**Countdown to Chicago!**

**PRE-ARRIVAL COMMUNICATION FOR NEW UIC INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

**THIS WEEK: TUITION & MONEY MATTERS**

As you prepare for this next chapter in your life, it’s important to consider how you will manage the financial aspects of higher education in the U.S. Learning about your student account and how to budget for living expenses can help to demystify these sometimes intimidating topics.

**What is my student account?**

University Student Financial Services & Cashier Operations (USFSCO) manages your online student account where you will view tuition and student fee bills charged by UIC. Their website explains how your student account works, how to make a payment, when payments are due, among many other topics.

**How can I make a payment to my student account from abroad?**

USFSCO has information about that too! Visit their international payments webpage.

**Is the financial information on my I-20/DS-2019 my tuition bill?**

In short, no, the financial information listed on your I-20/DS-2019 is for immigration purposes only and does not represent a tuition bill. This information is intended to communicate to the U.S. Embassy/Consulate abroad how much money a typical student would need to study in a particular degree program at UIC and that the I-20/DS-2019 holder has shown evidence of that funding as required by the visa category. These estimated expenses for immigration purposes are based on generalized reported living costs and tuition and fees for a course load of 12 credits per semester. The actual tuition and fee bill posted to your student account will vary depending on the number of credits you decide to take each semester (F-1/J-1 students must meet enrollment requirements.) To personalize your tuition and fee bill estimate for the fall 2018 semester, we recommend that you utilize the UIC Registrar’s calculator for undergraduate or graduate students.

**How much money will I need for living expenses?**

To get an idea of how much money you will need for expenses like housing, food, clothing and incidentals, you can look to the living expenses category on your I-20/DS-2019. Take the figure listed there and divide it by the number of months in your program’s academic year (nine months for most undergraduate and graduate programs). The resulting figure represents how much money you would need each month to cover the most basic expenses of living in Chicago. Depending on your choice of accommodation and personal life style, you may find that you need more money each month to cover your expenses; rarely can students get by comfortably on less.

**Can I get a job and earn money for living expenses while I study?**

Perhaps, but you shouldn’t count on it, especially in the first year of your program. Remember, as a student visa holder your primary objective in the U.S. is to study full-time. Your particular visa status and/or your academic program may restrict the type of job you can obtain and how many hours you can
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If you are allowed to work on-campus, note that these jobs are very limited and often filled by returning students before new students. In most cases, international students are not allowed to work off-campus during their first year of study. Visit the OIS website to learn more about F-1 and J-1 student employment regulations.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

All new international students are charged an Orientation/Arrival Fee of $149 during their first semester at UIC. Get the most out of your arrival experience by attending International Student Orientation events. Review the full schedule of events and confirm your participation by completing the online registration form.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Send specific questions to our New International Student Team at newintl@uic.edu or give us a call at +1 (312) 996-3121. Or, if you're already in Chicago, feel free to visit us during Open Advising.

Check out previous Countdown to Chicago pre-arrival communications along with additional arrival resources on the OIS website.