Welcome International Students!

Preparing to Study at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa 2017-2018

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI AT MĀNOA
Queen Liliʻuokalani Center for Student Services Room 206 Honolulu, HI 96822
Tel: (808) 956-8613 • E-mail: issmanoa@hawaii.edu • Website: http://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa
The International Student Services Office (ISS) staff warmly welcomes you to the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UH Mānoa). We hope to answer most of your questions regarding preparation for arrival in Honolulu. We look forward to meeting you and assisting you in having a wonderful experience at the University of Hawai‘i.

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Pre-Arrival Checklist
Prior to Your Departure for Honolulu

☐ Admission letter from UH Mānoa and I-20 or DS-2019. If you have not received your UH Mānoa I-20 or DS-2019, please contact:

Undergraduate Students:
Office of Admissions
Tel: (808) 956-8975 | Fax: (808) 956-4148
E-mail: uhmanoa.admissions@hawaii.edu
Web: http://manoa.hawaii.edu/admissions/undergrad

Graduate Students:
Office of Graduate Education
Tel: (808) 956-8544 | Fax: (808) 956-4261
E-mail: graduate.education@hawaii.edu
Web: http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/

Visiting and Exchange Students:
Mānoa International Exchange
Tel: (808) 956-4728
E-mail: inbound@hawaii.edu
Web: http://manoa.hawaii.edu/international/mix/

☐ Valid passport, valid student visa (except Canadians), SEVIS fee payment receipt.

☐ Reserve flight to Honolulu.
Recommended arrival is 1 week prior to the start of classes to attend ISS orientation and other orientations, and for clearances and testing.

Note: The earliest date of arrival into the U.S. for FIRST TIME study in the US is no more than 30 days prior to the report date on the I-20 or the DS-2019 form (“30 day advance grace period”). If you attempt to enter the US earlier you may be denied US entry. Students transferring to UH Mānoa within 5 months of last attendance at previous institution are not subject to the 30 day advance grace period. Recommended arrival time is at least one week prior to start of classes to allow time to clear registration holds, enroll in courses, and attend an ISS visa clearance session and the ISS Welcome Orientation.

☐ Request airport pick-up (optional). See Section 5

☐ Reserve housing.
We strongly urge you to arrange for temporary and/or more permanent housing prior to arrival. UH and nearby housing fills quickly. See Section 6.

☐ Sign up for an ELI test on-line if you are not exempt from ELI. See Section 7.

☐ Sign up for an ISS Visa Clearance Session and the Welcome Orientation. See Section 3.

☐ Request a student mentor (optional). See Section 4.

☐ Weather/Clothing.
Hawaii’s climate is sunny, oceanic and mild (70° to 85° Fahrenheit, 20° to 30° Celsius) with a cool/rainy season from November to April. Casual clothing is appropriate for most situations. Bring a sweater or light jacket, an umbrella and comfortable walking shoes. Light cotton and other cool washable materials are recommended. National dress may be worn for special occasions.

☐ Bring sufficient Funds.
Cash or traveler’s checks in US dollars; credit or debit card (optional).
Arrival Checklist

- Sign up for mandatory ISS Visa Clearance online. You will be asked for a local U.S. address, but this can be left blank. Update your local U.S. address after your arrival.
- Attend ISS mandatory Visa Clearance and Orientation.
- Take TB test at the University Health Services.
- Clear all registration holds. Allow 3 to 7 business days.
- Receive academic advising.
- Begin class registration at the appointment time assigned on MyUH.
- Attend the ISS Welcome Orientation.
- Open a local Bank Account.
- Set up e-refund on MyUH.
- Finalize registration and pay by payment deadline.

ISS Services, Visa Clearance, Welcome Orientation

What is International Student Services (ISS)?

The ISS Office provides oversight for the well-being of international students pursuing degree or non-degree programs at UH Mānoa. In addition to monitoring and administering visa requirements, ISS provides international students with cultural adjustment and sharing programs, leadership experiences, financial assistance programs, and personal advising. Each academic year, ISS serves approximately 1000 students from 80+ countries.

The ISS front desk is open Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and is closed Saturday, Sunday and all state holidays. Advising hours are 8:30–12:00 mornings, and 1:00–3:30 afternoons. Special circumstances and emergencies can be accommodated outside these advising hours.
What happens at the ISS Visa Clearance Session?

New international students are required to attend an F-1 or J-1 Visa Clearance session. The session lasts about one hour, and is followed by a tour of the QLCSS (Student Services) building. Students will have their visa related documents scanned and their “IS (visa) registration hold” cleared to allow for registration. F-1/J-1 regulations and selected university policies and rules will be discussed. See www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/pages/home/new-students/orientation.php to sign up for visa clearance.

IMPORTANT: Bring your passport and I-20 or DS-2019 form to this session for scanning and clearance of your "IS VISA REGISTRATION HOLD".

What is “The Welcome Orientation”?

“The Welcome Orientation” is offered by the ISS to help you have a successful start at UH Mānoa. You will receive helpful information on studying and living in the campus community. Besides meeting the ISS advising team and other UH Mānoa staff, you will have the opportunity to meet other international and local students and learn about student resources and university procedures. The Welcome Orientation occurs the week before fall and spring classes begin each semester, and includes a tour of selected campus sites, and a welcome reception with refreshments.

I heard about another orientation, NSO. What is this?

New Student Orientation (NSO) is a three-day program for undergraduate students to facilitate adjustment to the academic community and life at UH Mānoa. The NSO provides an opportunity to meet with academic advisers, plan a manageable schedule, learn about degree requirements, and learn how to access support services at UH Mānoa. Undergraduates may wish to attend both NSO and the ISS Welcome Orientation. For more information on NSO, visit the NSO website at www.hawaii.edu/nso

(Graduate students should receive information from their individual departments about departmental and field of study orientations. Attend these sessions if possible. Teaching and Research Assistants will benefit also from orientations designed for new Graduate Assistants.)
The ISS Mentor-Mentee Program

What is the ISS Mentor-Mentee Program?

Would you like one or more “experienced students” to personally assist you (mentor you) during the first few weeks after your arrival? For more information and to request a mentor, go to www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa (click Mentor-Mentee Program under new students selection) or email mentors@hawaii.edu.

Arrival Information

Can I request airport pickup services?

Yes, the Baptist International Student Center handles airport pickup for any International Student who requests this service. A volunteer will meet all international students coming to Hawai‘i for the first time, regardless of time of arrival. This is a FREE VOLUNTEER SERVICE. To request pick up, send an email at least one week before arrival to uhairportwelcome@gmail.com and specify your full name, gender, arrival information (flight number and carrier, date and time of arrival) and address where you wish to be taken in Honolulu. When you arrive, clear immigration and customs, collect your luggage, and then phone Carlye Lawrence (808-277-3185 or 808-946-9581).

Can I take a taxi to UH Mānoa or a Waikiki hotel?

Yes, the University of Hawai‘i is located about 20 minutes from the Honolulu Airport. Taxi fare to University dorms or Waikiki hotels is about $30–$35, excluding baggage charges and the customary tip of 15-20 percent.
Is there bus service to Waikiki Hotels and UH Mānoa?

Shuttle bus service serves all hotels in Waikiki and is reasonably priced ($12-15). See http://www.shuttlewaikiki.com or http://www.airportwaikikishuttle.com. Alternatively, the public bus ($2.50 exact change only) can get you from the airport to UH Mānoa or Waikiki but your luggage must fit under your seat or on your lap. See http://www.thebus.org

How do students get around?

There is an affordable and convenient bus system (The Bus) serving the entire island of O‘ahu, and city and county of Honolulu. UH Mānoa students receive a complimentary bus pass that is activated on the UH ID card after tuition and fees are paid each semester. There is also a free shuttle bus on campus serving the UH Mānoa campus only and a few sites near the campus. Many international students have bicycles or mopeds, and some purchase automobiles. Please note that parking cars on or near campus is often difficult and it can be quite expensive to own and maintain an automobile. State law requires a driver’s license and automobile insurance for all drivers.

Housing

On campus, off campus & home stay

Where do most of the students live?

International students at University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa enjoy both on- and off-campus living. Many students who live on campus like the convenience of being close to classes, libraries, computer labs, cafeterias and athletic facilities. Living in a residence hall also makes it easy for students to socialize with other students. As there are many residential options close to campus, many students choose to live off-campus.

On Campus Housing

Student Housing Services Office Frear Hall, 2569 Dole Street, Honolulu, HI 96822
Tel: (808) 956-8177 | Email uhmsh@hawaii.edu | Web: manoa.hawaii.edu/housing
Student housing includes residence halls and apartments. There is a $25 non-refundable application fee. Cost per semester varies, depending on the hall. Family housing is available at Hale Wainani apartments. Please see requirements, restrictions and qualifications at: https://manoa.hawaii.edu/housing/communities/family. Student housing resident must purchase a meal plan. Tuberculosis (TB) clearance is required for move-in. Check the website for details and application deadlines. On-campus housing is very limited and freshmen have priority.

East-West Center Housing (EWC)
1711 East-West Rd., Honolulu, HI 96848
Tel: (808) 944-7805 | Email: housing@eastwestcenter.org | Web: eastwestcenter.org/about-ewc/housing
For graduate students, daily rates for a semester rental are around $32-43 daily. Short-term daily and monthly rates are also available. See website for further information. EWC housing is on campus, but operated separately from UH Student Housing.

Living off campus?

Students make their own arrangements to live off campus. Most international students live in surrounding residential neighborhoods, such as Mānoa, Kaimuki, Kapahulu and Waikiki, where there are many apartments and homes offering shared housing arrangements within easy walking, busing, or bicycling distance. While the ISS can make students aware of possible living situations which may be satisfactory, ISS cannot recommend specific accommodations for an individual student and the ISS and UH assume no liability for any off-campus housing.

Students generally sign a housing contract or lease in private housing. The purpose of the lease is to protect both the tenant and the landlord. To assist you with learning about off campus living, the UH operates an off-campus housing information and referral service at www.manoa.hawaii.edu/housing/offcampus. This page publishes some private housing listing from landlords, and has developed a list of private dorms and hotel/dorm facilities that are popular with students. It also includes important legal information to help you understand your rights as a tenant in the state of Hawaii.

Another housing option very close to campus that has traditionally catered to international students is Kalo Terrace, an apartment complex for students. A typical apartment has 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms accommodating up to 8 students. See www.hawaiistudentsuites.com

Home Stay: An opportunity to live short or longer terms with Hawaii residents.

**International Hospitality Center**  
224 Queen Emma Square, Honolulu, HI 96813  
Tel: (808) 521-3554 Email: ihc@priory.net | Web: http://www.ihchawaii.org  
IHC provides one-week homestay including airport pickup, room and board, and involvement in host activities. There is an administrative fee (request price with your inquiry).

**International Student Placements**, Main Office  
199 First Street, Suite# 305, Los Altos, CA 94022  
Tel: +1 (650) 947-8879 | Fax: +1 (650) 948-1105 Email: info@isphomestays.com | Web: www.isphomestays.com  
ISP provides homestays for international students who wish to experience living with local host families. All students are placed within close proximity to their school and have the full support of the ISP staff to assist them during their stay. Different meal plans are available. Monthly rental fees vary.

**Rainbow Homestay LLC**  
Coordinator: Emma Miyaki  
Contact form available on website: www.rainbowhomestay.vpweb.com  
Home stays with or without meals and house sharing can be arranged. Monthly rental fees vary and there is an application fee.

I didn't make a reservation for temporary housing. What shall I do?  
Use the accommodation suggestions above or, contact a Waikiki hotel from the airport’s special phones. Waiting until you arrive may result in you paying higher prices than if you plan ahead.
What is the ELI Placement Test, and what does the ELI do?
The ELI placement test is given to new international and immigrant students whose prior coursework and test scores indicate a possible need for additional English language instruction to succeed in a US university. Based on your ELI placement test results, you may be exempted from ELI, or placed into a series of required ELI courses. Students who are required to take the ELI test will have the “ELI hold” placed on their student record at the time of admission and will not be able to register for courses until the hold is removed. The ELI Hold is removed when you register for any test (note: you may register online), but will be re-set if you fail to appear for the test. By signing up early for an ELI test, you can avoid having the ELI hold halt your registration for courses. Test dates, sign-up instructions, and complete information are found at www.hawaii.edu/eli.

English Language Institute, Moore Hall Room 570, 1890 East West Road, Honolulu, HI 96822
Tel: (808) 956-8610 | Fax: (808) 956-2802 | Email: uhmeli@hawaii.edu

What are the state and university health requirements?
In general, all students must meet state and university health clearance requirements BEFORE registering for courses and moving into UH Mānoa residence halls. This includes tuberculosis (TB) testing and measles, mumps & rubella (MMR) vaccination/documentation. Note: TB testing takes 2-7 days, must be done by a U.S.-licensed medical provider, and cannot be done if within 4 weeks of receiving a MMR vaccination. Complete details can be found at www.hawaii.edu/shs/health_clearance.
Academic Advising

How should I decide which classes to take?

It is essential for you to meet with an academic advisor to assist you with course selection.

• Graduate Students: Check with your academic department to identify your academic advisor.
• Undergraduate Students: Refer to the “Directory of Advisors for Undergraduate Students” to identify your academic advisor: http://manoa.hawaii.edu/academics/advising/
• Visiting and Exchange Students: Check with the MIX Office to identify your academic advisor.

How many credits do I have to take each semester?

Taking full-time classes is one of the essential criteria for maintaining your student visa status. In the spring and fall semesters, you must take 12 credits or more if you are an undergraduate student, or 8 credits or more if you are a graduate student. Graduate teaching/research assistants minimum credit requirement is 6 credits. (Summer enrollment is optional, as this is the annual vacation period.)
When can I register?

- **May 22 or 23, 2017** – Start date to register for **Incoming Undergraduate Students** (Newly Accepted, Returning, Transfer and MIX Exchange). Undergraduate students will be able to register without first receiving health clearance, but will need to complete TB, MMR, and health forms requirements in order to move into residence halls and/or attend classes.

- **August 1 or 2, 2017** – Start date to register for **Incoming Graduate Students** (Newly Accepted, Returning, Transfer and MIX Exchange). In order to register, graduate students will first need to address all registration holds, including health clearance.

Visit Registration Step-by-step Guidelines at [https://manoa.hawaii.edu/records/register/register.html#time](https://manoa.hawaii.edu/records/register/register.html#time)

What is a registration hold and how does it work?

Certain university offices may prevent you from registering or making registration changes (e.g., adding/dropping a course) by placing a hold on your account. This usually occurs if you have not fulfilled certain requirements (e.g., health clearance, English Language testing, etc.). Visit Holds to learn how to view and remove holds placed on your account. **Allow at least 3 business days to clear holds.**

New international students typically have the following registration holds:

- **Health Clearance – TB, MMR, and health forms holds**: Responsible office is University Health Services (UHS); effective date is July 15th for graduate students and a later date to be determined for undergraduate students; check your MyUH account for hold information. Refer to Section 8 for complete information on health clearance.
  
  - **NOTE**: New students must obtain their TB skin test from a U.S. licensed medical provider. If you use the University Health Services (UHS) to perform your TB skin test, you will need to allow 3 business days to receive skin test results. Last day to take the TB skin test at UHS is Tuesday, August 15th in order to get test results on Thursday, August 17th. UHS may be closed on Friday, August 18th, which is the Statehood Holiday in Hawaii. TB clearance is required to move into residence halls and attend classes.
  
  - **NOTE**: The TB skin test cannot be taken within 4 weeks of having taken an MMR vaccination.

- **English Language hold**: Responsible office is the English Language Institute (ELI); effective date is usually July 15th. Refer to Section 7 for complete information on ELI requirements.

- **Proof of Visa Status hold**: Responsible office is International Student Services (ISS); effective date is 08/21/17.

- **Proof of Health Insurance hold**: Responsible offices are Student Health Insurance Office (SHIO) for F-1 students or ISS Office for J-1 students and their J-2 dependents; effective date is 08/21/2017.
How can I obtain my student visa?

Most new students must pay the SEVIS fee ($200 for F-1/$180 for UH J-1) and print out the “I-901 receipt”. See [www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/](http://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/) for detailed information. You must have a SEVIS I-20 or DS-2019 form in order to pay this fee. Use the SEVIS ID# in the upper right corner of your UH I-20/DS-2019 when you complete the online I-901 form.

Next, submit an on-line visa application (DS-160) and follow the specific instructions for the US Consular office that will be issuing your visa. You will need to schedule an interview and bring the following documents to your interview: valid passport, I-20 (for F-1) or DS-2019 (for J-1), admission letter, I-901 receipt, and evidence of financial support. Be prepared to explain, (1) your academic and career goals and, (2) your intention to return to your home country upon completion of your academic studies. A helpful website to obtain information on visa processing is [http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange/student.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange/student.html)

**DO NOT** use an I-20/DS-2019 issued by another school if you plan to attend the University of Hawaii at Mānoa.

**DO NOT** enter on a B-2 (tourist) visa unless your visa stamp bears the notation “prospective student”.

**DO NOT** enter the US under the visa waiver program, or with a non-student visa you may already have in your passport.

I am transferring to UH Mānoa from another institution. What are the procedures and what do I need to do?

Keep in mind that there are academic procedures to follow when transferring from another institution to UH Mānoa, as well as immigration procedures to follow with regard to your SEVIS record. ISS oversees the immigration procedures for transfer of your SEVIS record from your previous institution to UH Mānoa and advises you to do the following:

- **After** you have been admitted to UH Mānoa, you will receive the admission letter and the “Request to Release SEVIS Record to UH Mānoa” form from the office of admissions. Submit a copy of your admission letter and the “Request to Release SEVIS Record to UH Mānoa” form to the International Student Office at your previous institution. If you have maintained valid F-1 or J-1 student visa status and will be enrolled at UH Mānoa within 5 months from the date of your last enrollment at your previous institution, your previous institution will release your SEVIS record to UH Mānoa on the date of your last enrollment.

- **After** UH Mānoa receives access to your SEVIS record, we will be able to issue you a new I-20 or DS-2019 form to attend UH Mānoa.

- **Per SEVIS regulations**, you will **NOT** need to pay a new SEVIS fee, since you will be continuing your studies at UH Mānoa using the SEVIS ID# from your original SEVIS record.

However, if you will not be enrolling at UH Mānoa within 5 months from the date of your last enrollment at your previous institution, or, if you are a J-1 student who is subject to the two year home residence requirement, then you will not be eligible to request/receive a release of your SEVIS record from your previous institution to UH Mānoa. In this case, UH Mānoa will need to create a new SEVIS record in order
I am transferring to UH Mānoa from another institution without leaving the U.S. Is there anything I need to do?
Sign up for an ISS visa clearance session. You will need to bring your passport with visa (Canadian citizens are exempt) and I-20 or DS-2019 form to the visa clearance session.

I am transferring to UH Mānoa from another institution but I am currently outside the U.S. Is there anything important I need to know?
To enter the U.S., present your valid passport, valid visa, new I-20 or DS-2019 form from UH Mānoa, and SEVIS payment receipt to the Customs Official at the US port-of-entry. Sign up for an ISS visa clearance session and bring your visa documents to the session. NOTE: Although Canadian students do not need a student visa, they must present a valid passport, new I-20 or DS-2019 form, and SEVIS fee payment receipt to a Customs Official at the US port-of-entry.

I currently have a non-student visa status, but I want to change to student status. What should I do?
Contact an ISS adviser to discuss your situation at least 3-5 months prior to start of classes. Students who experience visa denials or difficulties at the port-of-entry should contact an ISS adviser (email issmanoa@hawaii.edu or call 808-956-8613 during regular business hours).

Cost & Budget

Honolulu is a medium sized city with a high cost of living. The university estimates housing (shared room), food, public transportation and personal expenses at approximately $1,750 a month for the 9 month academic year.

When you first arrive, you’ll need enough to pay your tuition and fees (payment deadline 9 days after classes begin) and your initial living costs. Relocation costs may make the first month’s costs two or three times the normal monthly cost. If you will be employed by UH Mānoa as graduate teaching/research assistant (TA or RA), please remember that you may not get your first paycheck for 2-3 months. Be prepared. Net pay for a TA/RA will likely be 60 to 70% of gross stipend amount, due to federal and state income tax withholdings and health insurance costs.
How much do I need to study at UH Mānoa per year?

**Undergraduate Student**
Non-Resident Tuition and Fees (for 12 or more credits)*  
$33,786
Estimated Living Expenses including books/supplies, insurance, room/board  
$17,500
Total  
$51,286

**Graduate Student**
Non-Resident Tuition and Fees* (for 9 credits per semester**)  
$28,478
Estimated Living Expenses including books/supplies, insurance, room/board  
$17,500
Total  
$45,978

*Rates for professional graduate programs (Law, Medicine, Nursing, Architecture, Business) differ from the above. Consult Registration Guide for current rates at: manoa.hawaii.edu/records/tuition_fees/tuition.html.

**Average credit-load for a graduate student
Consult graduate course loads & full-time definition at: manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/course-loads-full-time-definition

Estimated living cost for summer: add $4,500 for living expenses, plus actual tuition and fees.

Is there a bank near campus?

The UH Federal Credit Union and American Savings Bank are both located on campus, and a variety of banks are located within walking distance of campus. There are also a number of ATM machines at Campus Center. When you arrive, open an account at the UH Credit Union or a near-by bank and request savings and check-writing services. You may also request a debit card and/or credit card from your bank.

Social Security Number

Do I need a Social Security Number?

All students who will work during study will need to have a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN). For further information, see ISS website at http://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/ under Social Security Number. Obtain certification document of visa status from ISS before applying for a SSN.
Will I have to pay taxes on personal or family money I bring to the U.S. from home?
No! Students depositing funds from abroad in a US bank should request tax exemption on the interest earned on foreign source funds. You will complete a form at your bank to claim your foreign source funds.

Will I have to pay taxes on money I earn working?
You may have to pay taxes on U.S. source income. Earnings from salary/wages are subject to both U.S. and State of Hawaii taxation, depending on how much you earn, and other factors.

Will I have to pay taxes on scholarship monies? Possibly.
Scholarships from US sources may be partially taxable. If the scholarship is only used to pay tuition and fees (and some required supplies) the scholarship funds should be tax-exempt. But when scholarship funds pay for other educational expenses (such as room/board) these funds may be taxable. Taxability also depends upon whether your country has a tax treaty with the U.S., which includes scholarship funding, and the amount of time a student resides in the US. Students with taxable scholarships will need an ITIN if they do not have a SSN.

The ISS provides on-line tax resources to assist students with tax issues related to scholarships and earned income at http://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/
Am I eligible for US government aid?
No. International students are not eligible for most federal and state aid.

What aid am I eligible for?
UH Mānoa offers scholarships to many students, primarily for academic merit and in some cases, financial need. Most aid to undergraduates is available only after your first year of study at UH Mānoa, or after acceptance in a major. Graduate students may receive partial support through their departments, or full support through teaching or research assistantships. Scholarships through the UH Foundation and other private sources in the US are also available. See http://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/ for further information.

May I work while I study?
Yes. During your first academic year you can work on campus. After that you may be eligible for selected, short-term off-campus employment. ISS approval is required for all work permits. F-1 and J-1 students have somewhat different types of employment permits available to them.

What Student Organizations are helpful to International Students?
Student organizations play a key role in the life of students. We urge you to get involved with organizations that give you experience in your major or in groups that share your extra-curricular passions and interests.
The International Student Association (ISA) has a special relationship with the International Student Services (ISS) office. The ISS supports the ISA, which gives leadership development opportunities to its student members. ISA leaders will introduce semester activities at the ISS Welcome Orientation.

Registered Independent Organizations (RIOs): RIOs are official student organizations at the UH Mānoa. Some of these organizations may be willing to provide help to new students. Please review current student organizations at [http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/studentlife/studentorg/rio.php](http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/studentlife/studentorg/rio.php) to obtain further information.