

The background is a solid red color. Overlaid on this are several thin, yellow, hand-drawn style circular lines that overlap and swirl around the central text, creating a dynamic, circular frame.

SPRING 2024

**INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS'**

PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE

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REPORTING DATE: JANUARY 7

You will need to arrive in Ames, Iowa by your mandatory reporting date of January 7, 2024.

If you have an emergency and are unable to arrive in Ames by January 7 or you would like to defer your admission to a future semester, you must contact the Office of Admissions at admissions@iastate.edu to receive a late arrival letter or an updated I-20. Please note that arriving late will impact your course availability and academic success.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- **University Holiday, Office Closed: Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26**
- **University Holiday, Office Closed: Monday, January 1**
- **University Holiday, Office Closed: Monday, January 15**
- **Spring Semester Begins: Tuesday, January 16**
- **Spring Break: Monday - Friday, March 11 - 15**
- **Spring Semester Ends: Friday, May 10**

LOOKING FORWARD TO SPRING

- **Spring 2024 International Orientation: January 7**
- **Destination Iowa State: January 12**

Destination Iowa State (DIS) is an in-person welcome program designed to ease the transition to college for all new Iowa State students, both international and domestic. During the program, you will build new friendships, learn how to navigate campus, and kick-off the start of the semester in a fun way.

For more information regarding the spring Orientation schedule, please visit our website: <https://isso.dso.iastate.edu/new-student-orientation/spring-orientation>

IMPORTANT PRE-ARRIVAL TASKS



STEP 1

Have you accepted your Offer of Admission?

To gain access to important online orientation materials, including course registration, you need to accept your offer of admission.

If you haven't yet accepted your offer, please visit the [Office of Admission](#) website to do so.

STEP 2

Have you received your University ID Number and signed up for your NetID?

After receiving admission to the university, you will receive your 9-digit university ID number from the Office of Admissions. Be sure to keep this number on hand, as it will be used throughout your arrival process.

Your NetID is attached to your university email and is also used to log in to university accounts. Register for your NetID [here](#).

STEP 3

Have you received your form I-20?

By this point you should have received your I-20 form from your Admissions Representative.

If you have not yet received your initial I-20, please contact [Admissions](#) to see if any additional steps need to be taken.

STEP 4

Have you paid the SEVIS Fee?

Before you can apply for visa or enter the U.S., you will need to pay the SEVIS Fee, also known as the I-901 Fee.

To pay this fee please visit www.fmjfee.com.

After paying the fee, be sure to print out your receipt. You will need the receipt when applying for your visa.

If you have any questions regarding your SEVIS Fee, please refer to the [SEVIS Fee FAQ](#) or call 703-603-3400 for assistance.

Once your SEVIS Fee is paid, you are ready to proceed to step 5.

STEP 5

Applying for your Student Visa*

After completing the above steps, you are ready to begin the visa application process. Please follow the [U.S. Embassy/Consulate](#) instructions to set up your visa appointment. You can also reference the guide that was provided by Admissions along with your form I-20.

It is best to apply for your visa as early as possible to ensure that you receive your visa and arrive on time for your first semester at Iowa State.

** Students with a Canadian or Bermudian passport do not need to apply for a visa.*

STEP 6

Register for Orientation

To track important pre-arrival tasks, as well as register for orientation, please log into [Cystart](#) the New and Former Students portal. You will need to request a Limited Services Pin in order to log in. Once in Cystart, and click the Iowa State International Student Pre-Arrival Information link on your home page.

If you experience any difficulties logging in, please contact isorient@iastate.edu and we will assist you.



GETTING FROM THE DES MOINES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO AMES

ISSO collaborates with **Executive Express**, a local car service company, to provide all new international students a **FREE** shuttle service from the Des Moines International Airport to Ames, Iowa.

Each student can transport two pieces of luggage and one lap item when traveling with Executive Express. Students will be charged \$15 per bag for each additional piece of luggage. This free ride from Executive Express is only available to new ISU international students, not their family members or returning ISU students.

Additional transportation services such as [Uber](#) and [Lyft](#) are available at your own personal expense.

TO BOOK YOUR SHUTTLE

- Go to www.executiveexpress.biz to make a reservation.
- In the reservation screen choose “Log In” in the upper right-hand corner.
The username: isorient@iastate.edu
Password: isucyclone (all lowercase)
- After you are logged in, click on the three lines in the upper left-hand corner and choose “New Reservation”
- Enter your pick-up date and the pick-up time. This should be a half hour after your arrival time. You will receive your shuttle time in a separate email. **Your airport code is DSM.**
- Your drop-off location is where you will be staying once you reach Ames. If you are able, enter your permanent housing arrangements.
- For Vehicle information choose Shuttle/DO or Any Vehicle.
- Enter your first name, last name, cell phone number, and email address. In the additional information field enter your University ID number.
- Enter your flight information.
- Be sure “Direct Bill/Invoice” is selected for payment method and click “Book Now”.

Keep your reservation/confirmation number. Other emails will follow providing your confirmation and shuttle time.

Note: At times through this booking process, you will see the cost of your trip. You will not be charged this amount. Through our arrangement with Executive Express, ISSO is billed directly.

If you have any questions, please contact isorient@iastate.edu.



HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS



It is important to have your living accommodations arranged before arriving in Ames.

ON CAMPUS HOUSING

Iowa State has a variety of on campus housing options for students.

Signing up to live on campus is easy! Your housing assignment is based off the date you submit your housing contract, not the date you accept your offer of admission. There's no reason to wait!

You can make adjustments to your contract later, for example, adding a roommate or learning community. Follow the steps below and submit your housing contract!

1. Accept your offer of admission to Iowa State.
2. Log in to the [Housing Portal](#) to submit your contract. As part of this process, you will choose preferences (aka: places you'd want to live). Check out housing options [here](#). Not sure where you want to live? It's okay! You can adjust your preferences, add roommates or choose [learning communities](#) later.
3. Submit your contract and you're set!

New student assignments are released beginning in late May.

OFF CAMPUS HOUSING

Ames has a variety of rental properties that exist off campus. If you are renting off campus only use reputable rental sites and avoid establishing rentals through sites like Facebook Marketplace.

The City of Ames website offers a [Rent Smart Guide](#) for individuals renting in Ames. It offers an overview of what renting in the city looks like and city policies regarding rentals.

TEMPORARY HOUSING

ISSO recommends that students in need of temporary housing upon their arrival to Ames make reservations at the Gateway Hotel.

To Make a Reservation:

- Call the Gateway Hotel at 515-292-8600
- Use the code "International Students and Scholars Office" to get the reduced rate

Currently the ISSO reduced rate for the Gateway is \$99 per night.

Reservations are dependent on hotel availability. The "International Students and Scholars Office" reduced rate does not apply during ISU home football games and graduation.

Alternative and independent arrangements can be made through Airbnb or hotels in Ames.

COURSE REGISTRATION



COMPLETE THE INTRODUCTION TO IOWA STATE COURSE

In this online course, you will learn about Iowa State's campus, essential resources, and gain access to course registration for your first semester of classes. You must complete the course by passing the quiz at the end with at least 70%. You will not be able to meet with your academic advisor and register for courses until you have passed this course.

Before you begin:

- Have your NetID and password ready! For password assistance, please contact the Solution Center at 515-294-4000.
- If you need to change your major, please update your student information before you begin the course.
- The course can be accessed on any computer or mobile device with access to the internet.
- The course takes about 2 hours to complete. You can pause and resume where you left off at any time.
- You can retake the final quiz multiple times, until you get at least 70% correct.
- A link to the course will be sent to you by email on October 18.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

After you have completed the course, your college will contact you to help you register for classes. Each college is different, so make sure to pay attention to the instructions as provided in the course.

Please Note: You must complete the [ALEKS Math Placement](#) as provided in the course.

INTERNATIONAL FIRST YEAR SEMINAR: UST 110

When you connect with your academic advisor, remember to register for the International First Year Seminar (IFYS) course for the Spring 2024 semester. This course is required for you to graduate from Iowa State. IFYS focuses on helping new international students transition to life on campus by connecting you with campus resources, discussing important topics like how to process culture shock, and making new friends through fun social experiences.

You may be exempt from IFYS if you are a transfer student, or if you graduated from a U.S. high school. To review IFYS exemption criteria, check the [IFYS webpage](#). If you are exempt, do not register for UST 110. Fill out the IFYS Waiver form on CyStart and attach proof of your exemption (ex. high school diploma or transcript from the college/university you are transferring from.)

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED CANVAS COURSES

Free Speech Training

All students are required to complete the Iowa Board of Regents Free Speech Training program each academic year; as a new student, you should complete the training before arriving on campus for your first semester.

Sexual Assault Prevention

We all have a role in creating a safe campus community. Iowa State does not tolerate sexual violence, and we strive to create a culture where everyone engages in violence prevention. Through prevention skills training, outreach, programming, and more, our campus community engages in ongoing efforts to reduce sexual violence and create a safer community for all.

PLACEMENT TESTS



ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST:

Incoming international students who are not native speakers of English, not enrolled in distance-only programs, or who do not meet at least one of the exemption criteria for the English Requirement must take the English Placement Test (EPT).

The English Requirement is different from the English proficiency requirement needed for admission to ISU. Students who are admitted to ISU may be required to take English classes to meet this requirement.

Please note that failure to take the EPT in your first semester may cause difficulties in planning your course of study and delays in your graduation.

EPT EXEMPTIONS:

Check the English Placement Test webpage and review the criteria listed under the Exemptions tab to determine whether you meet the English language requirement.

If at least one of the exemption criteria apply, you have met the English requirement and should not take the EPT. Your student records should be automatically updated to indicate that you have met the English requirement. You do not need to do anything for this process to occur. If you do not meet the English requirement, you need to take the EPT on campus in January.

Students who are confident that they have sufficient English proficiency may (re)take TOEFL iBT, IELTS, or Pearson PTE, at their own cost, to demonstrate their English proficiency. Required scores for meeting the English requirement are on the Exemptions tab of the EPT website.

EPT REGISTRATION:

Registration for spring term will open on December 28th. To register select the Registration tab for information about how to register. Note that you cannot register for the EPT more than two weeks before it is administered.

- Students who need to take the EPT will need to take both parts:
- EPT Writing: **January 9 at 8:00 AM**
- EPT Oral Communication: **January 9, after the writing test in a half-hour time slot between 10:30 AM and 4:00 PM**
- You will select a time when you register for the test.

Test descriptions, sample questions, scoring guides, and other information are available on the EPT website. If you still have questions after reading this information, email them to

ept@iastate.edu.

The EPT provides an opportunity for students to satisfy the English requirement. It evaluates students' English proficiency to determine whether they have the language skills needed to succeed academically at ISU or if they would benefit from additional English instruction in writing and/or oral communication. The results of the EPT lead to meeting the English requirement or assignment to take one or more English writing or oral communication classes. Students are only given one opportunity to demonstrate their English proficiency by taking the EPT. The one opportunity EPT is free of charge to ISU students.



ALEKS MATH PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT

The ALEKS Math Placement Test is a **required online test** you can take from any computer with reliable internet. You can take it more than once if you want to improve your score.

You must complete the [ALEKS Math Placement](#) in AccessPlus prior to your academic advising session. Your academic advisor needs your ALEKS math placement score to place you into the right courses. Allow at minimum three business days for Iowa State to receive your scores.

What if you already completed ALEKS? Scores from other Iowa Regents Universities and Community Colleges are also accepted for one year. You should be prepared to provide your advisor a screenshot of your previous score during your academic advising appointment, as Iowa State University does not have access to records taken through a different institution. Be sure your name is visible in the screen shot.

IOWA STATE HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Thielen Student Health Center (TSHC) looks forward to being your on-campus medical provider during your time at Iowa State. As a requirement of your orientation, you will be asked to attend a confidential, in-person health orientation visit at TSHC. During this visit, you will be provided with resources to support your well-being as you work to achieve your academic goals.

Iowa State Student Health and Wellness includes:

- Thielen Student Health Center
- Student Wellness
- Student Counseling
- Recreation Services

During your health orientation visit, you will meet with a member of the TSHC clinical staff to complete the following:

- Review resources available to Iowa State Students within the Student Health and Wellness unit.
- Review of immunization records and assistance with completion of ISU immunization requirements.

STUDENT HEALTH ORIENTATION



- Review any health concerns and receive assistance with the transfer of care needed by incoming students based on their individual needs.
- Receive information regarding the Student and Scholar Health Insurance Program (SSHIP).
- Assistance with connecting to other resources, as requested.

IMPORTANT STEPS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL:

On acceptance to Iowa State – begin as soon as possible.

- Complete the **Immunization Requirement Form** to bring with you to campus (link coming soon)
 - This form must be signed by a medical provider. We also ask you to bring supporting copies of original immunization documents labeled with your full name and date of birth.
 - If you've had previous testing for tuberculosis, please bring copies of these medical records including any lab reports or chest radiology reports.

WITHIN ONE MONTH OF ARRIVAL AT IOWA STATE.

- **Schedule your required in-person health orientation at TSHC.** (link coming soon)
 - Before your visit, review the information on this website. (we/TSHC will need to update this website)
- Download, sign, and print the TSHC Consent for Services and Communication **form** and bring a copy to your health orientation visit.
 - If you will be under the age of 18 when arriving on campus, it is mandatory that this form contain the signature of a parent or guardian.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about immunization records, ISU health requirements, or your health orientation session, please email the Thielen Student Health Center (TSHC) at immrequirements@iastate.edu. A member of their nursing staff will reply to your questions. The expected response time will be 5–7 days.

Questions specific to health insurance should be directed to the Student and Scholars Insurance Program (SSHIP) at isusship@iastate.edu.

REQUIRED ONLINE WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Mental Health Education Online Training Module

This interactive, virtual, role-play training module will help students identify, approach, and refer students who may be in distress. The training module will show up in your Canvas dashboard.

All incoming students are required to take the program between July 1 and July 31, 2023.

Alcohol Risk Reduction Program

All first-year students entering Iowa State and new transfer students are required to complete an online alcohol risk reduction program (AlcoholEdu). Students should log on to Canvas from their **Okta Dashboard** for detailed information and to complete the requirement within the given time frame (July 1 and July 31, 2023).

For assistance with these courses, contact Student Wellness at studentwellness@iastate.edu or 515-294-1099

YOUR UNIVERSITY ID CARD



ISU CARD

Your ISUCard is your permanent university identification card, which includes your picture and university identification number. You will use your ISUCard for most campus services including:

- door access to the residence hall
- meals on campus
- testing centers
- recreation center
- riding CyRide
- the library

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTO

[Visit the photo submission webpage](#) and follow the guidelines listed to submit a photo for your ISUCard. It is very important that you only submit a photo that meets our requirements. Your photo will be rejected if it doesn't meet the requirements.

Photos must be submitted online at least two full business days prior to picking up your card, or you will need to have your photo taken when you stop in the ISUCard Office instead.

Be sure to stop at the ISUCard Office in 0530 Beardshear Hall when you arrive on campus to pick up your ISUCard. Check the [ISUCard website](#) for hours of operation. The ISUCard Office, like most business offices on campus, is not open on weekends.

HAVE YOUR PHOTO TAKEN ON CAMPUS

You also have the option to stop into the ISUCard Office after you arrive on campus to have your photo taken and walk out with your ISUCard. Check the [ISU Card website](#) for office hours and further information.

The process generally takes about 30 minutes but could be longer if there is a line. Be sure to bring:

- your University ID number
- your passport



ISSO NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

ISSO NEW International Student Orientation will take place from **Monday, January 8 to Friday, January 12** and is **MANDATORY** for all incoming international students. All incoming undergraduate international students are expected to attend and participate in **ALL** required ISSO New International Student Orientation sessions.

ISSO New International Student Orientation is designed to help you make a smooth transition to Iowa State with sessions designed specifically for international students. During orientation, you will:

- Complete your required immigration processing with an ISSO International Advisor (mandatory)
- Meet with your academic advisor to finalize your registration for your first-semester classes
- Learn about campus resources and important information about Iowa State
- Make new friends through ISSO social events, and Destination Iowa State

Please note that the failure to attend orientation could result in academic, immigration and employment issues.

More information about ISSO New International Student Orientation, such as the complete schedule of events, will be sent to your email in July and made available on the [New International Student Orientation](#) page of the International Students and Scholars (ISSO) website.

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR ORIENTATION

- Hard-copy of your final academic transcript
- Student ID Number
- I-20 or DS-2019 (from ISU and any previous schools)
- Passport
- I-94 (retrieve electronic I-94 at the [CBP website](#))
- Dependent immigration documents: passports, I-20/DS-2019 forms, and I-94 forms
- Address in Ames (this can be a temporary address, such as a hotel or the home of a friend or acquaintance with whom you are staying)
- Name, phone number, and mailing address for a person we can contact if you have a personal emergency
- Financial guarantee (for sponsored students)

