UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

international student
welcome guide

2015/16
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The MU International Center is located in N52 Memorial Union on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia, Mo. The center houses the study abroad staff and international student and scholar services staff. As a center, we work together to coordinate, support and promote the internationalization of MU, which includes providing support services to international students coming to MU.

For questions about your F-1 or J-1 immigration status, you should speak with an international student adviser. You should make an appointment or come to walk-in advising:

- 10 a.m.-noon and 1:30-3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

Locations and hours for walk-ins are subject to change. Check international.missouri.edu for updated schedules.

N52 Memorial Union
Columbia, MO 65211
phone: +1 573-882-6007
e-mail: international@missouri.edu
international.missouri.edu

Fall semester 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes begin</td>
<td>Monday, Aug. 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor day holiday (no classes)</td>
<td>Monday, Sept. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving recess</td>
<td>Nov. 21–29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classwork ends</td>
<td>Thursday, Dec. 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading day</td>
<td>Friday, Dec. 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examinations begin</td>
<td>Monday, Dec. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall semester ends</td>
<td>Friday, Dec. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencement</td>
<td>Dec. 18–19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spring semester 2016

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes begin</td>
<td>Tuesday, Jan. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring recess</td>
<td>March 26–April 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classwork ends</td>
<td>Thursday, May 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading day</td>
<td>Friday, May 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examinations begin</td>
<td>Monday, May 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring semester ends</td>
<td>Friday, May 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencement</td>
<td>May 13–15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

provost.missouri.edu/academic-calendar/2015-16.php
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful contacts</th>
<th>+1 573-882-7786 admissions.missouri.edu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Admissions</td>
<td>+1 573-882-6311 gradschool.missouri.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Research and Graduate Studies</td>
<td>+1 573-882-7275 reslife.missouri.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Life</td>
<td>+1 573-882-3097 cashiers.missouri.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Cashiers</td>
<td>+1 573-882-7881 registrar.missouri.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Registrar</td>
<td>+1 573-882-2121 missouri.edu/directories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency numbers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police/fire/ambulance emergencies</td>
<td>911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poison Control Center</td>
<td>+1 800-222-1222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU Police Department</td>
<td>+1 573-882-7201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Police Department</td>
<td>+1 573-442-6131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Missouri crisis line</td>
<td>+1 888-761-4357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Hospital and Clinic</td>
<td>+1 573-882-4141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU Student Health Center</td>
<td>+1 573-882-7481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU Counseling Center</td>
<td>+1 573-882-6606</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The state of Missouri is located in a region of the United States known as the Midwest. The Gateway Arch, located in St. Louis on the state’s eastern border, is often referred to as the “Gateway to the West.” Eight states border Missouri, making it the second most neighborly state in the U.S. behind Tennessee.

Missouri is home to two professional baseball teams and two professional football teams, as well as the famous Anheuser-Busch Brewery, which is the largest in the country.

- Nickname: The Show-Me State
- Capital: Jefferson City
- Current governor: Jay Nixon
- Population: 6,010,688
- Size: 69,700 square miles (180,500 square kilometers)
- Population density: 33.13 inhabitants/square kilometer
- Largest cities: Kansas City (463,202), St. Louis (318,069), Springfield (106,660), Independence (117,213), Columbia (110,438)
- Climate information: climate.missouri.edu

For information about popular Missouri cities, go to:
- explorestlouis.com
- visitjeffersoncity.com
- visitkc.com
Columbia

Columbia is located about halfway between St. Louis and Kansas City (about 125 miles from each). For more information about Columbia, go to:

- City of Columbia: gocolumbiamo.com
- Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau: visitcolumbiamo.com

How to get to Columbia

Note: When making your travel arrangements, remember that students on F and J visas can arrive in the U.S. up to 30 days before the program start date on the certificate of eligibility. You must arrive at MU before orientation. Also, please keep in mind that most offices at MU (and some off-campus apartment offices) are closed on Saturdays and Sundays, and after 5 p.m. on weekdays.

MO-X shuttle service

MO-X is an excellent ground-transportation service that provides door-to-door transportation to Columbia from the Kansas City (MCI) and St. Louis (STL) airports for about $45-$50. For exact prices, schedules and reservation information, call +1-573-256-1991, fax +1 573-256-1992 or go to moexpress.com.

To use the door-to-door service, simply provide the address of your residence hall or apartment in Columbia. This service simplifies your arrival by dropping you off at your desired location. Please note: If you do not receive a confirmation email from MO-X, your payment has not be processed and your reservation is incomplete.

Connecting flights

You can arrange for a connecting flight directly to the Columbia Regional Airport. For details on flight information, go to flymidmo.com. The airport is about a 20-minute drive from campus and taxi services are available, though you may need to call one from the airport upon arrival. Tiger Taxi is a reputable taxi service, and can be reached at +1 573-445-2551.
If, for any reason, you need to book a hotel in St. Louis or Kansas City, you are responsible for making the arrangements.

Near the Lambert-St. Louis International Airport:

- **Ramada Inn**  (4.2 km from airport, shuttle service)
  +1 314-731-7700  about $50/night
- **Hilton**  (0.3 km from airport, shuttle service)
  +1 314-426-5500  about $71/night
- **Drury Inn**  (0.3 km from airport, shuttle service)
  +1 314-423-7700  about $84/night

Near the Kansas City International Airport:

- **Marriott**  (0.9 km from airport, shuttle service)
  +1 888-236-2427  about $100/night
- **Microtel**  (3.4 km from airport, shuttle service)
  +1 816-270-1200  about $40/night
- **Clarion Hotel**  (0.3 km from airport, shuttle service)
  +1 816-464-2423  about $79/night

If you need to stay in a hotel in Columbia, please see the Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau website for hotel listings: [visitcolumbiamo.com](http://visitcolumbiamo.com).

- **Tiger Hotel**  +1 573-875-8888
  23 South 8th St. (3 blocks to campus)
  [thetigerhotel.com](http://thetigerhotel.com)
- **The Broadway Hotel**  +1 573-875-7000
  1111 E. Broadway (1 km to campus)
  [thebroadwaycolumbia.com](http://thebroadwaycolumbia.com)
- **Hampton Inn and Suites**  +1 573-214-2222
  1225 Fellows Place (2.1 km to campus)
- **Holiday Inn Express**  +1 573-442-8034
  1402 Cinnamon Hill Lane (4.8 km to campus)
- **Stoney Creek Inn**  +1 573-442-6400
  2601 S. Providence Road (3.5 km to campus)

*Rates vary; contact hotel for current rate.
Pre-departure checklist

- Review your certificate of eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019) for accuracy.
- Pay any necessary visa and SEVIS fees.
- Check that your passport is valid at least six months into the future.
- Apply for a student visa at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

- **Degree-seeking undergraduate students:** Pay the MU enrollment fee.
- Make travel arrangements so that you arrive before orientation.
- Make your housing arrangements.
  - Arrange for temporary housing.
  - If living on campus, submit the online housing contract to MU Residential Life.
- Review the information for international students on the International Center website (international.missouri.edu/pre-arrival-checklist).
- Obtain your immunization records and bring them with you to MU.
- Learn more about Columbia (international.missouri.edu/come-to-mu/living-in-columbia).
Your certificate of eligibility will be either an I-20 or DS-2019, depending on whether you are coming to the U.S. on an F or J student visa. The “F” and “J” simply refer to different types of visas the U.S. government provides to international students.

An I-20 document is used to apply for a student visa in the F category. A DS-2019 is used to apply for a student visa in the J category. You can find out which document you have by reading the fine print in the bottom-left corner of the first page of the document.

Please review your certificate of eligibility to ensure that the information is correct and complete by using the guidelines below. If information needs to be changed or added, please contact the MU office that issued your document.

- Undergraduate students: isss@missouri.edu or +1 573-882-6007
- Graduate students with an I-20: gradadmissions@missouri.edu or +1 573-882-6311
- Graduate students with a DS-2019: isss@missouri.edu or +1 573-882-6007

If you have an I-20, please review the following fields:

- Personal information (should match your passport)
  - Name: Last/family, first/given, middle
  - Country of birth
  - Country of citizenship
  - Date of birth
- Level of education
  - The degree you plan to earn while at MU (e.g., bachelor’s, master’s or doctorate)
- Course of study
  - Field of study
  - Date when you should arrive at MU (you may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to this date)
- Source of funding
  - Should be the same source as indicated in your MU admissions materials
DS-2019  If you have a DS-2019, please review the following fields:

- Personal information (should match your passport)
  - Name: Last/family, first/given, middle
  - Country of birth
  - Country of citizenship
  - Date of birth

- Time period
  - Start date (you may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to this date)

- Exchange visa category
  - Should say “student,” followed by the degree you plan to earn while at MU (e.g., bachelor’s, master’s or doctorate)
  - Your field of study should be listed under “subject”

- Source of funding
  - Should be the same source as indicated in your MU admissions materials

Dependents  Dependents are family members, such as a spouse or child, who will accompany you to the United States. If you have dependents who will be coming with you, each of those dependents should have his/her own certificate of eligibility. You do not need to pay an additional SEVIS fee for your dependent.

Please contact the International Center immediately if you need a certificate for a dependent who will accompany you. You will be required to show that you have an additional $3,960 U.S. to financially support each dependent.

If you decide that you want your dependent(s) to join you after you arrive at MU, the International Center can give you documents for them at that time.

For more information, go to the International Center website (international.missouri.edu/dependents).
If your certificate of eligibility is correct, immediately make an appointment with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate to apply for your student visa. In some countries, it may take several months to receive a decision on your student visa application. Therefore, we encourage you to start this application process as soon as possible. Know that you may apply for your visa at any time, but in some countries, you will not receive the visa in your passport until four months prior to your program start date.

You should apply at the U.S. embassy or consulate with jurisdiction over your place of permanent residence. Although you may apply at any U.S. consular office, it may be more difficult to qualify for the visa outside your country of permanent residence. For a list of locations of U.S. embassies and consulates, go to usembassy.state.gov.

You should visit the website of the embassy/consulate where you will be applying to get a list of required documents for student visa applicants. You must pay a nonrefundable application fee and submit the following:

■ Online application form DS-160 (some applicants will also be required to submit a form DS-157). All forms must be completed and signed, and can be found at state.gov/m/a/dir/forms. A separate form is needed for children, even if they are included in a parent’s passport. Blank forms are available without charge at all U.S. consular offices and on the visa services website listed above.

■ Passport valid for travel to the U.S. and with a validity date at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the United States. If more than one person is included in your passport, each person desiring a visa must complete an application.

■ One 2x2 inch photograph for each applicant, showing the full face and against a light background.

■ Your I-20 (F applicants) or DS-2019 (J applicants).

■ Receipts showing payment of visa application and SEVIS fee.

■ Evidence of sufficient funding to cover your period of intended study.

U.S. student visa* Required documentation
You must establish to the satisfaction of the consular officer that you have binding ties to a residence in a foreign country, which you have no intention of abandoning, and that you will depart the U.S. when you have completed your studies. It is impossible to specify the exact form of that evidence since applicants’ circumstances vary greatly.

You are also advised to think about and articulate how your chosen program of study in the U.S. fits into your academic and career plans in your home country.

In addition to a visa processing fee, you will be charged a SEVIS fee. SEVIS stands for Student Exchange Visitor Information System and is the system that creates your I-20 or DS-2019. A fee is required by this system, and fee procedures may vary by country. For more information about the SEVIS fee, go to [ice.gov/sevis/i901](http://ice.gov/sevis/i901).

*Note: The visa application process may vary by country. Contact your local U.S. embassy or consulate for specific instructions on applying for a visa in your home country. For a list of U.S. embassies and consulates, go to [usembassy.state.gov](http://usembassy.state.gov).

The U.S. Department of State has a great website with a lot of useful information for international students. Go to [educationusa.state.gov](http://educationusa.state.gov) to find out more about:

- Applying for the student visa
- Financial aid resources
- Definitions and helpful terms
- Living in the U.S. (social customs and more)
F and J student visa holders may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the program start date listed on their certificates of eligibility. All students must arrive prior to the mandatory international student orientation. Please notify the International Center via email (isss@missouri.edu) as soon as possible if you will not be able to enter the U.S. in time to attend the orientation because of visa processing delays.

When you arrive in the U.S., an officer from Customs and Border Protection will review your documents at the port of entry before you are admitted to the country. Please have the following documents ready for the CBP officer to review:

- **Passport** – Biographical booklet issued by a national government to its citizens to allow for travel to other countries and return to their home countries. It is important that you make sure your passport is valid for at least six months beyond your intended period of stay.
  - The CBP officer in the U.S. will review your passport and student visa. S/he will then stamp your passport to indicate the date and place you arrived in the U.S.

- **Certificate of eligibility** (I-20 or DS-2019)
  - The CBP officer will stamp and make a notation on this document as well.
  - You must show the certificate of eligibility for the school you plan to attend. If you applied to multiple schools in the U.S., you must show the I-20/DS-2019 that lists the school you will actually attend.

Please know that the CBP has the authority to deny admission into the United States. If you have difficulties crossing the U.S. border, please call the International Center and ask to speak to an adviser.

- 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday: +1 573-882-6007
- All other times: +1 573-882-7201
  
  MU police will connect you with an adviser.
Your I-94 card is your arrival and departure record, which tracks when you enter and leave the United States. If you entered or re-entered the U.S. after May 2013, your I-94 card will be saved as an electronic record. This card can be accessed at cbp.gov/i94.

If you entered or re-entered the U.S. prior to May 2013, you will have a traditional I-94 card. The stamp on the card proves your current immigration status, as well as your legal entry into the United States. It should say F-1 or J-1 depending on your students status. For both F-1 and J-1 students, the card will also say D/S, which stands for duration of status. This means you are permitted to remain in the U.S. until you complete your program as long as you are legally maintaining your status. Every time you exit and re-enter the U.S. in F-1 or J-1 status, you will receive a new I-94 electronic record.

For more information about what to expect at the border, go to cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/study_exchange/exchange_arrivals.xml.

Note: You might have your fingerprints taken at the port of entry. Also, entry procedures are different for citizens of Canada.

Transferring to MU?

This information applies only to students currently attending another U.S. institution:

You must notify your current school that you have decided to attend MU. Your immigration record will then be transferred electronically via SEVIS to MU. When you check in at the International Center during orientation, please inform the international student adviser that you are a transfer student.

Please know that you must check in at the International Center within 15 days of orientation to complete the transfer process. After you check in, the International Center will print a new continued-attendance I-20/DS-2019 for you noting that your transfer has been completed.

Note: The International Center will not issue a transfer-pending I-20 for you unless you are traveling.
You must initially attend the school whose I-20/DS-2019 you used in applying for your student visa. Once at school, you must register full time for the fall and spring semesters. Undergraduate students must register for a minimum of 12 credit hours; graduate students must register for a minimum of nine credit hours (unless you have an assistantship). Enrollment guidelines will be reviewed in more detail during orientation.

You will need a Social Security card to work in the United States. Watch for more information during orientation.

**On campus** – International students are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week on campus while school is in session. During official school breaks, students are allowed to work more than 20 hours per week on campus. J-1 students must have written permission from the International Center to accept on-campus employment.

**Off campus** – Under certain circumstances, off-campus employment may be authorized. You must talk with an international student adviser to find out if you qualify.

Upon completion of studies, you may choose one of the following options:

- Continue your studies at MU or a different school for another degree or program. You will need to have your I-20/DS-2019 updated to reflect these changes.
- Apply for employment authorization through optional practical training (F students) or academic training (J students).
- Take up to 30 days (J students) or 60 days (F students) to leave the U.S.

**Within the U.S.** – You may travel within the U.S. as long as you maintain lawful F or J status and have a valid passport, I-20/DS-2019 and I-94 in your possession.

**Outside the U.S.** – You may re-enter the U.S. as long as you have a valid passport, F or J visa, financial documents and I-20/DS-2019 that is endorsed for re-entry by an international student adviser.
SSC 1150: Learning Strategies for International Students

a course for non-resident international students in their first semester at MU

featured topics include:

- culture shock
- campus resources
- writing an academic paper
- note- and test-taking strategies
- time management
- American culture
- academic expectations and classroom culture
- cultural differences and stereotypes

Cultural excursions for international students

Explore your new home state as you learn about Missouri culture and history on excursions with the International Center.
FULLY FURNISHED AND ONLY ONE BLOCK FROM CAMPUS!

DISTRICT FLATS OFFERS A STUDY ROOM, GAME ROOM, FITNESS CENTER, YOGA STUDIO, CYBER CAFE AND MUCH MORE! ROOMMATE MATCHING AVAILABLE.

CALL TODAY FOR MORE INFORMATION!

DISTRICTFLATSCOLUMBIA.COM  573-206-3487 | Info@DistrictFlatsColumbia.com
WALK TO CLASS & SHOPS
BUS TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE
2, 3, & 4 BEDROOM UNITS AVAILABLE
ROOMMATE MATCHING AVAILABLE
ONE PAYMENT FOR RENT, FURNITURE & UTILITIES
MANY LOCATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM

573.815.7361 @BROOKSIDEMIZZOU
WWW.BROOKSL.DE/INTERNATIONAL
**Finances**  
We recommend that you carry a limited amount of cash in U.S. dollars with you when you arrive. Most students find that carrying a combination of cash (about $300) and a credit card (mostly for emergencies) is most helpful. A representative from a local bank will be at orientation to help you set up a bank account in Columbia, if necessary. Please remember that if you are planning to receive funding from a graduate assistantship, your first check may not be available for a month or so. For more information about expenses and banking options, go to [international.missouri.edu/money](http://international.missouri.edu/money).

**Check-in and orientation**  
The International Center provides an orientation to give new international students essential information regarding their stay at MU. You are required to attend an immigration check-in session at the International Center and attend International Student Welcome.

**Check-in**  
If you arrive in Columbia before orientation, you may check in at the International Center early. Please see our online schedule for check-in dates and times specific to the semester you will be beginning your studies at MU ([international.missouri.edu/iso](http://international.missouri.edu/iso)).

If you won’t arrive in Columbia early, plan to check in during orientation. When you check in, you will need:

- Passport
- Visa
- I-20/DS-2019
- I-94 (can be printed at [cbp.gov/i94](http://cbp.gov/i94))
- Admission letter

In addition, you will complete a check-in form. You will be asked to provide the name, address and phone number of someone in your home country or the U.S. whom we may notify in case of an emergency.
Orientation for new international students will be:

**Fall semester 2015**
- Aug. 17–18, 2015
- Memorial Union

**Spring semester 2016**
- Jan. 11–12, 2016
- Memorial Union

A detailed orientation schedule will be posted on the International Center website ([international.missouri.edu/welcome](http://international.missouri.edu/welcome)) when it is available. If you are unable to attend orientation because of visa delays, please contact the International Center about late check-ins and the make-up orientation. **Please note that you must attend an orientation session.**

All new, degree-seeking international undergraduate students are required to take the MU English language exam before registering for classes. This is a placement test for English courses only and has no affect on your admission or grades. You must sign up for the exam at international orientation or you may go to the ELSP Office in 208 McReynolds Hall. For further information, please contact ELSP at +1 573-882-7523 or by email at demians@missouri.edu.

All new, degree-seeking international undergraduate students who plan to take a math department course at the level of math 1500 or below are required to take the ALEKS exam before registering for classes. (Note that statistics courses are not offered by the math department.) The test is not given for a grade, but will help determine which math class you should register for first. Before you arrive at MU, take the ALEKS exam online ([mathplacement.missouri.edu/takeALEKSexam.html](http://mathplacement.missouri.edu/takeALEKSexam.html)). Once you arrive, you also have the option to take the proctored ALEKS exam if you would like to test out of college algebra. (You should not register for the proctored ALEKS exam until you have spoken with your academic adviser.) General information about the exam and who needs to take it can be found at [mathplacement.missouri.edu](http://mathplacement.missouri.edu).
New international graduate students who have a teaching assistantship in their first semester at MU are required to attend the orientation for new international teaching assistants. For more information about the program, go to gradschool.missouri.edu/student-development/college-teaching/international-teaching-assistants.

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies may offer orientation events in the week before the semester begins. Many departments also offer departmental orientations. You are encouraged to attend both departmental and graduate studies orientations. For more information, check with your department or go to gradstudies.missouri.edu.

Sometimes, international student organizations help to coordinate rides for new students. Additionally, if you need help getting settled in Columbia, consider contacting one of MU’s student organizations directly for more information. A list of some of the cultural organizations on campus can be found on the International Center website (international.missouri.edu/organizations).

If you would like to live on campus, you must apply as soon as possible – the residence halls fill up quickly. For more information about on-campus housing options, go to reslife.missouri.edu.

- On-campus apartments – Available for students who are married, 21+ years old, pursuing a graduate degree or have children. For more information or to submit an application, go to reslife.missouri.edu/apartments.

- It is your responsibility to make housing arrangements either before or after you arrive in Columbia.

For more information about off-campus living, go to offcampus.missouri.edu. To search for an apartment online, go to:
- apartmentfinder.com
- myapartmentmap.com
- mycheapapartments.com
- columbiamo.craigslist.com
Rental prices vary widely in Columbia (approximately $300-$500 per month for shared housing).

Apartments closer to campus are typically more difficult to acquire and often more expensive. Off-campus housing arrangements require cash deposits for rent and utilities, as well as the purchase of some furnishings, linens and cooking utensils.
- Deposits alone can be $400 or more. Living alone is usually more expensive than having roommates.

Remember that the names of all individuals living together should be on the same lease.

Begin looking prior to arrival, because orientation week will be very busy and the most desirable apartments or roommate situations will go quickly.

After you arrive on campus and register for courses, you will need to obtain an MU student ID card. You should go to the ID office, located in the lower level of the bookstore. Be sure to take your passport and any other photo ID with you.

Once you receive your MU ID, keep it with you at all times. You can use your ID for a number of services on campus:

- Borrow books from the library
- Access campus computing facilities
- Pay bills on campus
- Access student health services
- Use the Mizzou Recreation Center
- Purchase student tickets for athletic events
- Participate in university-sponsored events and activities
- Access your residence hall and meal plan
- Purchase materials from the University Bookstore
- Swipe to do laundry in a residence hall

If you lose your ID card, a replacement costs $15. For more information about the student ID, go to doit.missouri.edu/id-cards/student.html.
In order to comply with U.S. immigration regulations, all international students at MU are required to purchase insurance that will provide sufficient medical coverage for hospitalization, surgery or other medical treatments, as well as coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation.

Failure to purchase and maintain adequate insurance coverage is a violation of your legal immigration status and can result in the termination of your student visa.

In order to ensure that students comply with this regulation, MU requires all incoming international students to purchase a mandatory health insurance policy.

One charge for AETNA insurance will be billed directly to your MU student account each semester you enroll in classes.

Regardless of the date you arrive in the U.S., coverage will begin Aug. 1 (fall semester) or Jan. 1 (spring semester). You will receive a brochure with detailed information about the policy and what it covers; please read it carefully.

Updated insurance information is available upon arrival.

For more details about your health insurance, please contact Ashley Holt (holtal@health.missouri.edu) or Brittany Reasons (reasonsb@health.missouri.edu) at the Student Health Center.

For more information about health insurance in general, as well as information about insurance for your dependents and health insurance waivers, go to international.missouri.edu/health.

MU requires all newly enrolled or readmitted students comply with mandatory health requirements. If not completed, your registration will be affected.

**Tuberculosis testing** – All students are screened for TB risk factors. A TB blood test (QuantiFeron-GIT) will be done on students that meet high-risk criteria. Please note that your TB test must be done at MU and you should not receive at live-type vaccines at least one month before arrival (including MMR, varicella and yellow fever) as this will delay the ability to do the TB blood test.
Meningococcal vaccine – Students in on-campus housing (includes all university-owned housing) must either:

1. Show documentation of receiving the meningococcal vaccine, either MenACWY (Menactra, Menevo) or MPSV4 (Menomune). Note: Students who received their first dose before age 16 require a booster (on or after 16th birthday) with a minimum interval of at least eight weeks from the preceding dose.

2. Obtain approval for exemption by submitting Form UM55 for approval (umsystem.edu/media/fa/management/records/forms/other/um55.pdf).

Measles, mumps and rubella – You must show proof of receiving two doses of MMR vaccine. The first dose must have been received at 12 months of age or later. The second dose must have been received at least one month after the first. If you are going to get your second dose, please have it done at least six weeks prior to your arrival at MU, or the Student Health Center may not be able to give you the other immunization tests.

- Alternatively, you can provide written documentation of previous blood test results showing immunity.

Health screening – Attend the health screening during orientation week. Bring copies of all your immunization records and any written documentation of any prior TB test or past treatment for TB disease/infection.

For more information on the MU mandatory health requirements, go to studenthealth.missouri.edu.

- At the beginning of your stay, avoid consuming excessive amounts of fatty, rich or spicy foods.

- Eat balanced meals, drink lots of water and get lots of rest so you will have the energy you need to stay healthy.

- Always limit your alcohol consumption and know your limits. Excessive consumption can impair your judgment and compromise your health and safety. Remember that the legal age to consume alcohol in the U.S. is 21.

- Set up an appointment with the Student Health Center or a local physician to discuss any questions or concerns about your health, including how to obtain medications or prescription drugs.
Paying your MU bill

MU will bill expenses to your student account. Check your email for monthly billing statements. For more information about payment options, go to [cashiers.missouri.edu/payments/options.html](http://cashiers.missouri.edu/payments/options.html).

- **Personal check**: Amount may not exceed the amount due; $20 service fee on any returned checks.

- **Credit card** (MasterCard, American Express, Discover; Visa not accepted): Charge amount may not exceed the amount due and must be made through MU’s third-party vendor, accessible through myZou. A 2.75% service charge will apply.

- **International wire transfer**: MU has partnered with peerTransfer to streamline the tuition payment process for international students. Payment can be made from any country or bank. Payment is almost always accepted in foreign currency, with excellent exchange rates, allowing you to save a significant amount of money. The transfer process can be tracked via a student dashboard, and email confirmation will be sent when payment is received. For more information or to make a payment, go to [missouri.peertracker.com](http://missouri.peertracker.com).

- **E-check**: Payment via direct debit of a U.S.-based bank account.

- **Cash**: Pay at the Office of Cashiers, 15 Jesse Hall.

- **By mail**: Submit payment in the return envelope that accompanies your hard-copy statement or send it to Cashiers Office, University of Missouri, 15 Jesse Hall, Columbia, MO 65211. Do **not** mail cash.
Once you arrive in Columbia, you will have the chance to meet one-on-one with an academic adviser from your department. Undergraduates will take both English and math placement tests to help determine which classes to enroll in for the first semester.

After meeting with your academic adviser, you can register for classes through myZou, the online student information system. You should have received a PawPrint (a username usually consisting of your initials and three random characters) and temporary password in an email from the MU Office of Admissions. When accessing your myZou account for the first time, go to registrar.missouri.edu/registration-adddrop/myzou-first-time.php for more information. Using your PawPrint and password, you can access the myZou system at myzou.missouri.edu.

If you have problems with your PawPrint or password, contact the MU Division of IT at +1 573-882-5000. For more detailed information about the registration process, go to registrar.missouri.edu.
Cell phones

Most U.S. students do not use land line phones. Cell phones are available through a number of carriers in the United States:

- AT&T – att.com
- T-Mobile – t-mobile.com
- U.S. Cellular – uscellular.com
- Verizon Wireless – verizonwireless.com
- Walmart (multiple options) – walmart.com

Depending on the length of your term of study, avoid long-term contracts and look for carriers with pay-as-you-go options that let you choose a price point that will reflect your phone usage. There are also several pre-paid options where you just purchase minutes as you need them.

Online services

Services like Skype allow you to make phone or video calls over the Internet at little or no cost to your family and friends back home. The Internet service on campus allows you to make use of these services 24/7.

The International Center provides limited fax service for international students free of charge for correspondence directly concerning students’ academic issues or visa status.

Personal faxes cannot be sent from the International Center; but domestic and international fax services can be found on campus at the Memorial Union information desk and the Digiprint centers in Ellis Library and the MU Student Center. Fax services are also available at the FedEx Office store in downtown Columbia (25 S 6th St.), but are usually more expensive than the on-campus services.
Greetings

People in the U.S. often greet each other by asking, “How are you?” This is part of the general greeting routine, and they are not expecting an elaborate answer. With new or casual acquaintances, provide a short answer (e.g., “I’m good”) and reciprocate by asking the same question.

Banking

- Look for free checking options (often available to students).
- Visa and MasterCard check/debit cards are accepted in most stores and restaurants (MU Cashiers does not accept Visa).
- With a check/debit card, purchases are deducted from your account balance as they are made.
- Monitor your balance via online banking to avoid overdraft charges.
- Be cautious of ATM fees – many banks will charge you a fee if you withdraw cash from an ATM belonging to another bank.
- Some banks have ATMs nationwide (good for U.S. travel).
- Ask your home bank for U.S. affiliates.

Public transportation

- If you live on campus, you will be within walking distance of downtown Columbia and all campus facilities.
- MU offers a free student shuttle around campus and to a limited selection of shopping areas.
- Several apartment complexes in Columbia offer a free shuttle service to and from campus.
- Columbia Transit buses have multiple stops around campus and the city, and a student pass is available for $100 per semester.
- For information about city bus schedules and rates, go to gocolumbiamo.com/PublicWorks/Transportation.

Post office

- Domestic and international mail can be sent via the U.S. Postal Service from the MU Student Center or the downtown post office (511 E Walnut St.).
- Check with other carriers (e.g., FedEx, UPS, etc.) for rates and delivery times if you are mailing a package that is time-sensitive.
Shopping

On campus
- Mizzou Market has three locations around campus and offers a variety of snack foods and toiletry items.
- University Bookstore, located in the MU Student Center, has a wide variety of items for sale, including textbooks and school supplies, Mizzou-themed clothing and some dorm room basics.

Off campus
- Shops within walking distance of campus sell food, household items and toiletries. For a list, go to international.missouri.edu/stores.
- Several large grocery stores, super-centers and the mall are easily accessible by bus.

Restaurants and tipping
- There are several of restaurants, cafés and bars within walking distance of campus.
- In restaurants or bars, you should leave a tip for your server. The suggested rate is 15 percent for standard service and 20 percent or more for exceptional service.
  - Tipping is usually expected as wages for laborers in the service industry are low.
  - Be sure to check your bill to see whether or not a tip has already been included (look for the word “gratuaty”). In most restaurants, larger parties (usually eight or more people) are automatically charged a standard gratuity. In this case, it is up to you whether to leave an additional tip.
  - If you are using cash, leave the tip on your table in plain sight with some kind of weight to prevent it from falling off the table.
  - If you are paying your bill with a debit or credit card, you may be able to add a tip to the receipt you sign, and it will be added to your payment.

Parks and recreation
- There are several city and state parks in or near Columbia. The city also has a wide network of trails for running or biking. For more information go to gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec or mostateparks.com.
To obtain a U.S. driver’s license, you must pass several tests. You should seriously consider if it will be necessary for you to have a driver’s license, and, in some cases, an international driver’s license may be sufficient. For more information, go to [international.missouri.edu/drivers-license](http://international.missouri.edu/drivers-license).

We encourage you to explore other parts of Missouri and the U.S. during weekends or academic breaks. Be sure to research your intended destination and figure out the best means of transportation to get there. Aside from flying, you might consider taking a bus or train to see more of the American landscape ([amtrak.com](http://amtrak.com); [megabus.com](http://megabus.com); [greyhound.com](http://greyhound.com)).

Important: If you are going to travel outside the U.S., you **must have** a travel signature from an international student adviser. Travel signatures are valid for six months and necessary to re-enter the U.S. on your current visa. You can get a travel signature by making an appointment with an adviser or coming to walk-in advising ([international.missouri.edu/about/advising.php](http://international.missouri.edu/about/advising.php)).
**Useful websites**

**Columbia**
- City of Columbia: [gocolumbiamo.com](http://gocolumbiamo.com)
- Public transportation: [gocolumbiamo.com/PublicWorks/Transportation](http://gocolumbiamo.com/PublicWorks/Transportation)
- MU campus virtual tour: [admissions.missouri.edu/visit/virtual-tours.php](http://admissions.missouri.edu/visit/virtual-tours.php)
- Wellness Resource Center: [wellness.missouri.edu](http://wellness.missouri.edu)
- Domestic Violence Unit: [gocolumbiamo.com/Police/Divisions/dove.php](http://gocolumbiamo.com/Police/Divisions/dove.php)

**Entertainment**
- Campus events: [stufftodo.missouri.edu](http://stufftodo.missouri.edu)
- Cinemas:
  - [ragtagfilm.com](http://ragtagfilm.com)
  - [gohollywood.com](http://gohollywood.com)
- Theater: [eventpros.missouri.edu](http://eventpros.missouri.edu)
- Arts and culture: [mizzouwire.missouri.edu/arts-culture.php](http://mizzouwire.missouri.edu/arts-culture.php)

**Museums**
- MEHA: [discovermeha.com](http://discovermeha.com)
- Art and Archaeology: [maa.missouri.edu](http://maa.missouri.edu)
- Enns Entomology: [museum.insecta.missouri.edu](http://museum.insecta.missouri.edu)
- Anthropology: [anthromuseum.missouri.edu](http://anthromuseum.missouri.edu)

**Shopping**
- Downtown District: [discoverthedistrict.com](http://discoverthedistrict.com)
- Columbia Mall: [visitcolumbiamall.com](http://visitcolumbiamall.com)

**Specialty grocery stores**
- Clover’s Natural Market: [cloversnaturalmarket.com](http://cloversnaturalmarket.com)
- The Root Cellar: [missouribountybox.com](http://missouribountybox.com)
- International food stores: [international.missouri.edu/stores](http://international.missouri.edu/stores)

**Art galleries and studios**
- P.S. Gallery: [perlow-stevensgallery.com](http://perlow-stevensgallery.com)
- Artlandish Gallery: [artlandishgallery.com](http://artlandishgallery.com)
- Columbia Art League: [columbiaartleague.com](http://columbiaartleague.com)
- Orr Street Studios: [orrstreetstudios.com](http://orrstreetstudios.com)
- The Mud Room: [mudroomstudio.com](http://mudroomstudio.com)
For a more detailed and interactive map of the University of Missouri, go to map.missouri.edu.
Get involved in the community

Take advantage of these great International Center programs:

**International Friendship Program**

Want to meet new people and learn more about American culture and the community? Sign up for the International Friendship Program.

New international students or scholars are paired with American students or community members to help welcome them to the United States and help them acclimate to mid-Missouri. Any interested new student or scholar can participate.

Get more information or fill out an application online at [international.missouri.edu/ifp](http://international.missouri.edu/ifp).

**Kaleidoscope**

Kaleidoscope is a community outreach program that sends MU international students to local schools, community groups and events to share their culture with others. Community members and schoolchildren benefit from the exposure to diverse backgrounds and cultures. International students gain valuable experience from interacting with Americans.

For additional information, go to [international.missouri.edu/kaleidoscope](http://international.missouri.edu/kaleidoscope).
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