

Aloha Guide

Hula skirts, surfboards and sunshine--as a non-resident, it might be a bit difficult to imagine what being a graduate student in beautiful Hawaii might be like. The idea of studying at the University of Hawaii Library and Information Science (LIS) Program sounds pretty exciting, but it probably has you feeling somewhat anxious.

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Climate

The warm sunshine of Hawaii will greet you for most of the year. Temperatures usually range from a low in the mid 60s (F) to a high in the low 90s (F), with moderate humidity. Most rainfall occurs in the winter, but expect it any time of the year. While we lack severe seasonal variation, those who live here for a while will notice subtle changes in the weather through the year.

The University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) campus is in a valley sheltered by mountains, with frequent, brief, but sometimes drenching tropical showers. Bring an umbrella and a light windbreaker, and enjoy the rainbows.

To check current weather conditions visit the [National Weather Service Forecast Office](#).

Clothing

Dress in Hawaii is very casual. Dress suits or fancy dresses are rarely worn, and ties are definitely out. Dress on campus is informal; jeans, cotton trousers, and shorts. Lightweight clothing is recommended year-round (washable cottons and synthetic fabrics), but sweaters or light jackets may be needed in colder weather--the classrooms in LIS are notoriously cold, especially after sitting in class for three hours. Children wear summer clothing plus light sweaters or windbreakers. Leave your wools and leathers behind--the humidity and mold will eat through them.

Population

The population in Hawaii is richly diverse, with no single ethnic or religious majority. In this multicultural environment, the people of Hawaii tend to be very tolerant of differing views, respecting each person's individuality and privacy.

Getting to Hawaii

Make reservations early for lower airfare. Flights are cheaper on some days than others; check with your travel agent. Try to arrive at least two weeks before registration so you can find housing. You'll go through customs if you are an international student; have your documents in hand when you arrive. Bring some toiletries and a change of clothes in your carry-on baggage in case your luggage arrives late or is lost. [Note: if you are thinking of flying home for the holidays, Kalikimaka ("Christmas" in Hawaiian) specials offer substantial savings in airfare, even though they have many restrictions. They help the airlines fill seats on empty planes that need to fly back to the mainland during our busiest tourist season.]

Getting to the University of Hawaii

Honolulu International Airport is in northwest Honolulu, about a twenty-minute drive from campus. The cheapest ride from the airport is on the city bus called [TheBus](#). The information desk there will direct you to city buses. Taxis are also available from the airport to the UH. View [TheCAB website](#) for fare rates and information.

From Waikiki, TheBus #4 or #13 goes to the UH and #8 goes to Ala Moana Shopping Center, a major transfer point. The #6 and #18 buses go from Ala Moana to the UH and back. It is easiest to catch #6, #8 and #18 at Ala Moana.

Car rental companies a few miles away from the airport may charge less per day (the weekly rate is usually lower than paying the daily rate for seven days). Most car rental agents require renters to be at least 25 years old, have a valid driver's license and a major credit card. There is a seat-belt law in Hawaii.

Shipping Your Wheels

New and used car prices are higher here. It may be cheaper to ship your car or cycle, though some prefer buying an older used car. The mild climate makes all two-wheelers popular. Traffic in town is aggressive and not two-wheel friendly, so wear a helmet (even though there is no helmet law). Gas is more expensive in the islands than the mainland, so take that into account. Leaded gas is not available. For shipping information, contact Matson Navigation Company or Sea Land Service (ships from the West Coast only).

A Vehicle Permit for cars and motorcycles (good for one year or until the out-of-state registration expires) must be obtained within 30 days of arrival. For details, visit any [Satellite City Hall](#) or call (808) 527-6695.

Annual car safety inspections are required. No-fault insurance is mandatory, and proof of coverage is needed to get a safety sticker. Many mainland companies have no representative in Hawaii; you may need to get insurance here--bring documentation of your driving record.

Annual safety inspections are also required for motorcycles. Motorcycle insurance is mandatory and expensive. Motorcycles, mopeds and bicycles must be registered.

TheBus

TheBus, a reasonably good alternative, will take you anywhere on Oahu for a single fare (transfer included), even around the island. Most buses going out of Honolulu can be caught at the centrally located Ala Moana Shopping Center. Routes and schedules are available from [TheBus](#). Monthly passes are good for unlimited rides. Buy them at the UH Campus Center, Satellite City Halls, Foodland, and 7-Eleven. Sometimes TheBus offers student discount passes, available at the [UH Campus Center](#).

Parking

Due to a serious parking shortage, new students are not allowed to purchase parking permits. Daily rates are \$4 (with a \$5 rate after 4pm), but the Parking Structure often fills up by 10:00 am. Carpool permits are available, but there must be at least two people in the car. Carpool permits are only given if both riders are UH students, and both have registered vehicles. Evening permits from the Parking & Traffic Office allow you to park on campus after 4 pm. Moped and motorcycle parking permits are also available. Beware: the police ticket and tow illegally parked cars in Hawaii.

For more information on parking at UH Manoa, visit the [UH Parking & Transportation Services](#) website.

Pets

Difficult as it may be, our official recommendation is that you leave your pets at home. Many landlords do not allow them, and you will be drastically limiting your housing options. Currently, dogs and cats (even Seeing Eye dogs) must be quarantined for 30 to 120 days, at the owner's cost. However, there are steps pet owners can take, before arriving in Hawaii, to significantly shorten the length of their pet's confinement.

If there are two owners, place both owners' names on the pet's crate so both parties have authorization to visit and deal with quarantine officials. Many exotic pets (snakes, ferrets, gerbils, hedgehogs, hamsters, etc.) are not permitted in

Hawaii as they are considered alien species that endanger the fragile ecosystem of Hawaii. Contact the Animal Quarantine Station on whether your exotic pet can be admitted.

Department of Agriculture
Animal Quarantine Station
99-951 Halawa Valley Street
Aiea, Hawaii 96701-3246
Telephone (808) 483-7151
FAX (808) 483-7161

Or visit the Hawaii Department of Agriculture's [Animal Quarantine Information](#) page for more information.

Getting a Place for the First Night

Please plan in advance for temporary housing, don't wait until your arrival. International students can contact the [International Student Services Office](#) for information on international student organizations (i.e., Chinese Students Association, Association of Korean Students, etc.), to assist with pick-up and first-night accommodations.

The following YMCA & YWCAs are near, or on a bus line to campus:

Central Branch YMCA:

Central YMCA
401 Atkinson Drive.
Honolulu, HI 96814
Phone: (808) 941-3344
<http://www.ymcahonolulu.org/locations/central>

Contact Central YMCA for more information.

Atherton YMCA:

Atherton YMCA
1820 University Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone: (808) 946-0253
<http://www.ymcahonolulu.org/locations/atherton>

Contact Atherton YMCA for more information.

Fernhurst YWCA Women's Residence:

Fernhurst YWCA
1566 Wilder Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone: (808) 941-2231
Fax: (808) 949-0266
<http://oahu.ywca.org/fernhurst>

Contact Fernhurst YWCA for more information.

For more off-campus housing options visit the [UH Off-Campus Housing Referral Program's](#) website.

Getting a State ID Card

With a State of Hawaii ID card, you can write personal checks in stores and get kama'aina (resident) discounts at many locations. You can obtain a State ID card for a fee at the State Civil Identification Office, weekdays, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm (except State holidays). Call their office at 1-808-587-3111 for recorded information on which legal documents are required (beware--they must be original documents such as social security card and birth certificate). Go first thing in the morning; the snail-paced line can get very long during the day.

The State ID Office is located at 465 South King Street (at the corner of Punchbowl Street and South King Street), Room 102. There is a handicap ramp in the front of the building.

More information can be found on the State of Hawaii's [Hawaii State Identification Card](#) website.

International Students

International students should contact the [International Student Services Office](#) for additional specific information. A cross-cultural orientation is offered for incoming international students.

Getting a Driver's License

Use your valid out-of-state driver's license in Hawaii until it expires. For a Hawaii state license, you must pass written and vision tests, and may have to pass a road test. You need your out-of-state driver's license and social security card to obtain a state license.

Apply for the license before your out-of-state license expires. Contact the City & County of Honolulu Motor Vehicles, Licensing & Permits Division for hours and fees (or visit the [Department of Consumer Services](#) website). They also handle the written and road tests for motorcycle and moped riders.

Personal Finances

Local banks usually require ten to 18 days to clear checks drawn on US mainland banks; checks from foreign banks may take longer. Traveler's checks are the safest and most efficient way to bring money. ATM machines connected to systems such as Cirrus and Plus are readily available. Bring along more funds than you anticipate; rent and food prices are higher than in most mainland cities (approximately 15-20% higher).

Get a Hawaii Driver's License or Hawaii ID card for cashing checks.

Credit cards are required to rent cars and furniture, and are used in lieu of a deposit for video store memberships, etc. To avoid the high interest rates of credit cards, you can get "debit cards" offered by some local banks. These credit card look-alikes deduct purchases directly from your checking account.

Financial institutions near the UH include American Savings Bank, Bank of Hawaii, Bank of Honolulu, Central Pacific Bank, City Bank, First Hawaiian Bank, First Federal Savings & Loan, First Nationwide Bank, International Savings & Loan, Pioneer Federal Savings & Loan. UH students are also eligible to join the [UH Federal Credit Union](#) on campus.

Getting a Bite to Eat

Waikiki restaurant prices are rather high. While there are familiar franchise restaurants in Honolulu (McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, Sizzler's, etc.), the cost here is a little higher than on the mainland.

Hawaii's multicultural population means a smorgasbord of ethnic restaurants to choose from. Eateries specializing in Chinese, Filipino, Greek, Hawaiian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mexican, Thai, and Vietnamese are just a sampling. If you are a vegetarian or vegan, the Asian influence means a bounty of foods to choose from--many restaurants serve vegetarian dishes. [Note: Honolulu has some strong anti-smoking laws. For example, smoking is prohibited in restaurants and the bar areas of restaurants (except for free-standing bars and separate outdoor areas). If you are a smoker from a smoking-tolerant area, you may need to adjust your habits.]

There are six dining facilities on campus:

1. Campus Center: Complete dining facilities. Breakfast, ala carte lunch, dinner, grilled items. Taco Bell is also located here.
2. Paradise Palms Cafe: Breakfast, ala carte lunch, dinner. Located right outside the library.
3. Manoa Garden Bistro: Breakfast (pastries, hot beverages), ala carte lunch, dinner, full service bar, and the only stir fry counter on campus.
4. Gateway House Dining Facility: Complete dining facilities. Breakfast, dinner. For those living in the dorms or on meal plans.
5. Hale Aloha Cafeteria: Complete dining facilities. Breakfast, ala carte lunch, dinner. Used by those living in the dorms, or on meal plans.
6. Satellite Operations: Provides a variety of meal items, snacks, and beverages at all satellite food service locations.

For more information on locations and hours of operation visit the [University Dining Services](#) website.

Shopping

An island environment means food costs are among the highest in the nation (most things must be shipped in). Please be aware that prices may be much higher than you are used to.

Markets in the University area include: Star Supermarket, Safeway Store, Times Supermarket, Kokua Natural Foods, and Down to Earth Natural Foods.

If you have a car, the most economical shopping can be at the large discount warehouse stores on the outskirts of town. These include Costco, Sam's Club, Wal-Mart, KMart, Home Outlet, Sports Authority, and Eagle Hardware.

Malls in Hawaii contain the same stores you are familiar with. The main shopping centers include [Ala Moana Center](#), [Aloha Tower Marketplace](#), [Kahala Mall](#), [Pearlridge Center](#), [Royal Hawaiian Center](#), [Windward Mall](#), [Waialeale Shopping Center](#), and [Victoria Ward Centers](#).

Other options for clothes, furniture, and cooking utensils include Goodwill, Savers, and Salvation Army Thrift stores, swap meets, and garage sales. The biggest swap meet is at the Aloha Stadium Flea Market, open Sundays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays.

Finding Housing

Contact the [UHM Student Housing Services Office](#) for information on dorms and off-campus housing, although word-of-mouth with your fellow students is often the most fruitful way of getting comfortable, affordable housing.

You may spend your first month securing permanent housing. Housing in Hawaii is expensive. Take heart, however; late July or early August is one of the best times to find a place to live. If you want to live near campus, areas close by include Manoa, McCully, Makiki, Moili'ili, Kapahulu, Kaimuki, Kapiolani Blvd., and St. Louis Heights. Check the classified ads in the classified ads in the [Honolulu Star Advertiser](#). Sunday editions have the most listings. Listings for apartments and shared housing are posted around campus on bulletin boards (in front of Hamilton and Sinclair libraries, and the Student Services Building). UHM offers very little housing for married couples.

Placing a "rental wanted" ad in the local newspapers before departure for Hawaii would be a good head start.

Types of Housing

Dormitories and Apartments: Write directly to the [UHM Student Housing Services Office](#). The Atherton YMCA also offers off-campus dormitory rooms close to UH.

Private Homes: Classified ads are your best source. Another good source is the [Women's Campus Club Exchange](#), a publication that can be found in department offices all around campus.

Shared Houses: This common option means roommates (one to four or more) with shared baths, etc., sharing the costs of rent and utilities (water, electricity). Homes can be roomy and comfortable, with spectacular views, and provide a chance to meet people and live in a setting you could not afford by yourself.

You will face stiff competition for cheap housing here. Show up prepared with a brief resume with financial status and references.

Sign a lease to avoid increases in the rent. The first month's rent and a security deposit (which, by law, cannot exceed one month's rent) are usually required; however, be sure you are allowed to sublease if you want to go home for the summer.

Utilities: Ask if water is included in the rent. Hawaiian Electric Co. and Hawaiian Telephone will waive deposits (up to \$75) if you had utility service in your name on the mainland and can get that company to provide you with a letter confirming this. Decrease your phone bill by buying your own phone. Most homes also subscribe to cable TV, and basic service fees will cost additional funds each month.

For more information on off-campus housing visit the [University of Hawaii Off-Campus Referral Program](#).

Taking Care of Your Health

[University Health Services](#) offers affordable basic medical care. A comprehensive Family Planning Clinic is open to both students and non-students, with fees based on income. A small pharmacy and lab provide medications and tests at low cost. Sports medicine, nutrition and mental health services are available on a part-time basis, and the staff can provide referrals for specialized care. Confidential, anonymous AIDS testing is also available. Call Campus Security for emergencies on campus.

Medical insurance is strongly recommended (and mandatory for international students); the Health Center is only open during regular working hours, and does not cover dependents, nor treat major illnesses or injuries. UH-sponsored insurance plans are available to students, spouses and dependents; brochures are available at the Health Center. There are open enrollment periods at the first month of each term.

You must go off-campus for x-rays, broken bones or other problems. If you have a health problem upon arriving, try the Waikiki Health Center. If they cannot handle your problem, they will refer you to the right agency. Inexpensive and friendly, they are geared to the visitor.

The School of Nursing's Student Dental Hygiene Clinic will inspect, clean, and polish teeth for for a cash fee. For more information on the program, please the clinic at (808) 956-8229.

Child Care

Most elementary schools offer after-school programs ([Department of Education](#), [YMCA](#), etc.). Check with the school, then contact the appropriate agency for details.

There are also many preschool childcare centers, with various costs and approaches to discipline and education. Arrangements for any form of childcare must be made as far in advance as possible.

The [UHM Children's Center](#) provides students, faculty and staff with on-campus childcare. Rates are based on income.

Children must have a TB test to enter Hawaii daycare centers or schools. The test can be taken on the mainland up to a year in advance. Bring proof of the TB test reading with you. Children must also have a physical exam by the end of the third month after entering school.

Things to Do

University of Hawaii at Manoa:

The [Art Department](#) has two award-winning galleries. The Music Department's [symphony orchestra](#), faculty and students perform regularly at the UH Orvis Auditorium. Oral interpretations of literary works are staged frequently by the Speech Department. The Drama and Theater Departments produce dance productions and major plays. Hemenway Hall regularly shows popular movies, and the Foreign Film Society runs films at the Physical Science Auditorium.

Hemenway Hall offers noncredit classes (pottery, etc.), while their Outdoor Recreation Board offers classes in sailing, scuba diving, etc.

If you want to take fun courses for credit, try ballroom dancing, swimming or karate. These undergraduate courses (worth one credit) will not count toward your degree.

To see some first-run movies in town, you can purchase discount tickets at the Campus Center Information Desk.

Sports:

As a UH student, you can purchase inexpensive tickets to UH sporting events. Men's baseball, basketball, football and women's volleyball are just a few examples of the sports you can attend.

For more information on UH sports visit the [University of Hawaii Athletics](#) website.

If you want to get some exercise, Manoa Valley offers some peaceful roads for jogging. Cooke Field has a rubberized quarter-mile track, while Kapiolani Park offers an exercise stop (sit-up bars, etc.) along the jogging trail. For extra miles, add a run to the other side of Diamond Head.

If you swim, try the sheltered beach at Ala Moana Beach Park. The UH Duke Kahanamoku pool has "open lap hours" every semester, as does the pool at the Manoa Recreation Center.

With a large health-conscious population, Hawaii offers many organized sports events, such as the 10k, open water swim, and biathlons. The world-famous Ironman Triathlon is held every October in Kailua-Kona, the [Honolulu Marathon](#) is held every December, and the [Great Aloha Run](#), held every year on President's Day (Lincoln's Birthday) is currently one of the top five largest fun runs held in the country.

Around Town:

- Libraries: The public libraries in Hawaii are administered by the [Hawaii State Public Library System](#). Visit its main library--and don't forget to get yourself a library card!
- The [Waikiki Aquarium](#), part of the UH School of Ocean & Earth Science & Technology, is world famous for its deep-sea nautilus collection. It is located at the Diamond Head end of Waikiki. Fee.
- The [Honolulu Zoo](#) sits at the Waikiki end of Kapiolani Park, very close to the Aquarium. Fee.
- The Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, is accessible via the TheBus or car. The visitor's center is open from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm, seven days a week, except for New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Tours begin approximately every 15 minutes from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. The tour is free, but tickets are issued on a first-come, first-served basis. You should probably arrive at the visitor's center before 1:00 pm to ensure getting a tour ticket. No bathing suits or bare feet are allowed.
- The Fort DeRussy US Army Museum on the Ewa (west) end of Waikiki, looks at the history of Hawaii's connection with the military, especially during WWII and Viet Nam. No fee; donations.
- The excellent Asian art collection at the [Honolulu Academy of Arts](#) was built in part around a large donation from James Michener. No fee; donations.

- The [Contemporary Museum](#) features art of the last 40 years. Fee.
- The Hawaii Chamber Orchestra Society offers concerts periodically.
- Stage Theaters in Honolulu: UH Kennedy Theater has frequent live performances. The Hawaii Performing Arts Company, the [Diamond Head Theater](#) and the Honolulu Theater for Youth feature live stage performances of musicals, comedies, modern and classical theater year-round.
- The Hawaii Maritime Center at the Kalakaua Boat House at Pier 7 traces Hawaii's maritime history. Fee.
- The [Bishop Museum](#) has the world's largest Hawaiian artifacts collection. Active research and lecture program. Stargaze at the planetarium. Open 7 days a week 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Hawaii residents admitted free the first Sunday of the month. Fee.

Looking for more ideas? Visit Hawaiiweb.com or the [Alternative-Hawaii](#) website.

Hitting the Beach

Hawaii is famous for its great beaches. For safety's sake, check with the lifeguard for surf conditions, hazardous currents, jellyfish, Portuguese Man O'War, or sharp coral.

The winter months bring world famous surf to the North Shore. Many other beaches also get very high surf which can be dangerous even for experienced swimmers. Sandy Beach is notorious for its high casualty rate of people who enter its deceptive knee-deep water and get injured by the violent shorebreak.

Some (safer) popular beaches close to the University are:

Ala Moana Beach Park: One of the most enjoyable sites, featuring a beautiful beach, picnic grounds, tennis courts, jogging paths and grassy fields.

Waikiki Beach: Minutes away from UH, this beach is popular with both visitors and residents. Swim, surf, snorkel, dive, people-watch, or just bask in the sun (don't forget to use sunscreen!).

There are many other beaches to be enjoyed; however, they are located farther away than those described above. A few of these are Hanauma Bay (fee), Kailua Beach Park, Lanikai Beach, [Kualoa Ranch](#), Kualoa Beach Park and Haleiwa Beach Park. A good idea would be to ask your fellow graduate students for directions as well as beach conditions. Beware: Never leave any valuables in your car.