two radio stations are part of the Emergency Alert System and will have information on road conditions, shelter locations and reentry information: 870 AM and 101.9 FM.

Register for UNO’s text notification service, http://ucc.uno.edu/notification/. Check the UNO website, http://www.uno.edu to find out if the university will close, or call the main phone number, 504-280-6000. If the University closes, recorded information will be available. If you live on campus, check with Student Housing or Privateer Place to find out when you must evacuate. Please review the University Hurricane Plan at http://ehso.uno.edu/docs/UNO-HurricanePlanDetailed.pdf.

There are two good websites that offer detailed information on tropical storms, with regular updates and projections, emergency preparedness information, and much more. The National Hurricane Center (which offers information in English and Spanish) can be found at http://www.nhc.noaa.gov. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) can be found at http://www.fema.gov.

Please keep OISS updated on your plans by filing a Personal Evacuation Plan at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5GPG6Q7.

WHERE TO GO

When everyone is leaving the city, it can be difficult to find a hotel, so people end up driving far away as they look for a vacancy. You can avoid this problem by making a reservation as soon as it looks like you may need to evacuate; you can always cancel the reservation if it becomes obvious that evacuation is unnecessary. The later you leave, the farther you’ll have to go to find a room. There are several inexpensive motel chains that can be found throughout the Southeast, in small towns as well as in larger cities: Motel 6, Days Inn, Super 8, and Comfort Inn are a few examples. You can find their national numbers in the Yellow Pages or you can check their websites online. (This is merely for your information; UNO does not endorse or recommend any particular hotel chain.)

Motel 6 http://www.motel6.com
Days Inn http://www.daysinn.com
Super 8 http://www.super8.com
Comfort Inn http://www.comfortinn.com

Red Cross shelters will be set up outside of the New Orleans metropolitan area in such places as Hammond, Baton Rouge, Alexandria, or even as far north as Monroe, Louisiana, and Vicksburg, Mississippi. If you want to go to a Red Cross shelter rather than to a hotel you should plan to bring with you a blanket, non-perishable food, and water. (See the section on what to bring). Listen to the Emergency Alert System radio channels listed above to find out where Red Cross shelters will be located.

HOW TO GO

CAR: If you have a car, check with your friends to see if others need a ride. Do not wait until the last minute to leave the city. Remember that everyone else is leaving too, and traffic will move so slowly that it can take several hours to go just 100 miles. Leave the city with a full tank of gas and a map. To avoid the worst traffic, try leaving in the early morning. Consider driving north on Interstate 59 instead of west on Interstate 10. Once outside of the city you may want to get off the Interstate and travel the smaller highways to avoid traffic jams.
At some point, the Louisiana State Police will direct all lanes of traffic on the major highways to flow out from the city. Prior to your departure, make sure you understand the various “contra-flow” evacuation routes. Contra-flow maps and more information are available at [http://www.getagameplan.org/downloads/evacGuideSoutheast.pdf](http://www.getagameplan.org/downloads/evacGuideSoutheast.pdf).

**TRAIN:** Only two trains leave New Orleans on a daily basis, so if you use this method, you need to make your arrangements as soon as it becomes clear that evacuation is necessary. The Crescent City leaves at 7:05 am and travels all the way to New York; the first five stops after Slidell are Hattiesburg, MS; Laurel, MS; Meridian, MS; Tuscaloosa, AL; and Birmingham, AL. The City of New Orleans leaves every day about 1:45 pm headed for Chicago. The first eight stops out of New Orleans are Hammond, LA; McComb, MS; Brookhaven, MS; Hazelhurst, MS; Jackson, MS; and Yazoo City, MS; Greenwood, MS, and Memphis, TN. Other routes do exist and are available but not every day. Prices vary, of course, but as an example, a round trip ticket to Memphis, TN will cost around $80. It can be cheaper when people travel in groups and there are student discounts but only if a discount card is purchased first. An advantage of evacuating by train is that Amtrak allows you to put an option on the reservation of your seat onboard until the departure time of your train at no charge at all. Trains also offer more comfort than buses. For more details, you can call 1-800-USA-RAIL or check the website at [http://www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com).

**BUS:** The bus can be cheaper than the train if booked over 14 days in advance but it would not be applicable in the case of a hurricane evacuation. Most buses do not offer direct routes and have to make connections in Baton Rouge which might make your trip longer than on the train, but on the other hand, there are many more options and destinations available by bus. You should rapidly pick your destination, make sure you can get there by bus, make your hotel or shelter arrangements, then buy your bus ticket. (As an example, a round trip bus ticket to Memphis, TN costs between $102 and $154 depending on how far in advance it was purchased.) You can reach Greyhound bus by calling 1-800-231-2222 or, locally, 525-6075. You can find the website at [http://www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com/).

**UNO BUS:** Limited bus transportation is available to evacuate those resident and international students who are unable to evacuate on their own. These students may only bring minimal personal belongings that they are able to hold on their lap. NO SUITCASES are allowed and all personal belongings must be in a book bag or small duffle/gym bag.

**YOUR LOCAL CONSULATE:** Please contact your nearest consulate as they might have evacuation options to offer you and will most likely want to know what your plans are even if you are not evacuating with them.

**STAY PREPARED**

- Prepare your disaster kit (See section on What to Bring)
- Pick up an “Evacuation Guide” from the OISS office, which contains additional information about evacuation. These guides may also be available at some convenience stores and restaurants throughout the city.
- Use Webstar to update your alternate e-mail address. In the event your UNO e-mail does not work, OISS will use an alternate e-mail address to communicate with you.
- Plan where you will go, how you will get there, and when you will depart.
- Notify your family and friends of your evacuation plans
- File your Hurricane Personal Evacuation Plan with the OISS

**WHAT TO BRING**

You should prepare your disaster evacuation kit (items below) before the start of hurricane season. When evacuating, take these items with you:

- Prescription medication and first aid kit, clothing and bedding including sleeping bags, blankets and pillows
- Battery operated radio, flashlight, and extra batteries
- Enough non-perishable food and water for at least 3 days (1 gallon per person per day)
- Immigration documents including passport, I-20 or DS 2019 and I-94 card
- Other important documents such as: social security card, proof of residence, birth & marriage certificates, insurance policies, tax records, etc.
- Important books, laptop, etc., cell phone, charger, car keys and maps
- Written instructions on how to turn off electricity, gas and water if authorities advise you to do so (you will need a professional to turn them back on)

Contact information for UNO: 504-280-6000; [http://www.uno.edu](http://www.uno.edu).

**AFTER THE STORM**

Monitor the UNO website regularly to find out when the institution will re-open. Check your UNO and/or alternate e-mail for specific instructions from OISS staff.
In order to buy a car, you will need a Louisiana driver’s license. After buying a car, you will need to register the vehicle in your name at one of the locations below:

**Vehicle Registration**
8700 Lake Forest Blvd.,
New Orleans, LA 70127
504.485.2301
OR

**Office of Motor Vehicles**
6701 Airline Hwy
Metairie, LA 70003
1.877.DMV.LINE

In order to register your car and get the title in your name you must have proof that you have liability car insurance.

**BUYING A USED CAR**

You may decide to invest in a used car after settling in to New Orleans. There are, in fact, many advantages to owning a car, primarily increased mobility and freedom. And if you plan to make a lot of trips on the weekends and during school holidays, owning a car may be cheaper than renting one or traveling by plane or bus.

**HIDDEN COSTS**

However, you must be aware of hidden costs, which are not included in the car’s price tag, including routine maintenance, repairs, registration, tax, and **INSURANCE**. You may want to buy a used car because you know it can be much cheaper than a new car, but often-used cars have special maintenance problems.

Here is an example:

Since there are no supermarkets within walking distance from campus, Juan and Wolfgang decided to buy a used car. They found several advertised in the Times-Picayune and started calling the owners. Finally they found one that seemed just right. It was 13 years old, but appeared well maintained and only had 41,000 miles on it. According to the owner, his son only used it to drive to school. Best of all, it only cost $1000! Juan and Wolfgang took care of the necessary paperwork to have the title transferred; they registered the car, and applied for Louisiana driver’s licenses. They checked into several insurance companies and chose the company that offered the insurance coverage required by Louisiana law at the cheapest price. They were surprised that they could not find any insurance for less than $160 per month. Within a month the car started having engine troubles. Juan and Wolfgang both had incidents when they were on weekend trips when the car broke down and had to be towed to a mechanic. Repairs both times cost over $200. Within 6 months, the car was no longer working.
Here are a few suggestions to help you avoid making Juan and Wolfgang’s expensive mistake:

**Before you buy a car,** call around to insurance companies to find out how much you will have to pay in annual premiums. Premiums vary, depending on your driving record, your age, the value of the car, the amount of coverage you purchase and the deductible you choose. Since you may not have established a driving record within the United States, insurance companies do not know if you are a safe driver. Therefore, your insurance will be higher the first year. It will also be higher if you are under 25 and/or if you have an expensive car. Make sure you get adequate coverage for your needs, because even a minor accident could cost thousands of dollars.

**Use common sense.** What are the chances that a 13 year-old car would only have been driven 41,000 miles (65,600 km)? Take a calculator with you so you can convert miles to kilometers quickly.

**Have a mechanic check the vehicle** out BEFORE you buy it. Maybe the owner will pay for the mechanic to look at it, but if not, consider it an investment. It’s better to spend $75 on a mechanic who can tell you whether the car is worth buying than several hundred (or more) dollars on repairs later!

**Use CARFAX.com** to check to see if the car has been in any accidents and what damages there may have been. The cost of this service ranges between $35.00 and $45.00 and can save you a lot of money in the long run. [http://www.carfax.com](http://www.carfax.com).

**Look for differences** in the color of the car; this could indicate that a part was replaced because of a previous car accident.

**Ask for the record of maintenance** (dates of oil changes, part replacements, times in the garage, etc.). Although not everybody keeps such a record, it could give you more information to make a decision.

**Check to see if the brake tag is current** (located in the left hand corner of the windshield). If it is not current, it may be an indication that the car cannot pass the inspection. All Louisiana cars must have a current brake tag. If the car does not have a valid sticker, you will pay a fine and be required to obtain one.

**If you buy a car from a used car dealer,** you will have a larger selection of cars to choose from. Prices will probably be a little higher than if you buy from an individual. Buying a car from a dealer does not guarantee you better quality or a car in better condition. Check the car as carefully as you would if you were buying it from an individual.

## PARKING ON CAMPUS

If you want to park your car on campus, you must have a UNO parking permit. Parking permits are available at the University Police Parking & Traffic Division (phone: 280.6047) and cost $ 100.00 for the full year, $ 85.00 for the spring and summer semesters and $ 60.00 for summer semester. If you buy a permit for the fall semester, you do not need to purchase one for the spring or summer semesters. Student parking decals permit students to park in white lined spaces only in the general parking lots which are shared lots for students, faculty and staff. Students may park in yellow lined spaces after 5:00 pm. Faculty/Staff only parking lots are clearly marked with signs at the entrance of these lots. Remember, park only in areas designated for your status at the university, never park in handicapped parking slots. Parking regulations are enforced 24 hours. Please be aware that parking decals for Pontchartrain Hall and Privateer Place are only valid in their respective designated residential parking areas.

See: [http://www.upd.uno.edu/parking.cfm](http://www.upd.uno.edu/parking.cfm)
LAWS TO KNOW

cause your own or someone else’s death.

DRUGS

It goes without saying that you should never use or be in possession of a controlled substance. Drug offenders are punished very severely. You will go to jail.

DRIVING WITHOUT INSURANCE

Being uninsured is not just a bad idea...it is illegal! Louisiana law requires you to carry liability insurance. If you are stopped by a police officer and fail to show proof of insurance, your car will be taken away and you will be issued a ticket. Look in the Yellow Pages under Insurance Companies for information on car insurance.

CHILD CARE

It is illegal in the US to leave children under the age of 13 home alone without adult supervision. If you are caught leaving your children home without adult supervision, it is called Child Neglect and could cause the State to take custody of your children.

*UNO has a children’s center, for more information call: 504.280.3131

IMMIGRATION IMPLICATIONS

Criminal activity that has immigration consequences includes: conviction for or admission of a crime of moral turpitude (CMT); conviction for aggravated felony; conviction for drug-related offenses; drug-related activities not resulting in conviction (drug trafficking and drug/alcohol abuse); and Security-related offenses, whether or not resulting in conviction (espionage, sabotage or terrorist activity). Conviction for immigration purposes means a formal judgment of guilt entered by a court where either a judge or jury found the individual guilty; OR you enter a plea of guilty and the judge ordered some form of punishment.

Moral Turpitude refers to conduct which is inherently improper, vile, or depraved, and contrary to the accepted rules of morality. Anyone who is convicted of, admits committing, or attempts committing a so-called crime of moral turpitude (CMT) is inadmissible (can not obtain a US Visa stamp) and deportable with certain exceptions. Examples of CMT include: Aggravated assault, spousal abuse, manslaughter, rape, arson, forgery, child abuse, bribery, fraud offenses, burglary and more. Examples of crimes that are not CMT include: simple assault or battery, misdemeanor DWI or DUI, urination in public, disorderly conduct, public drunkenness, most traffic violations, and consumption of alcohol by a minor.
HOW TO GET A LOUISIANA DRIVER’S LICENSE OR IDENTIFICATION CARD

Division of Motor Vehicles
TOLL-FREE NUMBER:
1.877.DMV.LINE
Website:
http://expresslane.org
Office Hours are:
8am - 4:00pm Monday-Friday
2150 West Bank Expressway
Harvey, La 70058
6701 Airline Hwy
Metairie, La 70003
2001 Behrman Ave.
New Orleans, La 70114

State motor vehicle offices have recently started implementing new guidelines for international students and scholars to receive either a driver’s license or an identification card. Please go to http://www.dps.state.la.us/omv/license.html for the latest requirements.

A new license costs $24.50 cash. You will be required to take a written test, an eye test and an on-the-road driving test. To study for the test, you may download the entire driver’s guide at the Office of Motor Vehicles website:
http://dpsweb.dps.louisiana.gov/DPSForms.nsf/

The vehicle that you take the road test in must have valid license plates, a brake tag (inspection sticker), and proof of insurance. It may be a car that you have borrowed from a friend, but you will be required to prove that it has insurance. YOU MAY NOT TAKE THE DRIVING TEST IN A RENTAL CAR. These tests are given at the Office of Motor Vehicles at the addresses above.

Non-immigrants applying for or renewing a driver’s license must have at least 6 months left on their I-20, DS-2019, I-94 or other immigration documents.

Non-immigrants who are not eligible to obtain a Social Security Card (F-2s and H-4s) may also get a driver’s license. You must first get a letter from the Social Security Administration office, which says that you are ineligible for the Social Security Number.

If you do not intend to drive while in Louisiana, you may wish to obtain a Louisiana ID for identification purposes. You will need to present the same documents as you would for a driver’s license. A Louisiana ID costs $21.00 cash.

ALWAYS carry your driver’s license, car registration card and insurance card.

Driving Schools

The following schools offer both classroom and road instruction:

New Orleans Safe Driving School
217 S. Galvez
821.5334

Victor Manning Safety Driving Institute Inc.
1500 N. Causeway
831.0373
CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is the normal process of adjusting to a new country and a new culture, which may be dramatically different from your own. You no longer see the familiar signs and faces of home. Climate, food, and landscapes, as well as people and their ways all seem strange to you. Your English may not be as good as you expected. You may find yourself suffering unexpectedly from the pressures of US academic life and the different pace of life.

If you feel this way, do not panic. As you become adjusted to US culture and attitudes and begin to know your way around, you will start to adapt to and understand your new surroundings and way of life. International students and scholars experience culture shock in varying degrees; some hardly notice it at all, while others find it terribly difficult to adapt. Below are explanations of the four stages of culture shock that you may experience. Not every person will experience culture shock in the same way, but no one escapes it completely and it is important to remember that you are not alone.

FOUR STAGES OF CULTURE SHOCK

The "Honeymoon" Stage
The first few weeks in your new home will be very exciting. Everything will be new and interesting, and you will likely be so busy getting settled and starting classes that you may hardly notice that you miss home.

Irritability and Hostility
As you begin to realize that you are not on vacation and that this is where you live, you might experience anger and hostility. Sometimes you may feel hostile toward Americans and their way of doing things, and even trivial irritations may cause hostility to flare.

Understanding and Adjustment
In time you will come to better understand your new environment and will find, maybe even unconsciously, that you are adjusting to your new home. You will experience less frequent feelings of hostility and irritability.

Integration and Acceptance
Finally, you will find that you have come to feel that, at least on some level, you consider your university or college and your new town, your home. You will have made friends and will feel that your community accepts you just as you have accepted it.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE SHOCK

Below are some common symptoms of culture shock, some keys to dealing with culture shock are at the top of the next page.

Homesickness
You miss your homeland, your family, and your friends. You frequently think of home, call or write letters to your family and friends often, and maybe even cry a lot.

Hostility
Minor irritations make you unusually angry, and you feel life in the US is the cause of your problem. You feel your expectations have not been met. It takes time to get used to life in a foreign country and many things need to be relearned. Be patient and ask questions when you feel you do not understand.

Dependence
You become dependent on fellow nationals, friends, or your international student adviser and feel you cannot achieve anything by yourself. You may feel scared of doing things by yourself without somebody else's help or approval.

Loss of self-confidence
You may feel everything you do is wrong, that nobody understands you, that you have trouble making friends. You may start to question the way you dress and think because you are afraid not to fit in.

Values shock
You might find yourself facing situations that are not accepted in your culture and have trouble getting accustomed to them. For example, relationships between men and women, the informality of American life, political or religious attitudes, or the social behavior of Americans may seem amoral or unacceptable to you.

Adapted from the following website:
http://www.educationusa.state.gov/
CULTURE SHOCK

Keys to surviving the first few weeks:
Remember that it is natural for you to experience culture shock.
Get plenty of rest to deal with the stress and jet lag that you may experience
Try to relax. Take a nap.
Take time to think and/or talk through your feelings.
Put little things that bother you in perspective. Is the problem really so bad?
Make an effort to be optimistic, but not to the point of avoiding negatives that should be expressed.
Make your new home environment as comfortable as possible.

Make friends as quickly as possible. If there are others of your nationality on campus, get acquainted. It will give you a support system.
Get in touch with a friend or family member at home.
Find someone whom you can talk with in your native language.
Keep a diary or journal. This is a great way to vent some of the frustration you might be too embarrassed to speak about. It may also be an interesting record of the changes that occur over time.
Try not to compare and search out things like home. Things are different! Enjoy and explore those differences.
Always, always keep an open mind and a sense of humor.
Feel welcome to come to OISS to talk with an adviser. OISS is your home away from home.

(This is adapted from: Welles, Paddy S., “Coping with Culture Shock”, The Bridge, Vol. 6, No 4, Winter 1981, pp44-47).

FRIENDSHIP VERSUS FRIENDLINESSE

Americans seem so friendly. They say hello as you walk by; they ask about how you are doing...yet, do they take the time to listen to your answers? NO? Just how does one become friends with Americans. First we need to understand the difference between friendliness and friendship.
Friendliness can be seen as an openness, easiness, kindness, warmth and hospitality. Friendship is on a deeper level, there is closeness, familiarity, and an ease of conversing. The white in the circles below represents friendliness and the gray represents friendship.

As you can see in the representation of the “US Culture” there is a large amount of friendliness that one passes through before becoming a friend with most Americans. You can think of it as peeling away layers of an onion, except in this case the layers are that of friendliness. When you look at the representation of the “Other Cultures” you can see that there are much fewer layers of friendliness that one must go through in order to become friends. You are likely to feel these differences, sometimes be confused by them and find it difficult to understand. The first step is going up to an American and saying hello.

(Model borrowed from Dr. David D. Horner, Director Emeritus, Michigan State University)
INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONALITY ORGANIZATIONS AT UNO

African Students Organization
nobialko@uno.edu

Chakra Indian Students Association
chakra.uno@gmail.com

Chinese Students and Scholars Association
kxing@uno.edu
www.orleansren.com

International Student Organization
iso@uno.edu
http://iso.uno.edu/

Latin American Student Association (LASA)
jamarti4@uno.edu

Muslim Student Association
msa@uno.edu

Nepalese Students Association
NepaleseStudentAssociationofNewOrleans@uno.edu

Pakistan Students Association
sakram@uno.edu

Taiwanese Students Association
kwu1@uno.edu
http://orgs.uno.edu/tsa/

Vietnamese American Student Association (VASA)
altran3@uno.edu

NOTES:
If there is no website listed, please check with OISS for more information or with the Student Involvement and Leadership Office in MH 159, or by calling 280.6349.

If you do not see an organization here and you would like to create a new one, please visit the Student Involvement and Leadership Office in MH 159.

INTERNATIONAL NIGHT 2013
SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2013

HOLD this date in your calendars! Each year the International Student Organization (ISO) organizes the International Night, which is a festival of cultures.

The first 2 hours consist of a catered meal from local ethnic restaurants and exhibits where different cultures and groups have elaborate displays of items that are important to them and their culture.

The second 2 hours consists of performances and a wonderful international fashion show!

This is the perfect time to wear traditional clothing from your home country. In fact we strongly encourage you to do so...therefore we suggest that you start thinking about having your family send something over now (if you did not bring a traditional dress/clothing) instead of waiting until March.

This event is one of the largest events on campus every year, with over 700 people attending. If you do not participate in the program, please plan on attending!
How do I find my Academic Advisor?

SUGGESTED COURSES WHILE AT UNO

**UNIV 1001: University Success.** This class will help you become familiar with the US educational system, give you study tools, and other valuable information to help make your student career at UNO a very successful one.

**ANTH 1030: America As a Foreign Culture.** This course has both US and international students enrolled in it. Some of the topics include: What does it mean to be an American, an analysis of American values, history of ethnic groups in the US, concept of national character, multiculturalism and its meanings as well as many other topics. Students learn a lot about their own culture as well as the US culture.

NINE TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

9. Take advantage of opportunities to interact with your UNO classmates from around the world and learn about their cultures and perspectives.

8. Join a student organization, play an intramural sport, and/or find an on-campus job.

7. Take a chance and introduce yourself to someone who might become a new friend.

6. Ask for help when you need it.

5. Use tutoring services that the university offers.

4. Sit near the front of the class.

3. Attend professors’ office hours.

2. Do not procrastinate.

1. BALANCE – your study, work, fitness and play time.
SELECTED UNO SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

There are many services available at UNO. The ones listed here are just a few of services you can utilize. Please consult the UNO Student Handbook for a more detailed listing of Services.

http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu

The Learning Resource Center—Liberal Arts Building, Room 334 (280.7054)

The mission of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) is to help UNO students succeed. The LRC offers many different services including: the Writing Center, Math Tutor Center, Other Tutoring services (biology, chemistry, physics, etc), a computer lab, a media library and peer educators. Most of the Learning Resource Center is located in the Liberal Arts Building with the exception of the Math Tutor Center which is located in Math Building, Room 107 (280-1168). You can look at their website for more information: http://lrc.uno.edu.

Counseling and Career Center—Human Performance Center, Room 112 (280.6683)

Students studying in the US for the first time often experience temporary feelings of loneliness, anxiety, or depression. This office provides help for students who are experiencing these personal problems and need to regain their confidence. There is no fee for the first session, and fees for the following appointments are determined on a sliding scale so as to be affordable for students. To help with more general coping problems, Counseling Services offers workshops on time management, stress management, handling anger, and other such topics throughout the semester. Students can also take advantage of career counseling through this office. Trained counselors can help you explore career options and help you find the career path that makes the best use of your particular skills.

The Women’s Center—201 Library (280.7285)

The Women’s Center provides special resources on women’s issues and offers a rich schedule of activities throughout the semester, including book discussions, workshops, readings, support groups, and guest speakers. The Women’s Center also provides a relaxed setting where students can meet one another. Watch for the Women’s Center monthly calendar which is regular posted on campus bulletin boards.

Computer Labs and E-mail Accounts

When you register and pay your fees, you automatically receive an e-mail account. To gain access to your computer and e-mail call 280.4357 or bring a picture ID to the Help Desk in the Computer Center. Computer labs with a total of more than 200 computers are available to students. The computer labs can be found in Kirschman Hall (room 208), the University Computing Center (room 101), Liberal Arts (room 334), and the first floor of the Library. Check the Class Schedule Bulletin, for the hours of operation. (The procedures are different for Faculty/Staff.)

The Driftwood

Driftwood, the student-run university newspaper, appears every Tuesday (except for weeks with holidays), and is distributed free at various locations around campus. The paper is a forum for students to express their concern about campus matters, and every issue contains campus news, sports and entertainment sections and an events calendar.
HELPFUL WEBSITES

UNO:
OISS – http://oiss.uno.edu
Academic Calendar - http://registrar.uno.edu/bulletin/importantdates/index.cfm
Division of International Education- http://inst.uno.edu/
Intensive English Language Program- http://ielp.uno.edu/
Registrar’s Office – www.registrar.uno.edu/
Student Affairs - www.studentaffairs.uno.edu /
Student Health Services - http://studenthealth.uno.edu/
Student Housing - http://housing.uno.edu/
UNO Admissions- www.uno.edu/admissions/Admissions.aspx
UNO Athletics - www.unoprivateers.com
UNO Student Government- www.sg.uno.edu/

New Orleans:
www.nola.com www.neworleans.com
http://artsneworleans.org/

Audubon Nature Institute - www.auduboninstitute.org/

National WW II Museum - www.ddaymuseum.org
New Orleans Museum of Art - www.noma.org
Ogden Museum of Southern Art - www.ogdenmuseum.org

Immigration and other federal websites:
Department of State – www.state.gov
Department of State: Consular Affairs – www.travel.state.gov
“J” Visa Program - http://j1visa.state.gov/
Visitor/Tourist Visas http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1265.htm
Foreign Embassies of Washington DC http://www.embassy.org/

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

OFFICE: PHONE:
Admissions Office 280.6595
Bursar’s Office 280.6489
Campus Dining 280.6370
Campus Police 280.6666
Housing—Pontchartrain Hall 280.6402
Housing—Privateer Place 282.5670
Human Resources—Benefits 280.3178
Intensive English Language Program 280.5530
Mental Health & Career Counseling 280.6683
Registrar’s Office 280.6216
Student Affairs 280.6222
Student Government 280.6229
Student Involvement and Leadership 280.6349

REMEMBER: To telephone a UNO number from on-campus, dial 3 and then the last four digits of the phone number.
U.S. HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

The federal government has designated several days each year as national holidays. On these days, governmental offices and most businesses, banks and schools are closed. Most stores are closed on Christmas, New Year’s Day and Thanksgiving. Special commemorative days, such as Mardi Gras, Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day and Halloween are not legal holidays, but are celebrated with special customs. The following are some of the holidays many Americans celebrate.

- New Year’s Day (January 1) — the celebration of the arrival of the New Year. It is customary to make a New Year’s resolution, which is a promise to quit a bad habit or to do something good during the coming year.
- Chinese New Year (date varies) - Of all the traditional Chinese festivals, the new Year was perhaps the most elaborate, colorful, and important. This is a time for the Chinese to congratulate each other and themselves on having passed through another year, a time to finish out the old, and to welcome in the new year.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (January 15) — official holiday since 1986 honoring the American civil rights leader who sought to secure equal rights for all Americans and won the Nobel Peace Prize.
- President’s Day (February) — a holiday honoring two of America’s most beloved presidents, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.
- Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) — a holiday that is not celebrated widely throughout the US, but is New Orleans’ biggest celebration. The Mardi Gras season begins 12 days after Christmas and continues for several weeks. Mardi Gras day is always the day before Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, and is a day for parties, parades, balls and celebrations of all kinds.
- Saint Valentine’s Day (February 14) — not a holiday, but a special day for the celebration of friendships and love. It is customary to send cards, candy and flowers to one’s spouse or close friends.
- Saint Patrick’s Day (March 17) — not a holiday, but an occasion to honor the patron saint of Ireland and America’s Irish heritage. Some people wear a green article of clothing on this day, and restaurants may serve green food and drinks.
- Easter (March or April) — a religious holiday observed by Christians, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In addition, this celebration is a special occasion for children.
- Memorial Day (last Monday of May) — a day to honor Americans who died in military service to their country.
- Independence Day (July 4) — a holiday to celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Americans celebrate this occasion by having picnics, parades and parties. In the evening, there is usually a free public fireworks display on the Mississippi River.
- Labor Day (first Monday of September) — a day to honor the workers of America. Picnics in public parks are popular on this day.

- Halloween (October 31) — not a holiday, but a festival of Scottish-Irish origin. Traditional activities include attending parties while dressed in costumes, carving pumpkins, and telling ghost stories. In the evening, children go from door to door for “trick or treat”; you are expected to give them candy (the treat) or they may play a “trick” on you.

- Diwali is a five day Hindu festival. Diwali means "rows of lighted lamps" and the celebration is often referred to as the Festival of Lights. During this time, homes are thoroughly cleaned and windows are opened to welcome Lakshmi, goddess of wealth. Candles and lamps are lit as a greeting to Laksmsmi. Gifts are exchanged and festive meals are prepared during Diwali. The celebration means as much to Hindus as Christmas does to Christians.

- Ramadan—Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar. It is during this month that Muslims observe the Fast of Ramadan. Lasting for the entire month, Muslims fast during the daylight hours and in the evening eat small meals and visit with friends and family. It is a time of worship and contemplation, a time to strengthen family and community ties. At the end of Ramadan is a huge feast and party called Eid-al-Fitr.

- Chanukah—The eight-day Festival of Lights commemorates the Maccabees' victory over the oppressive Syrian king, and the miracle that occurred after the Jews regained their temple. The victors found enough purified oil to keep the temple's candles burning for only one day. But the oil lasted for eight days, allowing them to purify more.

- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday of November) — a traditional holiday that began when the first American settlers, the Pilgrims, gave thanks for a bountiful harvest. Americans celebrate this day by preparing a special meal which usually includes turkey and dressing, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie.

- Kwanzaa (December 26 to January 1) - Kwanzaa (Quansa) is a holiday celebrated by many African-Americans. Unlike most holidays, Kwanza has neither religious nor political origins. Rather, it was the invention of one man, Dr. Maulana Karenga of Los Angeles, who saw it as a way for African-Americans to reaffirm their ancestors and their culture. The celebration focuses on traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce and self-improvement.

- Christmas (December 25) — a Christian holiday which celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. Through time, this has become a more secular holiday. Traditional activities include singing Christmas carols, decorating Christmas trees, sending cards and giving gifts. Children are told that Santa Claus will bring them gifts if they have been good.