

NOW THAT YOU'RE ADMITTED

It takes courage, faith and a spirit of adventure to leave friends, family and all that is familiar to begin a new life in a foreign environment. Your decision to apply to UNI was the first step in what will be an incredible journey.

We know that you have many questions and concerns. This booklet is designed to provide you with the information you will need prior to your arrival in Cedar Falls. Once you have arrived on campus, the International Student Orientation will help to integrate you into the campus community.

In today's world, cross-cultural exchange is more important than ever. As an international student, you will have the unique opportunity to act as an ambassador of your culture. If you bring an open mind and a sense of humor, you can have an experience that is rich and meaningful. The International Services staff will be here to help you make the transition to your new environment.

See you soon!

The International Services Staff

International Orientation

The International Student Orientation and Registration Program is designed to assist you in adjusting to UNI. The sessions will help you learn about the university system, become familiar with the campus and provide you with important knowledge and resources that will help you succeed at UNI.

Orientation typically begins the week before school starts each fall semester. A shorter orientation is also offered for the spring semester. Some of the activities and events include:

- A campus tour
- Opening a bank account
- Sessions on:
 - U.S. education system
 - Campus jobs
 - Paying your bill
 - Immigration issues
- Class registration
- Social security card sign-up
- Shopping trip
- Social activities
- An opportunity to get answers to all of your questions!

It is very important that you make arrangements to arrive for orientation. The information provided is vital to your success and happiness at UNI!

Travel to Cedar Falls

UNI is located in Cedar Falls, but you will fly into the Waterloo Municipal Airport (ALO) or the Eastern Iowa Airport (CID) in Cedar Rapids.

Please notify us by mail, e-mail or fax of the exact date and time of your arrival, your carrier and the flight number. You may also telephone the office during regular office hours between 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. local time, leave a message on the answering machine after hours, or call the emergency cell phone. We are happy to assist students on an individual basis who are interested in finding out more about bus, airport shuttle or car transportation to the campus.

Upon arrival on campus, all students must check in and bring their travel documents to the International Services Office. Failure to do so may result in delay of class registration.

VISA Application

Upon receipt of your I-20 or DS-2019 from the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), apply for a United States (U.S.) visa at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate closest to your place of residence. You will need to take with you:

- An I-20 or DS-2019.
- A valid passport.
- Financial documents showing how you will pay for your educational and living expenses for at least one year.

Be prepared to answer questions concerning:

- Your major field of study.
- Sources of money for your studies.
- Your intent to return to your home country after completion of your studies in the U.S.

If Consular Officers find you ineligible for a visa:

- They must return all documents to you.
- They must give you written reasons for the denial.
- You may secure additional documentation as needed, and reapply.

SEVIS

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System is the system used to issue your I-20 or DS-2019 form. It is a large networked system that is also used by the U.S. Consulate to verify visa eligibility, the U.S. immigration officers at your point of entry into the U.S., and by UNI to report your arrival and activity on campus. Your record in SEVIS will remain active during your entire academic career in the U.S.

Arriving in the U.S.

U.S. Immigration officials at the port of entry will make the final determination about your admissibility as a student. Immigration documents you need to enter the U.S.:

- A valid passport.
- A valid F or J VISA stamp in your passport.
- Form I-20 or Form DS-2019.

F-1 VISA HOLDERS

For initial admission, you MUST:

- Show the immigration official the UNI Form I-20 and your passport.
- Attend the school specified on your VISA.

The immigration official should:

- Stamp your Form I-20, and return it to you.
- Give you a stamped or electronic I-94 Departure Record (small white card - or a card like a boarding pass, stapled to your passport when you enter the U.S.).
- Stamp your passport. (If the immigration inspectors in the U.S. forget to stamp your documents, please ask them to do so.)

Immigration procedures to follow when transferring to UNI from another university in the U.S.:

If you travel outside the U.S. before coming to UNI:

- Inform the International Student Advisor at your current school of your intent to transfer to UNI. Your advisor should make the necessary entry into SEVIS.
- Obtain Form I-20 from UNI.
- Be sure that your F-1 visa is valid or obtain a new visa.
- Present your UNI Form I-20 to immigration officials upon reentry to the U.S.
- Upon arrival, bring your stamped UNI I-20, your passport and I-94 card to the International Services Office to be copied.

If you come directly to UNI without leaving the U.S.:

- Bring the UNI I-20, your passport and I-94 card to the International Services Office to be copied.

J-1 VISA HOLDERS

Show the immigration official the DS-2019 and your passport. The immigration official should:

- Stamp your Form DS-2019 and return the official copy to you.
- Give you a stamped or electronic I-94 Arrival/ Departure Record (small white card – or a card like a boarding pass, stapled to your passport when you enter the U.S.).
- Stamp your passport. (If immigration inspectors in the U.S. forget to stamp your documents, please ask them to do so.)

F-1 and J-1 VISA HOLDERS

- Because you plan to study in the U.S., you **SHOULD NOT** enter the country with a B-2 (tourist VISA) unless the tourist VISA has been marked “Prospective Student” by a U.S. consular official. A change from tourist to student status is very difficult to obtain without leaving the U.S. You will not be allowed to begin classes until your change of status has been approved.
- Individuals on tourist VISAS are not permitted to work or hold assistantships at UNI.
- You **SHOULD NOT** enter the U.S. under the VISA Waiver Pilot Program. This program does not permit you to extend your stay in the U.S., change to student status, or work or hold an assistantship at UNI.
- When you complete the I-94, please choose the white I-94 form. Other colors of the same form are not for students or scholars with a visa in their passports.

Money Issues

Financial Aid

UNI offers very limited financial assistance to non-U.S. citizens. Students must be prepared to finance their own education and living costs for the extent of their degree program unless previously arranged scholarships or assistantships have been awarded. Students who are unable to pay their bills will not be able to continue at the university and will need to return home.

Work on Campus

On-campus work is permitted. Departmental jobs (food service, maintenance, etc.) are often available to F or J students if they are self- or family-sponsored and if such employment will not interfere with their ability to carry a full program of study. On-campus work is permitted for a maximum of 20 hours per week while school is in session and full-time during vacation periods.

International Bank Wire Information

In order to wire money accurately to the University of Northern Iowa, you will need to contact your bank with the following information:

Account Name: University of Northern Iowa
Account Number: 2025720961
Bank Name: Wells Fargo Bank Iowa
S.W.I.F.T. B.I.C. address: WFBIUS6S

Please provide your name and UNI student ID number as well.

Any questions, please contact:

Diane Headington
Head Cashier
256 Gilchrist
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0008
Phone: 319-273-2628
Fax: 319-273-2001
E-mail: diane.headington@uni.edu

(To wire money within the United States use the following S.W.I.F.T. routing/ABA number: 073000228)

Expenses Before Classes Begin

Tuition and other university charges will not be due before the start of classes. However, students need to bring money for food, supplies and miscellaneous expenses. Please do not carry large amounts of cash with you or in luggage checked in with the airlines. We recommend the use of traveler's cheques or debit and credit cards for initial expenses until you establish a bank account.

Extra-curricular activities

Your education at UNI begins in the classroom, but we know that your learning doesn't end there. Education comes from many sources. One source that fully complements classroom instruction is your involvement in student organizations.

We have more than 200 active groups on campus at UNI. You might choose to become involved in the International Student Association, the Chinese Students Association, student government or a professional organization such as the American Marketing Association or the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Club. You might choose to join the Ethnic Minority Students Association, the folk dancers, a language club or an art or music group. You could write for the Northern Iowan student newspaper, volunteer to help the campus radio station or join the intramural soccer team. We hope you will make time to join one of the campus organizations; it will enrich your experience at UNI.

Health

Enrollment in the health care plan provided by UNI for international students is mandatory unless you provide proof you have comparable coverage from your sponsor or your home country. Comparable coverage must include benefits for medical evacuation/repatriation and for repatriation of mortal remains. More information about UNI's health care plan can be found at www.chickering.com

Housing

Most likely, one of your primary concerns is housing. Now that you are admitted, it is important to secure your housing arrangements as soon as possible. This will ensure that you have a place to stay when you arrive, since housing cannot be guaranteed without a signed contract.

On-Campus Housing

Living on campus is a great way to speed the process of integration into university life. As you will find in your housing information brochures, there are several on-campus residence halls and meal plans to choose from as well as university apartments for students with dependents, graduate students or students more than 23 years old.

The waiting lists for the University Apartments and ROTH can be long. You should not assume that completing a contract for one of these options guarantees a reservation. To ensure that you have a place to stay initially, you must also complete a contract for a residence hall room.

For more information about housing options, meal plans, prices, and an on-line housing contract, consult the Department of Residence web site at <http://www.uni.edu/dor/>

Off-Campus Housing

Although you may choose to live off-campus, International Services cannot be responsible for arranging off-campus accommodations. If you wish to pursue this option, you will need to make the arrangements on your own. Students can check for available off-campus apartments for rent at <http://www.uni.edu/studentorgs/nisg/housing/>

International Friendship Program

The International Friendship program is an organization of families and individuals from the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area who are interested in getting to know UNI international students. The goal of the program is to promote intercultural exchange, friendship and understanding. Students and families have the opportunity to gain new perspectives on world issues while sharing their different cultures.

The coordinators of the program do their best to match you with a family who shares similar interests and with whom you will have a chance to build a warm and friendly relationship. Various social activities are planned throughout the year. Student participation is optional.

The families and individuals are unpaid volunteers who offer their assistance in the spirit of friendship and human solidarity. If you would like to participate in this program, complete the enclosed application and return it to International Services. Placement is dependent on the number of available volunteers. We may not be able to accommodate requests made after your arrival on campus.

Following are a few more useful tips to think about while you are preparing for your journey to Cedar Falls.

Travel

- Carry your passport and other immigration documents with you at all times. Do not keep them in your checked luggage.
- Leave copies of your travel documents with your family. It will be much easier to replace your passport and visa if they are lost or stolen.
- Place name tags on the inside and outside of your luggage.
- Make a list of the contents of each suitcase and keep it with your documents in case your luggage is lost.
- Carry money **ONLY** in your carry on luggage.
- Choose luggage with sturdy wheels.
- Pack as lightly as possible. Consider whether you could carry it by yourself if you had to.

What to Bring

- Items unique to your culture to decorate your room, to show American friends, or to use in multi-cultural festivals - ethnic costumes, posters, popular music, etc.
- Things that may be difficult to find in the U.S. For example, some spices unique to your culture may be difficult to find here.
- Some money in cash (not more than USD \$100), including some coins.
- Enough money in traveler's checks or bank checks to cover the cost of tuition, room and board, books, health insurance and living expenses for at least one semester.

Other Good Tips

- Give the International Services phone number and address to your family at home.
- Research the weather patterns of Iowa before you come.
- Read about your own native culture, customs and politics to share with new friends.
- Learn about the traditions, opportunities and policies at UNI by browsing the website at www.uni.edu
- Read about American culture and customs before you come. It will increase your understanding and help to reduce your anxiety.
- Do not be discouraged by homesickness or loneliness. These feelings will pass.
- Think of cultural adjustment as an adventure.
- Leave textbooks at home. They add extra weight to your luggage, making travel difficult.

Reminders

- Return your housing contract with the deposit to the Department of Residence as soon as possible. Hotels can cost \$50 to \$70 per night if you have not made housing arrangements prior to your arrival.
- Mail, fax or e-mail your arrival information (date, time, flight number or bus stop) to International Services before you depart from home.
- If you plan to fly, International Services staff can arrange to meet you at the Waterloo Municipal Airport or the Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids. If you fly to another destination, you will be responsible for covering the cost of the bus or shuttle to UNI.

Although we realize that it is impossible to answer/anticipate all questions, we hope that this brochure has provided you with sufficient information to alleviate anxiety and enable you to make informed decisions. The orientation itself is designed to answer specific concerns not addressed here. We want your arrival and adjustment to UNI and the U.S. to be pleasant, and we look forward to meeting you.