It is almost time for you to start your studies here at UW-Madison! Are you ready? Are your bags packed?

Remember to review your plans for traveling to UW-Madison. Make sure you have your UW-Madison admission letter, your passport with your valid US F-1 or J-1 visa stamp (unless you are Canadian) and your I-20 or DS-2019. Do not forget to pay your SEVIS Fee online and keep the receipt with your important documents.

You should plan to arrive in Madison at least 2-3 days before your scheduled orientation times. In addition, lodging reservations should be finalized.

To review ISS Orientation information, check out the first newsletter here.

**FIND A PLACE TO LIVE**

We know housing is a big concern for international students because it is difficult to secure housing before arriving in Madison. If you have already confirmed a place to live, you are one step ahead!

If you plan to live on-campus in a UW residence hall, the earliest you can move in is Monday, January 11. If you found a place to live off campus, talk with your landlord about your move in date.

For Housing and Temporary Lodging information, see Pre-Arrival information on the ISS website.

**STAY CONNECTED TO**

Call home often through CellularLD.

CellularLD is a prepaid long distance provider that allows you to call home internationally through a cellular phone or landline anywhere in the US at very low prices.

**NEED FURNITURE?**

Many off campus apartments do not come with furniture. To obtain low-cost gently used furniture, check out MFIS’s furniture program.
**ISS ORIENTATION & WELCOME EVENTS**

**SIGN UP FOR ISS ORIENTATION**
Sign up to attend your ISS orientation and welcome events. Please sign up by filling out this [Google Form](#) prior to your arrival.

*Deadline: Monday, January 11*

**CHECK IN WITH ISS**
Bring your passport, I-20 or DS-2019, your local address in Madison, phone number, foreign address, and emergency contact information, to check-in with ISS prior to your ISS orientation. Browse various resources that ISS has available to assist you with your transition to Madison and studying at UW-Madison. Talk to current international students and ISS staff.

*Monday, January 11 through Friday, January 15*
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Red Gym, Mezzanine A/B, 2nd Floor

**EXCHANGE & VISITING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION**
Individual schedules for full day Exchange and Visiting International Student Orientation will be provided by your exchange coordinator prior to arriving at UW-Madison. Make sure you have had your immigration documents scanned in advance.

*Thursday, January 14*
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Grainger Hall, Room 1100

**UNDERGRADUATE, GRADUATE, & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ISS ORIENTATION**
ISS hosts an orientation session for all [newly admitted](#) international undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. This is a required orientation program for F-1 and J-1 student visa holders. During this session we will share visa and university requirements, discuss campus and health insurance resources, and cover programming for all international students. You are required to attend the entire length of the orientation session. Please plan accordingly.

*Friday, January 15*
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Red Gym, Masley Media Room, 1st Floor

**ISS WELCOME LUNCH**
All new international students are welcome, regardless of the orientation session you will attend. This event is optional but please indicate whether or not you will attend on the [Google Form](#) (also mentioned above).

*Friday, January 15*
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Red Gym, On Wisconsin ABC, 1st Floor

**ISS SHOPPING TRIP**
Immediately following the ISS Welcome Lunch, there will be a free shuttle bus to Bed Bath & Beyond and AT&T on Madison’s East side. Bed Bath & Beyond is a national store specializing in bedroom, bathroom, office, and home décor items. The exclusive shopping event will offer 10% off all purchases. At AT&T you can set up cell phone service. Target is located next to Bed Bath & Beyond where you can purchase other essentials. The buses will leave and return to the Chazen Art Museum on University Avenue every 30 - 45 minutes.

*Friday, January 15*
1:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
[Bed Bath & Beyond](#) and AT&T

**BRIDGE: AN INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP PROGRAM**
This ISS program helps connect international students with U.S. students to assist with the initial adjustment to the university and new culture. If you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity for intercultural exchange, [apply by the deadline](#)!

*Application deadline:*
Wednesday, January 20
11:59 p.m.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RESOURCE FAIR**
All students are invited to attend the International Student Resource Fair. The Assembly for International Students, Madison Friends of International Students, and several campus partners will be in attendance for you to learn more about the resources available to you at UW-Madison and in the Madison community. Enjoy light refreshments while talking to other international students and getting connected.

*Friday, January 22*
4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery (WID)
Open Court
ISS suggests that you bring less than $500 in cash when you travel to the U.S. You should bring a credit card that you can use in the U.S. and travelers checks for additional money; a general estimate would be $2,000 in travelers checks. Bring an estimate of what you need for the first two weeks in travelers checks. Once you set up a bank account, other large currency amounts can be sent by wire transfer from your home country bank account.

**TAKE CARE OF YOUR FINANCES**

ISS suggests that you bring less than $500 in cash when you travel to the U.S. You should bring a credit card that you can use in the U.S. and travelers checks for additional money; a general estimate would be $2,000 in travelers checks. Bring an estimate of what you need for the first two weeks in travelers checks. Once you set up a bank account, other large currency amounts can be sent by wire transfer from your home country bank account.

**PAYING YOUR TUITION**

Are you funded by your government or a third party (an employer, a business, a non-profit organization) for your education? If so, please make sure you tell the Bursar’s Office when you arrive so that your account will be set up correctly. The Bursar’s Office is located at 333 East Campus Mall. This is the office where you will be paying all your tuition and fees. Visit their website [www.wisc.edu/bursar](http://www.wisc.edu/bursar) to learn how to pay tuition.

An electronic payment option is available to international students so that you can pay tuition with foreign currencies through your student account. Check out the Foreign Currency ePayment instructions and view a list of participating countries and available currencies on the UW-Madison Bursar’s [website](http://www.wisc.edu/bursar).

**RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS**

Protect yourself and others by getting your vaccines. Wisconsin law [SS 36.25 (46)] requires students who will live in a University Residence Hall to affirm that they have received vaccination against Meningococcal disease and Hepatitis B. University Health Services (UHS) has a health record form for students to complete which is confidential and will be retained by UHS. Students are required to affirm this information before they can move into the UW Residence Halls by visiting the [UHS website](http://www.wisc.edu/bursar).

If you will live off-campus, then there are no required vaccines. However, regardless of where you live, it is recommended that all students in college have certain vaccinations before arriving on campus. For a list of recommended vaccines visit their [website](http://www.wisc.edu/bursar). These vaccines are available at University Health Services (UHS) for a fee (some may be covered through the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)). For more information about vaccines or to schedule an appointment, call UHS at (608) 265-5600.

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**MOVIE NIGHT: BEING BUCKY**

Check out the ISS Resource Fair and then come watch a free movie with your friends and family. *Being Bucky* is a documentary film that follows several people to see what it takes to become UW-Madison’s mascot, Bucky Badger. This event may star special guest appearances including Bucky Badger himself!

**INTERNATIONAL REACH ORIENTATION**

*International Reach* is a cross-cultural speakers volunteer program that places international speakers in schools, at campus events, and community organizations for presentations. Join us for an orientation to learn more.

**MADISON FRIENDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS (MFIS) CAPITOL TOUR & RECEPTION**

The Madison Friends of International Students (MFIS) is a non-profit volunteer group of community members created to help international students adjust to life in Madison. MFIS will host a reception and tour of the State Capitol building for new international students. Space is limited to the first 75 people. Click [HERE](http://www.wisc.edu/bursar) for more information and to register.

**Friday, January 22**

7:00 p.m.  
Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery (WID) Forum

**Thursday, January 28**

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Red Gym, South Mezzanine

**Sunday, January 31**

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Wisconsin State Capitol  
Senate Parlor, 2nd Floor
CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT 101

You may experience a mix of emotions as you prepare for this new chapter of your life. Many international students report being excited, anxious, happy and sad all at the same time. This mixture of emotions is normal, especially if you are coming to the United States for the first time. Remember to be patient with yourself and give yourself time to adjust to the United States.

Coming to a new country, you may experience the Four Stages of Cultural Adjustment referred to as the 4-H’s (Honeymoon, Hostility, Humor and Home). Most people experience these stages to some degree.

When you first arrive in the U.S., you may experience the Honeymoon stage, the initial stage of cultural adjustment. During the Honeymoon stage, everything you experience and discover may feel new and exciting. You may be very enthusiastic about everything you encounter and everyone you meet.

Next, you may experience the Hostility stage. This is the period when you realize that there are many new challenges and barriers to overcome. For example, you may not always understand things such as local culture and jokes, and you may experience language barriers that feel frustrating and draining.

Next comes the Humor stage. This is the stage when you begin to learn to overcome the challenges and barriers you have encountered. During the Humor stage, mistakes do not bother you as much. In fact, you may find that you can actually laugh at them!

The final stage is the Home stage. This is the point when you feel at home in your new environment.

Remember that not all students experience all of the Four Stages of Cultural Adjustment and that they might not follow in the order discussed. Stay busy and surround yourself with positive people. Remember to talk often with friends, family and UW staff to work through challenges. Let the journey begin!

Pack the essentials!

You may be wondering what to pack and how to fit everything into your suitcase.

Madison has four distinct seasons. You will be arriving in the coldest of winter months, so warm clothes, a heavy coat, boots, hat, scarf and gloves are recommended. However, you will also have a chance to purchase these items after you arrive.

Don’t forget to pack your cultural attire and items from home too! There are several events on campus that celebrate cultural diversity in which you may want to participate.

Linmo App — Created for Badgers by Badgers!

Linmo is an app created to help foster cross-cultural communication, find language exchange partners, and connect international and U.S. students on campus. Download the app for FREE and start connecting!

Residence Hall Linens can be purchased and shipped even before you arrive.

"The Battle for Bascom Hill 2011" photo by Muhammad Shoaib Bin Altaf
UPON YOUR ARRIVAL

WISCARD

The WisCard is your key to campus life and serves as your official UW-Madison identification card. This will be your access card to campus buildings and events, as well as your meal plan. You will want to secure your WisCard upon your arrival to campus for easy access to your events and purchases around campus.

Learn more on how to get your WisCard or visit Union South, room 149 when you arrive on campus!

BUS PASS

All students are given the opportunity to obtain a bus pass through the Associated Students of Madison. The use of public transportation in Madison is very popular and quite reliable, especially when parking can be expensive and difficult to find. Bus passes will be available for pick up after course registration.

If you will arrive early and would like a temporary bus pass, you may purchase single-ride or multi-ride passes. Madison is also a great city to bike in the spring. You may rent a BCycle and explore Madison!

GET INVOLVED ON CAMPUS

It is important to attend all orientation events and activities so that you take care of important tasks right away. Once everything is settled, make sure you have a plan to get involved and connected to other students on campus. Recent graduates often comment that they wished they had been more involved in student organizations and activities before graduating. To view the many fun opportunities available at UW-Madison, visit the Center for Leadership and Involvement’s webpage.

ISS provides programs to help international students get connected and succeed at UW-Madison. Programs include a diverse offering of social, educational, community service and fun events designed to meet the needs of international students. Our cornerstone programs International Reach: a cross-cultural speakers program, and BRIDGE: International Friendship program, provide international students with great opportunities to get involved. Check out all the ISS programs on our website.

CONNECT WITH ISS BEFORE YOU EVEN GET HERE!

Instagarmers: Take a picture of yourself (a “selfie”) and introduce yourself to other new international Badgers! #GlobalBadger

We cannot wait to meet you!