

# International Student Resource Guide

**UIC** OFFICE OF THE  
VICE CHANCELLOR  
FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS



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## **About The Resource Guide**

The Resource Guide for New International Students and Exchange Visitors is designed to address some of the most frequently asked questions posed by new international students and exchange visitors about their arrival on campus and getting settled in the community.

The information is presented in a sequence beneficial to the needs of a new arrival: from locating housing to recreational activities. We hope that you will find this guide helpful. We welcome your suggestions for new material to enhance the experience of future international students and exchange visitors.

Please contact:

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Website: [www.ois.uic.edu](http://www.ois.uic.edu)

Find OIS on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter!](#)



Welcome from the Executive Director

Welcome to all international students, exchange visitors and their families. The Office of International Services (OIS) staff hopes that you will find your academic pursuits to be very rewarding at the University of Illinois at Chicago and that you use the resources of our office to assist you in resolving your immigration related problems and concerns or to enhance your experience. The OIS website was designed to describe the various programs and services we offer.

The mission of our office is to enhance and support the international dimensions of the University of Illinois at Chicago and the medical campuses in Peoria and Rockford. This includes participation in the creation of both a culturally diverse learning and working environment by assisting individuals involved in international educational exchange. OIS provides an array of essential services and programs to assist international students, faculty and scholars, and their families to achieve their educational, professional and personal objectives. To accomplish the mission of enhancing and supporting the University's international efforts OIS:

- Provides immigration rules and regulations counseling and advising to international students, faculty, staff and scholars.
- Facilitates the transition of international students, faculty, staff and scholars to life at UIC and the U.S. by providing continuous services aimed at assisting in the assimilation process.
- Provides immigration rules and regulations guidance and referral to university departments and units, particularly in the area of employment, international exchange programs, and international program creation.

It is our hope that you find our staff to be accessible and friendly. We may be reached by telephone, e-mail or personal appointment. In addition, we always have Open Advising for F-1 students Monday through Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and for J-1 Exchange Visitors (students and scholars) Tuesday and Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. where an advisor is available to answer your general concerns.

No matter how long or short your stay at the University of Illinois at Chicago, we wish you the best and encourage you to utilize our services. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

James Hammerschmidt, PhD  
Executive Director



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## SECTION 1: CONTACT INFORMATION

### The Office of International Services Contact Information



#### Chicago Location:

1200 West Harrison Street  
 Student Services Building 2160  
 Chicago, IL 60607

**Phone:** +1 312-996-3121

**Fax:** +1 312-996-9432

**Email:** [ois@uic.edu](mailto:ois@uic.edu)

**Website:** [www.ois.uic.edu](http://www.ois.uic.edu)

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

### Open Advising Schedule

	F-1 Students	J-1 Exchange Visitors (Students and Scholars)
<b>Monday</b>	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	By Appointment Only
<b>Tuesday</b>	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b>	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b>	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	By Appointment Only
<b>Friday</b>	By Appointment Only	By Appointment Only

### Emergency Contact Information

University of Illinois at Chicago and Area Emergencies	
<b>312-355-5555 or 5-5555 from any campus phone</b>	Phone number for life-threatening emergencies or to report a police, fire, or medical emergency on the UIC campus.
<b>312-996-2830</b>	Phone number for non-emergency assistance from UIC Police.
<a href="http://www.uic.edu/uic/studentlife/campus/emergency-information.shtml">http://www.uic.edu/uic/studentlife/campus/emergency-information.shtml</a>	Website with additional UIC emergency information.

Off-Campus Emergencies	
<b>911</b>	Phone number for life-threatening emergency or to report a police, fire, or medical emergency.
<b>311</b>	Phone number for non-emergency assistance from Chicago Police and to request city services.



## **SECTION 2: PRE ARRIVAL INFORMATION FOR F-1 or J-1 STUDENTS**

The **F-1 student status** allows non-immigrants to pursue a course of study in the U.S. Once the F-1 has finished his or her program, the F-1 student will return home. The F-2 is the dependent, of the F-1. The F-2 is not authorized to work or study in the U.S. unless the F-2 is the child of the F-1 and younger than 18 years of age. If you have a SEVIS I-20, you will be applying for the F-1 visa.

*SEVIS is the "Student and Exchange Visitor Information System," and is used for F, M, and J visa categories.*

The **J-1 student status** is also for non-immigrants to study in the U.S., however, it is used more for exchange students or sponsored programs. If a J-1 student is receiving funding from his or her home government or from a U.S. governmental agency, he or she should be a J-1. J-2s are the dependents of J-1s, and can attend school and apply for work authorization with USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services). If you have a SEVIS DS-2019, you will be applying for the J-1 visa.

### **How to obtain a visa stamp:**

#### **Step One: Paying the SEVIS FEE:**

When you are admitted to the University of Illinois at Chicago, and receive an I-20 or DS-2019 from OIS, you will need to pay the **SEVIS FEE**, <https://www.fmjfee.com>. When paying the SEVIS FEE please enter your name as it appears in your passport, and on your I-20 or DS-2019. This information needs to match. After the **SEVIS FEE** is paid, you will be able to schedule your visa appointment at the nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy that serves that area. Also remember to print your receipt as you will need it later in the process of obtaining your visa stamp.

**Step Two: Secure your VISA APPOINTMENT:** Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for your visa appointment, [www.usembassy.state.gov/](http://www.usembassy.state.gov/) Please secure your visa appointment with how your name appears exactly in your passport.

### **PREPARING for your visa interview**

1. Passport must be valid for at least 6 months.
2. I-20 or DS-2019 issued from the University of Illinois at Chicago.
3. Admission letter
4. Proof of finances, or letters of scholarship to show proof of economic support while in the United States.
5. Passport size photos for visa issuance.
6. SEVIS Fee receipt
7. Be prepared to give reasons on what your plans are after leaving the United States upon the completion of your degree.
8. Any other documents required by the U.S. Embassy/Consulate
9. Please note that you should only apply for a visa stamp for the school in the US you intend to attend.



## **Travel Preparations:**

### **Clothing Items to Pack:**

Chicago is a city that experiences a wide range of weather conditions. Therefore, depending on the time of year you arrive; will determine the most important items to pack. Dressing in layers is also highly recommended as when the seasons are changing, the temperature can vary from morning to evening.

A jacket or coat, long pants, sweaters, sweatshirts, sweatpants, long sleeves and t-shirts are some suggested items, as they are easy to layer. A pair of comfortable walking shoes are also highly recommended. If you are coming during winter, a hat, gloves and boots are important items to have. If you are unable to get these before arriving there are many places around Chicago where they can be purchased upon arrival.

### **Climate:**

Chicago is located in a “cold temperate zone.” The winters can be quite cold, temperature drops below 0 Fahrenheit, and the summers can be very hot and humid. The Spring and Fall seasons do not last as long as the Summer and Winter seasons.

Please find below a chart that demonstrates the average weather temperature Chicago experiences on a monthly basis. These are only averages, and do not always reflect the actual temperature the city may experience.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Normal High</u>	<u>Normal Low</u>	<u>Avg. Temp (F)</u>	<u>Precipitation (Avg. Inches)</u>	<u>Snowfall (Avg. Inches)</u>
January	29.0	12.9	21.0	1.5	10.7
February	33.5	17.2	25.4	1.4	8.4
March	45.8	28.5	37.2	2.7	6.5
April	58.5	38.6	48.6	3.6	1.8
May	70.1	47.7	58.9	3.3	0.1
June	79.6	57.5	68.6	3.8	-
July	83.7	62.6	73.2	3.7	-
August	81.8	61.6	71.7	4.2	-
September	74.8	53.9	64.4	3.8	-
October	63.3	42.2	52.8	2.4	0.5
November	48.4	31.6	40.0	2.9	1.9
December	34.0	10.1	26.0	2.5	8.8

\*Source: The Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau, National Climatic Data Center



## **SECTION 3: HOUSING**

### **On Campus Housing Students:**

The Office of International Services strives to ensure a smooth transition for students as they begin their educational journey here at UIC. Therefore, OIS highly encourages students to live in one of the number of residence halls on all three sides of UIC's campus. Campus Housing offers programs, activities and services that provide an educational advantage for UIC students. If you are interested in living on campus, you should apply before you arrive. For more information please visit: <http://www.housing.uic.edu/> or call + 1 312-355-6300 for the housing office. Please see the appropriate section of our Welcome video for more information about on-campus housing.

### **Immunizations and health records**

UIC students living in on campus housing born after January 1, 1957 are required by the Illinois Department of Public Health to present documented proof of immunity against the following diseases:

1. Measles (Rubeola) - two doses at least 30 days apart
2. Rubella (German Measles)
3. Mumps
4. TD (Tetanus and Diphtheria) Measles (Rubeola) - two doses at least 30 days apart
5. Rubella (German Measles)
6. TD (Tetanus and Diphtheria)

For more information, please visit:

[http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/student\\_records/medical\\_immunization.html](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/student_records/medical_immunization.html)

For a list of the FAQ's please visit:

[http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/student\\_records/medical\\_immunization\\_faq.html](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/student_records/medical_immunization_faq.html)

### **Chicago Off Campus Housing:**

Chicago is the third largest city in the United States. There are many neighborhoods, with various price points for rent. Here is a link to UIC's Commuter Center: <http://commuter.uic.edu/services/off-campus-housing-resources.html>. This link has a compiled listing of websites for off-campus housing options. When living off campus, please take into account that there could be other fees including the rent such as gas, and electricity. Please see the appropriate section of our Welcome video for more information about off-campus housing.

### **Housing Search Strategies**

***Here are some suggestions for starting your search once you have arrived on campus:***

1.) Have a cell phone and a laptop computer to inquire about vacancies that become available. You may find that many apartment leasing offices may not answer calls and have voice mail or email only. You will need the phone to receive those returned messages at all hours of the day. You may want to prepare a script when leaving telephone messages for the landlord, mentioning that you are a new employee or student at UIC and that you are interested in the property.

2.) Consider public transportation in getting around, or if you have a driver's license, you may rent or borrow a car; your search will go faster this way. Remember that Chicago is a big city!

3.) Become familiar with housing vocabulary.

When searching for housing, you may run into some of the following terms:





**Lease** – A lease refers to the contract that you sign when you rent an apartment. A lease is a legal relationship between the tenant (you) and the landlord.

**Apartment** – An apartment is a long-term accommodation, in a housing unit which occupies part of a building.

**Rental** – A rental is when a payment is made by temporary use of another's property.

**Hostel** - A hostel is a short-term, budget accommodation where customers can rent individual beds in social rooms, or sometimes private rooms but with a shared bathroom.

**Apartment Search Company** – An apartment company searches for an apartment for you free of charge. Instead they are paid a percentage by the landlord.

4.) Walk or drive around neighborhoods that you like and look for “For Rent or For Lease” signs posted in the windows of houses and apartments.

5.) Prepare a list of questions to ask your potential landlord. Sample questions include: Who will pay for utilities? Are you allowed to have a roommate? How much is the security deposit? Is parking available and included in the rent? Are there laundry facilities located in the building? Etc.

Listed below are some helpful words of advice for people who are new to renting housing in the U.S.:

**Review the lease.** Carefully review all of the conditions listed on the lease and make sure you ask questions if you do not understand before you sign the lease. If you have any questions related to your lease, you may visit the Student Legal Services office in the Student Services Building. The office is able to review your lease agreement for free, before you sign it. To make an appointment, contact, +1 312-996-9214.

**Get everything in writing.** To avoid disputes or misunderstandings with your landlord, get everything in writing. Keep copies of any correspondence and follow up an oral agreement with a letter, setting out your understandings. For example, if you ask your landlord to make repairs put your request in writing and keep a copy for yourself.

**Protect your privacy rights.** Next to disputes over rent or security deposits, one of the most common and emotion-filled misunderstandings arises over the tension between a landlord's right to enter a rental unit and a tenant's right to be left alone. If you understand your privacy rights (for example, the amount of notice your landlord must provide before entering), it will be easier to protect them.

**Talk to your landlord.** Keep communication open with your landlord. If there is a problem – for example, if the landlord is slow to make repairs – talk it over to see if the issue can be resolved short of a nasty legal battle.

**Protect your security deposit.** To avoid any misunderstandings, make sure your lease or rental agreement is clear on the use and refund of security deposits. When you move in, walk through the premises with the landlord to record any existing damage.

**Notify OIS:** Lastly, once you have decided on the perfect off-campus housing to live in, please update your address information with the Office of International Services through your [student portal](#).



## SECTION 4: ARRIVAL TO THE UNITED STATES AND UIC

When traveling to the U.S. please remember to carry all of your immigration documents with you (passport, I-20/DS-2019 if F-1 or J-1). When going through the port of entry, your I-94 document will be issued electronically. After the port of entry, please keep your documents in a safe place so as to not lose them.

**After you arrive in Chicago, you are required to do the following:**

**1.) Activate your Netid:** Please visit the ACCC website, and follow the instructions:

[https://www.uic.edu/htbin/acctportaltoken/pass.cgi?dispatch=activate\\_panel](https://www.uic.edu/htbin/acctportaltoken/pass.cgi?dispatch=activate_panel)

**2.) Checking in with OIS.** This is REQUIRED of all new international students. Students sponsored by UIC must check in within 30 days of the program start date listed on your I-20 or DS-2019. If this is not done, your immigration record will be automatically terminated at the end of 30 days, and you will be required to return home.

At the check in, please bring the following items to OIS:

- a) Passport
- a) I-20/DS-2019, or approval notice of current status.
- b) Copy of I-94 document printout obtainable at: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>
- c) Proof of health insurance (J-1 students only).
- d) Have local address of where you are currently living.

**3.) Class Registration:** The SEVIS hold on your record preventing you from registering for classes will be removed within 24 hours after you've checked into the Office of International Services. Please note that there may be additional holds (from the Office of Admissions or your academic department) that may prevent you from registering for classes, and they must be taken care of first before you can register for classes.

**Undergraduate Students:** Before registering for classes you may be required to meet with your academic advisor, and can do so at orientation, or by logging into [www.my.uic.edu](http://www.my.uic.edu)

**Graduate Students:** Please contact your academic department/academic advisor by email with assistance in scheduling classes.

**4.) I-Card:** After you have registered for classes, you can get your I-card from the ID card office at the Student Services Building at 1200 West Harrison or at 828 South Wolcott Avenue. You will need to have your passport or another form of ID with your UIN. Your UIN may be found on your UIC admission letter. We also recommend that you bring a printout of your class schedule to the ID Center. For more information, please visit the ID Center at: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/idcenter/>

**5.) U-PASS:** The Chicago Transportation Authority Ventra U-PASS is provided to all eligible students during enrolled terms. The Ventra U-PASS provides unlimited use of CTA trains and buses while school is in session. Distribution for new students is usually conducted in the Student Services Building. Please note that you must present your valid I-Card in order to pick up your U-PASS.



## SECTION 5: NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

The Office of International Services' orientation sessions prepare all new students for personal and academic success by establishing relationships with the UIC community, accustoming students to life in Chicago and educating on the academic and regulatory requirements of studying in the United States. OIS does this by providing international students, with pre-arrival and cross cultural adjustment information. We also provide immigration updates including maintaining status, employment, travel, and visa information. Orientation is required, and is done prior to the start of each semester.

There is a one day pre-orientation session specifically designed for **graduate students** that explores all of the crucial knowledge new international graduate students must know to achieve success during their time at UIC. Sample topics presented in the past have included: 'The US Classroom Culture', 'Academic Integrity', 'Cross-Cultural Awareness' etc.

For **undergraduate students**, our office prepares in conjunction with Student Development Services, a two day pre-orientation session that will help in your transition to UIC life. You will also have an opportunity to meet with an academic advisor to assist with selecting classes.

Please visit the OIS web page for detailed information for either Fall, Spring, or Summer orientations at: <http://www.ois.uic.edu/>





## SECTION 6: SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

### What is a Social Security Number?

In the United States, a **Social Security number (SSN)** is a nine-digit number issued to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and temporary (working) residents. The number is issued to an individual by the Social Security Administration, an agency of the United States government. This number is required from anyone who has secured employment in the United States.

### How do I obtain a Social Security Number?

For students with on-campus employment, you will need to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) by visiting your local Social Security Administration (SSA) office. Once your application has been approved, you will be issued a Social Security card that has the notation, "VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION." SSA issues this type of card to people lawfully admitted to the United States on a temporary basis who have authorization to work by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Your card should arrive 2-4 weeks after you apply.

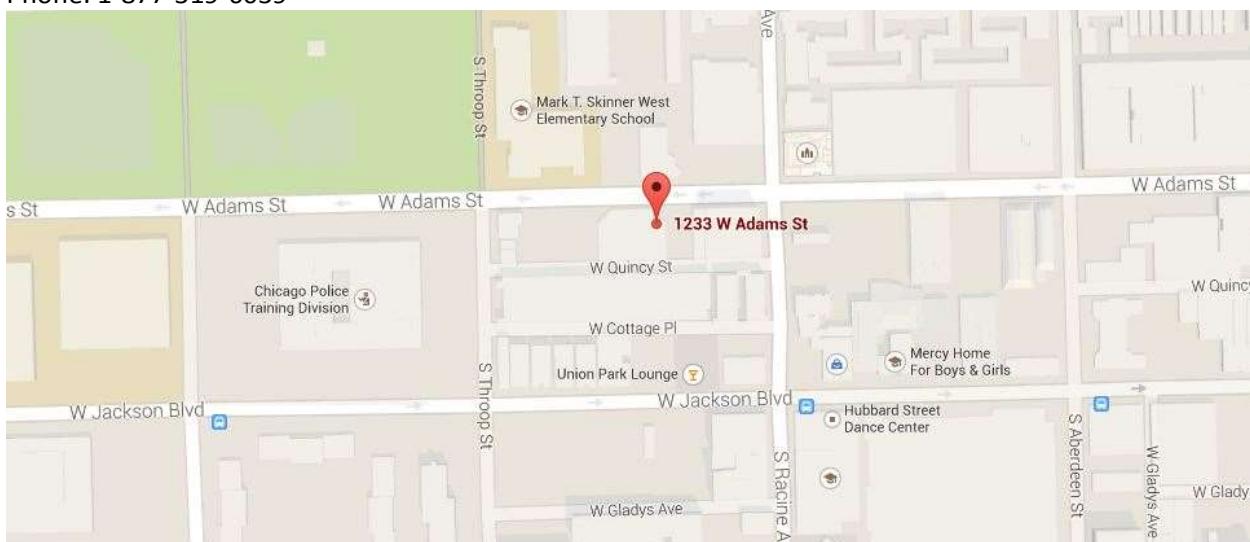
### When should I go to the SSA office?

SSA must verify your immigration status with the Department of Homeland Security database. It takes one day for the two federal databases to communicate the correct information about your immigration status. Therefore, OIS strongly recommends waiting at least 24 hours from time of entry into the US before applying for your SSN.

### Where is the Social Security Administration office?

#### For students in Chicago:

The closest Social Security office is located at:  
1233 Adams Street  
Chicago, IL 60607  
Phone: 1-877-319-6039





**For students in Rockford:**

The closest Social Security office is located at  
502 E. Jefferson Street  
Rockford, IL 61107  
Phone: 1-877-628-6570



**For students in Peoria:**

The Social Security office is located at:  
815 W. Pioneer Parkway  
Peoria, IL 61615  
Phone: 1-877-319-6039



**Documents to take to the Social Security Office:**

- Your passport
- Your Form DS-2019 if in J-1 status, or Form I-20 if in F-1 status
- Your EAD card if in J-2, or pending Permanent Residency
- Your I-94 document available to print from: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>
- Letter of job offer addressed to student from the UIC department
- Letter from OIS (request this letter from OIS in advance.) **F1 and J1 students must have checked in with OIS and be enrolled full-time prior to requesting the OIS letter.**



### **How do I request a Social Security letter from OIS?**

You may stop by OIS to complete and submit a Document Request Form, or you may complete the form and email it to our office at [ois@uic.edu](mailto:ois@uic.edu). The Social Security letter will be ready in (3-5) business days for pick-up. You will be notified by email when the letter is ready.

### **Do I need a Social Security Number to open a bank account?**

U.S. financial institutions are required to verify the identity of every individual who opens a bank account. In compliance with federal regulations, all banks operating in the U.S. have established Customer Identification Programs (CIP) that they are to follow for anyone who seeks to open an account. While the specifics of the CIP may vary from one bank to another, Department of Treasury regulations found at 31 CFR § 103.121 set forth the following minimal information that the banks must obtain from you before allowing you to open an account:

1. Your name
2. Your date of birth
3. Your street address – no P.O. Box
4. An identification number

It is important to remember that banks establish their own customer identification programs and may ask for additional documentation than is described above because they are ultimately responsible for establishing the identity of their customers.

### **Can I apply for an Illinois Driver's License without a SSN?**

A Social Security Number is not required to obtain a State of Illinois Driver's License. Internationals (F-1, F-2, J-1, J-2, among others) in Illinois may obtain a Temporary Visitor Driver's License (TVDL) from various locations in the state. To apply, you will need to visit the Social Security Administration to request a letter stating that you are not eligible for an SSN, this is known as a Form L-676. If, however, you are eligible for a SSN, then you must apply for and receive the SSN before applying for a state driver's license.

**For more information, visit the Social Security Administration web site:** <http://ssa.gov/ssnumber/>



## SECTION 7: ILLINOIS DRIVER'S LICENSE OR STATE IDENTIFICATION

### Obtaining an Illinois Driver's License

You may obtain an Illinois Driver's License by visiting a facility closest to where you live. Please note that different facilities offer different types of services, therefore, it is important to check the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) website before going to a facility. For more information about hours, and required documents to take with you, please visit: <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/>

**The nearest facility to the Chicago campus where full services are offered is located at:**

5301 W. Lexington Street  
Chicago, IL 60644  
312-793-1010



**The nearest facility to the Rockford campus where full services are offered is located at:**

3720 E. State Street  
Rockford, IL 61108  
815-394-0179



**The nearest facility to the Peoria campus where full services are offered is located at:**

3311 N. Sterling Avenue, #12  
Peoria, IL 61604  
309-686-6040





## SECTION 8: MONEY MATTERS

When traveling to the U.S. it is recommended that you have some small amount of US currency for initial expenses upon arrival. Coming from O'Hare or Midway Airport you may take the train or a taxi to campus. You will also want to have enough initial funds for food, temporary housing if needed and other incidentals. Please see our Welcome Video that illustrates this further.

### Opening a Bank Account:

Once you arrive in the United States and at UIC, you will want to open a bank account. This is not required, but is highly recommended. Using ATMs (automatic teller machines), or a debit card, which is similar to a credit card but taken straight from your checking account are common practices to access money. However if you use a bank ATM that is not affiliated with your bank, a fee could be charged to you. Please note carrying large sums of cash is not advised.

### For our Chicago students:

The following bank locations are within walking distance from at the Chicago campus and have ATM machines located throughout the city and state of Illinois:

**Bank of America:** [www.bankofamerica.com](http://www.bankofamerica.com)

1212 S. Ashland  
Chicago IL 60608  
312-243-3221

**Chase:** [www.chase.com](http://www.chase.com)

1130 W. Taylor Street  
Chicago, IL 60607  
312 421-1998

**Citibank:** [www.citibank.com](http://www.citibank.com)

1200 West Taylor Street  
Chicago, IL 60607  
312 361-1847

**TCF:** [www.tcfbank.com](http://www.tcfbank.com)

1220 S Ashland Ave  
Chicago, IL 60607

### For our Rockford students:

The following bank locations are within walking distance of campus and have ATM machines located throughout the city of Rockford and state of Illinois:

**Bank of America:** [www.bankofamerica.com](http://www.bankofamerica.com)

6958 Spring Creek Road  
Rockford, IL 61114  
815-877-6530

**Chase:** [www.chase.com](http://www.chase.com)

6000 E State Street  
Rockford, IL 61108  
815-394-4666





**For our Peoria Students:**

The following bank locations are within walking distance campus and have ATM machines located throughout the city of Peoria and state of Illinois:

**Bank of America:** [www.bankofamerica.com](http://www.bankofamerica.com)

6958 Spring Creek Road

Rockford, IL 61114

815-877-6530

**TCF:** [www.tcfbank.com](http://www.tcfbank.com)

124 SW Adams Street

Peoria, IL 61602

309 672-9580

**Credit Cards in the U.S.:**

Please note that if you do not have what is known as “credit history” in the US, it will be difficult to obtain a credit card. Therefore, you can establish a credit history by first obtaining a “Secure Credit Card” which often requires that you deposit money first, for its usage. Within a few months of using the secure card, you may become eligible for other credit cards. However, you may need a Social Security Number to be eligible to apply.

**Budgeting for the first year:** The estimated cost of living expenses could be up to \$1,800 per month. However, this amount could vary depending on your living situation once you arrive to UIC, i.e., whether you are living on or off campus, with roommates or by yourself. Students accompanied by dependents should budget additional funds. It is important when setting up a budget that it is realistic and that is reasonable to adhere to. It is recommended that you budget for housing, food, clothing, entertainment, miscellaneous and other incidentals.



## SECTION 9: AROUND TOWN

Please find below a list of places where you can shop for household items, eat, and also information on how to get around campus, and Chicago once you arrive. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of places around campus, you will be able to add more to your list as you familiarize yourself with the campus and the neighborhoods closest to campus.

<b>Shopping &amp; Grocery &gt; stores and neighborhoods for different shopping needs</b>		
<b>Store's Name</b>	<b>Types of goods that can be purchased</b>	<b>Address &amp; CTA train line</b>
<b>Target</b>	Clothing, grocery, home goods, school supplies, toiletries, etc. Almost anything! Near campus!	1101 W. Jackson Blue Line > UIC-Halsted
<b>State Street</b>	Street with many clothing and shoe stores, including Nordstrom Rack, Akira, DSW, Gap, Old Navy, H&M, and Macy's Department Store.	Between Jackson & Lake Red Line > Jackson
<b>Bed Bath &amp; Beyond</b>	Home goods including bedding, organization, decoration & cooking supplies.	555 W. Roosevelt #12 > Roosevelt/Jefferson
<b>Michigan Ave.</b>	Very popular shopping for more upscale stores including Banana Republic, Nike, Apple, Bloomingdale's, and luxury boutiques.	Between Illinois & Oak Red > Grand
<b>Devon Ave.</b>	Street on the far north side of Chicago. Home to many South Asian stores and restaurants.	Between California & Ridge Blue > Red > #155 West
<b>Chinatown</b>	Neighborhood on near South Side with many restaurants and stores featuring Chinese products.	W. Cermak & S. Archer Red > Cermak-Chinatown
<b>Mariano's</b>	Full-service grocery with large selection and to-go meal options.	40 S. Halsted Blue Line > UIC-Halsted
<b>Whole Foods</b>	Upscale grocery with organic foods and natural products. Fresh salad bar.	1101 S. Canal #12 > Roosevelt/Canal
<b>Jewel-Osco</b>	Full-service grocery store with budget-friendly options.	1220 S. Ashland #12 > Roosevelt/Ashland

<b>Restaurants &gt; Places to eat near campus</b>		
<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Type of restaurant and food that can be purchased</b>	<b>Address</b>
<b>Taylor St.</b>	Street full of restaurants of various prices and cuisines. Many Italian options.	Taylor Street between Ashland & Morgan
<b>Greektown</b>	Many Greek restaurants at various price points.	Halsted Street between Van Buren & Madison
<b>Giordano's</b>	Chicago deep dish pizza and other classic Italian-American options.	815 W. Van Buren
<b>Fontano Subs</b>	Italian sub sandwiches. Fast and budget-friendly.	1058 W. Polk
<b>UIC Dining</b>	Interactive campus map showing all on-campus dining locations <a href="http://www.uic.edu/depts/dining/docs/whereToEat_interactive%20map2014.pdf">http://www.uic.edu/depts/dining/docs/whereToEat_interactive%20map2014.pdf</a>	



## SECTION 10: TRANSPORTATION

### **Buying and Owning a Car**

Car ownership can be expensive, especially in a crowded city with limited parking, like Chicago. In addition to the cost of buying a car, you will need to pay annual registration fees, car insurance, and parking fees. If you have decided it is best for your situation to purchase a car, it is recommended that you become familiar with the following resources:

#### **Kelly Blue Book:** [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com)

Kelley Blue Book provides information about car resale values in the U.S. and gives you an excellent resource for comparing prices, especially for used cars. The “Blue Book” is the nation's number-one-selling automotive book featuring 15 years of used car values on more than 10,000 models of cars, trucks and vans and is available in bookstores, auto supply stores and other locations.

#### **The Better Business Bureau:** [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)

This site can help you find out if a particular business has a good reputation or not, and if there have been any complaints filed against them. Just click on “Check out a business” and type in the name of the business to get a full report.

### **New and Used Car Dealers**

Both new and used car dealers can be excellent sources for finding a quality used vehicle. These cars may be serviced by the dealer and sold with limited warranties. You can check on a car’s history through a service called Carfax at [www.carfax.com](http://www.carfax.com).

### **Auto Insurance:**

Drivers have a financial responsibility for personal injury and property damage caused during accidents. The State of Illinois requires that all drivers be insured for this. Major insurance companies include AAA, Allstate, State Farm, and GEICO (Government Employees Insurance Company). Please check the Better Business Bureau website at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) for valuable tips on understanding, shopping for, and minimizing the cost of auto insurance. Feel free to shop around and consider different insurance companies—prices vary. Ask the company if they offer special discounts for a good driving record or any other incentives for students.

### **Auto Registration:**

You must register your car with the Department of Motor Vehicles as soon as it is purchased. Please visit: <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/> for information on how to register your new vehicle.



You may find below information on how to get around town prior to purchasing a car, or if you prefer to not purchase one.

<b>Transportation &gt; Ways to get around campus and Chicago</b>	
<b>Campus Parking, Bus Shuttle, CTA trains &amp; buses</b>	<a href="http://www.uic.edu/uic/about/visit/parking-bus.shtml">http://www.uic.edu/uic/about/visit/parking-bus.shtml</a>
<b>Divvy</b> (blue bike share system)	<a href="https://www.divvybikes.com/">https://www.divvybikes.com/</a>
<b>Uber</b> (car ride sharing system)	<a href="https://www.uber.com/cities/chicago">https://www.uber.com/cities/chicago</a>
<b>Lyft</b> (car ride sharing system)	<a href="https://www.lyft.com/">https://www.lyft.com/</a>

**UIC Red Car Service: UIC’s Red Car and Disabled Persons Transportation.** The Red Car service runs from 11pm to 7am. This service provides transportation between the East starting from Clinton Street to the West at Western, to the South Campus at 14<sup>th</sup> Street the only south of Roosevelt, then north to Harrison Street. For more information and details, please call **312-996-6800**, or visit: <http://fmweb.fm.uic.edu/Trans/default.aspx>



## **SECTION 11: THE MAILING SYSTEM**

### **Mail Delivery:**

Mail is delivered to your home once a day Monday through Saturday. There is no mail service on Sundays or federal holidays.

### **Mail Drop Boxes:**

If you want to send mail, you can either drop it inside your home mailbox for pick up by the postal worker, or drop it in one of the blue mail boxes located around the city. The mail is picked up at specific times each day—check the schedule posted inside the door of the mail box. Make sure the mail box says “U.S. P.S.” on the box before dropping it in.

### **United States Post Office [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)**

The postal service in the U.S. is efficient and reliable. If you need to buy stamps, postcards, change your address, or send letters and packages by first class, priority, express, certified, or registered mail, visit the local US Post Office or you may do so online via [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com). For more information on locations and hours call 1-800-275-8777 or check the website.

### **U.S. post offices near the UIC Chicago campus include:**

#### **Nancy B. Jefferson Center:**

116 South Western Avenue  
Chicago IL 60612-9998

#### **Pilsen Center:**

1859 South Ashland Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60608-9998

### **U.S. post offices near the UIC Rockford campus include:**

#### **Kilburn Rockford:**

2440 Kilburn Avenue  
Rockford, IL 61101-9700

#### **Downtown Rockford:**

401 South Main Street  
Rockford, IL 61101-9705

### **U.S. post offices near the UIC Peoria campus include:**

#### **Persimmon Annex:**

90 Persimmon Street  
Peoria, IL 61602-9998

#### **Peoria:**

95 State Street  
Peoria, IL 61601-9998



There are many mailing service shops around town that function much like the post office, but are privately owned or retail chains and serve as a convenient alternative to the post office. Not only do they provide mailing and shipping, but they will also package your item. They offer photocopying and faxing services and other document production services as well. Some big retail chain stores are:

UPS: [www.theupsstore.com](http://www.theupsstore.com). 1-800-275-8777

FedEX: [www.fedex.com](http://www.fedex.com). 1-800-463-3339

DHL: [www.dhl.com](http://www.dhl.com). 1-800-225-5345



## SECTION 12: FAMILY RESOURCES

If your spouse and or children accompany you during your stay in the U.S., you will need unique services and resources to help your dependents feel at home. Living in one of the UIC family housing units is a good way to find community and supportive resources. Listed below are some common topics of interest for international dependents in the U.S.:

### **Education:**

If your spouse decides to pursue a degree program while in the U.S., you must speak with an advisor in the OIS office well in advance to make sure it is legally possible to do so. For example, F-2 visa holders must change their visa status to F-1 before beginning a full-time study program. This can be a lengthy process (up to five months), and much planning is necessary to make sure the change of status is completed smoothly and on time.

### **Employment:**

Getting a job in the U.S. is a good way for a spouse to become integrated into the community and gain valuable experience. Dependents with J-2 status are allowed to apply for work permission and work in the U.S. However, many dependent visa types are NOT allowed to have paid employment in the U.S such as F-2. Check with the Office of International Services about your dependent's work eligibility before he or she accepts any paid job offers.

### **Volunteer Work:**

If your spouse is not eligible for paid employment due to his or her visa status, unpaid or volunteer work may be a good alternative. However, please note that if your dependent is considering volunteering, it is highly recommended that he/she speak with an OIS advisor before the volunteering starts. As a volunteer, your spouse can easily integrate into the his/her new environment and become a part of the community.

### **Schools & Child Care:**

In Chicago there are many types of schools to send your children to, that are public and private. For Chicago public schools there are:

***Magnet schools***, (public schools with specialized courses or curriculum);

***Charter schools*** (schools that receives public funding but operates independently);

***Classical schools*** (the instructional program in these schools is accelerated and highly structured for strong academic achievement in literature, mathematics, language arts, world language, and the humanities);

***Gifted schools*** (schools where there is an accelerated instructional program that places an emphasis on thinking, reasoning, problem solving and creativity); and

***Neighborhood schools*** (the neighborhood schools are those that one would go to if he or she lived in the district). Many of these schools have gifted programs or special education, and those that are part of the Chicago Public Schools are free. Your children will be required to have certain medical exams before entering school. To help your children make a smooth transition into their new school, read as much as you can about how the school system works and what you can expect. Some helpful web sites for general information include:



Info USA <http://usinfo.org/enus/>

The U.S. Department of Education <http://www.ed.gov>

Great Schools [www.greatschools.net/](http://www.greatschools.net/)

### **Elementary of Primary Schools:**

For a list of schools from elementary to high school in the Chicagoland area, please visit:

<http://www.cps.edu/Pages/home.aspx> Please note that education is compulsory for ages 6 through 17. To stop attending school at age 17 requires written and informed consent by the student's parent or guardian.

For child care and pre-school options, The University of Illinois at Chicago has a child care and early learning center. If you are interested in this, please sign up as soon as possible as there usually is a waiting list. Please visit for more information: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/children/>

Chicago Public Schools also has "Early Learning Programs," <http://chicagoearlylearning.org/> For private options there are many within Chicago. There are also pre-school normally 2-5 years of age are at Chicago city colleges, or through private educators, that are not affiliated with CPS or are parochial. To compare schools in the area that are private or public this website could be used:

<http://www.greatschools.org/illinois/chicago/schools/>

### **Daycare Options:**

For children who are under 6 years of age, and need daycare, "Yelp" is a tool that can be used when looking specifically for day care options. Please visit: [www.yelp.com](http://www.yelp.com) and enter "daycare" in the 'Find' box and your specific neighborhood in the 'Near' box.





## **SECTION 13: UIC RESOURCES**

### **University Student Financial Services & Cashier Operations (USFSCO)**

USFSCO is where you can pay your tuition bill via check or credit, or on line in their office. If you want your payment to show the same day, you can pay on-line or pay directly to the USFSCO Cashier's office located at Marshfield Avenue Building, 809 S. Marshfield Ave. Room 116, 10am to 3pm, Monday-Friday. To see your online account details and have access to your bill and pay it online please login to [www.my.uic.edu](http://www.my.uic.edu) for the portal. If you have questions or concerns please contact the USFSCO customer service via email at [usfscohelp@uillinois.edu](mailto:usfscohelp@uillinois.edu) or for a payment plan or financial counselor visit the website <http://paymybill.uillinois.edu>

### **Counseling Center (Students)**

The Counseling Center serves UIC's student population if there is need in making life decisions, making transitions, stress, dealing with different cultures, substances issues, coping and problem solving skills, or mental illness. The counseling center has a professional staff, and services are private and confidential. For more information please visit <http://www.uic.edu/depts/counseling/> For the Counseling InTouch hotline please visit: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/counseling/hotline.shtml> or call 312-996-5535, Sunday-Friday 6pm to 10:30pm.

The InTouch Hotline is a free telephone crisis intervention, counseling, and referral service offered to UIC students and members of the greater Chicagoland area. The Hotline is staffed by volunteers trained through the UIC Paraprofessional Program. Calls placed to the Hotline remain confidential and are treated in an objective, non-judgmental fashion. Hotline volunteers are trained to discuss a wide range of problems including, but limited to:

crisis situations anxiety and panic conflict resolution, relationship issues, difficult decisions, isolation, stress, depression, sexuality issues, loneliness, family concerns, and referrals. Individuals are encouraged to call and explore any important issue or concern they may be facing.

### **Student Health Center/UIC Hospital & Clinic**

Campus Care is the health insurance designated for UIC students. For more information, please visit: <http://www.uic.edu/hsc/campuscare/> The UIC Hospital and Clinic focus on patient care, and also does various types of research at the University. For more information please visit: <http://hospital.uillinois.edu/>

### **Health Insurance J-1 Students and Scholars**

For J-1 students and scholars health insurance coverage is required that meets at least the minimum of the U.S. Department of State requirements. The coverage should cover the start and end dates of your DS-2019 program activity. For the minimum requirements, please visit: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-1999-title22-vol2/xml/CFR-1999-title22-vol2-sec514-14.xml>

### **Disability Resource Center**

SSB 1200 West Harrison Street, Room 1190 SSB

Please visit their website to see what services they provide UIC students at: [www.drc.uic.edu](http://www.drc.uic.edu) or call Voice: (312) 413-2183 . Video Phone : (773) 649-4535 Fax: (312) 413-7781

For para transit services please call:

- Students should contact the Disability Resource Center at (312) 413-2183.
- Faculty and staff should contact the Office of Access and Equity at (312) 996-8670.



Or visit: <http://fmweb.fm.uic.edu/Trans/paratransit.aspx>

### **UIC Recreation & Fitness Center**

UIC has two fitness centers: the Student Recreation Facility and the Sports and Fitness Center. These facilities are open to our students and scholars. For students this is covered by your fees, for scholars you will need to contact one of the facilities directly to have access, and will need to pay either bi-weekly or monthly for membership. For more information please visit: <http://recreation.uic.edu/>

### **Student Clubs & Organizations**

Clubs and organizations are huge part of student life on campus. The UIC campus has many organizations that cater to the varied needs of international students. Those organizations can be found here: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/campusprograms/solist.shtml>

### **Religious Practice, UIC & Chicago**

UIC and Chicago have very religiously diverse populations. At UIC there are some student groups that are associated with different religious practices, for student organizations affiliated with religion please visit <http://www.uic.edu/depts/campusprograms/solist.shtml>. In Chicago there are many different faiths and places of worship. A good website to see what is nearby UIC or in a particular Chicago neighborhood, please visit: <http://www.yelp.com/chicago>.

### **Safety**

Moving to a new place can be new and exciting, but one should also be alert to his or her new surroundings. Get familiar with the neighborhood, and the surrounding areas is always recommended, and what resources are available if needed. UIC has its own police department that services the UIC community as well as the Chicago Police Department. Such services that UIC PD provides are: escort service, how and where to report a crime, and bicycle theft and registration program. For more information please visit: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/police/index.html>

### **Commuter Student Resource Center**

CSRC is located on the second floor of Student Center East, behind the Wellness Center. They assist UIC student population that lives off of campus primarily but also provides resources to all of UIC's student population. Some of their FAQs are "What are my rights as a renter?" to "What study areas at the CSRC are available? Can I reserve a space or is it first come first serve?" For more information and services they have available, please visit: <http://commuter.uic.edu/>

### **Career Services**

Career Services helps students with on-campus employment, advise them with their resumes and cover letters, coordinates job fairs, mock interviews, as well as provide many other services to UIC's student population. For more information, please visit: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/ocs/>

### **Dean of Students**

The Dean of Students Office provides support to the UIC student population through the following services:

**a.) Student Advocacy Services:** These services provide assistance for students, faculty, staff and the families of students for the items:



1. Personal Emergencies
2. Illness
3. Campus Notification of an Anticipated Absence
4. Victim of a Crime, Referral for an Emergency Loan
5. Assistance with Contacting Students on Campus
6. Consulting Services for Faculty and Staff

**b.) Student Conduct Process:** The Student Disciplinary Policy is the University's process in handling allegations of misconduct by UIC students. The Student Disciplinary Policy addresses both academic misconduct (such as plagiarism, cheating, or grade tampering) and behavioral misconduct (such as theft, assault, under-age drinking, and drug-use.) The primary purpose of the Student Disciplinary Policy is to insure that students receive due process - which means that every student should have a fair opportunity to express their side of the story before any decisions are made about their disciplinary case. The Student Disciplinary Policy was designed to be educational in nature.

**c.) Student Legal Services:** Help with landlord and tenant law, traffic violations, court appearances, and other services. An attorney and other paralegal support are available through Student Legal Service to assist currently enrolled UIC students.

**d.) Student Mediation Center:** Provides assistance with conflict issues pertaining to roommate issues, relationships, classmate disagreements, and group communication issues. This is free to all UIC students, and can be done formally through student peer mediators or a staff member. You can also sign up to be part of the Peer Training Mediation Program.

**e.) Student Ombuds Services:** The Ombudsperson is an advocate for students at UIC, and investigates student complaints, reports the findings, and helps to achieve equitable settlements. This person analyzes both sides of the situation impartially to ensure that students receive fair treatment from all offices within the university. The Ombudsperson may serve as a counselor, and mediator. The Ombudsperson also provides referrals and clarification regarding university policy and procedures.

For more information regard the services the Dean of Students Office offers, please visit [www.uic.edu/depts/dos/](http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/) or call (312) 996-4857



## **SECTION 14: UIC ACADEMIC RESOURCES**

### **Tutoring Services**

For a list of tutoring services that are provided across east and west campus please visit:

<http://www.uic.edu/uic/studentlife/learning/tutoring.shtml>

### **Learning Resource Center**

For a list of learning resource centers that are available to students please visit:

<http://www.uic.edu/uic/studentlife/learning/index.shtml>

### **Bookstore**

UIC has two bookstores, one located on the first floor of Student Center East, and one on the first floor of Student Center West. For more information please visit: <http://www.uicbookstore.org/>

### **Library**

The UIC Library has many resources to the UIC community for Student Scholars, from interlibrary loan, computing, printing and copying to research help. For more information please visit: <http://library.uic.edu/>

### **Academic Center for Excellence**

The Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) provides resources for students particularly in the areas of study tips, study strategies, math and science tutoring. They also offer Academic Support Program (ASP) courses designed to meet the reading, writing, study and learning demands of the UIC classroom. Samples of their courses include: 'Advanced Communication Skills in English as a Second Language', 'Academic and Professional Writing', etc. More information about ACE can be found at: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/ace/>