Welcome
International
Students!

Preparing to Study at the
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
2012-2013
The International Student Services Office (ISS) staff warmly welcomes you to the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM). 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 UHM and I-20 or DS-2019.
If you have not received your UHM 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: www.hawaii.edu/admrec/

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

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

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

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

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 from another US institution are not subject to the 30 day advance grace period.

☐ Request airport pick-up (optional).
See page 6.

☐ 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 page 7.

☐ Sign up for an ELI test on-line before August 8 to prevent registration delays. See page 9.

☐ Reserve your space in an ISS Visa Clearance Session (mandatory). See page 5.


☐ Weather/Clothing.
Hawai`i’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. Bed linen and a towel may be helpful.

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

☐ Attend ISS Check in Session.
☐ Clear all registration hold(s). Allow at least 3 business days.
☐ Receive academic advising.
☐ Begin your registration at the appointment time assigned on MyUH.

☐ Attend the ISS Welcome.
☐ Find housing and enter your local address in MyUH.
☐ Establish a local Bank Account.
☐ Set up e-refund on MyUH.

ISS Services, Check-in, Orientation

What is International Student Services (ISS)?

The ISS provides visa related and other support services to international students at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. Each academic year, we serve approximately 1200 students from about 90 nations.

In addition to monitoring and administering visa requirements, ISS provides cultural adjustment and sharing programs, leadership experiences, financial assistance programs, and personal advising.

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. Counseling/advising hours are 8:30–12:00 mornings, and 1:00–3:30 afternoons. If you have special needs, please notify us, and we will try to accommodate you.
What happens at the ISS Visa Clearance?

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, I-94 card, 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” is offered by the ISS to help you have a successful start at UHM. You will receive helpful information on studying and living in the campus community. Besides meeting ISS and other UHM staff, you will have the opportunity to meet other international and local students and learn about student resources, university procedures, etc. The Welcome occurs the week before fall and spring classes begin each semester, and includes a tour of selected campus sites, and a welcome party with refreshments.

The Spring 2013 Welcome will be held Friday, January 4, 2013 - 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
(Location: Spalding Hall 155 and Hemenway Courtyard)

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

New Student Orientation (NSO) is a special 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 benefit from 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, collect your luggage and clear immigration and customs, and then phone Carlye Lawrence (808-277-3185 or 808-946-9581).

Can I take a taxi to UHM 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 $25–$30, excluding baggage charges and the customary tip of 10 to 15 percent.
Is there bus service to Waikiki Hotels and UHM?

“AIRPORT WAIKIKI HOTEL SHUTTLE” bus service serves all hotels in Waikiki and is reasonably priced (app. $10.00). Alternatively, the public bus ($2.50 exact change only) can get you from the airport to UHM or Waikiki if your luggage will fit on your lap.

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. UHM 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 UHM 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.

What are the advantages of living on campus?

Many students who live on campus like the convenience of being close to classes, libraries, computer labs, cafeterias and athletic facilities. Living in the dorm also makes it easy for students to socialize with other students.

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 dormitories and apartments. There is a $25 non-refundable application fee. Cost per semester varies, depending on the hall. Children cannot be accommodated. Dorm resident must purchase a meal plan. 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 $27–39 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 Manoa, 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 take 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.housing.hawaii.edu/och](http://www.housing.hawaii.edu/och). 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.

There are two housing options very close to campus which have traditionally catered to international students:
- **Atherton YMCA**, a coed dorm with single, double and quad rooms. See [www.athertonymca.org/](http://www.athertonymca.org/)
- **Kalo Terrace**, an apartment complex for students. A typical apartment has 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms accommodating up to 8 students. See [www.studentrentalshawaii.com/](http://www.studentrentalshawaii.com/)

Hawaii Student Housing operates two converted hotels in Waikiki as dorms for international and domestic students at any college in Honolulu. See [www.HawaiiStudentHousing.org](http://www.HawaiiStudentHousing.org)

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 | Fax: (808) 521-3556 | Email: IHC@priory.net | Web: [http://www.ihchawaii.org](http://www.ihchawaii.org)
IHC provides one-week homestay including airport pickup, room and board, and involvement in host activities. Administrative fee is about $250. *Rates are subject to change*

**International Student Placements**, Main Office
199 First Street, Suite#305, Los Altos, CA 94022
Tel: (808) 536-2837 | Email: toni@isphomestays.com | Web: [www.isphomestays.com](http://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. The monthly fee ranges from $650 to $850 per month.

**Rainbow Homestay LLC**
Coordinator: Emma Miyaki
Tel: (808)277-9016 | Email: rainbowhomestay@hawaii.rr.com | Web: [www.rainbowhomestay.vpweb.com](http://www.rainbowhomestay.vpweb.com)

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 ELI placement test results, students 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
Tel: (808) 956-8610 | Fax: (808) 956-2802 | Email: uhmeli@hawaii.edu

What are the state and university health requirements?
All students must meet state health clearance requirements before completing registration. Allow at least 3 business days.

- Tuberculosis skin test; chest X-ray as necessary. TB testing must be done in Hawai‘i.
- Two doses of measles or MMR vaccination.
Do I need health insurance?
Yes. UH policy requires F-1 and J-1 students to have adequate health insurance for each term you are enrolled. J-2 dependents in the U.S. are also required to have adequate health insurance. Health insurance is strongly recommended for F-2 spouses and children as health care in the US is extremely expensive.

F-1 students: see www.hawaii.edu/shs/ (click on International Student Insurance).
J-1 students: see www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/ (click on health insurance).

Academic Advising

How should I decide which classes to take?
It is essential for you to meet with an academic adviser to decide which courses you should register for.

- Graduate Students: go to your academic departments.
- Undergraduate Students: go to your College Student Services.
- Visiting and Exchange Students: check with the MIX office to locate your advising contact.

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.)
What are registrations holds and how do they work?

A "registration hold" locks your student registration. For example, if you have a hold before you begin to select and register for classes, you will not be able to register. If a hold becomes effective after you have already registered for some classes, that hold will prevent you from making any registration changes. **Allow at least 3 business days to clear holds.** New international students typically have three or four registration holds that may be visible at some point during the registration process:

- **Proof of Visa Status hold:** Responsible office is International Student Services (ISS)
- **Health Insurance hold:** Responsible office is Student Health Insurance Office (SHIO) for F-1 students, or ISS for J-1 students and their J-2 dependents
- **TB, MMR, and health forms hold:** Responsible office is University Health Services
- **English Language clearance:** Responsible office is the English Language Institute (ELI)

Look at your UH registration portal to view current holds. A hold notation will NOT be displayed prior to the “effective” date of a hold, but will be displayed on the effective date, and as of the effective day, will prevent any changes to registration until that hold is cleared or moved forward.

**Warning!** Students who have not cleared ALL required holds by the registration deadline may have their enrollment cancelled due to non-compliance with US or state of Hawaii regulations, or UH policy and may also have their student visa status terminated in the SEVIS system.

The visa status and TB/MMR holds are deleted entirely once a student has satisfied the conditions of the hold. The health insurance hold is designed as a “perpetual” hold. The effective date of that hold will be moved forward as long as you are a student with a student visa. As you pay your health insurance premiums and provide proof of coverage, the hold will be set for a future date. For example, if you purchase the UH Student Health insurance for Spring 2013 and pay for one semester only at the beginning of January, your health insurance hold will be reset to the end of May. You will have to provide proof of a new payment prior to Fall 2013 semester in order for the insurance hold effective date to move forward to the beginning of January 2014.
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 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 [travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.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 UHM from another institution without leaving the U.S.

Is there anything I need to do?

F-1 or J-1 students who are transferring from a SEVIS school will need to be “released” from that school before UHM can prepare a UHM visa form I-20 or DS 2019. You may transfer in the middle of a degree program, or when starting a new study program at UHM. Please ask the International Student Adviser at your old school to release your SEVIS file to UHM, so that UHM can issue your I-20 or DS 2019. Bring both your old and new visa forms to the ISS when you arrive. (J-1 students subject to the 2 year home residency requirement may not be eligible to transfer schools or programs within the U.S. Seek advising from your current J-1 sponsor.)

I am transferring to UHM from another institution but I am currently outside the U.S.

Is there anything important I need to know?

F-1 students who have previously attended a SEVIS school must be released in SEVIS, as stated in the previous section. When you enter the US, you must present a valid passport with a valid visa in your passport. But it is not necessary to obtain a new visa to correct the school notation. (Canadians do not require a visa, but are required to provide the I-20 or DS-2019 for the school they plan to attend at the Port of Entry and receive F-1 or J-1 entry status.) All students entering the U.S. on a student visa must present an I-20 form (F-1 status) or the DS-2019 (J-1 status).

I currently have a non-student visa status, but I want to change to student status.

What should I do?

Contact an International Student 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).
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 $1766 every month.

When you first arrive, you’ll need enough to pay your tuition and fees (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 UHM 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 80% of gross stipend amount, due to federal and state income tax withholdings and health insurance costs.

How much do I need to study at UHM per year?

**Undergraduate Student**
- Non-Resident Tuition and Fees (for 12 or more credits) $25,652
- Living Expenses including books/supplies, insurance, room/board $15,900
- Total $41,552

**Graduate Student**
- Non-Resident Tuition and Fees (for 8 credits only) $19,528
- Living Expenses including books/supplies, insurance, room/board $15,900
- Total $35,428

Rates for professional graduate programs (Law, Medicine, Nursing, Architecture, Business) differ from the above. Consult the schedule of classes online for current rates.

Estimated living cost for summer: $4,500 + tuition and fees.

Is there a bank near campus?

The UH Federal Credit Union is 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 from ISS before applying for a SSN.

Taxes

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., and the amount of time a student resides in the US.

The ISS provides on-line tax resources to assist students with tax issues related to scholarships and earned income at 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?
UHM 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 UHM, 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 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 UHM. Some of these organizations may be willing to provide help to new students. As representatives change frequently, please review the current student organizations at [www.manoa.hawaii.edu/studentlife/studentorg/rio.html](http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/studentlife/studentorg/rio.html). You may email the contact person listed for more information.