



HEADING TO THE US?
HERE IS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

Pre-departure to the
United States

OVERVIEW

- ✓ Pre-departure planning
- ✓ Student Visa: Quick Overview
- ✓ Traveling to & Arriving in the U.S.
- ✓ Beginning your U.S. Education
- ✓ Practical info for everyday living
- ✓ Culture & Adjusting
- ✓ Panel & questions

PRE-DEPARTURE PLANNING

DOCUMENTS TO BRING:

- Valid **passport** w/ non-immigrant **visa** stamped inside
- **Certificate of Eligibility** (I-20 or DS-2019)
- Arrival-Departure Record
- **Medical documents**
 - Certificate of Immunization and Vaccination
 - Prescriptions for Medication and Eyeglasses
 - Medical and Dental records
- **Affiliation/admission letter**
- **Contacts:**
 - Important telephone numbers, addresses of contacts in your home country and your U.S. university



Could be helpful!

- Copy of birth certificate
- Academic documents

STRATEGIES FOR PACKING

What you should pack

- **Appropriate clothing:**
 - Seasonal weather (especially Winter)
 - Casual and formal attire
- **Prescriptions for any pre-existing conditions**
- **Gifts/materials to share from your home country**
- **Photos of family and friends**

Do *Not* Bring

Household items:

Linens and bedding

Towels

Cooking utensils

Study supplies:

Pens, paper

Notebooks

These items can be purchased in the U.S. at a reasonable cost.

STUDENT VISA: OVERVIEW

- Start at least **2 months** before departure
 - Documentation organized and ready for interview
 - Name on the Certificate of Eligibility matches passport
 - Bring school transcripts
 - Prepare to explain your plan for financing your exchange
-
- Be prepared to show that reasons for returning home are **stronger than those for staying in the U.S.**

VISA: CONTINUED

U.S. embassy or Consulate **cannot issue a visa more than 120 days before start of program in the U.S.**

Even if you have your visa, you will not be allowed to enter the country **more than 30 days before the start of your program**



IMPORTANT PEOPLE ON YOUR UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DEFINITIONS

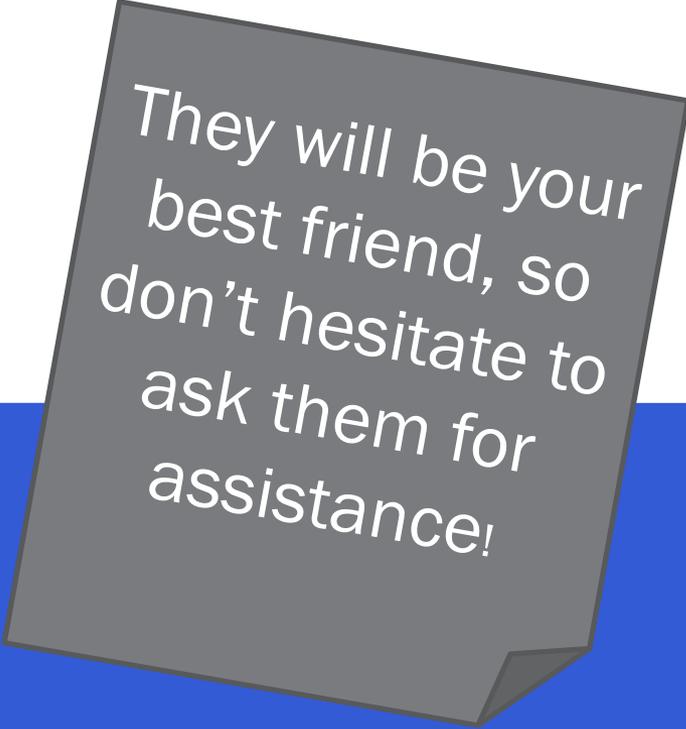
Academic Advisor: helps plan academic program so you complete your degree on time, monitors your academic progress, and provides advice on academic issues and professional goals.

International Student Advisor: works with all international students and scholars on campus and is an excellent resource for information on living in the United States.



INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OFFICE

- *Everything* you need to know
 - Housing
 - Banking
 - Meal plans
 - Class scheduling
 - Health & wellness (medical centers or physician services)



They will be your
best friend, so
don't hesitate to
ask them for
assistance!

QUICK OVERVIEW: HOUSING

- Know the housing options available
- Apply early for campus housing
- Review all rental and lease agreements carefully
- Consider the various meal plan options on campus, regardless of your housing



QUICK OVERVIEW: MONEY

- Open a Bank Account once you arrive in the U.S.
- Automatic Tellers (ATM)
- Debit and Credit cards
- Tipping -- 15-20%
 - Restaurants
 - Cab drivers
 - Hotels (maids & concierge)
 - Most service providers



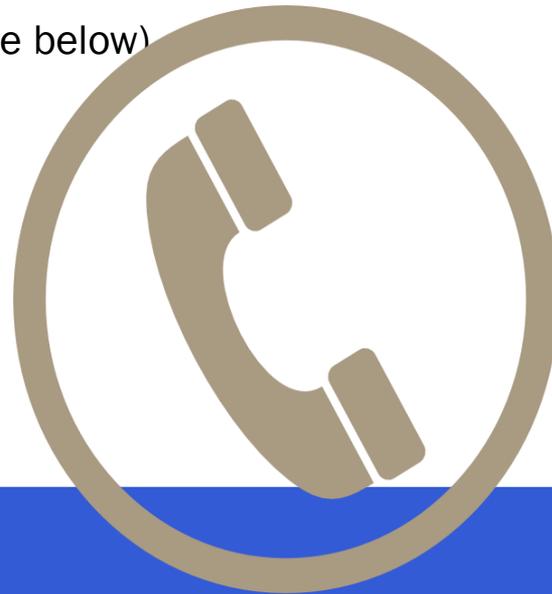
QUICK OVERVIEW: HEALTH

- Campus Health Clinics
- Family Medical Care
- “Health Insurance”



QUICK OVERVIEW: COMMUNICATION

- U.S. Telephones – 10 digits including 3 digit ‘area code’
- **Emergency - 911**
- Calls to Foreign Countries from USA – 011 + International Country Code + Phone Number
- Prepaid Calling Cards/SIM cards
- Skype or other online, voice or video (see below)



QUICK OVERVIEW: SHOPPING

- The Campus Bookstore
- Supermarkets ('Grocery Store')
- Pharmacies ('Drugstore')
- Department Stores
- Discount Stores



REVIEW: PRACTICAL INFO FOR EVERYDAY

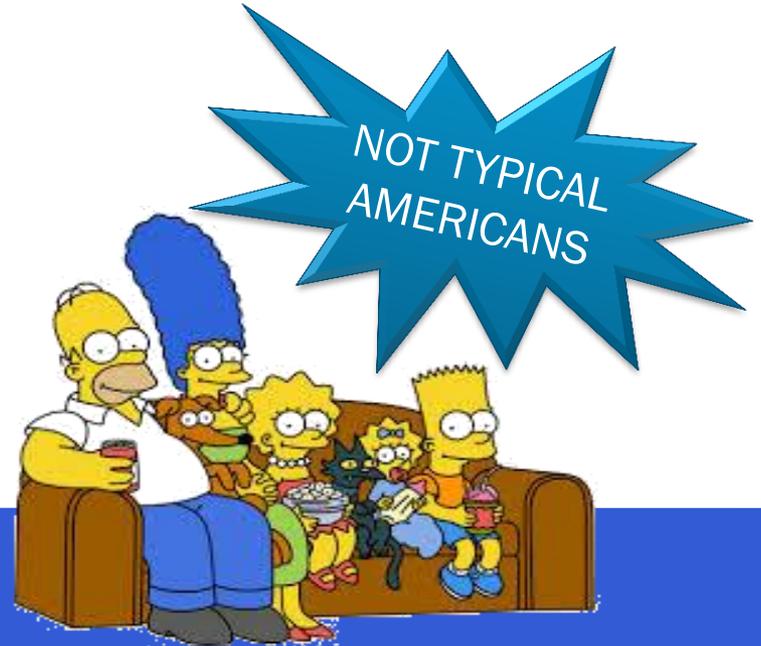
- ✓ Research local/Internet banks to determine which one suits you
- ✓ Explore telephone and Internet service options
 - ✓ Skype,
 - ✓ Hangouts
 - ✓ WhatsApp
- ✓ Find where the **health care facilities** are so you know where to go when you become ill
- ✓ **Stay safe:** use caution and common sense as you get to know the new campus and city
- ✓ Ask your international student adviser for information on how to ease your transition
- ✓ Don't forget the U.S. uses a different plug than the EU!

BEGINNING YOUR U.S. EDUCATION

- Address them as ‘**Professor**’ or ‘**Doctor**’, unless instructed
- Professors in the U.S. have **office hours** when they are available for consultation
- Arrive **on time**
- Teaching Assistants (**TA**) work with professors
- Wide range of use of technology:
 - Some Professors will not check email regularly, while
 - Others will require online interaction (including unique platform)

AMERICAN SOCIAL & CULTURAL CUSTOMS

- The “American Dream”
 - the U.S. is a melting pot
- No single ethnic or cultural origin of Americans
 - Accents and customs vary between and within cities
- Greetings
- Use of Names
- Friendliness and Friendships
- Social Invitations



DIFFERENCES TO EXPECT

- **No ranking system**
 - Passing grade is typically on a scale of “A” to “D” | “F” is failing.
 - May also be a grade-point scale from 0 to 4.0 or Pass/Fail.
- **Liberal arts- majors & minors**
- **Teaching and classroom styles**
 - “Free speech” it is acceptable in American culture to voice your opinion freely
- **On-campus life and opportunities**
 - Groups, organizations, sports teams

IN THE CLASSROOM

It is important to participate actively in the classroom :

- Vocal participation
- Oral presentations
- Group projects
- Research papers
- Midterms/Final exams
- Interactive setting/Seminar format



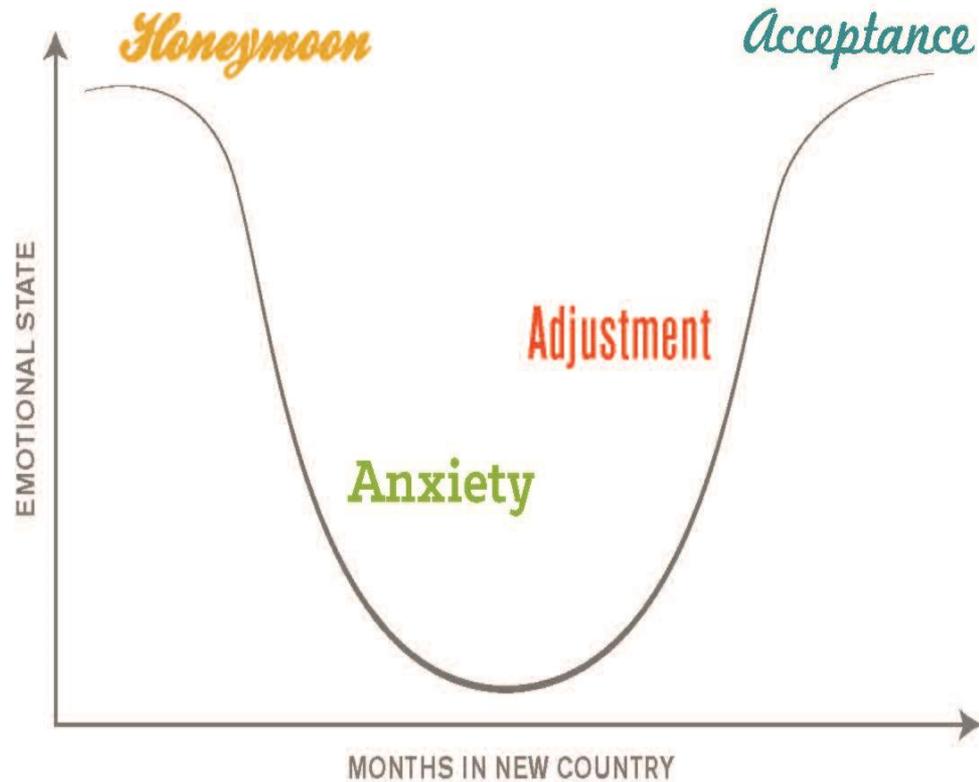
DO'S & DON'TS IN THE U.S.

- Don't assume Americans know everything about your home country.
- Take note of the specific laws in your city:
 - Traffic, parking laws, littering
 - Smoking and alcohol laws
- **Do smile!**



ADJUSTING TO A NEW ENVIRONMENT

STAGES of CULTURE SHOCK



ADJUSTING: CULTURE SHOCK

Honeymoon

- You feel like a tourist - everything is new and exciting.

Anxiety, Rejection and Isolation

- You realize this is **not a vacation**. You feel frustrated, disillusioned, and irritable towards Americans.

Understanding and Adjusting

- You start understanding the new environment and find a routine in your daily life.

Integration and Acceptance

- You start to see the university and your new town as “Home”

RECOGNIZING & TREATING CULTURE SHOCK

- Connect with family and friends back home (!!!!) *but* don't become dependent on them!

- Don't isolate yourself!
- Exercise and do outdoor activities to relieve stress

Homesickness

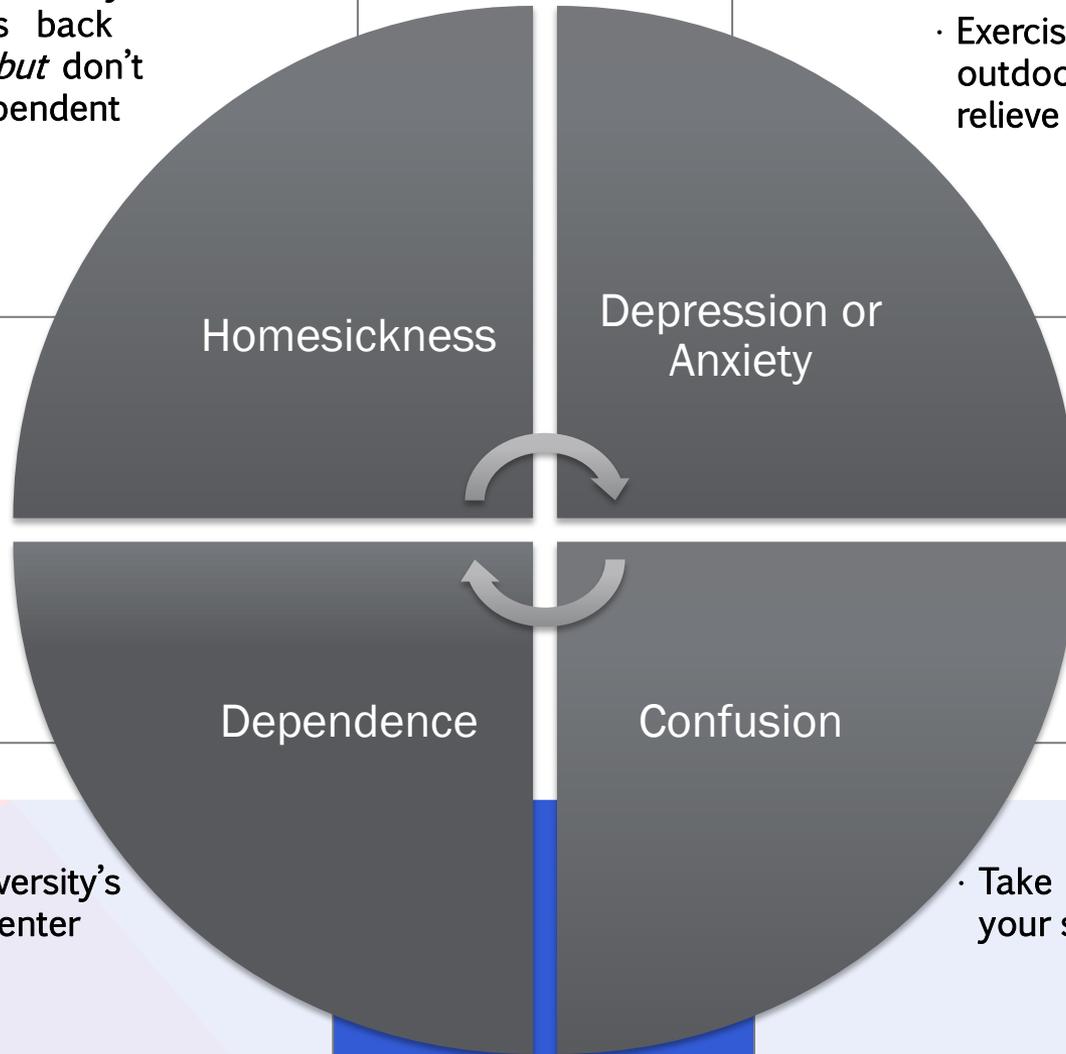
Depression or Anxiety

Dependence

Confusion

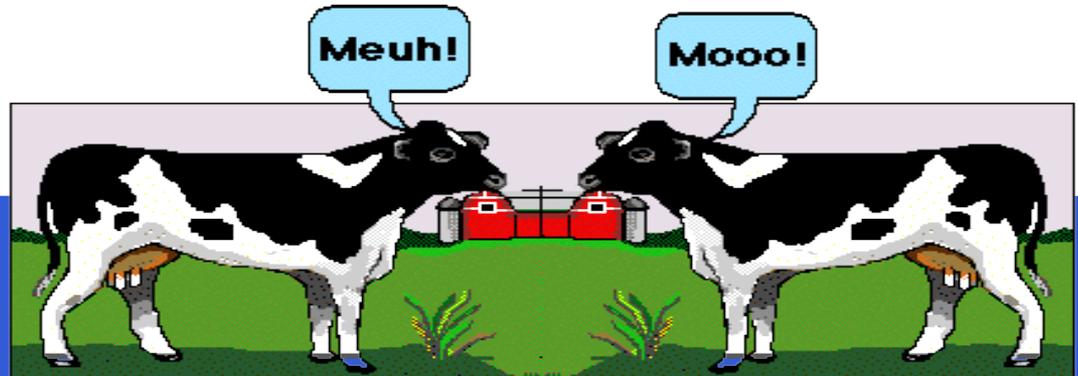
- Visit your university's Counseling Center

- Take a break from your studies



ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES

- U.S. regional accents vary, give yourself time to adjust to the local accent.
- You may face situations which are unacceptable in your culture.
- Be patient and embrace differences → *open-minded*
- Eat well, sleep well, and exercise.
- Ask questions



AN EMERGENCY AT HOME

- Meet with your International Services Counselor
- Meet with your academic adviser
 - If you miss a significant amount of work, your final grade may be 'incomplete'
 - You are allowed to drop some classes

INTERESTING DIVERSITY TRIVIA!

Percent of Americans Born Abroad

13%



- Local
- Abroad

Americans that speak a language other than English at home

21%



- English
- Other Language

non-white babies outnumbered white babies for the first time



974,926 international students studied in the U.S.



REVIEW: ADJUSTING TO NEW ENVIRONMENT

- ✓ If possible, plan to arrive at your university several days before orientation begins due to jet lag
- ✓ It is normal to experience some culture shock
- ✓ Become familiar with American social customs, that may be different from the your native ones
- ✓ If a family emergency arises, remember that there are people at your university who can help you decide the best course of action

PANEL

- 🇺🇸 Rosemary Bornstein, Saint Louis University, MO
- 🇺🇸 Ana Vasudevan, University of California Berkley, CA
Johns Hopkins University, MD
- 🇮🇱 Ben Konen, Berklee College of Music, MA
Queens College, NY

EducationUSA – CEDIES

18-20 Montee de la Petrusse / L-2327



@USEmbLuxembourg



<https://goo.gl/ay7ec7>



[/www.facebook.com
/usdos.Luxembourg](https://www.facebook.com/usdos.Luxembourg)



www.instagram.com/us.embassy.luxembourg/

Tel: +352 46 01 23 00
Luxembourg.usembassy.gov
luxeducationusa@gmail.com

