



# **SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY**

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**International  
Student Handbook  
2018 – 2019**

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## **Letter from the Asst. Vice President of International Affairs**

On behalf of the staff of the International Affairs Office, I would like to welcome you to South Dakota State University! Our office looks forward to assisting you as you become acclimated to SDSU and the Brookings area. We will do our best to make your experience at SDSU a positive and productive one. Please feel free to contact us at any time as you encounter the many issues that “come with the territory” of traveling to a foreign land. Again, we will be happy to help you the best we know how.

When you arrive, it is not uncommon to have many questions and your first weeks on campus are likely to be the most confusing. Much information will come at you quickly and it will be hard to absorb it all; however, I would like to highlight a few things that you might find important.

At the beginning of each semester, our office hosts many new student orientation activities that are designed to help introduce you to the services and people available to help you as you experience life at SDSU. Please take advantage of our new student orientation as it will help you adjust more quickly. The International Affairs Office also hosts many events throughout the academic year. Through these events, you will have an opportunity to meet many friends and enjoy intriguing conversation. Please join us and bring your friends!

Our office is located on the main floor of Briggs Library. Feel free to visit the International Affairs Office any time we can be of assistance to you.

Best wishes in all of your pursuits.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Fairfax  
Assistant Vice President of International Affairs

## **Orientation**

SDSU's international student orientation takes place in August before the beginning of Fall Semester. A less extensive orientation is offered at the start of Spring Semester. International students who have attended the orientation program have found it to be beneficial both for making new friends as well as understanding the academic requirements, immigration regulations, and support services available. All new incoming international students are required to attend new student orientation. It will help to guide and direct you as you begin your academic endeavors here at SDSU. Many current SDSU students serve as orientation volunteers called "Diplomats." They greet you when you arrive, help with academic advising, lead campus tours, and introduce new students to the community. New student orientation also gives you a good opportunity to become acquainted with some of the staff with whom you will associate during your stay here. Make the best of this opportunity that is given to you!

# International Affairs Office

## *Our Mission*

- The Office of International Affairs is committed to promoting, supporting and celebrating an international environment at South Dakota State University. To accomplish this, the Office strives to create access to and appreciation for international and cross-cultural experiences, perspectives, initiatives, and advocacy which will prepare individuals to interact in the global community.  
Included in our commitment is:
  - Providing dependable, accurate information and services to both our study abroad participants and international students.
  - Helping to support International Students, Research Scholars and Professors in maintaining their legal status while in the United States.
  - Supporting international students in successfully accomplishing their academic and career goals.
  - Assisting the Brookings Community and Region in its commitment to diversity.

## General hours

Except on official University holidays, the Office of International Affairs is open all year. International Affairs' staff hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You can stop by the office in Suite 119 on the main floor of the Briggs Library, or you can call 605/688-4122 to ask general questions.

## Walk-in hours & appointments

One of the many benefits of attending SDSU is that the Office of International Affairs tries to be as flexible with your schedule as possible. With this being said, if you think your appointment will last more than 15 minutes, we suggest that you schedule an appointment.

## Advising services

International Affairs staff's past experiences have trained them to provide information to foreign nationals about academic, immigration, financial, personal and family matters, as well as issues such as cross-cultural adjustment. In addition, the Office of International Affairs provides training and programs that enhance the awareness and understanding of cross-cultural and international issues. Staff in the OIA consult daily with University faculty and staff on issues related to international students in their departments. Other resources provided to students are:

The First Year Advising Center:

Wintroe Student Success Center [sdсу.AdvisingCenter@sdstate.edu](mailto:sdсу.AdvisingCenter@sdstate.edu) Phone: 605.688.4155

Wellness Center:

1440 N. Campus Drive [sdсу.wellnesscenter@sdstate.edu](mailto:sdсу.wellnesscenter@sdstate.edu) Phone: 605. 697.9355

Career Center:

University Student Union, Suite 136 [sdсу.careercenter@sdstate.edu](mailto:sdсу.careercenter@sdstate.edu) Phone: 605.688.4425

## Visa documents

The Office of International Affairs is responsible for helping international students maintain their nonimmigrant visa status. The OIA prepares or assists in preparing certain nonimmigrant visa documents required by the U.S. government for persons with F-1 (student) and J1 (exchange and scholars) visas. These include documents for travel, dependent travel, changes of degree program, transfer of schools, extension of stay, and employment options. Our Office is also responsible for international student admission to SDSU. For more information about international student admission to SDSU, contact our International Recruitment Coordinator.



## Office of International Affairs Resources

### **Web Sites**

You can find a wide range of information—from visa regulations and downloadable forms to newsletters and intercultural opportunities—published on the web. Check out the Office of International Affairs website at <http://www.sdstate.edu/international-affairs/> & click on the “International Students and Scholars” Link.

You can also stay connected with the Office of International Affairs by “liking” our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/SDSUInternational>.

### **International Listserv**

The International Student Listserv is a way to keep our International Student population informed. All international students will be subscribed to the listserv upon arrival to SDSU. This allows international students to stay informed on important issues. Information provided includes office schedules, special events, U.S. government regulatory changes, and other news items of concern to the international population at SDSU. To access the International Student Listserv please visit: <http://lists.sdstate.edu/scripts/wa.exe?HOME> (Click on International\_Students)

### **Brochures/Packets/Forms**

The Office of International Affairs also provides many brochures on visa regulations and other useful information to complement the student handbook. You can pick up copies of the following brochures/packets from International Affairs’ staff in Briggs Library.

#### *Special F-1/J-1 Brochure Series:*

- F-1 Curricular Practical Training
- F-1 Optional Practical Training
- F-1 Economic Hardship Work Authorization
- When Is It Acceptable to Delay My Graduation?
- Fulfilling the Requirements of SEVIS: A Guide for Students in F-1/J-1 Status
- A Guide for F-1/J-1 Students Traveling Outside the US
- Online or Distant Education Restrictions
- STEM Extension Checklist and Procedures

#### *Forms*

- Program Extension Packet
- Request for a Reduced Course Load Form Due to Medical Condition
- Request for a Reduced Course Load Form
- Full-time Enrollment Verification Form – Graduate Students
- Letter Request Form for Inviting Friends and Family to the US
- Letter Request Form for Inviting Spouse and Children to the US
- Leave of Absence Form
- Change of Status – Please talk with an OIA staff member for the appropriate form.
- Reinstatement Procedures
- Change of Address
- Driver’s License

# Your Legal Status in the United States

## Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)

SEVIS is an electronic reporting system that provides the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), formerly part of the Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS) with information on international students and scholars in the United States who hold F, J, and M visas. The Department of Homeland Security has created an internet-based record-keeping system to maintain electronic data. The system also tracks entries into the U.S. and departures from the U.S. Every school, college, and university that admits students or scholars on F, J, or M visas is mandated to use SEVIS.

SEVIS requires daily reporting on full course enrollment and changes students may make in their academic program (i.e. change of major, change of degree program). Students should ensure that they complete a full course of study each semester or have a Request for a Reduced Course Load Form on file in the Office of International Affairs. Graduate Students working on their thesis/dissertation need a fulltime enrollment verification form on file. In addition to the information that is printed on I-20s or DS2019s, other information is reported, including but not limited to: academic status, employment, and residential address. Students should make sure that all information on their I-20 or DS 2019 remains accurate. Students should contact International Affairs staff regarding a new I-20/DS2019 if there has been a change (i.e. name has changed, financial support, new program, etc.) For more information on SEVIS, go to <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis>.

### *Visa vs. Immigration Status*

It is important to clarify two legal terms in order to fully understand how to maintain your legal status in the U.S. People are often confused about the terms “visa” and “immigration status.” Students frequently say to us, “My visa is expired. How do I get my visa extended?” In some cases, the students mean the visa stamp in their passport has expired while others are referring to the I-20 Form. In order to be of help, International Affairs staff will ask questions to clarify whether you mean, in fact, the visa stamp or your I-20.

If you are referring to the F-1 visa stamp in your passport, that stamp cannot be renewed in the U.S. You can renew your visa only at a U.S. embassy or consulate **outside** the U.S. However, you do not need to renew your visa if you will remain in the U.S., hold a valid I-20 or DS2019, and have remained in valid F-1/J-1 status. If your SEVIS I-20 or DS2019 is about to expire or has expired, then you will need to see International Affairs staff about a program extension or reinstatement. The paragraphs below offer detailed explanations of these terms.

#### **Visa**

You obtained the visa stamp in your passport at a U.S. embassy or consulate in your country or the country where you have been living. This stamp is used for entering the U.S. **The expiration date on the visa stamp does not indicate the length of time you are allowed to stay in the U.S.;** it indicates only the latest date on which you may apply to enter this country. When entering the U.S. through a “port of entry,” the Immigration inspector examines your passport, your visa, and your I-20/DS2019 (or Certificate of Eligibility) and determines whether you are admissible to the United States. The visa basically functions as a key to enter the U.S. Once you have entered, you will not have to worry about whether your visa is valid or expired. However, when you leave and need to re-enter the U.S., you must have a valid “key,” or visa, to return.

Note: Canadian citizens are not required to have a visa if entering from the U.S. within the Western Hemisphere. However, they must show their I-20/DS2019 and proof of Canadian citizenship at the U.S. port of entry in order to obtain the F-1 visa status.

#### **Immigration Status**

Once the Immigration inspector at the port of entry determines you are admissible to the U.S., he/she will grant you an immigration status, which is indicated on your I-94 Arrival/Departure Document and on your I-20 or DS2019.

The I-94 is a **very important document** so be sure you always keep it safely with your passport. The inspector will stamp your passport with the date of your arrival and status as “F-1” or “J-1.” Upon your arrival at SDSU, you will be able to print your I-94 by going to the following link: [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94). You will need your passport number, date of birth, name, country of citizenship, date of arrival, and class of admission. The Office of International Affairs can assist you in printing your I-94. The number at the top of the I-94 is your USCIS admission number, which you will keep for the duration of your studies, unless you leave the U.S. for a period of five (5) months or more. You will be issued a new admission number when you re-enter after that period of time.

## **F-1 / J-1 Legal status**

The United States has laws governing foreign nationals living within its borders. It is vital for you to take responsibility and learn about these laws which are constantly updated.

If you have **ANY QUESTIONS** in regard to immigration laws and regulations **PLEASE CONTACT INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS STAFF IN THE OFFICE of INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**. They are happy to help you understand what you need to know so that you do not jeopardize your current visit or any other future plans that you may have for returning to the United States.

Students who come to the U.S. are granted nonimmigrant classifications known as “F-1”, “J-1” and “M’”. This is commonly referred to as your “status.” (South Dakota State University only admits F-1 and J-1 Students.) A spouse or child (under the age of 21) who is allowed to come to the United States to be with an F-1 student or a J-1 student/scholar is considered a “dependent” and is given F-2 or J-2 status. This status is valid as long as the F-1/ J-1 student/scholar maintains valid status.

In order to remain legally present in the United States, you must “maintain” your status. To maintain legal status in the United States, you must follow the rules that apply to your Visa Category.

***\*\* It is your legal responsibility to know and adhere to these rules. \*\****

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT RULES FOR F-1 STUDENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

- You must attend the school that you were authorized to attend on your I-20.
- You must maintain a full course of study during the academic year. (Full time attendance during summer sessions is not required unless you were admitted to begin your studies during summer session.)
- You may not drop below full-time status without authorization from the Office of International Affairs
- You cannot be employed off campus without proper authorization.
- It is important for you to have a clean criminal record. Charges such as DUI (Driving under the influence), possession of illegal substance, MIP (Minor in Possession), buying/owning a firearm, or assault will lead to the termination of your legal status in the United States. The Office of International Affairs cannot assist you with criminal charges.
- You must follow the Department of Homeland Security rules regarding:
  - Extending your stay (apply for extensions before I-20 expires.)
  - Changing from one degree program level to another (bachelor’s, master’s, Ph.D.)
  - Transferring to another school
  - Reporting any changes in your residential address by updating the current mailing address with the Office of International Affairs
  - Staying in the United States past your grace period

## THE MOST IMPORTANT RULES FOR J-1 STUDENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- You must attend the school that you were authorized to attend on your DS-2019.
- You must engage only in activities permitted under your program and category.
  - Students must maintain a full course of study during the academic year.
  - Scholars must teach or perform the research they were authorized to do.
- You must maintain the required health insurance coverage.
- **You cannot be employed without proper authorization.**
  - **On Campus or Off Campus. Please stop by the Office of International Affairs for authorization.**
- You must follow the Department of States' rules regarding:
  - Filing timely and appropriate transfer and extension notifications.
  - Report any changes in your residential address by updating the current mailing address with the Office of International Affairs.

## Important Immigration Documents

If you have questions about anything related to the following documents, contact International Affairs staff.

### **Passport**

The U.S. government requires that international students keep their passports valid at least six months into the future. Additionally, students working on campus will find that the payroll office is unable to issue your paycheck if your passport is expired. Only your government can renew or extend your passport. Contact your country's embassy or consulate in the United States for information on the appropriate procedure. Addresses and telephone numbers for foreign embassies in the United States are available on the web at

<http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl/32122.htm>

### **Form I-94**

Once you have arrived at SDSU, you will need to go online to print your I-94 at the following website: [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94). You will need your passport number, date of birth, name, country of citizenship, date of arrival, and class of admission. The Office of International Affairs can assist you in printing your I-94.

**Admission Number:** The 11-digit number on your I-94 is used by the DHS to monitor your arrival and departure from the United States.

**Expiration Date:** On your I-94 you will find the notation D/S. This signifies Duration of Status and means that you can stay in the United States until your program ends or your I-20/DS2019 expires, whichever is first. If you *complete* your program, you have an additional 60 day grace period if you have F-1 status. Dependent status (F-2) ends when the F-1 status ends. J-1 Students have a 30 day grace period. Dependent status (J-2) ends when the J-1 status ends. In order to remain longer, you must apply for an extension of stay before your I-20/DS2019 expires.

### **Form I-20**

Students with F-1 legal status have an I-20 document.

SEVIS ID Number:

A number assigned to your record by the SEVIS system. You will find this number printed on your I-20.

I-20:

This document contains information about the student, the school, the student's academic program, the student's expenses and funding and the length of time the student is allowed to complete an academic program. Students must complete their academic programs before the date in item 5 on the I-20, or request additional time from International Affairs staff before this date arrives. If the I-20 expires before the program is completed, the student loses his or her legal status in the United States. Students are only allowed to enroll full-time at the school

listed on the I-20 unless prior approval is gained prior to transferring to the other school. A transfer process is available for students who want to change schools.

### **Form DS - 2019**

Students with J-1 legal status have a DS - 2019 document.

#### **SEVIS ID Number:**

A number assigned to your record by the SEVIS system. You will find this number printed on your DS - 2019.

#### **DS - 2019:**

This document contains information about the student, the school, the student's exchange program, and the length of time the student/scholar is allowed to complete an academic program or remain in the states. Students must complete their exchange programs before the date in item 3 on the DS - 2019, or request additional time from International Affairs staff before this date arrives. If the DS - 2019 expires before the exchange program is completed, the student loses his or her legal status in the United States. Students may attend only the school listed on the DS-2019 unless transfer approval is gained prior to taking courses at the other school. A transfer process is available for students who want to change schools.

**Note on Travel and Reentry:** After using your I-20 or DS 2019 for your initial entry into the U.S., you will need to have your document signed by International Affairs staff to revalidate it for future reentry. For further information on travel and reentry, contact International Affairs staff.

### **Entry VISA**

A visa is a stamp or sticker placed in your passport. F and J visas can be obtained only at a U.S. embassy or consulate outside the United States. The purpose of the visa is for entry into the United States in a particular status. Information about applying for a visa at many U.S. embassies and consulates around the world is available on the web at [http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/questions/questions\\_1253.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/questions/questions_1253.html)  
Look for information about nonimmigrant visas.

**Note About your Visa:** The visa is the most commonly misunderstood immigration document. It is a stamp that the United States consulate or embassy gives foreign nationals in their passports and which they must have to **enter** the United States in the particular classification they request (e.g.: F-1). The validity of a visa stamp pertains only to the period during which it may be used for admission to the United States. It does not indicate how long you may stay in the United States. Visitors may remain in the United States with an expired visa as long as their certificate of eligibility is valid and the proper immigration status is indicated on the I-94 card. On the visa stamp, there is also an indication of the number of entries permitted, usually One, Two, or M (for multiple). If a student uses up his or her entries (or the visa expires) and wishes to enter the United States again during the same validity period, he or she must at that time obtain a new visa before re-entering the country.

### **F-1 / J-1 Employment Authorization Document (EAD)**

If you are in F-1 or J-1 status and have a current employment card issued by DHS for Optional Practical Training or Off-Campus Work Permission, that employment permission is *no longer valid* when you start a new academic program with a new I-20 or DS -2019. Please discuss this with International Affairs staff before you transfer or change levels.

### **Safekeeping of Your Immigration Documents**

It is extremely important to keep and protect the following documents in order to identify yourself, apply employment authorization, prove your status, and maintain a record of your status throughout your stay in the

United States. We encourage you to place these documents in a safe deposit box at a local bank. It is also prudent to keep copies of the following documents in case you lose them:

- I-94
- Passport
- F-1 students and F-2 dependents: page one and three of I-20. (Each have their own I-20)
- J-1 students and J-2 dependents: page one of DS - 2019. (Each have their own DS-2019)
- EAD (if applicable)
- Old passport (some governments allow you to keep them, some do not)
- F-1 students: staple all of your previous I-20s to your current I-20

## Full course of study requirement

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requires all international students with F-1 visas or J1 Student Visas to register for a minimum number of credits each semester to maintain their student status in the United States. It also requires the University to verify that its international students are registered for a full course of study.

### Credit Requirements

Minimum credit levels for the 2018-2019 academic year:

- Undergraduate students (including transfer undergraduate students and non-degree undergraduate students) must be registered for a minimum of 12 credits.
- Graduate Students (Including Masters and PhD students): Full course of study is typically 9 credits at the graduate level; however, the credits may vary depending on the percentage of graduate assistantship a student has.

#### IMPORTANT:

To be able to be considered taking a full course load, your transcript must indicate that you are in 12 credits at the undergraduate level or 9 credits at the graduate level. (Unless the graduate student has an assistantship.) As a result, it is not possible to withdraw from a course unless you meet certain criteria. If you are in jeopardy of failing a course, you may want to consider changing the way the course is graded to avoid it affecting your GPA. If this happens, you will want to speak with the Records and Registration Office to change from being graded on an A to F scale, to either an AU (audit) or P/F courses. **Furthermore, only 3 credits of online courses can count toward full time enrollment each semester.**

### Taking Less Than a Full Course of Study

In some circumstances, students are allowed to take less than a full course of study during an academic term. However, you must have prior approval from International Affairs staff **before** registering for less than a full course of study or dropping below a full course of study. The legal regulations allow only a few acceptable reasons for not carrying a full course of study through the entire academic term. Typically, Undergraduate students will use the Request for a Reduced Course Load form which can be picked up at the Office of International Affairs in Briggs Library. Graduate Students will generally use the Fulltime Enrollment Verification Form. If you fall below full-time status during a term for any reason that is not recognized in the regulations, you will lose your legal status in the United States. ***This is the most common way students lose their legal status!*** Meet with International Affairs staff for prior approval before you finalize your plans to register for less than a full course or to withdraw from a class.

**Note:** For Independent Study courses and for courses in which you have taken an “incomplete,” the credits count only in the academic term in which you registered for them.

### Exception from Full Course of Study

If Undergraduate Students plan to register for less than a full course of study, or if you cancel a course and drop below the full course load, they must fill out and submit a Request for a Reduced Course Load Authorization Form

to International Affairs staff. The Request for a Reduced Course Load Authorization Form lists acceptable reasons recognized in the regulations.

*Reasons that **are not** considered acceptable* by the Immigration Service or U.S. State Department include:

- I don't have enough money.
- I'm too busy finishing incomplete classes from last semester.
- I'm too busy with employment.
- I'm too busy with extracurricular activities.
- I'm studying for the GMAT, GRE, CPA, or other similar exams.
- I'm suspended from my college, and cannot register.

**\*\* Graduate Students** who have an assistantship or **who have completed their formal course work** and are working on their thesis/dissertation, will need to complete the fulltime enrollment verification form.

### ***Request for Reduced Course Load Forms***

You can download the Request for a Reduced Course Load Form from the International Affairs' Website: at <http://www.sdstate.edu/international-affairs/> ; Click on "Current Students" Link, then click on the form you wish to download. Forms are also available at the Office of International Affairs in the Briggs Library.

#### **Where to Get Forms Signed**

You must first see International Affairs staff before dropping below a full course of study. Bring your Exception Form with you to the meeting, as all requests for a Reduced Course Load Authorization must be signed by an academic adviser, and usually require a note of explanation from the academic adviser. You must then submit the signed form to International Affairs staff and get an international advisor's signature as well.

#### **Where to Submit Reduced Course Load Forms**

Submit your completed forms to International Affairs staff during a scheduled appointment. If approved, the form is processed and kept in your permanent file in the Office of International Affairs. One copy should also be kept by you. It is important to keep copies of your signed Request for a Reduced Course Load Authorization Forms. You may be required to present them to a U.S. consular or USCIS official in the future if you request a new visa stamp, file for a change of visa status, or request an adjustment of status to permanent residence.

## **Dependent Study: F-2 / J-2 Status**

Effective January 1, 2003 USCIS regulations specify that individuals holding F-2 status are not eligible to pursue a program of study in US educational institutions. The exception to this regulation is:

- Minor children holding F-2 status are able to attend elementary and secondary school on a full-time basis.
- The regulation allows F-2 visa holders to participate in craft, casual or recreational classes or one ESL class (full-time ESL classes are prohibited). It must be considered avocational. Students must change their Status to F-1 Student Status prior to taking more than one course.
- SDSU does not allow F-2 visa holders to enroll in any coursework.

**\*\* There is currently no regulatory restriction on study for J-2 Dependents.** This means a J-2 dependent may enroll as a part time or full time degree seeking student. J-2s must still apply for admissions to either the Office of International Affairs or Graduate School to be accepted at South Dakota State University.

## **Insurance requirement**

All students are required to have SDBOR Student Injury and Sickness Insurance. The full premium can be paid the first semester you are here or it can be paid on a semester by semester basis. Information can be acquired from International Affairs staff.

## Losing your legal status

**Read the section on maintaining F-1 / J-1 status.** If you fail to follow these guidelines you will lose your legal status and related benefits. This means you lose any eligibility for employment, even on-campus employment. Further, if the DHS or an immigration law judge becomes aware of your lost legal status, you may be declared “unlawfully present.” Unlawful presence in the United States for 180 days means being barred from returning to the United States for three years. Twelve months (continuous or aggregate) of unlawful presence means being barred from returning to the United States for ten years. The DHS or an immigration law judge may also find you have stayed in the United States beyond the time authorized. This is called “overstaying” your visa. If you overstay the time allowed on your I-20, any U.S. entry visa in your passport is automatically cancelled. All new U.S. entry visas, for the rest of your life, can be issued only by the U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country. After being unlawfully present or overstaying your visa, you may have trouble getting another visa altogether.

## Regaining your legal status

You cannot regain your legal status without new documents from the Office of International Affairs and your financial sponsor. There are two ways to regain your legal status: reinstatement or reentry into the U.S (under certain circumstances). Both methods are expensive and time-consuming, and success cannot be guaranteed.

### **Reinstatement**

If you have fallen “out of status,” you must apply to the USCIS for reinstatement. International Affairs staff will assist you in this process if it is your first time out of status, but you will be required to submit the application for reinstatement. The fee for this is \$290.00 (subject to change), and the forms can be obtained from International Affairs staff. Students who have previously been reinstated and are out of status again will have a difficult time being granted reinstatement. The Office of International Affairs can provide an attorney referral list for students in this situation.

You may also be reinstated, if this is your first time out of status, by leaving the U.S. and returning on a new I-20, prepared by International Affairs staff. However, you should discuss your options with them because leaving the U.S. for reinstatement may jeopardize your eligibility for any practical training.

USCIS will consider reinstating a student to F-1 status if:

1. The student has not been out of status for more than 5 months
2. The student establishes, to the satisfaction of the USCIS, in a detailed letter that:
  - the violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond the student’s control; circumstances might include serious injury or illness, closure of the institution, or a natural disaster; **excuses of inadvertence, oversight, neglect, or willful failure on the part of the student are not accepted;**
  - the violation relates to a reduction in course load that would have been within International Affairs staff’s power to authorize, and that failure to approve reinstatement would result in extreme hardship to the student;
3. The student is pursuing or intending to pursue a full course of study in the immediate future at the school which issued the I-20; and
4. The student has not engaged in **unauthorized** employment.

**A decision to reinstate an individual to F-1 student status is completely at the discretion of the USCIS.** Neither SDSU nor the Office of International Affairs has any control over this matter. If you are denied reinstatement, you must stop attending classes and depart the U.S. within 30 days.

***If you think you may be out of status, please contact International Affairs staff as soon as possible!***

F-1 reinstatement currently takes about 3-4 months to process and requires a letter from International Affairs staff to recommend reinstatement. Remember, while your reinstatement request is being processed, you cannot legally



work in the United States. Further, any reinstatement may result in a greater risk that future visa applications may be denied.

**\*\* Students in J-1 Status requiring reinstatement should meet with International Affairs staff to determine whether you are eligible for reinstatement. At that time, they will indicate what is needed to apply for reinstatement.**

## Grace Periods

F-1 Students who have completed their studies or completed their optional practical training period have 60 days to prepare to leave the U.S., to transfer to a new school, or move to a new level at the same school. Students who drop out of school or withdraw and have prior approval from International Affairs staff have 15 days to prepare to leave the U.S. J-1 Students and Scholars have 30 days to prepare to leave the U.S.

Students that drop out of school, who are refused registration due to failure to maintain a minimum GPA, or who withdraw without prior approval must leave the U.S. immediately. If you think you may be in this situation, make an appointment to see International Affairs staff as soon as possible.

## Employment Options

### F-1 / J-1 work options

The most important employment issue to keep in mind is the issue of legal, or “authorized,” versus illegal, or “unauthorized,” employment. It is your responsibility to make sure that you engage only in legal employment, i.e., that which qualifies under USCIS regulations as permissible for F-1 and J-1 students. **Any unauthorized, illegal employment – even if it is for a few hours, even if you did not know it was illegal – renders you out of status and terminates your stay in the United States. You should always make sure that you have the necessary employment authorization before you begin work, since starting work without prior authorization, even if you receive an authorization later, constitutes illegal employment. (In some cases, there is a little flexibility for J1 students on this; HOWEVER, best practice would be to get approval prior to engaging in employment.)**

Always consult with International Affairs staff before starting any employment. This is the only way to ensure that you do not engage in illegal employment and suffer adverse consequences for your future in the U.S.

### **BEFORE ONE CAN OFFICIALLY START WORKING, A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER MUST BE OBTAINED:**

#### **Social Security Number:**

Please meet with the Office of International Affairs to determine your eligibility to apply for an SSN number. Our office has additional documentation that is required by the Social Security Administration Office so be sure to stop by OIA before you go to Sioux Falls or Watertown to apply for an SSN number.

South Dakota State University assigns you an eight digit Student ID for record-keeping purposes. This ID number is used during class registrations, to retrieve records and issue university paychecks. (This is not a Social Security Number.)

All persons in the U.S. also use a 9-digit U.S. Social Security number as an ID number. This number is required for employment; however, the Social Security Administration will not issue a Social Security number until a student can show or verify that they have secured employment.

Note: **Social Security Numbers are not employment authorizations.** Please see the next section which pertains to Off-Campus Employment for information on Employment Authorizations.

The Sioux Falls Social Security Office is located at 5021 S. Nevada Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57108.

The Watertown Social Security Office is located at 514 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Watertown, SD 57201

### ***On-Campus Work Permission Regulations***

- Authorization not necessary for F1 Students. For J1 Students authorization needs to be granted in SEVIS.
- Job must be located on South Dakota State University's campus.
- Includes student employment jobs and graduate assistantships
- International students are not eligible for "work study" jobs. When searching for a job, it is important to ask departments whether they have any "general payroll or non-work study" positions.
- Can begin working first semester at the University, once registered.
- Must be considered a full-time student by registration or valid Request for a Reduced Course Load Form.
- Hours limited to part time (20 hours or less per week) during the academic year, and 40 hours per week during semester breaks (Winter Break and Spring Break) and summer vacation period.

### ***Practical Training Requirements (Curricular and Optional)***

- Directly related to field of study.
- Must be in F-1 status for at least one academic year (except graduate students whose major requires immediate participation (must be a published academic/departments requirement))
- Must be in good academic standing.
- Work is limited to part time (20 hours or less per week) before completion of required coursework, full-time (21 hours and up) during vacation periods and after completion of required coursework for degree.
- Do not begin working until your authorization has been issued.
- Application materials can be obtained from the International Affairs' Website: at <http://www.sdstate.edu/international-affairs/index.cfm>; click current students and then on the employment form you wish to download. Forms are also available in Briggs Library Suite 119. Students may stop by anytime to pick up Curricular Practical Training or Optional Practical Training forms. Please make an appointment with International Affairs staff upon completing the form.

There are two types of practical training, **Curricular** and **Optional**.

**Curricular Practical Training**, or CPT, is an option available to F-1 students when employment is part of your academic program or when you will receive academic credit for work. This employment may be in the form of an internship, practicum, or any other work experience that is either required for your degree, as defined in the course catalog, or for which academic credit is awarded.

**Optional Practical Training** is the opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to a practical work experience off campus. OPT is authorized by USCIS. This authorization generally takes 90 to 120 days to obtain but can take as long as 5 months. The maximum time granted to work in F-1 OPT status is 12 months, not to exceed 14 months after completion of studies. You may use some or all of the available 12 months of practical training during your course of study or save the full 12 months to use after graduation. While on optional practical training, you will be required to provide your current address to International Affairs staff, along with the name and location of your employer(s).

#### **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

- Pre-graduation only.
- The work must be required by the degree program, be a co-op program, and you must receive course credit for the internship/job.
- A student authorized for full-time CPT for 12 months or more loses future optional practical training eligibility.
- Authorization processed by International Affairs staff will be completed by the end of your appointment.

#### **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

- Total of 12 months can be used before and/or after graduation.
- The Department of Homeland Security takes 2-4 months to process the authorization; \$ 380 fee.
- Application for OPT must be submitted within 60 days of your degree-completion date for post-completion optional practical training. (Start date of employment must also begin within 60 days of degree completion date as well.)

- The earliest date you may apply for post completion OPT is 90 days prior to the end of your program. Students graduating earlier than the date listed on their I-20 should be aware a new program end date may be necessary.
- A 12-month period of OPT is available per degree program as long as the subsequent degree(s) is at a higher educational level.
- Students in specific Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) degrees may be eligible for a 17-month extension on their OPT. If you feel you may qualify for the STEM extension, please contact International Affairs staff prior to the end date of your initial OPT.

### ***Off-Campus Work Permissions (General)***

“If other employment opportunities are not available or are otherwise insufficient, an eligible F-1 student may request off-campus employment work authorization based upon severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the student’s control. These circumstances may include loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without fault on the part of the student, substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and/or living costs, unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student’s source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses.”

#### **Eligibility**

If you feel your circumstances qualify as a severe economic hardship, you should pick up an Economic Hardship Employment Authorization packet. We recommend that you then make an appointment to discuss this with International Affairs staff. Economic Hardship Work Authorization is based on economic necessity and is very difficult to obtain. F-1 students must meet the following conditions:

- Must document sudden, unforeseen change in financial circumstances.
- Must be in F-1 status at least one academic year.
- Must be in good academic standing.
- Cannot begin working until your authorization has been issued by the DHS.
- Work is limited to half time during the academic year, full time (20 or more hours) during vacation periods.
- Application materials available from International Affairs staff in Briggs Library. Students may stop by anytime to pick up Economic Hardship, Curricular Practical Training, or Optional Practical Training forms. Please make an appointment with International Affairs staff upon completing the form.
- The Department of Homeland Security takes 2-4 months to approve or deny an authorization; \$380 fee.

### ***F-2/ J-2 Employment***

Individuals holding F-2 status are not authorized to work while in the United States. Dependents of J-1 Exchange Visitors in J-2 visa status are eligible to apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for employment authorization. Bear in mind that J-2 dependents are NOT permitted to work or to receive a US Social Security Number until they have received an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card from the USCIS. Expect the processing time for the EAD to be at least two to three months.

J-2 dependents with employment authorization may work until the date on the EAD card or until the J-1 principal visitor completes his or her program, whichever is earlier. J-2 dependents may apply to renew their work authorization, as long as the J-1 visitor remains in status. If the J-1 receives an extension of stay, the J-2 dependent must re-apply for work authorization once the extension has been granted. Applications for extensions of the EAD should be made at least 3 months in advance of the expiration date on the card. Please see International Affairs staff in the Office of International Affairs for assistance in requesting employment authorization.

# South Dakota State University Student Documents and Procedures

## University documents

### ***Student ID Card***

As an international student at South Dakota State University, you will have at least two forms of picture identification (I.D.): your passport and your SDSU student I.D. card. You do not need to use your passport for every-day identification. Keep it at home in a safe place. Keep your SDSU I.D. with you at all times in a safe place. You may need it to access certain facilities on campus, including the library and computer labs. Occasionally you will be asked to show your I.D. card to University department staff members as proof that you are a student at SDSU and that you are entitled to use the services provided by these offices.

### ***Billing Statement***

The SDePay electronic billing and payment system is the official means of delivering tuition bills to all students of South Dakota State University. All enrolled students will have an eBill posted to their SDePay account.

#### **Paper bills will not be mailed.**

Students will receive a notice in their University assigned "Jacks" e-mail account when their SDePay bill is ready to be viewed online. The online statement will detail the amount due (tuition, fees, housing, meal plans and other miscellaneous charges) as well as any applied Financial Aid payments and previously posted payments.

Students can access SDePay by logging onto the secure WebAdvisor Web site: <http://webadvisor.sdstate.edu>

Students can:

- View current billing statement
- View billing payment history
- Check current account balance
- View account transactions for the past 45 days

Cashier's Office  
Morrill hall 136  
SDSU, Box 2201  
Brookings, SD 57007-2098

Office Hours:  
Monday-Friday from 9 am to 4 pm,  
or call Monday-Friday 8 am to 5 pm.  
Phone: 605-688-6116

### ***Student Schedule***

Any time you register for a class (from home, a computer lab, or at a registration center) you will generate a student schedule for that semester. The schedule that you can access on-line is a list of the classes for which you have registered. You can print a schedule for the current academic term any time you like. Simply go to our website under "WebAdvisor" and click on "Login." <http://webadvisor.sdstate.edu>

## ***Procedures***

### ***Payment and Payment Plan Procedures***

When you applied to South Dakota State University, you indicated on your application forms that you had sufficient funds to pay for your tuition, fees, insurance, room and meals. **Tuition Payments are due within the first 10 class days.**

## PAYMENT PROCESS

By the tenth day of classes, each student must make a full payment of charges based on the number of credits early registered for, residency status, and campus housing. Late fees will be assessed starting on the eleventh day of classes. We encourage students to mail payment before registration day. Payment of tuition and fees can be made directly to the University by cash, check or electronic bank transfer.

Students can pay their account balances with eCheck, debit cards or credit cards through the SDePay.

- eChecks are electronic transfer of funds from a checking or savings account of a US bank. Payment by eCheck is a **free service**.
- Debit and credit cards are subject to a 2.75% service fee assessed by and payable to infiNET, host provider of SDePay. American Express, MasterCard and Discover cards are accepted. **Visa is not accepted.**

**Students can authorize parents, a spouse or other individuals to view their eBill and make an ePayment on their student account.**

SDePay is available 24/7 except for regularly scheduled maintenance on most Thursday evenings.

## BILLING & PAYMENT FAQ's

- 1. When should I expect to receive my initial bill?**
  - a. You will be notified by email when the statement is posted.
- 2. What happens to my initial bill if I change my class schedule?**
  - a. If you adjust your class schedule after August 17, you can view current account transactions and student account balances on SDePay.
- 3. When is my bill due?**
  - a. Payments are due within the first 10 class days.
- 4. How can I pay my bill?**
  - a. Payments can be made electronically, in person, or by mail.
- 5. Can I set up my payments on an installment plan?**
  - a. The Cashiers Office has an agreement with Nelnet Business Solutions in providing installment plan services through FACTS. To enroll in the FACTS payment plan, click on the eCashier logo on SDePay. For more information, contact Cashiers Office at: 605-688-6116.
- 6. Can I just take care of my bill through the mail?**
  - a. You are welcome to mail your payment in full to the Cashiers Office, Morrill Hall, SAD 136, Box 2201, Brookings, SD 57007. Please allow up to one week of mailing time. **Payments received on or after September 4 will be subject to a late payment charge.**
- 7. Can I still make my payment in person?**
  - a. You can make payment at the Cashiers Office, Morrill Hall, SAD 136. **Payments received on or after September 4 may be subject to a late payment charge.**
- 8. What happens if I don't make payment or arrangements to pay by September 4?**
  - a. A late payment charge will be assessed on all accounts with a balance due of more than \$100 at the end of day on September 4. Payment arrangements shall be on file with the Cashiers Office.

**\*\*\* REMINDER TO STUDENTS:** By setting up your parents, a spouse or other individuals as authorized payers on SDePay, they can receive notices of statement availability, view account statements and make online payments.

**Sponsored students:** it is your responsibility to confirm that new financial sponsorship letters from your government are sent directly to the Cashiers office each semester. Letters may be sent to:

SDSU Cashier's Office  
SAD 136 Box 2201  
Brookings, SD 57007

U.S.A

If you have questions about signing up for a university payment plan, please stop by Cashier's Office in SAD 136 to do this within the **first 10 class days**.

### ***Registration Information on the University's website***

In order to access the most accurate, up-to-date information about the University's course offerings, degree requirements, and registration guides, you are encouraged to refer to our online registration website.

Some of the features included on this site are:

**WebAdvisor:** You register for classes on this site. You can also cancel and add courses after you have registered. (The web registration will allow International Students to drop below 12 credit hours per semester; **HOWEVER, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are registered for a minimum of 12 credit hours**. If you are looking to drop a course, make sure you add a new course or speak to International Affairs staff prior to withdrawing from the class.)

**Semester Class Schedule:** Lists of all courses in all departments being offered in a particular semester, also scheduling and registration information.

**Student Record:** Contains information on academic advisers, majors and minors, fees, transfer evaluation (transfer of credits from other schools) and your current academic record.

**Catalog:** Descriptions of a semester's courses, with information provided by instructors.

The Catalog also includes information about degree programs, program requirements, course offerings, and faculty members. The catalog can be accessed by going to the following link: <http://catalog.sdstate.edu/>

### ***Email Account***

As a student of South Dakota State University you will utilize various electronic resources and electronic mail. You will be given your email account during orientation after receiving your Student ID and your PIN Number (password). It is very important that you use SDSU's email **even if** you already have another e-mail account. E-mail messages sent by SDSU to students through University-assigned, Jacks e-mail addresses will constitute an official means of communication. It is the student's responsibility and obligation to access official University email messages in a timely manner. As other e-mail accounts may be blocked by the SDSU firewall, SDSU is only able to monitor student e-mails coming from University-assigned e-mail accounts. **Messages from your professor or messages pertaining to changes in the immigration information will be sent to your SDSU email account only.** If you use another email service, please forward your SDSU emails to that account so as not to miss information that can affect your legal status in the United States.

If you have problems or questions about your SDSU email account, please contact the Help Desk in OIT at the following number: 688-6776.

### ***SDSU Facilities and Services***

#### **Bookstore**

South Dakota State University's Bookstore is located in the Student Union. Textbooks are located in the basement of the bookstore. Students have the choice of purchasing textbooks or renting them. When you enter the Bookstore, you find your own books and pay for them at the counter as you exit. That said; don't be afraid to ask questions... the Bookstore Staff is very friendly. Occasionally there are used books on the shelves. These are less expensive than new books and are usually in good condition.

#### **Rental Program**

SDSU offers a book rental program to provide students with yet another option while purchasing textbooks. Plain and simple, renting textbooks **saves you money and gives you the same result**

**in your classes as buying your books.** Renting a textbook is exactly like renting a movie. You pay for it, have it for a certain period and then have to return it by a certain date. Specifically, we set the date at the end of finals week for each semester. If you do not return it by that date, an extra charge will be added to your account. By renting a textbook you are saving 20-50% compared to a new or used book.

Still confused about why you would want to rent instead of buying used? Well, the Bookstore purchases books according to what the instructors decide to use. If the instructor uses the same books for the following semester, then it is better to have a used book and sell it back. However, if you buy used and the instructor decides to use a different book the next semester, chances are that the bookstore will not buy the book back. In that case, it is better to have a rented book because you saved the money up front and didn't lose anything. Buyback is great, except for the fact that it is not guaranteed. Renting textbooks allows you to purchase a book without the risk of it becoming worthless by the end of the semester. Renting is the safe option for you; it keeps your money in your pocket and saves you from worrying about buybacks.

Another thing about renting books is if you decide you want to keep the book for future reference, all you have to do is pay the difference, and it is yours. The South Dakota State University Bookstore is committed to finding an affordable way for students to get their textbooks.

### **Dining Services**

The university offers a complete dining service. Meals are provided for all students living in campus residence halls, depending on the meal plan that they select. Off-campus students and guests are also welcome to use the dining facilities. Information on Dining Services can be found at: <http://www.campusdish.com/en-US/csmw/SDSU>. Don't live on campus and think you don't need a meal plan? Well you can always add money on to your SDSU ID card, this will allow you to buy meals at the union, snacks from the vending machine and anywhere else on campus that accepts "Hobo Dough".

### **Briggs Library**

South Dakota State University's Briggs Library is one of the finest in the area, giving access to virtually every other campus library in the state and region. Students are able to access the library over 97 hours a week. <http://www.sdstate.edu/library/>. The Briggs Library is a great resource for assignments, journals, research papers, books and videos. Speak to a librarian at Briggs Library to find out more about requesting articles, searching academic journals and finding a great book!

### **Career Center**

Career counselors offer exploration of career options and opportunities to fine-tune job search skills. They also arrange for interviews both on and off campus, participate in regional job fairs, and offer free resume-writing and job-seeking skills workshops. They are located in the Student Engagement Office, Suite 136, Student Union.

### **Performing Arts Center**

Funded by a unique partnership between SDSU, the city of Brookings, and private donors, the state-of-the-art Performing Arts Center on the campus of SDSU is used for large ensemble, Brookings Chamber Music Society, and other special departmental performances. Check out the SDSU News and Events website to find out more about musicals and theater productions. The Larson Memorial Concert Hall is a beautiful 1,000-seat hall featuring custom acoustics which can be adjusted to the needs of all groups performing there. It is fully equipped with its own percussion equipment, risers, acoustical shell, professional sound and recording equipment, and a Fazioli Concert Grand Piano.

**Writing Center**

Instructors and graduate students are available to assist graduate and undergraduate students with writing problems in any SDSU course. Located in Briggs Library Room 103, the Writing Center is open Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Students can visit the Writing Center or call 688-6559 to schedule an appointment. Students are encouraged to visit the writing center for help with format checks and assistance with writing skills.

**Disability Services**

South Dakota State University provides assistance for students with a wide range of disabilities. Your first step is to fill out the application for disability services. Along with this application, you'll need to send documentation of the disability. After that, they will set up an appointment to discuss services provided that will enhance your learning experiences at SDSU.

Some of the ways we can help include:

- alternative text formats
- sign language interpreters
- note takers
- assistive technology
- alternative accommodations for exams (for example, testing in a distraction-free environment or providing readers for exams)
- extended time for testing
- referrals to other resources

**Confidentiality**

The Office of Disability Services respects your privacy and strives to treat all personal information with confidentiality.

This office may release information to University faculty and staff when a “need to know” is established by Disability Services. The need to know must be based on compelling and legitimate educational reasons for the information disclosure. Generally, the faculty and staff do not need to know what your disability is.

**Wellness Center**

The Wellness Center is dedicated to supporting academic success and personal development by promoting and encouraging healthy lifestyle for the members of the SDSU community. The Wellness Center houses state of the art fitness equipment, a variety of recreational and intramural programs, effective wellness education, and a conveniently located student health clinic and counseling center.

Hours of Operation:

**Monday-Thursday:** 5:00am-11:00p.m.

**Friday:** 5:00am-10:00p.m.

**Saturday:** 8:00am-8:00p.m.

**Sunday:** 12:00pm-11:00p.m.



# Health Care in the U.S. and at South Dakota State University

## ***Health care options for international students and their families***

The mission of South Dakota State University Health Clinic and Counseling Services is to promote the health and wellness of the university community, to enhance student retention, and to support academic and personal success of all students. All SDSU students are eligible to receive quality, accessible and affordable health care at Student Health Clinic and Counseling Services. The cost of health care in the United States is very high. A short stay in the hospital can cost thousands of dollars. Individuals must make their own plans for dealing with health care issues. **Before you visit a local clinic or Hospital, it is suggested that students visit the SDSU Health Clinic first (unless it is an emergency.)** Students who visit the SDSU Health Clinic first will receive better coverage if referred to an outside clinic. (See Health plan for details. However, the Dependents (spouse or child) will be required to show proof of insurance. The insurance will be required to be on file. SDSU will provide a list of recommended insurance companies. International students and their dependents who are in the U.S. on temporary, nonimmigrant student visas are not eligible for U.S. government programs like Medical Assistance or Medicaid. You can protect yourself from the high cost of health care by obtaining health insurance coverage.

### **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

You may not use any type of public funding during your stay in the United States as a nonimmigrant. Examples of public funding include medical assistance, public housing, and community services such as day care benefits.

**Although state and local services may determine non-immigrants to be eligible for some form of public assistance, federal law prohibits its use. U.S. government officials may deny an entry visa request or entry into the United States if they determine an individual has previously used public funds.**

### **HOW CAN I OBTAIN HEALTH INSURANCE?**

International students are required to have the student insurance plan offered through the SD Board of Regents Office. Information on this policy can be acquired from International Affairs staff.

### **MEDICAL SERVICES FOR YOUR FAMILY**

All SDSU students are eligible to receive quality, accessible and affordable health care at Student Health Clinic and Counseling Services. Dependents (spouse or child) will be required to show proof of insurance. The insurance will be required to be on file. As a result, we have provided the following list of companies who would be able to provide health insurance to F2 and J2 visa holders.

Avera Health Plan (not the BOR plan.)  
Avera Health Plans - Individual Sales  
888-322-2115  
The Olson Group  
Individual Sales  
Wellmark BCBS - 605-692-4722  
Dakotacare - 605-692-2078  
American Family - 605-692-2500  
State Farm - 605-692-6225

If you have any questions, please stop in and talk to International Affairs staff in Briggs Library, Suite 119. Family members should seek care at an outside clinic and should verify coverage with the insurance company as well as the provider **before** scheduling appointments.

### **Brookings Family Planning**

Brookings Family Planning is available to students and their dependents. The mission of Family Planning is to provide individuals the information and means to exercise personal choice in determining the number and spacing of their children and maintain or improve general and reproductive health.

The family planning provider provides education, counseling, medical, & birth control services along with Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) screenings. Cost of services is based on family income and size. Any student or non-student is eligible to receive these services.

Brookings Family Planning is located in Student Health and Counseling. For more information or to make an appointment, please call 688-4157.

### **“OVER-THE-COUNTER” REMEDIES**

For minor aches and pains, or common colds and flu, medications are available at drug stores, pharmacies, and discount department stores. Medications that do not require a doctor’s prescription, such as aspirin, cold and flu medication, and other pain relievers, are often referred to as “over-the-counter” medications.

### **DOCTORS AND CONSULTING NURSES**

For chronic or more serious conditions, you will probably wish to see a doctor. Although receiving a referral from the Student Health Clinic is not necessary, utilizing the SHC is recommended as receiving a referral allows for 100% coverage when visiting an outside clinic. They will refer you to a clinic if they cannot help you there. (Each doctor’s visit will cost you approximately \$50.00.) You can call the Health Center directly and ask to make an appointment. Often they will ask if you have spoken with a consulting nurse. The consulting nurse lines are an excellent form of medical triage. You call and ask to speak with a consulting nurse. Once connected, you describe your symptoms to the nurse, who will likely ask you some pertinent questions in order to fully understand the problem. The nurse will then recommend some type of care—over-the-counter remedies, a doctor appointment, or even immediate medical attention. If the nurse recommends an appointment or immediate care, the necessary arrangements will usually be made for you.

### **SDSU STUDENT HEALTH (WELLNESS CENTER)**

The charges for an appointment will vary depending on factors such as service requested, new or previous client, etc. The Student Health Clinic’s fees are lower than surrounding clinics. Some of the charges are listed below:

New patient appointment: \$55.00 to \$205.00

Established patient appointment: \$25.00 to \$180.00

TB test: \$20.00

MMR: \$84.00

Immunization Review: \$55.00

## **Emergency Care**

Health care providers distinguish between emergency services and urgent care. *Emergency services* are those required for a serious injury or life-threatening illness. **Emergency care:** You should go to a hospital emergency room/department only if the problem is life-threatening or extremely serious. Services provided at an emergency room cost much more than the same services at a regular clinic. The Emergency room is located at **Brookings Health System**, located at 300 22nd Avenue. **For emergencies call 911 or 605-688-6805 or 111** (if you are on campus.)

Be sure you know where you can go for immediate care before the need arises.

## **Dental Care**

Dental insurance is not as easily obtained as medical insurance. If you do not have dental insurance, you will be required to pay for dental services, usually before services are rendered. Please refer to the Brookings Chamber of Commerce for information about Dentists and Orthodontics at <http://brookingschamber.org/>

The USD – Dental Clinic in Sioux Falls provides a number of services at a reasonable cost to students and people who can't afford dental care.

USD Dental Clinic:  
521 N. Main Avenue, Suite 202  
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57104  
Phone: 605-367-8046 (to set up an appointment)

**Services:**

Dentists are available as adjunct faculty in the Sioux Falls clinic to provide **exams, extractions and fillings for patients. Services include:** Dental Appliance Care, Dental Hygiene Prophylaxis, Dental Radiographs, Fluoride Treatments, Impressions and Study Models, Nutritional Counseling, Oral Hygiene Instruction, Pain Management, Root planning, Sealants, TMJ Assessment, Tobacco Intervention, Mouth guards, Night guards, Teeth Bleaching, Tooth Desensitizing.

**Hours:**

**School Year:**

Tuesday - Thursday  
8:00 - 11:30 a.m.  
1:00 - 4:30 p.m.

**Summer:**

Monday - Thursday  
8:00 - 11:30 a.m.  
1:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Clinic services are not available when school is not in session over the school year, such as holidays and semester breaks.

**Directions**

Address for the USD Dental Clinic in Sioux Falls- 521 N. Main Avenue, Suite 202  
Take Minnesota Avenue to 4th Street then turn Right on to Main Avenue. The clinic is in the Siouxland Health and Human Services Building, on the corner of 4th Street and Main Avenue, on the second floor.  
Entrances are on the east and west sides of building  
Parking is on the street or in the west parking lot

**For Dental Emergencies**, students can contact Sioux Falls Community Dental Clinic. They will help students at a very affordable price. They can be reached by calling 1-605-367-8022.

Community Dental Clinic:  
521 North Main Ave., Suite 200  
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57104  
Phone: 605-367-8022

**Walk-In appointments only – Must be there by 7 a.m. daily (Monday – Friday) 1<sup>st</sup> come, 1<sup>st</sup> served. (Limited appointments each day.)**

Students experiencing a tooth ache or severe pain can visit this clinic at an extremely reduced cost.

\$35.00 Copay – That is all that is charged for an exam.

Must provide:

- Class Schedule or Transcript that verifies full time enrollment as a student.
- Student ID

For a procedure such as a Root Canal, students will pay \$200.00. A procedure such as his normally costs around \$900.00 without insurance.

# Culture in the United States

## *U.S. Cultural Values*

No doubt you already know a great deal about the U.S. and perhaps about U.S. Americans. Yet if you are new to studying in the U.S. there are probably a few things that may surprise you and possibly challenge you about some common U.S. values. We describe a few here so that you may be prepared for these values and how they differ (or don't) from your own cultural values.

### **The Importance of Time**

In the United States, time is treated like a tangible asset and is used carefully and productively. Being "on time" (arriving at the stated time) for class or meeting with friends is of the utmost importance.

### **The Work Ethic**

Like people in many countries, U.S. Americans place a high value on hard work. However, they tend to feel personally responsible for their accomplishments and take personal credit for what they've done. It is believed that people achieve results on the basis of how hard they work, so they judge others by how hard they work and how task-oriented they are.

### **Achievement**

A very high value is placed on a person's accomplishments and productivity. Individuals evaluate themselves and are evaluated by others in terms of their achievements and accomplishments.

### **Individualism**

U.S. Americans tend to view themselves first and foremost as individuals with both freedom and responsibility to manage their own lives, make their own decisions and accomplish their own goals. Families and friends are important, but individuals are expected to consider their own needs, desires, and values. U.S. Americans seem to be less comfortable being obligated to or dependent on others. People are also held individually accountable for things they have promised to do, and international students may find that they are expected to do more of their work independently than they are accustomed to at home.

### **Direct Communication and Problem-Solving Style**

While this varies greatly by region and family background, people in the United States generally place a higher priority on clear, factual communication. This means that at times, U.S. Americans may choose to be direct even if it means possibly hurting or embarrassing another person.

### **Pragmatism**

U.S. Americans can be pragmatic and oriented toward practical matters. They are attracted to things and ideas that are seen as "useful." This goes together with the orientation toward work and achievement. There is a high value on being able to relate "theory" to "practice." Understanding these values can help you understand why things are as they are in the U.S. and help you to adjust to your new "home-away-from-home".

## **Friendship and Dating in the United States**

You may find that people in the United States have very different ideas than you do about making friends. Because of the value put on friendliness, U.S. Americans sometimes misread people from other countries who are reserved or formal as being cold or rude. In the U.S., saying "Good morning," "Hi," or "Hello," with a smile will usually indicate that you do not have any bad feelings towards colleagues, faculty, or friends. Until you get used to it, this friendliness (smiling and being sociable and helpful) can be confused with an invitation for a friendship.

U.S. Americans are often much slower to form deep relationships than first impressions may indicate. They may shy away from international students out of respect for your privacy or to avoid offense, so you may need to be the one to initiate friendships.

Because U.S. Americans are “doers,” it is helpful when trying to make friends to ask someone to do something with you: go out for coffee, to a movie, shopping, bowling, etc. Another approach is to join a club or activity on the campus or in your community.

Generally, dating among students is very casual due to the expense of going out. There are no set rules in terms of who asks for the date or who pays. In many cases the person who asks for the date will pay, but one should be prepared to cover their share of the expenses. Volunteering to cover some of the costs would be a nice gesture and probably appreciated by your date.

Adapted from *American Ways* by Gary Althen, University of Iowa

U.S. American	General Contrasts
1. A friend is anyone from a passing acquaintance to a lifetime intimate.	1. A friend is someone with whom one is very close.
2. Friends are often limited to an area of common interest, such as work, school or recreation.	2. A friendship embraces the whole person
3. Friends gather to enjoy an activity together.	3. Friends gather just to be together.
4. If someone has a problem, it is acceptable to go to a professional (i.e., counselor) for help.	4. Someone with a problem goes to a friend of family member for help at any time.
5. Friends may be “dropped” if they do not live up to our expectations or standards of behavior	5. One tolerates a lot from someone who is a friend.
6. Friendships cross genders.	6. Friendships are made only with the same gender.
7. Friendships cross generations.	7. Friendships are made with people of the same age.
8. One schedules time to see friends.	8. Friends are available at any time.
9. Americans act friendly and informally with almost everyone.	9. People who don’t know each other maintain a formal relationship.

## Protocol

### First Names and Titles

There are strong regional and cultural differences within the United States with regard to formality and the use of titles with names. These include “Mr.” (pronounced “Mister” and meaning male, married or single), “Ms.” (pronounced “Miz,” meaning female, married or single), “Miss” (meaning single female), “Mrs. (pronounced “Missus,” meaning a married female), “Prof.” (short for “Professor,” meaning someone who has a faculty appointment or tenure at a college or university), or “Dr.” ( short for “Doctor,” meaning a medical doctor or someone with a Ph.D.).

In the Midwest, people generally use first names when speaking. This can make addressing professors and staff very confusing for international students when they first arrive. Do you call a professor by a title such as “Professor Brown,” or do you call her by first name, “Judith,” as you may hear other students do? Sometimes it’s one way, and sometimes it’s another, so how can you tell when each is appropriate?

It is best when dealing with professors to err on the side of politeness and use their titles — Professor, Doctor, Mr., or Ms. Often instructors will tell you on the first day of class what they would like to be called. If you aren’t sure, it is appropriate to ask them how they would like to be addressed. Graduate students, especially graduate assistants, are more likely than undergraduates to be on a first-name basis with their professors. And most professors are on a first-name basis with each other. Office staff, receptionists, and secretaries are almost always on a first-name basis with students.

It is most important to remember that informality is not an indication of disrespect. It is simply a cultural habit that may indicate mutual respect, equality, and a willingness to engage in open dialogue and intellectual exchange.

## ***Appropriate Dress***

In the United States one's way of dressing is expected to suit the circumstance. As students, dressing casually (jeans, shorts, shirt, t-shirt) is acceptable. In the workplace or other professional settings, follow the norms of that particular place. Professional attire for men generally requires dress slacks, shirt and tie, or a suit. For women it may require a suit (with slacks or skirt), dress, or skirt and blouse. Be observant of what others are wearing or ask a supervisor before wearing casual clothes. Also note that because people are dressed casually doesn't mean it's an informal environment or that supervisors or professors are to be treated as equals.

## ***Dealing with Organizations***

We have all experienced frustration in dealing with organizations. This frustration is often worse in a foreign country. When it is combined with common misperceptions that many international students have about the roles and status of office personnel in their host country, there can be serious misunderstandings. This can lead to anger, hurt feelings, and even greater difficulties in getting what you need.

## ***Guidelines for Getting Things Done***

- There is a strong trend toward informality in the United States. In many countries, secretaries and receptionists are trained to use specific, formal behavior in order to serve people courteously, including set greetings such as, "Good morning, may I help you?" In the United States, especially the Midwest, the desire to be on "equal footing" with others tends to make people uncomfortable with this kind of formal behavior. You may encounter a very casual attitude from many of the University staff with whom you have business. In comparison with your background and experience, you may find this very helpful and courteous, or casual to the point of disrespect. Try not to take it personally!
- Be respectful of all employees. In the United States, secretaries and receptionists often have power to make decisions, and they may have the information you need.
- Remember that in the United States, many rules really are followed, and procedures often are not negotiable. Arguing or demanding to see someone "in charge" will not lead to success. It is more effective to explain exactly what you need and what kind of problem you have been having, and ask, "What do I do now?" or "Is there someone who could help me?" Even though employees usually can't "bend the rules", if they like you, they are more likely to put a little extra energy into problem solving.
- If you follow procedures and instructions carefully, a lot of time and energy can be saved. In the United States, many things are done over the phone, or through the mail, making a personal visit unnecessary. Take the names and phone numbers of people you talk to, in case some delay or complication does arise and you need further help.

Adapted from *American Ways* by Gary Althen, University of Iowa.

## **Legal issues**

While many internationals may expect the U.S. to be the "land of the free", it is often not long after arrival that sojourners realize this is a country of many rules and regulations. As you will see from the following description of some of the laws that may affect you, the rules and regulations are intended to protect the rights of the individual -the basis for our legal system.

## ***SDSU Non-Discrimination Policy***

South Dakota State University has a well-established commitment to maintaining a campus environment free from discrimination and harassment, as articulated by federal and state law, and University policy.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of SDSU not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, transgender status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran's status

or any other protected class in the offering of all benefits, services, and educational and employment opportunities.

As part of this policy, SDSU has designated a Title IX/EEO Coordinator to assist individuals with any concerns about discrimination or harassment in education programs or activities.

Concerns should be reported directly to the Title IX/EEO Coordinator. The complaint process is subject to the South Dakota Board of Regents policies, and will follow the institutional policies listed below:

Policy 4:3 Equal Opportunity, Non-Discrimination, and Affirmative Action

Policy 4:4 Harassment including Sexual Harassment

Policy 4:5 Prevention of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Stalking

Policy 4:6 Human Rights Complaints

These policies can be found at <http://www.sdstate.edu/policies/>.

## **Non-Retaliation/Privacy**

Complainants, respondents, witnesses, and other persons who have assisted, testified, or participated in any manner in any phase of a harassment or discrimination investigation will be protected against retaliation. SDSU's policy and applicable Board of Regents, state and federal regulations prohibit retaliation, coercion, interference and/or intimidation, or any other adverse action taken as a direct result of a complaint being brought forth.

All concerns are responded to and/or investigation in a highly sensitive manner. The privacy of the parties involved is protected. The process is neutral, impartial and fair.

## **What You Can Do to Address Harassment or Discrimination**

- Approach the person you feel has discriminated against or has harassed you and communicate your concern directly, in person or in writing. Ask them to stop the concerning behavior or comments immediately.
- Report harassment or discrimination to the Title IX/EEO Coordinator.

## **Reporting Concerns**

To report your concerns, you are welcome to speak directly to the Title IX Coordinator.

### **Ms. Michelle Johnson, Ed.D**

Title IX/EEO Coordinator & Affirmative Action Officer

Human Resources, Morrill Hall 100

Brookings, SD 57007

Phone: (605) 688-4128

Email 1: [Michelle.Johnson@sdstate.edu](mailto:Michelle.Johnson@sdstate.edu)

Email 2: [Equal.Opportunity@sdstate.edu](mailto:Equal.Opportunity@sdstate.edu)

SDSU has recently adopted a Compliance Hotline that offers two additional ways to report concerns, including the option to report anonymously, if you choose:

Toll-Free Reporting: 1-844-880-0004

Web Reporting: <https://www.lighthouse-services.com/sdstate>

If a student or employee confides in you their concern, please encourage them to report the issue or you may report on their behalf. The University has a legal obligation to respond to issues, big and small, so SDSU requests that all concerns be brought forth. The University has many resources and wants to support faculty, staff and students.

### **What happens if a violation of the policy occurs?**

The University will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or retaliation that violates SDBOR or University policy. Where such violations are investigated and found to have indeed occurred, the University will take steps to end it immediately. An individual found to have engaged in discrimination, harassment or retaliation will be subject to appropriate discipline, depending on the severity of the misconduct.

### **For More Information**

For more information on the policies established to promote equal opportunity and eliminate discrimination and harassment at SDSU visit: <http://www.sdstate.edu/hr/equal-opportunity/index.cfm>

### ***Alcohol and Tobacco Products***

Smoking in public buildings is prohibited by South Dakota State University. Smoking is generally allowed outdoors, in one's home, in bars, and in designated smoking sections in some restaurants. If you want to smoke, first look for "no smoking" signs or ask an employee to find out if smoking is allowed. When in someone else's home, you should step outside to smoke. Cigarettes and other tobacco products may not be purchased or used by people under the age of 18.

Alcohol use in the United States is also regulated by law. In South Dakota, alcohol may not be legally purchased or consumed by anyone under the age of 21, and it may **not** be consumed while in an automobile. Driving while intoxicated is considered a serious crime, punishable by large fines, jail sentences, and the loss of driving privileges. Bartenders and others who serve alcohol (such as hosts of parties) can be held legally responsible if a guest becomes intoxicated and injures another person. It is also a serious crime to offer or provide alcohol to anyone under the age of 21.

### ***Drugs and Medications***

Street drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, and other mood-altering substances that are not prescribed by a medical doctor, may not be possessed or sold legally in South Dakota. Strict laws and severe penalties apply. Medications prescribed by doctors may not be sold or used by anyone other than the patient.

### ***Sexual Harassment and Stalking***

Sexual harassment and stalking laws legally protect individuals from being victims of sexual and other harassment. These laws apply to all within the U.S. - citizens, residents, and visitors.

Sexual harassment is the misuse of power that has sexual overtones and generally falls under the following circumstances: as a condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement, or in a situation that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or academic performance. Sexual harassment can be verbal or physical. As a result of sexual harassment laws, many U.S. Americans now avoid physical contact with acquaintances; an exception to this is the hand shake, which is a recognized form of greeting.

It is also illegal to "stalk" an individual by following the person, continually making unwanted phone calls or other unwelcome attempts to contact another person. If you force unwanted physical or verbal contact on another person, you may violate South Dakota law as well as social norms.



If you have questions about what sexual harassment is, or feel you are being harassed, you are encouraged to contact the International Affairs Office or Counseling Services (located in the Wellness Center.) If you believe you are being stalked, contact the police.

#### South Dakota State University Non-Discrimination Policy

South Dakota State University is committed to promoting equal opportunity and eliminating discrimination and harassment.

#### **What activities are protected?**

Prohibited bias factors should not interfere with, and will not be permitted to adversely influence decisions regarding any aspect of:

- Employment
- Study
- Delivery or receipt of institutional services
- Enrollment or participation in institutional programs or activities (e.g., academic, educational, extracurricular or athletic), both on and off campus. Note: Off-campus activities include, without limitation, study abroad programs, internships, student teaching and athletic events.

#### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of SDSU not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, transgender status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran's status or any other protected class in the offering of all benefits, services, and educational and employment opportunities.

As part of this policy, SDSU has designated a Title IX Coordinator to assist individuals with any concerns about sexual discrimination in education programs or activities. This includes discrimination on the basis of sex in admission to or employment in SDSU's education programs or activities.

Discrimination complaints including harassment or sexual discrimination in educational programs should be directed to SDSU's Equal Opportunity Officer/Title IX Coordinator, Human Resources, Morrill Hall 100. The complaint process will follow the Board of Regents Human Rights Complaints Procedures. These procedures can be found at [www.sdbor.edu/policy/1-Governance/documents/1-18.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/1-Governance/documents/1-18.pdf).

#### **Non-Retaliation/Confidentiality**

Complainants, witnesses, and other persons who have assisted, testified, or participated in any manner in any phase of a harassment or discrimination investigation will be protected. SDSU's policy and applicable Board of Regents, state and federal regulations prohibit retaliation, coercion, interference and/or intimidation, or any other adverse act. Persons committing such adverse acts will be subject to disciplinary action. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

#### **What You Can Do to Address Harassment or Discrimination**

- Approach the person or group you feel has discriminated against or harassed you and communicate your concern directly, in person or in writing.

- Report harassment or discrimination to management or to the Equal Opportunity Officer/Title IX Coordinator before it becomes severe or pervasive. You will have the option to file an informal or formal complaint. Also see Equal Opportunity website for access to this form.

If you have concerns about harassment or discrimination, talk to someone about it. Take a stand against behavior that is threatening, intimidating, or offensive even when it is not happening to you. University employees that learn of a discrimination or harassment situation as a third party may also report it to the Equal Opportunity Officer/Title IX Coordinator.

**Ms. Michelle Johnson, Ed.D**

Title IX/EEO Coordinator & Affirmative Action Officer

Human Resources, Morrill Hall 100

Brookings, SD 57007

Phone: (605) 688-4128

Email 1: [Michelle.Johnson@sdstate.edu](mailto:Michelle.Johnson@sdstate.edu)

Email 2: [Equal.Opportunity@sdstate.edu](mailto:Equal.Opportunity@sdstate.edu)

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**For More Information**

For more information on the policies established to promote equal opportunity and eliminate discrimination and harassment at SDSU visit: <http://sdstate.edu/hr/equal-opportunity/index.cfm>

***Domestic Assault***

South Dakota and Federal law prohibits individuals from inflicting bodily harm on their spouse or partner and children. Police have the ability, under the law, to arrest and jail a person, even if the victim does not want to press criminal charges. Often police will proceed with such action.

***U.S. Criminal Sexual Conduct Laws***

It is important to have an understanding of U.S. law in the Criminal Sexual Conduct Code. Individuals have the right to stop sexual contact at any time. This means that when a person says “no” to any type of sexual contact, it violates the law if the partner attempts to emotionally or verbally coerce or physically force that person into continuing the sexual contact. Violation of the Criminal Sexual Conduct Code ranges from forced rape to improperly (without consent) touching the clothed or unclothed intimate body parts of another person. Violation of these South Dakota laws can result in a prison or jail term of one to forty years and/or a fine from \$3,000 to \$40,000. If you become a sexual assault victim, contact the local police. The Counseling Center can also provide assistance. Adults (people over the age 18) cannot have sexual contact/relations with a Minor, or someone who is under the age of 18. This is considered statutory rape and is punishable by imprisonment and /or fines.

***Shoplifting***

You may find shopping here very different from what you are used to at home. Generally, merchandise is sold “self-service,” and clerks are not close at hand. It is very important when shopping in U.S. stores, especially very large stores, to use a cart or basket provided by the store. Never put a piece of merchandise in your

pocket, your purse, or a fold of your clothing. If you do, it may appear to a store employee that you intend to take it without paying for it. In the past, such misunderstandings have led to international students' arrests by the police on charges of "shoplifting." Stores often have devices attached to items to prevent shoplifting, and you may sometimes find you are being watched by an employee or a hidden camera. Shoplifting is a crime, and you can be taken to court, even over a misunderstanding.

## ***Rental Rights and Responsibilities***

### **Landlord-Tenant and Consumer Issues**

#### ***RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NON-IMMIGRANTS***

While non-immigrants may have essentially the same legal rights and obligations as citizens, they are perhaps more likely to encounter legal problems. Language and cultural barriers, differing value systems, and lack of familial support are all factors which can cause a problem to be significantly worse for the non-immigrant student. Among the most common problems encountered by non-immigrant students are those involving landlord-tenant and consumer issues. Both of these areas can involve complicated contracts and transactions. These two areas of the law are particularly well-suited to preventative strategies. Basic and general advice can go a long way to help students avoid or limit legal problems in these areas. The following are general guidelines which may be helpful in preventing problems with landlord-tenant and consumer transactions:

- Never sign any document until it has been fully read and understood. Contracts cannot be easily broken.
- Keep written records of all transactions. Get a receipt for cash payments.
- Don't rely on verbal assurances or promises from landlords or sellers of consumer goods; document them in writing.
- When purchasing or renting, inspect the goods thoroughly prior to signing any agreement. This includes a thorough inspection of an apartment to be rented. Document the condition of the apartment in writing.
- Be aware of how any transaction conflicts with immigration and visa requirements.
- Most landlords have their tenants pay a security deposit which is approximately one month worth of rent during the signing of the lease. Most landlords will refund this deposit once your lease ends and you leave your apartment/house in a respectable manner. Read your lease for specific details.

Laws related to landlord-tenant and consumer issues vary from state to state. Some regulated activities and parties which are commonly covered by federal and state consumer laws include:

- Door to door sales
- Club contracts (i.e. health clubs)
- Seller's duty to disclose defects
- Motor vehicle odometer tampering, dealer's sales contracts, sales tactics
- False advertising
- Mail order transactions
- Credit card billing
- Collection agencies
- Purchase and sale of goods – warranties
- Rental deposit refunds

Students who encounter problems related to the above items should be advised to seek legal assistance.

*Adapted from: Barbara Boysen, University of Minnesota*

*NAFSA (6-89)*

## ***Legal Questions***

If you have Legal Questions, we have several Lawyers employed as professors here on campus. Please contact the International Affairs Office to inquire about who you can talk with.

## ***Personal Safety***

Although the Brookings community is relatively safe; it is not free from crime. With this being said, you can take some simple precautions to keep yourself and your belongings safe while you are living here. Trust your instincts regarding people and places, and don't be afraid to ask for help. If you feel you are in danger, notify the police by calling 911 (111 from an on-campus phone). There are also Emergency Call Boxes placed around campus that are to be used in the case of an emergency or if you feel unsafe. Campus police will respond to your call right away.

The Security Office provides a free escort service 24 hours a day, every day, where an employee of the Security Office will walk with you to your destination on South Dakota State University's campus. The number to call is 5117 (or 688-5117 if you are calling from off campus or a cell phone.) There are also emergency phones and campus phones located around campus, which you can use to call 911 if you have an emergency. Here are some additional suggestions to protect yourself and your property:

- After dark, walk with someone else and stay on well-lit streets.
- Do not give your name, telephone number, home address or e-mail address to someone whom you do not know well. Ask the person for a contact number if you are interested in meeting again.
- You can suppress your personal information from the University web directory by contacting the Records and Registration Office. Their number is 688-6195.
- Learn that it is acceptable to say "no" directly. Anything else may be taken as "yes" or "maybe."
- Do not wear headphones, as they may decrease your ability to hear noises around you.
- Wear bright or light colors to increase your visibility at night.
- Walk facing oncoming traffic if no sidewalk is available.
- Have your keys out and ready for use when approaching your building or car.
- Always carry enough change with you to make a phone call.
- Do not leave any valuables—your backpack, purse, or books, unattended.
- When using an ATM machine, try to find one in a well-lit and busy area. Avoid counting your cash where other people can see you.
- Lock your room whenever you leave it, as well as at night when you are studying or sleeping.
- Do not let strangers into your home to use the phone, or for any other reason.
- Never give your credit card number or Social Security number on a telephone call you did not initiate.
- Do not give out your social security number in the mail or email, federal departments will never email you asking for your SSN number, these are usually "scams" and even look authentic. For assistance with social security scams you can always contact the International Payroll Office in Admin 315 for additional assistance.

## **Health and Hygiene**

This section provides basic information about health concerns in the United States. Although this will not be new information to most international students, there are some students who find it very helpful.

### ***Cleanliness***

U.S. Americans place a strong emphasis on cleanliness. Daily bathing, use of a deodorant, and brushing one's teeth twice a day is recommended. Many people in the United States become uncomfortable when they are in close contact with someone who has noticeable body or mouth odor. Though U.S. Americans communicate directly on many topics, they will probably avoid that person rather than discuss the problem. Americans shower on a daily basis and even shower in the winter!

Personal care products such as soaps, deodorants, shampoos, toothpaste, mouthwash, and feminine hygiene products (tampons and pads) can be purchased in grocery, drug, or discount stores. Pharmacies are the best

place to ask questions about specific product information. If the clerk is unable to help you, talk directly with the pharmacist.

### ***Public Restrooms***

Toilet facilities are known by many names. In South Dakota, you will be understood if you ask for the restroom, toilet, ladies' or men's room, or bathroom. Most public restrooms have two separate facilities, one for men and one for women, but some facilities may be "unisex," meaning they are used by both males and females (usually not at the same time). Women's restrooms often have a vending machine with tampons or sanitary napkins, as well as a container for disposing of used ones. Paper towels and feminine hygiene products should not be flushed down the toilet.

### ***Intimate Relationships and Attitudes Toward Sex***

Generally, U.S. Americans may seem very open about sex, but this openness does not necessarily mean that they are promiscuous or even sexually active. Because of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as unplanned pregnancy, it is important that individuals share responsibility with their partner in having protected sex. "Safe sex" is highly promoted in the United States—you will see television, magazine, and newspaper ads for it. The use of a latex condom is regarded as essential to safe sex. Condoms can be purchased in drug stores or discount stores such as Hy-Vee, Lewis Drug Store, Wal-Mart, Wellness Center or Kmart. Women as well as men may carry condoms.

### ***Contraceptives (Birth Control)***

Protection against unwanted pregnancy is available in both prescription and nonprescription form. The "ob/gyn" (obstetrics/ gynecology) department in any clinic can provide information on the effectiveness of various birth control methods and help you determine what would best meet your needs. You will be required to have a pelvic exam before any prescription contraceptives, including the pill, diaphragm, or Norplant implants can be given. Nonprescription contraceptives include condoms and vaginal spermicides. All nonprescription contraceptives can be purchased in a pharmacy or in a discount store such as Wal-Mart. Proper use of a contraceptive and knowledge of its effectiveness are important factors in preventing pregnancy. The Wellness Center does provide contraceptives. The Counseling office is also a great resource for students who find themselves or their partner pregnant.

### ***Living in a Different Culture***

Living in a culture different from your own is an exciting and often challenging experience. Besides finding housing, registering for courses, and getting to know a new city, you will probably go through "cultural adjustment," the transition to a new culture. Most people will experience some "culture shock" as part of this process.

#### ***What is Culture Shock?***

"Culture shock" is the name given to a feeling of disorientation or confusion that often occurs when a person leaves a familiar place and moves to an unfamiliar one. Coming to Brookings from another country, you will encounter a multitude of new things— buildings, stores, and even the trees may look different. Food may not be the same, and people may look, speak, and act differently from people at home. Even the smells may be different. Your English might not serve you as well as you expected it would. You might not be able to convey your full personality in English, with the result that you think other people are seeing you as a child. And your family and friends are far away. As a result of all this you may feel confused, unsure of yourself, and may have some doubts about the wisdom of your decision to come here.

#### ***Symptoms***

Some people are more affected by culture shock than others. People experiencing culture shock tend to become nervous and unusually tired. They may want to sleep a lot or may have difficulty sleeping or even

eating. They may write many letters home. They may not be able to focus on academics or homework. They may feel frustrated and hostile toward the local people. They may get excessively angry about minor irritations. It is not unusual to become very dependent on fellow nationals. All these feelings may make it difficult to deal with residents of the host country and use their language.

### ***Coping with Culture Shock***

Different people react differently to culture shock. Some become depressed, or even physically ill. Others are stimulated by the new experiences. Here are some ideas that might be helpful to you:

#### **Maintain your perspective.**

Try to remember that thousands of people have come to South Dakota from other countries and have survived (even when they arrived in the cold of winter).

#### **Take some practical steps.**

In *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning*, J. Daniel Hess makes these suggestions for people who are experiencing the loneliness or distress of culture shock:

1. **Find people to interact with.** Ask them questions. As you take an interest in them, your feelings will have a focal point outside of yourself.
2. **Surround yourself with familiar things**—a favorite jacket, a photo, a CD. Make your environment pleasant and reinforcing.
3. **Connect with family & friends:** there are inexpensive ways to keep in touch with family back home such as Skype, GoogleTalk, MSN Messenger, Facebook and Twitter.
4. **Slow down.** Simplify your daily tasks. Relax. Let your emotions catch up with the newness all around you.
5. **Develop patterns.** Follow the same routine each day so that you get a sense of returning to the familiar.
6. **Give expression to your feelings.** Cry. Laugh. Sing. Pray. Draw a picture.
7. **Revise your goals** to accommodate detours instead of scolding yourself for failures.
8. **Keep working on language skills.** Practice the American idiom, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.”
9. **Confide to friends,** and even your host family, that you are sad. Their support will warm you.
10. **Make a few small decisions and carry them out.** Your resolve in small things will increase your confidence. Be assured that, however stressful, culture shock passes if you are willing to let the process of cross-cultural adaptation take its course.

#### **Be patient with yourself and with other people.**

Adjustment is a gradual, day-by-day process. It normally takes some time—a few weeks, a few months, and maybe longer—for people to become comfortable in a new country.

#### **Take care of yourself.**

It is particularly important in times of stress to eat a balanced diet, get enough rest, and get regular physical exercise. Take breaks for recreation or socializing. Studying or working constantly, without taking care of yourself, may make you sick, and make your entire situation worse.

#### **Realize that you may be treated as a stereotype.**

On many occasions, international students will be responded to as “a foreign student” or “a student from country X.” Whether the stereotype is positive or negative depends on the person’s experience, not on anything about you personally. Try not to let this discourage you. Try to start some interesting conversations about the subject of stereotypes—what peoples’ stereotypes are, where they came from, and so on. And remember that you probably have your own stereotypes about Americans.

**Talk with experienced international students from your country and other countries.**

Their observations and advice can help you. Ask them what things they have found most bothersome, most interesting, most perplexing. Ask them what sources of information and support have been most helpful.

**Learn the local criteria for success.**

Find out what is considered a good performance in studies, research, social relations, and other aspects of your life here. You can get information about this from teachers, native students, secretaries, neighbors, and many others.

**Realize how the status of your role here compares to the status to which you are accustomed.**

Different societies attach different importance to roles or positions; for example, in many countries, the role of “university student” or “professor” is accorded more respect or status than it is in the United States. It can be difficult to adjust to having a lower social status than you are accustomed to. It helps to recognize that you personally are not being downgraded, but that you happen to be in a society where respect is expressed differently than is the case at home.

**Avoid being excessively influenced by dramatic events.**

Newcomers to a society may have a particular, very noticeable experience from which they generalize about the new society and the people who live in it. In fact, the experience might be very unusual, not a safe basis for generalization. For example, a new male international student found that his residence hall roommate removed all of his clothes when he was in the room studying or relaxing. The new international student at first supposed this was what U.S. students customarily did, and wondered if he should do the same. He wisely asked around, though, and found that his roommate’s behavior was not typical. If you have a dramatic experience that influences your opinions or feelings about local people, discuss the experience with others and get an idea whether it is typical or unusual.

**Do what you think is appropriate and explain if necessary.**

New students should act in the way they consider appropriate, and then, if the host responds in an unexpected way, give an explanation of the culture and customs that led you to behave in the way you did.

**Learn from the experience.**

Moving into a new culture can be the most fascinating and educational experience of your life. It gives you the opportunity to explore an entirely new way of living and compare it to your own. Here are some questions that you might try to answer as you encounter the local people:

- How do they make friends?
- How do friends treat each other?
- Who respects whom, and how is respect shown?
- What attitudes do they have about their families?
- What is the relationship between males and females?
- How do people spend their time? Why?
- How do they deal with conflicts or disagreements?
- What do they talk about?
- What kind of evidence do they seek or use when evaluating an idea or trying to win an argument?

You can compare the answers you get to the answers you would get to the same questions in your country, and you can help yourself develop a better understanding of your own society and of the one where you are living now.

**Visit the International Affairs Office.**

A discussion with our staff can help achieve a useful perspective on culture shock and insights into U.S. culture. The SDSU Wellness Center is also a great resource for students or family members who are dealing with depression based on their adjustment to U.S. Culture.

## ***Adjustment for Spouses and Children***

Spouses and children of international students go through the same phases of cultural adjustment as the students themselves and can benefit from many of the suggestions above. But their initial attitudes and feelings may be different. A spouse may have left a job in the home country, may not have wanted to come to the United States, may have a lower level of English proficiency, and may have lost the support of family members with an active role in child care and household matters. If the family's economic status has changed, this can also lead to greater frustration for the spouse, especially if the spouse has been accustomed to help with cooking, cleaning, and child care. The spouse needs to adjust to a new country and new roles. During the initial period, the spouse may feel a loss of self-confidence and independence. He or she may feel very isolated and lonely. These feelings may be more severe if the student is deeply involved in studies and is often gone from home.

Spouses who have been in this position advise that the best way to overcome these difficulties is to go out and meet other people. This may seem frightening at first, but the new spouse will meet many others who feel the same frustrations, and talking with them can be quite helpful. A good way to meet other people around campus is through Office of International Affairs sponsored events such as International Night, The Festival of Cultures, International Education Week, and other cultural events. Additional advice: join some organizations or do volunteer work. In Brookings there are many groups and volunteer opportunities. Brookings is home to people from all over the world; spouses can find cultural activities and religious assemblies, all of which are good opportunities to meet people with common interests.

Children also need time to adjust to being in a new place. In general, they learn English very quickly, but school, daycare, or babysitters may be frightening for them at first. Younger children may want a parent to be with them all the time and older children may want their parents to stay with them for a short time at daycare or school. Talk with their teachers to see if this is possible. The teacher may also be a good source of information about other activities, such as sports, music, or art, in which your child can participate.

One key issue facing parents who are raising children in another culture is the degree to which they feel comfortable in seeing their children adopt the local ways. Some international students do not mind if their children seem "American", but others prefer for their children to behave according to the standards of the culture back home. Such parents want their children to do well in school here and to make friends, but may fear that the children are losing their native identity and are adopting inappropriate behaviors. Children are observant and learn quickly. They may want an American first name and may learn attitudes about independence and choice (from school, friends, and the media) that you believe are not appropriate for your culture. Each family needs to decide how important it is to them to help their children retain their own culture. The importance of this will probably vary with the child's age and the length of the parents' planned stay in the United States. It may be helpful for you to talk with other parents to see how they deal with this perplexing issue.

*"Living in a Different Culture" Office of International Students and Scholars, University of Iowa.*

## ***Understanding this Model of Cultural Adjustment***

### **Pre-departure Anxiety**

There's a lot to do before going to another country. People often become overwhelmed with details and are nervous about leaving family and friends for so long. Boarding the plane can bring enthusiasm back.

### **"The Honeymoon"**

Just like with many new relationships, the first reaction to a new culture is often euphoric. You have finally arrived after months, maybe years, of planning. The differences in scenery, food, language, or customs can be exhilarating!

### **Initial Culture Shock**

This is where the excitement of differences can often quickly turn to frustration. For many, the shock can come at the first meal when familiar foods are nowhere to be found. For others, it is the realization that



speaking a second language all day is not only exhausting; it's frustrating to feel limited in your communication. For others, the initial shock is an accumulation of many factors, including the lack of familiar faces and cultural cues.

#### **Surface adjustment**

This can occur when you have settled into a new routine. Maybe you have successfully registered and made it to your classes. Perhaps you've met some people in your classes that seem like they will become friends.

#### **Adaptation and adjustment**

It takes time to adapt and adjust to your new environment. Skills you developed in previous transitions will help you when you encounter future intercultural challenges. Adjusting and adapting to a new culture requires the ability to know yourself well and to know the ways of the culture and its expectations of you.

#### **Reentry shock or adjustment**

The challenges of coming home can be many – the most significant can be that you did not expect it to be hard to come home. But it can be difficult, no matter how excited you are to see family and friends. Moreover, it can be hard to make sense of your experiences in the U.S., especially if you have to immediately find a job or return to your studies. With reentry, the goal is not to jump right back into everything – otherwise, why did you leave? You want to put your new found skills to good use: seeing things from another point of view, speaking another language, and learning of another area of the world. Staying connected with other international alumni is one strategy that can lessen the shock of reentry.

#### **Culture shock**

This is a state of mind you reach when the deeper differences between cultures are experienced and the novelty of the difference decreases. There may be unresolved cultural conflicts in the classroom, with friends, or with the society in general.

#### **Places of True Cultural Learning**

Moving out of culture shock and into adaptation and adjustment is not simply a matter of feeling better. Rather, it requires understanding the reasons behind culture shock and developing personal strategies for dealing with cultural differences. Most sojourners cannot do this process alone; get help from others with international experience or from International Student Services staff to understand U.S. culture and appropriate coping strategies.

#### ***International Relations Council (IRC)***

IRC is the official student organization that represents the international student voice at South Dakota State University. IRC leaders work closely with the International Affairs Office staff to help new students adjust to life at SDSU. IRC is an advocate for international student concerns, and support programs that encourage students to get involved and make new friends both on and off campus.

The IRC also sponsors picnics, organized sports groups, trips, SDSU's International Night and educational programs on world issues. They encourage volunteers to help organize events and provide new ideas for activities and programs. International and U.S. students can join IRC, and many nationality groups are represented in it. To become a member and eventual leader contact the International Affairs Office.

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## **Education in the United States**

The following characteristics can help you understand how U.S. cultural values influence behaviors and expectations in the classroom. The value placed on individualism, achievement, importance of time, work ethic and pragmatism are evaluated in the following section.

## Characteristics of the U.S. academic environment

The U.S. cultural values listed in the previous section shape the academic environment in the following ways:

1. Active classroom participation is expected.
2. Time pressure is high - often there are many small assignments due each week - and time management is an important skill to develop.
3. Critical thinking must be developed.
4. Independent thinking is highly valued.
5. Presenting ideas concisely in class is expected.
6. Assignments (reading, writing, homework, tests) are numerous.
7. Competition is a common mind-set.
8. Achievement and hard work are highly valued; the finished product is most important.
9. Students must be responsible for themselves.
10. Equality—all students should be treated equally.
11. Informality is normal.
12. Direct and straightforward communication is expected.
13. Friendship is usually based on doing things in common—sports, studying, etc.
14. Combining theory and practice—the practical application of ideas—is emphasized.
15. Problem-solving orientation—“If it’s broken, we ought to be able to fix it!”
16. The scientific method and the use of logical proof are emphasized academically.

### ***Methods of Instruction at SDSU***

**Lectures:** Lecture is the most common method of instruction. This may involve note taking and class discussions. You are highly encouraged to participate in the classroom discussion and to voice your opinions. Evaluation is based on your scholarly effort and classroom participation. You should always ask questions any time you do not understand something, or need any clarification.

**Seminars:** Seminar is a small class, usually at the upper levels. Students are often required to prepare presentations.

**Term Papers:** Term paper, or simply a “paper”, is basically a report on research you carry out during the semester. Usually you are given a topic for the paper early in the semester. All papers and any work that is to be submitted are generally typed. You will be required to use the library for the research for your paper.

**Examinations:** Every class has a final exam at the end of the semester, plus a few tests and many “quizzes”. Almost all exams are closed books and the dates announced at the beginning of the semester. Some “pop quizzes” are unannounced, and students are expected to be prepared for these surprise quizzes. Some exams are Objective Tests, designed to test your knowledge of particular facts.

Objective exams could be:

- true/false
- multiple choice
- matching
- identification; or
- fill in the blanks.

Other exams are Subjective Tests, and include “essay questions” which require you to write an essay in response to the question or statement. An exam could include both subjective and objective parts.

## ***Graduation Requirements at SDSU***

The adviser system assists in proper course selection to meet curricular requirements and helps you avoid errors in scheduling. However, you have the final responsibility for satisfying the degree requirements for the curriculum chosen and for the university general education requirements.

To receive a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Arts Degree (BS, BA), a student must successfully complete:

### **The General Degree Requirements**

- A. Completion of at least 120 semester credit hours for the baccalaureate degree (see individual professional college requirements) and 64 semester credit hours for the associate degree. Remedial course credits are not counted as meeting degree requirements.
- B. A Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) and Institutional Grade Point Average (IGPA) of 2.00. The CGPA is based on all courses attempted within the Regental system, transfer or at SDSU. The IGPA is based on all coursework taken at SDSU. If a course is repeated, F95 or later, only the last grade received will be included in the calculation of the CGPA and IGPA.
- C. Institutional requirement. An institutional credit is a course offered by SDSU at any of its approved sites using any approved method of delivery. Courses that are a part of a formal collaborative agreement among Regental institutions are considered to be institutional. The minimum number of credit hours that must be earned from the institution granting the degree are 32 credits for the baccalaureate degree and 16 credits for the associate degree. The number of the last credit hours earned preceding completion of the degree that must be earned from the institution granting the degree are 16 of the last 32 credits for the baccalaureate degree and 8 of the last 16 credits for the associate degree. The minimum number of credit hours specified in the major or minor requirements that must be completed from the institution granting the degree is 50 percent. Credits earned by examination are not counted as resident credit unless an exception has been made because of special program features. A student must have 20 upper division level credits, 14 of which need to be taken at SDSU.
- D. Completion of University general education requirements as described below.
- E. Completion of all college and major field requirements.
- F. Demonstration of satisfactory performance in writing, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning as evidenced by receiving a passing score on all sections of the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) exam or alternative assessment. This requirement must be met by both associate and baccalaureate degree-seeking students.
- G. Demonstration of proficiency in Information Literacy (IL) by receiving a satisfactory on the system IL examination.
- H. Degree seeking students may complete requirements for a minor at any Regental university that has been approved to grant that minor. This minor will be recorded on the transcript in conjunction with a degree/ major at that university or a degree/ major at any other Regental university. A minor will only be recorded on the transcript in conjunction with a degree and major.

### **The General Education Requirements**

The required General Education Curriculum for all undergraduate students is explained on pages 21-27 of the 2018-2019 Catalog. The 30-credit System General Education Requirements (SGRs) are designed to achieve these seven goals.

#### **System Goal #1: Written Communication**

Students will write effectively and responsibly and will understand and interpret the written expression of others.

#### **System Goal #2: Oral Communication**

Students will communicate effectively and responsibly through listening and speaking.

**System Goal #3: Social Sciences/Diversity**

Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.

**System Goal #4: Humanities and Arts/Diversity**

Students will understand the diversity and complexity of the human experience through study of the arts and humanities.

**System Goal #5: Mathematics**

Students will understand and apply fundamental mathematical processes and reasoning.

**System Goal #6: Natural Sciences**

Students will understand the fundamental principles of the natural sciences and apply scientific methods of inquiry to investigate the natural world.

**System Goal #7: Information Literacy**

Students will recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, organize, critically evaluate, and effectively use information from a variety of sources with intellectual integrity.

In addition to the System General Education Requirements, SDSU has **Institutional Graduation Requirements (IGRs) of 8-9 credits designed to achieve three major goals.**

**IGR Goal #1: Land and Natural Resources**

Students will learn to be responsible for the land and other natural resources.

**IGR Goal #2: Personal Wellness**

Students will demonstrate a holistic approach to personal wellness.

**IGR Goal #3: Social Responsibility/Cultural and Aesthetic Awareness**

Students will demonstrate social responsibility or cultural and aesthetic awareness to foster individual responsibility and creativity.

The specific learning outcomes related to these three IGR goals and the specific courses designed to meet these learning objectives are described in detail on pages 46-49 of the 2012-2013 Catalog.

NOTE: Other than for System General Education Goal #7, no given course may satisfy more than one of these requirements, unless the minimum number of credits is exceeded. Credits in excess of the minimum credits needed may be applied in another area.

**Advisors and Instructors: Asking for advice**

At SDSU, you will have two main advisors: an international student advisor and an academic advisor. Listed below are the types of questions and concerns that each can address, and which are best suited to instructors.

***International Student Advisor (International Affairs staff)***

- passport, visa, or Department of Homeland Security (DHS) matters
- other legal matters
- University policies, procedures, and services
- transfers to other schools
- work permission
- travel outside the United States
- health insurance

- financial problems
- academic concerns and problems
- career planning and job strategies
- personal concerns: adjustment; day-to-day living; relationships with family, friends, roommates, etc.
- social and cultural issues
- how to read and interpret your Class Schedule
- detailed information on the registration process
- how to transfer credits

### **Academic Advisor/Professors**

Advising on course selection, graduation requirements, and registration is done by academic advisors.

Undergraduate students with declared majors will have an academic advisor assigned to them.

Undergraduates who have not declared a major must declare a major. If you don't, you will fall out of status in the SEVIS System. You can obtain academic advising from staff in the Advising Center if you have declared a major but are unsure of whether you would like to continue in that major. You should plan to confer with your academic advisor several days before the start of classes.

- which classes to take, advice on schedules
- short- or long-term academic requirements or planning
- availability of graduate assistantships
- probation/suspension and help for poor grades
- majors or minors
- grading system
- academic calendar
- academic terminology
- course content
- course schedule, syllabus, requirements
- exams, papers, and grading
- advice, assistance in comprehending course material, finding library resources, and assessing your progress

### **Clarifying advisor roles**

Do these situations differ from your expectations? *In many cases, the answer could be both true and false, depending on the circumstances!*

- My academic advisor will be an expert in my specific field of study and in my special area of interest.
  - **Usually true.**
- I can expect that both my international student advisor and my academic advisor will maintain a formal relationship with me on all occasions.
  - **It depends on the advisor and the situation.**
- In situations where I disagree with a University rule, the international student advisor will be able to help me get what I need.
  - **False. While an advisor will serve as an advocate to support your viewpoint, the international student advisors need to follow University policy as well.**
- My academic advisor will be able to tell me which professors are the best teachers.
  - **False. Get advice from other students and remember that advice varies according to the person.**
- The person with whom I will need to talk about specific regulations for graduation from the University will be my academic advisor.
  - **True; however, you can also talk with the Registrar as well.**
- It is the responsibility of my academic advisor to tell me which classes I must register for each semester.

- ***Usually you and your advisor work on this together; however, you are ultimately responsible for taking the right courses.***
- The international student advisor can help me with a dispute I am having with my academic advisor or another professor.
  - ***Often true. The International Affairs Office can work on your behalf to resolve the problem.***
- I can go to International Affairs Office during normal business hours and always find an advisor available to answer my questions.
  - ***False. Please call 4122 before you come to check availability.***
- Both my international student advisor and my academic advisor will be available to complete applications or other forms for me if I ask them.
  - ***False. The emphasis on individualism and independence in the United States means that students are responsible for completing their own forms; however, we can help.***
- If I am having difficulty in a particular course, an international student advisor or my academic advisor will be able to influence the instructor to give me special consideration.
  - ***False. Again, while the International Affairs Office will serve as a resource to help you understand the U.S. educational system and U.S. Americans' behavior, the staff will not intervene for you. However, we can help you to become more effective in communicating with your professors.***
- When I meet my international student advisor on the street, she or he will remember my name and my particular situation.
  - ***Sometimes false. Unfortunately, International Affairs staff cannot always remember students' names. Do not interpret this as a sign of disinterest; rather, it is due to the large number of students he works with every year.***
- My academic advisor will help me by correcting my written work because he or she knows that English is not my native language and I might not always use correct spelling or grammar.
  - ***False. Most advisors do not consider this to be their role.*** (Contact the Writing Center in Wintrobe Student Success Center.)
- I will have the opportunity to interact with my academic advisor in social settings.
  - ***Sometimes true.***
- I will be able to talk to my academic advisor about my personal, non-academic problems.
  - ***Depends on the advisor.***
- I can change academic advisors if I don't feel that I am getting the help I need from my current advisor.
  - ***True—check with your department. Graduate Students this is often harder, please check with the Graduate School for additional advice.***

## South Dakota State University Grading Policies

SDSU is on the 4.00 Grade Point System.

Undergraduate grade points are awarded as follows:

<b>A</b>	Exceptional	4.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>B</b>	Above Average	3.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>C</b>	Average	2.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>D</b>	Lowest Passing Grade	1.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>F</b>	Failure	0.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>S</b>	Satisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>U</b>	Unsatisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>RI</b>	Incomplete (Remedial)	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>RS</b>	Satisfactory (Remedial)	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>RU</b>	Unsatisfactory (Remedial)	Does not calculate into any GPA

<b>W</b> Withdrawal	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
<b>AU</b> Audit	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
<b>I</b> Incomplete	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>IP</b> In Progress	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>EX</b> Credit by Exam	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>CR</b> Credit	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>NC</b> No Credit	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>TR</b> Note for NSE/MEDT	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
<b>LR</b> Lab grade linked to Recitation Grade	0 credit course
<b>NG</b> No Grade	0 credit tracking course
<b>NR</b> Grade not Reported by Instructor	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>Grade*</b> Academic Amnesty	Does not calculate in any GPA, no credit given

### **Undergraduate Grading Policy**

Undergraduate students are expected to earn at least a 2.00 accumulative grade point average. An undergraduate whose accumulative GPA (Grade Point Average) drops below 2.00 will be put on academic probation, and should contact his/her advisor to discuss this status. This can also lead to dismissal from the university, placing your F-1 status in danger.

### **Credit / No Credit grading option**

The University also has a Credit /No Credit grading option as an alternative to taking classes for an A-F letter grade. Some classes must be taken A-F. Some degree programs have a limit on the number of C/NC credits you can take. Grades of C or NC are not calculated into your grade point average.

**Graduate Grades will be assigned to the Graduate Academic Level and to all courses and sections with course numbers of 500 or greater. Plus and minus grades are not used.**

### **Graduate grade points are awarded as follows:**

<b>A</b> Exceptional	4.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>B</b> Good	3.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>C</b> Average	2.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>D</b> Unsatisfactory	1.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>F</b> Failure	0.00 grade points per semester hour
<b>S</b> Satisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>U</b> Unsatisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>W</b> Withdrawal	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
<b>AU</b> Audit	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
<b>I</b> Incomplete	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>IP</b> In Progress	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>NG</b> No Grade	0 credit tracking course
<b>NP</b> Normal Progress	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>NR</b> Grade not Reported by Instructor	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>EX</b> Credit by Exam	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>CR</b> Credit	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>NC</b> No Credit	Does not calculate into any GPA
<b>TR</b> Note for NSE/MEDT	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
<b>LR</b> Lab grade linked to Recitation Grade	0 credit course

## Standards of academic conduct

Academic standards and practices are influenced by culture. What is considered appropriate academic behavior in your home country might be different from what is appropriate in the United States. Therefore, it is important that you understand U.S. standards and practices. Not meeting these standards can result in charges of academic dishonesty and possible expulsion from SDSU. The U.S. definition of academic dishonesty is based on the cultural values of individualism, fairness, the idea that individuals must think and work independently, and a strong value of original thinking, creativity, and invention. At South Dakota State University, academic dishonesty is defined as any act violating the rights of another student in academic work, or involving misrepresentation of your own work. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, cheating on assignments and examinations; plagiarizing or representing as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same work, or substantially similar works, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student's work.

### ***Exams/Papers and Cheating***

It is common in many countries for students to study and work together to prepare for exams. This is customary in the United States as well. However, once in the classroom, students are on their own for exams. Students cannot copy or discuss answers with each other during an exam. It is essential in the U.S. education system that each student be evaluated individually on his or her own work. "Cheating" is defined as copying someone else's work or taking prohibited information or tools to an exam.

### **PLAGIARISM**

"**Plagiarism**" is defined as copying the work of someone else and not naming your source. In the United States, this will be considered an attempt by you to pass off the ideas or words of another person as your own. **Plagiarism is one of the most serious violations of the standards of academic conduct in the United States.** It can ruin your academic career. Of course, when you are writing a paper, you research many sources and present or summarize other people's ideas. But you must name your sources and identify when you are using their words and ideas by these methods:

- name your sources in the text
- put quotation marks around words and sentences that you copy from someone else's work
- provide footnotes and endnotes (even when you are paraphrasing someone's words)
- include a list of references or a bibliography

This also applies to the work of other students. Discussing ideas for a paper with friends is okay, but it is not acceptable to hand in papers that are the same as your friends' or to let someone else write your paper for you, even though the ideas are yours. If you are unsure how to cite a source please contact the Writing Center at Wintrobe.

### **HELPFUL RESOURCES ON RESEARCH AND WRITING**

- Consult a publication manual from your discipline, such as the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, for specific guidelines on citing the written and spoken work of others.
- Ask in your department if a particular style or publication manual is used in your field.
- Contact the Writing Center at: 688-6559



# Living in Brookings

## Housing

The Department of Residential Life is dedicated to providing a comfortable, safe and well-maintained living environment for all of our students. The halls are all staffed with enthusiastic professional and student staff who are eager to assist our residents with the college transition. Our Residential Life team includes Complex Directors, Residence Hall Directors, Graduate Assistants, Community Assistants, Living Learning Coordinators and more. New International Students admitted to SDSU are required to live in university residence halls upon arrival. To live on campus at SDSU you must submit the appropriate application along with the application fee. Housing and Dining Services information was sent to you with the admissions package. The following information about our Housing and Residential Life are provided for your benefit.

### KEY FACTS

- SDSU has 15 Residence Halls.
- Each residence hall houses between 150 and 500 students.
- Approximately 3,500 students live on-campus.
- Each resident is provided with internet for unlimited use.
- All rooms are furnished with lofts, mattresses, desks, chairs, dressers, mirrors and wastebaskets.
- Internet ports are also provided at no additional cost.
- All residence halls are equipped with hobo dough/coin-operated laundry facilities, vending machines, mail service, furnished common lounge area.
- If you still know what a landline is and wish to have one, phone jacks are provided in each room. You will need to provide a telephone and arrange for service with Swiftel Communications at (605) 692-6211.
- Basic cable will be activated upon your arrival and is free for one week. After that if you wish to purchase cable service you must contact Mediacom directly at (800) 332-0245.
- No Smoking is allowed in the Residence Halls. Smoking is only allowed outside at least 25 feet from all doorways and windows.
- SDSU is a completely dry campus, which means that alcoholic beverages and empty containers
  - are **not allowed anywhere** on campus.
- Most freshmen live in double rooms.
- Upperclass students have the opportunity to claim single rooms, suites and apartments.
- A variety of housing options are offered to meet student lifestyles.
- Residents may choose from a variety of meal plans and different meal locations.
- Residents have many opportunities to gain leadership skills through their involvement within the Residence Halls. These opportunities include being a CA (Community Assistant) or being a member of various Residence Hall Associations (RHA).
- Residents seeking employment opportunities can work in various aspects of Residential Life. The following positions are available on a continuous basis: working as an Office Assistant, working in maintenance and facility services, working as Hall Mail Staff, working as Hobo Hangout staff, and working as a Community Assistant or Senior Community Assistant.

National research has shown that students who live in residence halls are more likely to be satisfied with their college experience, complete their education, have a higher level of involvement in campus activities, and maintain higher GPAs than their off-campus peers. This is largely due to living closely among peers in an educational environment and being near campus resources.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF CAMPUS LIVING

Convenience is very valuable for busy college students. Beyond being in an environment where you will develop lasting friendships, living on-campus offers the following conveniences:

- Close walking distances to classes, computer labs, the library, and recreational areas
- All-you-can-eat meals in Larson Commons, as well as other various options including: Einstein Bros. Bagels, Erbert & Gerberts, One Stop Rabbit Shop, Java City, Papa Johns, SDSU Dairy Bar, The Market, Jaxsnax, Weary Wil's.
- A variety of programs and activities within your living area
- Nearby parking for all residence halls
- Lounges to gather with friends and study groups
- Quiet places to study
- Fun & friends – There's always something going on!

### **RESIDENTIAL LIFE STAFF**

Each residence hall has a number of CA's (Community Assistants) who are selected and trained to assist with student concerns – personal, social, and academic. Together, the CA's and the Residence Hall Directors plan social, recreational, service, educational and diversity programs for the halls. Area Residence Hall Directors (RHD's) and Complex Directors (CD's) are professional, full-time staff members who live on campus are responsible for the management of their area, its various facilities and operations, and the social and economic development of the residents that live in their area. Additionally, the Residence Hall Directors supervise the CA staff, advise programming, and are available for individual assistance and referrals to other University services.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES OFFERED**

Our 15 residence halls offer students a variety of living options. Most freshmen will be placed in a double room with a roommate in a Freshman Hall. Students may also make residence hall and roommate requests on their Housing application. Students with physical or health needs are able to arrange their special requests directly with Residential Life at 605-688-5148. (We also encourage you to get in touch with our Disabilities Services Coordinator at 605-692-6211.) Each residence hall and room comes equipped with the following services:

- Hall Desk
- Mail Delivery
- Package Deliveries
- Phone Line
- Vending Machines
- Laundry Facilities (located in all residence halls)
- Kitchenettes
- Safety and Security
- Internet Port or Wireless Internet

### **HOUSING OPTIONS**

There are several room types available:

- Double Room
- Designed Single Room
- Double as Single Room (one occupant)
- Multiple as a Double Room (two occupants)

We also offer several Living Learning Communities or Themed Housing Types:

#### **Living Learning Communities (LLC)**

- Academic Residential LLC I — Spencer Hall (Jackrabbit Village), freshman transition option with extra academic support and a special focus on college success
- Ag/Bio LLC — Hansen Hall, students enrolled in the College of Agriculture & Biological Sciences
- Engineering LLC — Mathews Hall, students enrolled in the College of Engineering

- Health Professionals LLC — Mathews Halls, students enrolled in any health-related major
- Honors College LLC — Mathews Hall, students participating in the Honors College

### **Themed Housing**

- Healthy Lifestyles — Brown Hall, students interested in wellness and making healthy life choices
- Fine & Performing Arts — Binnewies Hall, any student interested in learning about, participating in or sharing an appreciation for the arts (need not be enrolled in a related major)
- Jacks Fanatics — Young Hall, students interested in learning about, building on and creating Jackrabbit traditions and sharing SDSU pride
- Quiet Lifestyles — Abbott Hall (Jackrabbit Village) & Pierson Hall, students interested in a quieter living environment that will include extended quiet hours
- TIOTI — Brown Hall, students interested in learning about American Indian history and culture; will involve a close relationship with the American Indian Education and Cultural Center

### **Family Student Housing**

Family Student Housing is available for Students with a spouse or dependent(s.) Our community consists of forty-eight one-bedroom State Court apartments, thirty-two one-bedroom and eight two-bedroom State Village apartments providing quality and economical housing for eligible students. They are communities which provide opportunities for adult students to meet and socialize with other students as well as a place for children to interact and learn together.

We encourage you to familiarize yourself and your family with the FSH handbook. (<http://www.sdstate.edu/reslife/fsh/index.cfm>) It is designed to provide you with information about the services and policies pertaining to life in Family Student Housing (FSH). If you should have further questions about Family Student Housing, please contact Department of Residential Life personnel at (605) 688-5148. The office is located in 167 Caldwell Hall and is open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except weekends and holidays.

Living in a community comes with rights and responsibilities. It takes everyone working together to create and maintain a safe and comfortable living environment. The FSH Manager is an excellent resource for you for living in FSH and being a student at SDSU. The FSH Manager works with you in the development of the community.

## **Child Care & Education**

### **SDSU Family Resource Network**

The SDSU Family Resource Network, found in Pugsley 201, is dedicated to assisting parents and educators of young children in the Brooking community. Services provided to parents include a list of childcare providers in the Brooking community, a check-list to use when choosing childcare, a toy and parenting resource library and Project 8 which assists parents in insuring their child's car seat is properly installed in their vehicles. The following link can be used to access more information about the Family Resource Network: <http://www.sdstate.edu/tll/frn/index.cfm>

### **Fishback Center for Early Childhood Education**

Located on the first floor of Pugsley on the SDSU campus, the Fishback Center for Early Childhood Education provides preschool programs for children ages 15 months to 5 years. The Center also houses a kindergarten classroom for children entering their first year of elementary school. For more information or to get your child on the waiting list, please contact Laura Gloege, Coordinator of the SDSU Preschool at 605.688.6477 or use the following link: <http://www.sdstate.edu/tll/fishback/index.cfm>.

### **School-Aged Children**

Information for enrolling school-aged children in primary or secondary school can be found on the Brookings Chamber of Commerce Website: <http://brookingschamber.org/education/>.

## **Brookings Public Library**

Looking for a place to study off the beaten path? The Brookings Public Library may just be the place for you! Located at 515 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, the library boasts a wide array of books for all ages. Other library resources include free wi-fi, a computer lab complete with internet, movie and audio book rentals, study rooms, and meeting rooms for non-profit organizations. The Mango Tree Coffee Shop on the second floor gives the library an added bonus of a place to grab a quick bite to eat and some caffeine for an extra-long study session. The library's website hosts a number of educational opportunities for children and adults, including Mango Languages. This website can be used to practice using English or a plethora of other languages you may be interested in learning.

Library services are free to all people living in Brookings County, including the towns of Aurora, Brookings, Bruce, Bushnell, Elkton, Sinai, White, and Volga. More information about the library and its resources can be found at: <http://www.brookingslibrary.org/>

## **Scheduling a Week**

### **A TYPICAL WEEK**

All classes are held from Monday through Friday, between 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Some evening classes are also held from Monday through Thursday until 9:00 p.m. (exact times may vary). A three-credit class meets for three hours of class time. These classes either meet one hour each day for three days, or one and half hours for two days or 3 hours 1 night a week. Lab classes may have different schedules.

Most of the evenings are occupied with assignments, projects and homework. You will need to work on your time management skills the first few weeks of school. As you get more used to organizing your own schedules, you will find time to be involved in other extracurricular activities or personal interest. So it is very important that you manage your time well, plan ahead, and give yourself enough time to just relax.

During the weekends, most of the students catch up with their laundry, room cleaning, writing letters, reading books etc. Although it may appear that very few are actually studying during the weekends, most of the students at U.S. colleges and universities have designed themselves a daily and weekly schedule for studies and homework. You can also get ideas and suggestions from your roommates or classmates or the International Affairs Office on time management.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students at South Dakota State University have ample opportunity to participate in different extracurricular activities organized by different student clubs and organizations. These programs are mostly entertainment, sports, and cultural events. Membership to these clubs and organizations is open to all students and is free. There are also college publications, theater productions, choirs and intramural sports, which are produced and participated in by students. Event posters can be seen around campus for information on these events.

## **Transportation**

### ***Brookings Area Transit Authority (BATA):***

The Brookings Area Transit Authority can be reached to shuttle people around the city of Brookings. Their phone number is: 692-2222. (<http://brookingsareatransit.com/>) Contact them for routes and times. There are 4 main stops at SDSU: Student Union, Pugsley – East Side, Medary – (Dairy Bar Corner), Berg & Bailey – SW Corner, Married Student Housing.

- Students must call a day in advance.
- Fares are \$2/ride, round trips are \$5.
- Same day rides are \$5/ride... Their schedule may dictate the time they can pick you up.
- Sioux Falls Trips:
  - Mondays – Round Trip is \$15
    - (Arrangements must be made by 4:00 PM Friday.)
  - Other days – Fares are \$1.75/loaded mile for up to two passengers
  - Fares must be paid in advance.
  - Call for operating hours.

#### **JEFFERSON BUS LINES:**

Jefferson Bus Lines is an economical way of traveling to Brookings from Sioux Falls (or from Brookings to Sioux Falls.) Tickets are estimated at around **\$16.00 - \$22.50 USD (one way.)** The Jefferson Lines Bus Stop is located at the Zip Trip gas station (3045 Lefevre Dr.).

You can purchase your tickets online at the following website:

<https://www.jeffersonlines.com/book-your-trip.asp>

Busses leave from Sioux Falls once a day (7 days a week) at 2:40 p.m. and arrive in Brookings at 3:55 p.m. Busses leave from Brookings once a day (7 days a week) at 11:15 a.m. arriving in Sioux Falls at 12:15 p.m.

#### ***Buying a Car***

If you are thinking about getting a car, consider it carefully. Tax, License, Insurance and maintenance are major expenses many people don't anticipate: potentially as much as \$1,500 per year. Some students choose to purchase nice cars and have difficulty paying their school fees because of this. Make sure your priorities are straight. If you are fortunate enough that you can afford a nice car, purchasing one and making both your car and school payments will not be a problem. Those who cannot afford one, ask yourself what your primary purpose for being here is. If your car payments will affect your ability to pay your school bill, you are putting yourself at risk. Do not get caught up in US Culture and buy a car you cannot afford. Many times, students can purchase a used car that will get you back and forth between school and your apartment for less than \$500. While there will be some maintenance repairs, you will be better off in the long run. Keep in mind that your main reason for being here is to get your degree. A nice car will eventually come as a result of hard work now.

#### ***Bikes***

Many students commute on bicycles. In South Dakota, biking is most common during the warmer months, but winter biking is also possible. To make winter biking a safe and enjoyable transportation option, consult with the staff of Sioux River Bicycles & Fitness. Their phone number is: 692-5022.

If you purchase a bike, remember to keep it locked at all times. The nicer your bike is, the greater your risk. To prevent theft, we recommend high-quality kryptonite locks (available in "U" shapes or cables), because a thief can remove your bike from anything else (such as a chain and padlock) in less than ten seconds. Also, do not lock your bike to hand rails or to sign posts where your bike might obstruct the sidewalk.

#### ***Shopping***

##### ***General Advice***

In the United States, as in most countries, live by the rule *Buyer beware!* Compare prices—the same items are often sold at different prices in different stores. Ask your friends where to buy at bargain prices. Watch for sales advertised in the newspapers and for items “on sale.” “Want ads” in the newspapers list sales of used household goods and furnishings.

Prices in stores are normally fixed, and the customer does not bargain with the sales clerk. It is common, however, to bargain when you buy from a private individual. (It is also common to negotiate the price on automobiles.)

When you buy merchandise:

- If you must buy on credit, calculate the total amount you will end up paying, not just the monthly payments. Many credit cards charge interest rates of 20% or more! Be sure to keep up with payments; the seller usually has the legal right to force you to return items if you don't.
- Read tags and labels. Check sales slips and written guarantees. Be sure you understand them; *keep them in a safe place in case you need to return or exchange an item.*

If a problem arises:

- Take your complaint to the store first, and write down the name of the person you spoke with; often they can solve the problem. Many buyers mistakenly fail to get in touch with the store before seeking outside assistance.
- Be prepared to wait a few days or a week; some complaints take time to be resolved.
- If, after a reasonable length of time, you have not received satisfaction from the store, collect all receipts and sales slips and call a consumer protection agency (e.g., the Better Business Bureau, see the following section ) for help.
- Try to save copies of everything—a bill, canceled checks, warranties, and correspondence—you have sent or received concerning the problem.

### ***The Better Business Bureau***

The Better Business Bureau is an organization designed to protect buyers. It is a non-profit service organization. You can call the Bureau for information on where to purchase certain items that you cannot locate in the Yellow Pages of the city telephone directory. You can also get information on whether or not the Bureau has received any complaints against a company. Contact them on-line at <http://www.bbb.org>.

### ***Beware of Solicitors!***

Often people will come to your door, call you on the telephone, or stop you on the street and ask you to buy or sign up for something. Be careful. Find out more about them. Never sign anything from solicitors unless you read it carefully and understand what you are signing. You may receive letters in the mail that say "you may already have won" a large sum of money or some other wonderful prize. These are contests, and millions of these letters are mailed to people all over the United States. It is very unlikely that you will actually win anything. If the letter asks you to send money, throw it away—these contests are created to make a profit for the organizer.

### ***Grocery Stores***

Grocery stores sell all types of food—fresh, frozen, and canned—"staples," and spices. Most also sell toiletries such as shampoo, toothpaste, and paper products such as toilet paper, paper toweling, sanitary napkins, facial tissues, paper plates, and paper cups etc.

### ***Clothing, Pharmaceuticals, and Housewares***

#### **Department Stores**

Department stores sell shoes, clothing, appliances, furniture, fabrics, dishes, pots and pans, linens, towels, and toys. You can find them at the Brookings Center Mall or The Empire Mall in Sioux Falls. Most store hours are 9:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, Saturday 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., and Sunday 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Discount department stores, such as Wal-mart and K-Mart, sell fair- to good-quality items for discount prices.

### Hardware Stores

Hardware stores sell many household goods, small appliances, and tools. There are hardware stores near the campus. Wal-mart also sells many hardware items and electronics.

### Pharmacies

Pharmacies are the only places that sell doctor-prescribed medicines. Many drugs may only be obtained with a doctor's prescription in the United States. If you get a prescription from a doctor, you may have it filled at the Jackrabbit Pharmacy, HyVee Pharmacy, Lewis Drug, or Wal-mart. Non-prescription drugs, often called "over-the-counter" medications—aspirin, cold tablets, vitamins, some contraceptives (e.g., condoms), etc., are in plain view on drug store shelves. If you do not see the item you are looking for, ask the pharmacist for help.

### CUTTING COSTS

Buying used or second-hand clothing and furniture is very common in the United States—especially among students, who are trying to cut costs. Some of the better-known stores include Goodwill and Thrift Shops. Students also post notices of second-hand items to buy or sell in newspaper classified ads, on bulletin boards, Facebook, and listservs. The following is a list of thrift stores that have information on the web.

Goodwill Stores: [www.locator.goodwill.org](http://www.locator.goodwill.org)

Salvation Army Thrift Stores <http://www.nro.salvationarmy.ca/english/>

## Winter in South Dakota

South Dakota is known for its four distinct seasons. The weather is influenced by winds from the Gulf of Mexico and the Arctic regions. While each season has remarkable features to offer, South Dakota's best-known season is undoubtedly winter.

Weather information is usually reported in non-metric measurements. Temperature is reported in degrees Fahrenheit, rather than Celsius. Wind speed is reported as miles per hour, rainfall and snowfall in inches. Weather forecasts are reported by newspapers, television, and radio stations. Additional weather information is available at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov> on the National Weather Service (NWS) web site and on sites linked to by the NWS. In the rare case that South Dakota State University would close due to weather, SDSU always posts school closings on the front page of the website: <http://www.sdstate.edu/> as well as on local TV stations such as Kelo-Land and KSFY. For current weather conditions you can go to [http://www.weathercentral.com/weather/us/cities/sd\\_brookings.html](http://www.weathercentral.com/weather/us/cities/sd_brookings.html). Weather throughout the State of South Dakota is extremely variable. Be sure to get local information concerning storms and conditions.

### Fahrenheit - Celsius Conversion

These are the formulae used to convert temperatures:

$$^{\circ}\text{F} = (^{\circ}\text{C} \times 1.8) + 32$$

$$\text{ex: } (20^{\circ}\text{C} \times 1.8) + 32 = 68^{\circ}\text{F}$$

$$^{\circ}\text{C} = (^{\circ}\text{F} - 32) / 1.8$$

$$\text{ex: } (70^{\circ}\text{F} - 32) / 1.8 = 21^{\circ}\text{C}$$

### Wind Chill

During winter, people often speak of temperature and wind chill. When the wind blows, it causes people and animals to lose heat much more rapidly than when there is no wind. Look at the wind chill chart on the following link. Find a temperature and a wind speed. At the intersection of the two values, you will find the wind chill factor. In extreme cold and windy conditions, with wind chills many degrees below 0° Fahrenheit, **exposed skin can freeze in a few minutes**. The danger increases if you have wet clothes or hair. Make sure to dress warmly with several layers and cover your extremities to avoid frost bite on you face, toes, fingers, ears etc. To view a wind chill temperature chart go to <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/windchill/index.shtml>.

### **Snow and Ice**

South Dakota's first snowfall is usually in late October or early November. The coldest months are January and February. Lakes and rivers develop ice soon after the temperature remains below 32° Fahrenheit for an extended period of time. Ice remains dangerously thin, however, until several inches of ice have formed under the surface. Each year a number of people die in South Dakota after falling through ice that was too thin to support their weight. The winter preparedness website from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has information about preparing for a winter storm [www.fema.gov/areyouready/winter.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/winter.shtm)

### **Winter and Your Health**

The winter season may affect your health in ways other than dangerous temperatures and wind chills. In cold weather, you will experience watery eyes and a runny nose. These are normal reactions to cold and do not mean you are ill. Colds and flu are common during the winter; however, mild depression is also fairly common. South Dakota's northern latitude means that the days are much shorter in winter than in summer, and the short days, combined with cold weather, often affect one's mood. If you find yourself feeling sad, or not wanting to go outside at all, you may be getting depressed. A good way to combat mild depression is to get out in the sunlight and exercise. Avoid isolating yourself at home.

### **Winter Clothes**

Dressing for winter involves a basic principle: **Dress in layers**. Layers of clothing trap air, which insulates your body from the cold. You should also have a water resistant outer layer and warm, water-resistant boots. Jackets with down or insulated filling will help protect you from wind chill, try to find a jacket with a hood to keep your head and face covered. Wear a warm hat or ear muffs - as well and buy gloves and woolen socks or thermals. Your head has little insulation and loses heat very quickly. A wise saying to remember: **The best way to keep your feet warm is to keep your head warm.**

Select a close-fitting garment to wear next to your skin, such as a t-shirt, tights, or long underwear. Silk or polypropylene is best, because it wicks moisture away from your skin, unlike cotton. Over the first garment, wear a sweater, sweatshirt, or something similar. On the outside, wear a winter jacket such as a parka. Be sure to wear warm boots and a hat, as well as mittens or gloves. Winter clothing may be found at many stores; Wal-Mart is a great place to start.

### **Winter Activities and Escapes**

You can enjoy most winter days outside if you are dressed appropriately. There are many fun activities that can be enjoyed only in the winter, such as skiing, skating outdoors, snow-shoeing, winter camping, Ice Fishing and more.

### **DRIVING AND PARKING IN WINTER**

Driving in the winter is more complicated than at other times of the year. You should have blankets or extra clothes in your car in case you become trapped in your car due to a winter storm. You will need antifreeze in your car's radiator, an ice scraper to clear your windshield, and a shovel in case you get stuck in the snow. Snow and ice are slippery and car accidents are common. Also common are cars that will not start, due to the cold.

#### **Winter Emergency Car Kit**

- Starter ("jumper") cables
- Ice scraper
- A large bag of sand or cat litter
- Small shovel
- Flashlight and flares
- Extra window cleaning fluid (*Do not use water—it will freeze!*)
- Candles and matches and a blanket



**If you get stuck in a snow storm on a highway do not attempt to leave your car. Stay put, and wait for the Highway patrol to come by. Also, run your engine sparingly and make sure your exhaust pipe is clear of snow. (A clogged exhaust pipe can result in carbon monoxide poisoning.)**

#### **Snow Emergency Parking Rules and Regulations**

In order to remove snow quickly and thoroughly, the city of Brookings will declare “snow emergencies.” Special parking restrictions will go into effect so snowplows can work efficiently through the city. Some streets are designated as snow emergency routes and will be cleared first. If you or your friends have a car, pay attention to snow emergency regulations or the car will be ticketed, towed, and subject to fines!

#### **Emergency Telephone Numbers**

**For all emergencies, whether you are on or off campus, in South Dakota or any other state, all you need to dial is the three-digit number 911. (9-911 if on campus.)** The 911 operator answering will ask you questions in order to determine who to send to help you (police, paramedics, fire department, etc.). You may also be asked to speak to the police or fire department, depending upon the situation. **This number should be used only in emergency situations.**

#### **WARNING SIRENS**

At 1:00 pm on the first Wednesday of each month, cities in the United States test their warning sirens. The test will last approximately one minute. Warning sirens are used when severe weather is approaching (e.g., high winds or tornadoes). Immediately turn on a radio or television if you hear the sirens at a non-testing time and take shelter as instructed.

## **Gambling**

The Brookings region has several casinos within driving distance that students are able to access. We urge you to use caution when/if you chose to visit one of these establishments. We have had students in the past find themselves in financial crisis because they have gambled away their tuition/rent/living expenses. If you chose to go to a casino, make sure you set your limits and you only bring an amount of money you are willing to lose. These casinos are big and luxurious because people lose their money... not because everybody wins. Your odds of losing your money to one of these casinos are much greater than your odds of winning money.

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## **Money and Banking**

### **Financial institutions**

It is not safe to keep a lot of cash (currency) with you. Financial institutions—credit unions, banks, and savings and loans institutions—provide a safe way to keep your money because they carry insurance on all funds kept in them. Most U.S. Americans pay their expenses with personal checks from their bank checking account. Most financial institutions are open Monday through Thursday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Friday: 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

### ***Foreign Currency Exchange and International Transaction Services***

In general, local banks do not keep much foreign currency on hand. You may need to travel to Sioux Falls to exchange foreign currency. Please contact your local bank to find out specific details.

### ***Bank Accounts***

To keep your money in a financial institution you must open an account. You will need a student I.D, Passport & I20 to open an account. Ask the institution’s staff about the types of services it offers. These can vary widely. However, there are basically two different types of accounts:

**Checking accounts:** Institutions often offer free checking to students. You must make a deposit of at least \$100 to open an account. All new international students will need to open a checking account. Below is a list of financial institutions that you may want to check into when opening a checking account. The Yellow pages of your phone book will list many others as well.

**Savings accounts:** Savings accounts earn interest. You can withdraw any amount at any time during regular hours by transferring the funds to your checking account or taking it in cash. Institutions will charge a monthly service fee of \$3.00 if your balance drops below \$300.00.

#### **NEARBY INSTITUTIONS**

##### **Wells Fargo Bank**

527 Main Ave, Brookings, SD

Phone: (605) 692-6245

##### **First Bank & Trust** (various locations)

520 6th St, Brookings, SD

Phone: (605) 696-2265

##### **Community State Bank**

520 6th St, Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 692-6294

##### **Meta Bank**

600 Main Ave, Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 692-2314

##### **Dakotaland Federal Credit Union**

2423 6th St, Brookings, SD 57006

Phone: (605) 697-5922

##### **Home Federal Bank**

1024 6th St, Brookings, SD

Phone: (605) 692-7100

#### ***Cash Cards and Check (Debit) Cards***

Instant cash cards and check (or debit) cards look like credit cards. They allow you to withdraw money from your account 24 hours a day from ATM machines at different locations. Check cards are also used for purchase; the money is electronically transferred from your checking account to the merchant. You must have a checking account in order to get a check card. However, you can have an Instant Cash (ATM) card even if you only have a savings account.

Cards for different institutions may have different names, but most ATM machines serve several institutions. Just place the card in a machine and enter your personal identification number (PIN) to activate it. (Be sure to memorize the PIN number.) Some machines take deposits, too. Banks sometimes charge a fee for these transactions, so try to use ATM machines affiliated with your bank.

**If you decide to use a cash or check card, be sure to record your withdrawals, purchases, and fees in your checkbook! The same as you do when you write a check.**

## **MONEY TRANSFERS**

Students are advised wired to have money wired directly to their own local bank account through electronic transfer from another bank. Ask at your local bank for instructions for completing this process. (Money can also be wired to SDSU.)

Money transfers are also available through a private company such as Western Union at 800/325-6000 (English language) or 800/325-4045 (Spanish). Western Union will require a Visa or Master Card credit card to transfer money over the telephone. Otherwise, you must visit a Western Union office to arrange a money transfer.

## **Taxes**

### **INCOME TAX INFORMATION**

Anyone who earns income from U.S. source must file "Income Tax Return" each year. This affects students who hold teaching assistantships, teaching fellowships, research assistants, graduate students, those students with Practical Training Authorization, or those employed for off-campus or on-campus jobs. Your monthly paycheck will show a deduction for federal, state, and local taxes. These are three of the agencies to which you must report by April 15 of each year. Your employer will provide you with a "1042S" or a "W-2" form, usually in late January or early February. These forms show your total earnings and any income tax deducted. You must submit this form along with the appropriate income tax to federal, state and local Internal Revenue Offices. Should you, over the course of the year, pay more than your tax bracket demands, you will obtain a refund; should you have paid less, you'll owe the government.

Depending on your country of citizenship, certain tax treaties apply which may reduce the amount of federal tax you pay. If your country does have a tax treaty with the U.S. you should read the whole treaty carefully to see if you qualify for any treaty benefits. Some treaties only exempt part of your income from taxation. You may owe on the rest. If, after reading the treaty, you feel that you do qualify for the treaty benefits, you should complete and submit to IRS (Internal Revenue Service) form 8233, and accompanying statements to your employer each year.

Federal income tax forms and instructional booklets are available from the IRS. State and local tax forms are available from the state and city revenue offices, public libraries, the Internet, and SDSU Library. You should keep copies of all forms submitted to IRS and any other government agencies. If your forms are lost or questioned, it is your responsibility to provide duplicate information. "Tax Evasion" (failure to pay and report taxes) is a federal offense; do not forget to file.

As an international student in the United States, you must know and meet your obligations under applicable federal, state and local laws. Tax forms and instructions are available from the IRS website at: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

Every year, sometime around the beginning of March, The Shared Payroll Center will offer free tax filing assistance for our international employees and students whose tax residency is classified as "Non Resident Alien". This is normally a walk-in service, no appointments are necessary. Please contact [Jolane.Tomhave@sdstate.edu](mailto:Jolane.Tomhave@sdstate.edu) for more information.

Even International Students who did not receive any income should report to the Library to receive assistance filing reporting form 8843. All F-1 and J-1 visa holders are required to file federal income tax.

## Recommendations for handling your money

### Handling Money While Traveling

1. Consider buying a money belt to wear underneath your clothing.
2. Buy travelers' checks in U.S. dollars.
  - Buy them in small denominations—\$20 and \$50.
  - Sign them before leaving the bank.\*
  - Keep travelers' check receipts in a separate place.
  - Recommended: (a) American Express (b) Citibank
    - (Sometimes your travelers' checks may be refused.)
3. Do not carry large amounts of cash at any time. When traveling, carry no more than \$300-\$400 in cash.
  - Use small bills: \$5, \$10, \$20
  - Once you are settled, carry no more than \$50, unless shopping.
4. Always keep your money and travelers' checks on your person while traveling.
  - **Not** in a suitcase
  - **Not** left in hotel rooms, dorm rooms, or in the homes of friends or relatives

### General Financial Tips and Advice

1. Your financial matters are personal and should not be discussed in public places. You should take responsibility for managing your own money.
2. It's always best not to borrow money. Similarly, do not lend anyone more money than you can afford to lose. Do not lend money to people you barely know, it is also unwise to lend money to friends if you have tuition and bills to pay.
3. Always keep your belongings with you in public places, classrooms, libraries, and at parties.
4. If your money is stolen:
  - Inform the local or campus police immediately. File a police report.
  - Contact your travelers' check or credit card company for instructions.
  - Contact your international student advisor and your academic advisor.
5. Consider on-campus student employment for the following reasons:
  - earn spending money
  - establish savings
  - increase and practice your English-language skills
  - meet a variety of students and staff
  - get work experience in the United States
  - learn more about U.S. culture

### Money Transfers and Bank Accounts

1. International money transfers, in most cases, take a minimum of 21 days. There is also a service charge.
  - a. Each bank has a routing number of international money transfers. Ask your bank for their routing number. Your parents or sponsors will need this number as well as your checking account number in order to wire money to your account.
2. Open a bank account immediately at a bank near campus or your residence, convenient for you, that meets all of your particular financial needs.
  - a. Be sure to have your checks start with a high number, at least 1000.
  - b. Get a safe-deposit box for valuables and important documents such as jewelry, passports, birth certificates, money market certificates.
  - c. Make sure you keep your account balanced as overdraft checks (writing checks when there is not enough money in your account) and fees are very costly.

### **Advice About Educational Expenses**

1. You are expected to pay your tuition and fees by the due date when billed each semester. You are personally responsible for all tuition and fees, even if you are sponsored by a funding agency or government. You can elect to pay in one, two, or three installments. See the Cashiers Office in SAD 136 about the payment plan options.
2. Penalty fees for late tuition payments are charged directly to the student. In some cases, sponsoring agencies will not take responsibility for the late fee and the student must pay it, even if the agency failed to make the tuition payment on time.
3. It is advised that you bring enough money with you for your first semester's educational and living expenses.
4. Health insurance is a requirement for all international students. All international students at SDSU must be covered by SDBOR Student Injury and Sickness Plan. You will not be able to have a private health insurance policy of your own.

### **Financial Tips Related to Housing**

1. University residence halls must be paid in advance.
2. Most apartments require the first month's rent when you move in. Other charges may include:
  - a. Damage deposit
  - b. Key deposit
  - c. Application fee, which may include a background check
3. Always, at all times, keep dorm rooms and apartment doors locked.
4. Consider having your personal property insured.
  - a. Apartment (renter's) insurance, available from any insurance company, is not expensive but can save you thousands of dollars if property is stolen or damaged by fires, flooding, etc.
  - b. Travelers' insurance
5. Allocate some money for "settling in" to your new home for items such as small appliances, cleaning products, and other household goods.

### **Credit Cards, Instant Cash Cards, and Check Cards**

1. Try to avoid the frequent use of credit cards. Buy only what you can afford to pay. If you do need to use a credit card, carefully review each month's statement, especially if you have used your account number on the web.
2. Instant cash cards (ATM) and check cards are useful and can be obtained when you open your checking account. Generally, a check card allows you to pay for items out of your checking or savings account and is honored by businesses in the same way as a credit card. However, unlike a credit card it cannot be used for amounts greater than the balance in your checking account.
3. Never leave your ATM receipts lying near the ATM machine.
4. Always remember to record your ATM (automated teller machine) withdrawals and check card purchases in your checkbook register! Do not rely on the balance printed on an ATM withdrawal receipt or even what you are told when you call the bank! (Checks you have written, for example, may not have been processed.)
5. Remember that if your credit or check card is lost or stolen, it can be a very unpleasant and expensive experience.

## **Lifestyle choices and decisions**

Most of your expenses depend on what you, as an individual, decide are important based on your new lifestyle here. You'll find some necessities (such as insurance) cost much more than you are accustomed to paying, while there are other ways to simplify your lifestyle and save money. Think about the following items. Which of these are necessities which you cannot change (e.g. tuition & fees)? Which could be easily modified to fit your budget (e.g. sending email instead of phoning home, buying used books)?

computer  
 warm clothing, boots  
 credit card finance charges  
 health insurance  
 TV/VCR  
 international travel  
 concerts, sports, movies  
 food  
 transportation costs  
 books  
 car  
 tuition & fees  
 camera  
 phone calls home  
 rent & utilities  
 stereo  
 renter's insurance  
 eye glasses

## Sample semester budget worksheet

Here is a suggested format for a budget worksheet. By completing this, you will become more aware of your financial situation and should be able to manage your finances more efficiently. At the end of the semester, check to see how well you kept to your budget, and then make adjustments for the next semester.

Financial Resources	September	October	November	December
1. Employment				
2. Funds from your sponsor				
3. Other funds				

### School Expenses

1. Tuition				
2. Room and Board				
3. Fees and Student insurance				
4. Books and supplies				
5. Miscellaneous				

### Living Expenses

1. Food				
2. Rent and utilities				
3. Renters' insurance				
4. Telephone				
5. Clothing				
6. "Settling in"				
7. Child care				

8. Transportation				
9. Savings/emergencies				
10. Bills (indebtedness)				
11. Entertainment				

# Metric Conversions

## LENGTH

1 millimeter (mm) = 0.03937 in  
1 centimeter (cm) = 10 mm = 0.3937 in  
1 meter (m) = 100 cm = 1.0936 yd  
1 kilometer (km) = 1,000 m = 0.6214 mile  
1 inch (in) = 25.4 mm  
1 foot (ft) = 12 in = 0.3048 m  
1 yard (yd) = 3 ft = 0.9144 m  
1 mile = 1,760 yd = 1.6093 km

## AREA

1 square cm (cm<sup>2</sup>) = 100 mm<sup>2</sup> = 0.1550 in<sup>2</sup>  
1 square meter (m<sup>2</sup>) = 10,000 cm<sup>2</sup> = 1.1960 yd<sup>2</sup>  
1 hectare (ha) = 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> = 2.4711 acres  
1 square km (km<sup>2</sup>) = 100 ha = 0.3861 mile<sup>2</sup>  
1 square inch (in<sup>2</sup>) = 645.16 mm<sup>2</sup>  
1 square foot (ft<sup>2</sup>) = 0.093 m<sup>2</sup>  
1 square yard (yd<sup>2</sup>) = 9 ft<sup>2</sup> = 0.8361 m<sup>2</sup>  
1 acre = 4840 yd<sup>2</sup> = 4046.86 m<sup>2</sup>  
1 square mile (mile<sup>2</sup>) = 640 acres = 2.59 km<sup>2</sup>

## MEASUREMENTS

1 Teaspoon = 5 ml  
3 Teaspoons = 1 Tablespoon  
16 Tablespoons = 1 U.S. cup  
2 Quarts = 8 pints = 16 cups = 128 fluid ounces = 1 U.S. gallon

## TEMPERATURE

Conversion °F to °C: Subtract 32, Divide by 1.8  
Conversion °C to °F: Multiply by 1.8, Add 32

## VOLUME/CAPACITY

1 cubic cm (cm<sup>3</sup>) = 0.0610 in<sup>3</sup>  
1 cubic decimeter (dm<sup>3</sup>) = 1,000 cm<sup>3</sup> = 0.0353 ft<sup>3</sup>  
1 cubic meter (m<sup>3</sup>) = 1,000 dm<sup>3</sup> = 1.3080 yd<sup>3</sup>  
1 liter (l) = 1 dm<sup>3</sup> = 0.2642 US gal  
1 liter = 0.2200 Imp gal  
1 hectoliter (h) = 100 l = 2.8378 US bu  
1 cubic inch (in<sup>3</sup>) = 16.387 cm<sup>3</sup>  
1 cubic foot (ft<sup>3</sup>) = 0.0283 m<sup>3</sup>  
1 cubic yard (yd<sup>3</sup>) = 27 ft<sup>3</sup> = 0.7646 m<sup>3</sup>  
1 US dry pint = 0.5506 l  
1 US bushel = 64 US dry pints = 35.239 l  
1 US liquid pint = 0.4732 l  
1 US gallon = 8 US liquid pints = 3.7854 l

## MASS (WEIGHT)

1 gram (g) = 1,000 mg = 0.0353 oz  
1 kilogram (kg) = 1,000 g = 2.2046 lb



1 ton (t) = 1,000 kg = 1.1023 short tons  
 1 ton = 0.9842 long ton  
 1 ounce (oz) = 437.5 grains = 28.350 g  
 1 pound (lb) = 16 oz = 0.4536 kg  
 1 short cwt = 100 lb = 45.359 kg  
 1 long cwt = 112 lb = 50.802 kg  
 1 short ton = 2,000 lb = 0.9072 t  
 1 long ton = 2,240 lb = 1.0161 t

## Slang Terms and Idioms

A lemon:	a bad buy or purchase
At one's fingertips:	easily recalled
Bar:	place where alcoholic beverages are served
Bar-B-Q (barbecue):	an outdoor cooking party, like a picnic
Beat around the bush:	to avoid speaking directly about a subject
Big shot:	supposedly important person or someone who thinks he or she is important
Break the ice:	make a beginning in a conversation
Brown-nose:	1) overly pleasing to person in authority 2) "kiss up"
Buck:	dollar bill
BYOB:	Bring Your Own Bottle or Booze (liquor)
Cocky:	over-confident; egotistic; big ego, show-off
Cool:	1) something good, strange, or unusual 2) awesome, far-out, excellent, radical, wow
Cop:	slang for police officer; pig, bacon, the heat
Copy-cat:	copies others' actions
Couch potato:	lazy person who watches too much television (TV)
Crabby:	irritable, angry, tense, moody, pissed-off; ticked-off
Cram:	to study hard the night before the test
Cut to the chase:	get to the point of the subject; don't beat around the bush
Dope:	illegal drugs: marijuana, hashish; someone stupid
Dude:	friend; buddy
Dumb:	a term for a person meaning stupid
Finals:	3-4 days of tests at the end of each semester
Foot in the mouth:	make an embarrassing mistake
Gas:	gasoline or petrol for a car
Geek:	weird or unusual person; nerd, dork, weird-o, doorknob
Get real:	get serious
Give the cold shoulder:	ignore rudely; cold-hearted
Go Dutch:	pay one's own way
Go fly a kite:	go away; take a hike, go jump in a lake
Goof-off:	lazy or idle person who sometimes does silly things;
slacker,	
	procrastinator

Gotcha:	1) I understand 2) I fooled you
Hassle:	troublesome, a nuisance; bug, annoy, irritate, pet peeve
Having a fit:	anxiety and nervousness, emotional explosion; freaking
out,	having a cow
In a jam:	in a difficult situation; in a pickle
Jerk:	unfriendly person, mean or rude
Jock:	athlete
Loose:	promiscuous or easy
Make ends meet:	budget within one's income
Make-out:	kissing
Make-up:	1) to apologize after a fight 2) do an assignment after it was due 3) facial cosmetics a woman uses
Mid-term:	tests held in the middle of a semester to determine part of
the	student's grade
Nerd:	weird or unusual person; geek, dork
No way:	not possible
OK:	term for approval of something meaning all right
Once in a blue moon:	seldom, rarely
Out of it:	1) somebody whose mind is far away 2) somebody not fitting into a certain group
Out of the question:	unthinkable, impossible
Phony:	someone or something that is false
The Pill:	common term for the contraceptive birth control pill
Play the field:	go out with a variety of people on dates
Psyched up:	excited about something to come
Pull one's leg:	tease a person; lie, fooling you, pulling your chain
Quiz:	short test (many times unexpected)
Radical:	something good, strange, unusual; awesome, cool
Rain cats and dogs:	rain heavily
Run around with:	be friends with; hang out, chillin'
Show:	cinema, movie, film
Skip:	not go to class
Spill the beans:	to reveal a secret, thus ruining a surprise or to gossip; let
the cat	out of the bag
Stuck-up:	to think highly of one's self; snob, snobbish, snot,
conceited	
Stud:	confident and good-looking male
Stuffy:	inflexible person; boring, conservative
Take for granted:	to assume something about someone or something
Through the grapevine:	hear about something through gossip
Under the weather:	sick, not feeling well
Whatever:	1) I don't believe you

What's up?	2) doesn't bother me
You betcha:	3) no big deal
	"What have you been doing?", "What's happening?"
	agreement or confirmation

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## **Other Emergency Numbers**

**(Dialed from a phone located on campus)**

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**For Emergencies:** Most of the U.S., including Brookings, 911 (or 111 on campus)

**SDSU Wellness Center Health Clinic:** 4157

**Brookings Health System (Hospital):** 9- 696-9000

**Ask-A-Nurse (24-hour nurse phone line):** 9- 800-658-3535

**Brookings County Sheriff:** 9- 696-8300

**Brookings Police:** 9- 692-2113

**South Dakota Highway Patrol (non-emergency):** 9- 367-5700

**South Dakota Poison Control Center:** 9- 1-800-222-1222

**University Police Department:** 5117

**Manager, Intn'l Students and Scholars (Greg Wymer):** – Briggs Library Suite 119; 4482

## Frequently Asked Questions:

The following is a list of frequently asked questions. Other questions can be addressed to your advisor.

1. **When and how do I pre-register for next semester?** Dates and hours, scheduled according to seniority and alphabetical order of last names, are announced in the semester schedule. Advising Week is one week prior to pre-registration. You are expected to see your advisor during Advising Week. You will be able to register via Webadvisor.
2. **Do I have to take a full load every semester?** You must register for 12 credits if you are pursuing an undergraduate degree and 9 credits if you are pursuing a graduate degree unless you have a Graduate Assistantship. (See International Affairs staff for more information.)
3. **Is it possible to take more than 18 credits?** Undergraduates are not permitted to register in 19 or more semester credits the first term. Otherwise, yes, registration in 19 or more semester credits in subsequent terms is permitted only when the previous semester's work shows high achievement.
4. **Why do we have to take so many liberal arts classes?** All universities in the US require broad general education or liberal arts programs, which are designed to give all students academically well-rounded experience in all areas of knowledge.
5. **Is it better to get your Liberal Arts credits over with first so you can concentrate on your major?** Not necessarily, but it is best to concentrate on liberal arts courses the first few semesters and to take beginning courses in major(s) you are considering. The more liberal arts courses you take, the better you are prepared for most majors and careers. It is advisable to take the deepest and widest selection of liberal arts courses possible.
6. **Why does everyone have to take freshman English?** All programs at SDSU require competent writing skills. Freshman English helps you to establish a solid foundation helping you to be able to write effectively.
7. **How many hours a night should I study?** The usual rule is an average of 2 hours per hour in class. Most freshmen find, a little late, that they studied too little their first semester. Help with study habits is readily available in the First Year Advising Office.
8. **Can I repeat a course for a higher grade?** Yes. If you received a D, F, or I, you may repeat (register and pay for) the course. If you complete a repeat form during or after the semester in which you repeat it, only the higher grade will count on your GPA. Re-taking a course in which you receive a W is not considered repeating. You may repeat for the purpose of raising your grade only once; i.e. if you fail a course twice and then repeat it, the second F, as well as your grade from your second repeat, is counted in your GPA.
9. **How often can I skip classes?** Basically, never. Absence from classes is the primary reason students fail courses. Skipping, if started, becomes a very self-destructive habit. Some teachers announce an absolute maximum number of absences allowed. Some departments also have absence policies for certain courses (i.e., Freshman English, Speech, Education).
10. **Do all classes require papers?** No, but many do. Learning to write well is one of the most valuable skills a student can learn. It affects the grade received in almost every class.

11. **When is the last day to withdraw from a class?** Sept. 6 – Nov. 8 “W” Grade when dropping or withdrawing. You must receive permission from International Affairs staff Greg Wymer before your withdrawal from class.
12. **If I drop a class, can I get a refund?** Only in the first 8 class days of the semester. (Note: a “W” stays on your transcript forever). After the deadline, it is often possible to withdraw from one class and add another, using the tuition already paid.
13. **What is an “I” (incomplete) grade?** An instructor may be willing to give you an “I” if you have completed most of the work for the course but are unable, for example, to take the final or turn in a term paper, etc. An incomplete should be made up as soon as possible. They count as F’s for GPA purposes. The policies governing the grade of I are now being reconsidered and may be changed during the year.
14. **How does a person withdraw from college?** Speak with the International Affairs Office first. Once your withdrawal has been approved, you will need to visit the Office of Records and Registration.
15. **What are the greatest academic dangers for new SDSU students?** Not attending every class (even occasional skipping is dangerous practice); working too many hours; not realizing how different college is from high/secondary school.
16. **How is a GPA figured?** Divide the grade points (right hand column on transcript) by the attempted credits in graded courses. Do not count credits graded “W”, “C”, “NC”, or “S”. Count “F” or “I” credits. (An I counts as an F). Grades from coursework received from an International College or University will not transfer into the student’s GPA. Grades from credits received from a domestic/US institution will transfer into the student’s Cumulative GPA.
17. **What is the minimum acceptable GPA?** What is academic probation, suspension? Academic probation means that you are in danger of being suspended. Students who are suspended must sit out of classes for one academic term. The first term GPA is below a 2.0 and the Cumulative GPA is above a 2.0, the student would be on probation. If the student’s Cumulative GPA is below a 2.0, but the student’s term GPA is above a 2.0, the student would continue to be on probation. If both the student’s term GPA and Cumulative GPA are below a 2.0 and this continues for two consecutive Semesters, the student would be suspended.
18. **How do I find out about tutoring services? Is there a charge?** See the First Year Advising Center in Wintrode or check in your department. All tutoring services at SDSU are free to students.
19. **Are scholarships available after the freshman year?** Yes. Students currently enrolled at SDSU should check MyState for scholarship updates.
20. **When does a person have to declare a major?** Immediately. USCIS regulations require all students have a major declared in the SEVIS system. Furthermore, it is important to note that some majors, because of pre-requisite sequence courses, must be started in their first semester of their freshman year if students are to graduate in 8 semesters. These include, particularly, science majors and science related majors as well as music and art. If you are uncertain about your major, do not change your major at the Records Office until you have determined what major you will follow.
21. **How do I change majors and faculty advisor?** Contact your college/department and they will notify the Records and Registration Office of an Advisor Change. Remember to let the International Office know when your major is updated, this is your responsibility as a student!

22. **What is an "override" slip?** A permit, signed by the instructor of the class you want to take, to gain admittance into an arranged class or a closed class.
23. **Where are "good" places to study?** In Briggs Library, Student Union, empty classrooms, dorm study areas.
24. **Where do I get an SDSU catalog?** Catalog – accessible online:  
<http://catalog.sdstate.edu/>
25. **Where can I get a copy of my transcripts?** Your advisor gets copies (one to keep and one to give you) each semester. Ask for your copy. You can also get a copy through the Records and Registration Office.
26. **Where is the First Year Advising Center?** Wintrode Hall.

## Student Statement of Responsibility

SDSU Office of International Affairs, Briggs Library, Suite 119 (605) 688-4122

(Please read each of the statements below and ask questions about any that you do not completely understand)

1. **Maintaining Your Visa Status:** You must follow the rules that apply to your non-immigrant visa (F-1, F-2, J-1, J-2, etc.) in order to maintain your legal status.
  - a. Your passport must be valid for at least six months at all times.
  - b. Any change of address/ name change must be reported to the University within 10 days (student and any dependents in the U.S.)

### ***For F-1/ J-1 Students:***

- You must attend the school specified on your I-20 or DS 2019.
  - You must register for and complete a full course of study each semester.
  - You must notify the International Affairs Office when you change your major or degree program level (e.g. change from BA to MA) or change your funding (expenses, amount or source) more than 25%.
  - You **must** receive approval from the International Affairs Office **before**:
  - being allowed to enroll for less than (or dropping below) a full course of study (see item 2 below).
    - b) terminating your program of study.
  - You must receive work authorization before you engage in any employment off-campus (see item 3 below).
  - You must notify the International Affairs Office if you plan to transfer to another school. The International Affairs Office must release your SEVIS record online before another school can issue you an I-20 or DS 2019.
2. **Full-Time Enrollment:**
    - a. US immigration law requires that F-1 and J-1 students register for and complete a full course of study each semester:
      - i. 12 credits for undergraduate, non-degree seeking, and professional college students;
      - ii. 9 credits for graduate students.
    - If you cannot enroll full-time or you need to withdraw from a class and fall below the minimum amount of credits outlined above, you **must be authorized to drop below a full course load** by the International Affairs Office **before** the beginning of the semester or **before** dropping below full-time enrollment. You must submit a **"Request for a Reduced Course Load" form or fill out the 'Credit Verification' Form.**

3. **Work Permission** for students whose I-20 or DS 2019 was issued by SDSU: You may work on campus up to 20 hours per week while school is in session, and full-time during official vacation periods and semester breaks. Any off-campus employment requires prior authorization by the International Affairs Office or the USCIS.
  - a. I must apply for a SSN number before I start working on campus, or meet with OIA for additional information. Working illegally will lead to the termination of my SEVIS record.
4. **Keeping Immigration Documents Up to Date:**
  - a. Upon initial entry, and any subsequent change, F-1 and J1 students must present their own and F-2 and J-2 dependents' documents to the International Affairs Office including: I-20, passport, entry visa stamp, I-94 card, and Employment Authorization Document (EAD card). Notify the International Affairs Office immediately if you or your dependents change visa status.
  - b. Keep your documents safe and save all your new and old I- 20s or DS 2019s during your stay in the US.
5. **You are responsible for keeping up to date on immigration matters:** Talk with International Affairs staff for updates.
6. **Use of Consistent Name:** The name on all of your documents and in the SDSU database must be consistent. You must use the same first, middle (if applicable), and last name in your passport, I-94 card, I-20, Social Security card, SDSU Identification card, South Dakota Driver's License/State ID, bank accounts, checks and any other documents you may acquire during your stay in the U.S.
7. **If any of your information changes** (name, residential address, phone number, etc.) or that of your dependent/s, you must update your information at the Records Office. This must be done **within 10 days**. Failure to report such changes to SDSU will result in loss of legal status.
8. **Release of Information:** The International Affairs Office cannot legally release information about you to anyone unless you give written permission first. The International Affairs Office is required by law, however, to report to USCIS information regarding your presence in the U.S. and your student status at SDSU. In addition, other U.S. government agencies may be designated to request information about you.
9. **Use of Public Funding: As a nonimmigrant, you are not eligible to use any type of public funding** during your stay in the U.S. Federal law prohibits its use regardless of what local services determine.
10. **Required Health Insurance:** SDSU requires all international students to be enrolled in the SDBOR Student Injury and Sickness Plan (Unless specified in your exchange program contract.)
11. **You must pay all your tuition, fees, loans, and other SDSU bills:** Nonpayment will result in a registration hold and may result in loss of legal status.
12. **You must file a U.S. Income Tax form** by April 15 each year, even if you have not earned any income in the U.S. The International Affairs Office makes available resources for tax assistance but does not offer any tax advising.
13. **F-2 dependents: Study and work in the U.S.** F-2's are prohibited by law from being employed. Enrollment in a program of study at an institution of higher learning is not permitted at SDSU. F-2 children may engage in fulltime study in elementary or secondary level (K-12).
  - a. F-2's admitted to begin a program will not be eligible to enroll until they receive approval of F-1 status.
14. **Before travelling out of the US I must stop by OIA and have my I-20 signed**
15. **F-1 students have 60 days known** as the grace period after the end of their program/graduation in which they may legally stay in the US, apply for OPT, transfer or change status. After this date you are considered 'out of status.' J-1 student have a 30 day grace period.
16. **If my program is ending and I need** additional time to complete it, I need to seek a program extension from OIA. I cannot let my I-20/DS 2019 expire.

**I have carefully read these responsibilities and understand their importance. I am aware that my legal status in the U.S. depends on fulfilling these responsibilities to the best of my ability. If I have any questions at any time about these matters, I know that I may call International Affairs staff Wymer at (605) 688-4122.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Name (print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_