

International Exchange Student Welcome Packet

7 **STEPS** **to ENROLLMENT**

Fall 2004

- 1. Register for New International Student Orientation**
- 2. Clear your Health Insurance Requirement**
- 3. Create an SDSU WebPortal and Register for your Classes Online**
- 4. Obtain your J-1 Visa and Review your Legal and Financial Requirements**
- 5. Meet Immunization Requirements**
- 6. Prepare for your Role as an Exchange Student**
- 7. Check-in at the International Student Center**

STEP 1

Register for New International Student Orientation

You are required to attend the mandatory orientation session for exchange students held at the International Student Center on Wed. August 25 from 9am to 4pm. This orientation will provide you essential resources to help you succeed at SDSU and to ease your transition to the university. In order to register, you must return the enclosed International Student Confirmation Form.

What can you expect to do at orientation?

- Meet with international student advisers who will verify your immigration status and can answer your immigration questions
- Meet with current international students who can answer your questions about life at SDSU
- Complete health insurance requirements and find out more about your health insurance coverage
- Find out about housing options on and off campus
- Make new friends
- Learn about ISC programs and activities
- Get to know the ISC staff
- Free lunch and information about banking, transportation, on-campus jobs, cell phones, California driver's licenses, rental cars and much more.

Remember you **MUST** bring: your passport, DS-2019, I-94, and health insurance information or check/money order for health insurance.

STEP 2

Clear your Health Insurance Requirement

International Students at SDSU are required by law to have health insurance. An F-Hold on your registration prevents you from registering for your classes until you have shown proof of health insurance coverage. You can temporarily clear your insurance requirement (and register for your classes) by returning the enclosed International Student Confirmation Form with your signature in the Health Insurance Promissory Contract section. By signing the Promissory Contract, you promise to provide proof that you have an approved health insurance policy in effect by Friday, September 3, 2004. If you do not, your registration will be cancelled.

Please note that it takes 2 days to clear your F-Hold after we have received your Promissory Contract.

You must fulfill the Health Insurance Requirement (and your Promissory Contract) by Friday September 3, 2004 in one of three ways:

1. Purchase the health insurance policy offered through the ISC* when you arrive in San Diego.
2. Purchase the health insurance policy offered through the ISC* online at www.csuhealthlink.com (same prices as above). Be sure to hit the button to notify your school of your purchase when you have finished the transaction.

3. Show documented proof that you have an alternate insurance policy that meets all six of the California State University Requirements. These requirements are very strict and there are no exceptions. The requirements are:

- The policy is valid until at least January 15, 2005;
- The medical benefit is at least \$100,000 per condition with a co-payment of no more than 25% and a deductible of no more than \$100;
- The repatriation benefit is at least \$7,500;
- The medical evacuation benefit is at least \$10,000;
- The policy provides equal benefits for each gender (policy must have maternity benefits at no extra cost);
- The policy pays for pre-existing conditions after six months of continuous coverage.

* The ISC strongly recommends that you buy the insurance offered through our office. It complies with all of the mandated requirements and it offers a special group rate and features a reduced deductible and a claims processing service.

STEP 3 Create an SDSU WebPortal and Register for your Classes Online

All new international students can register beginning Friday, July 16. This is the earliest date you can register for your classes. The earlier you register for classes, the more course availability you will find. Courses at San Diego State University fill up quickly. Your goal should be to register for classes on Friday, July 16. You can always make changes later.

Three Steps to Register for your Classes

1. Choose your Classes by Reviewing the *Class Schedule* and the *General Catalog*

The *Class Schedule* lists all classes offered at SDSU for the fall 2004 semester and is available online at www.sdsu.edu/schedule. The *General Catalog* provides a description of classes. It is available at www.sdsu.edu/catalog. You should choose classes based on your home institution's recommendation for transferable credit.

2. Create an SDSU WebPortal

You must create an e-Services portal account to access important services available to admitted students, including Application Status Check, Update E-mail/Address, and My Registration Info. To create an account, visit www.sdsu.edu/e-services and click on "Students." Then, click on the "Need an Account?" button. Your User Name is your Red ID# (printed on your admission letter). Your Personal Identification Number (PIN) is initially set to equal your date of birth (MMDDYY). For example, if you were born on December 6, 1983, your PIN is 120683. During the account activation process, you will create

a new permanent PIN that is not your birthdate. You must have a working e-mail address to create a portal account. A temporary PIN will be sent to your e-mail address, and you must use this temporary PIN to activate your account.

3. Register Online

When you know the classes you want, you can register online at <http://weblines.sdsu.edu>. Use the Red ID and password to log into your account and add your classes. If you do not have access to the internet, call the ISC for assistance.

Important Notes Regarding Registration

*** Please note that as an exchange student, you are not subject to pay regular fees at SDSU. However, you may be required to pay additional fees such as lab fees (\$20-\$50), sports fees, etc. You will be sent a bill for these after you have registered for your classes.

*** FOR CSU-IP participants: If you are participating in one of the California State University Exchange Programs (CSU-IP) through the Chancellor's office, you are required to pay campus-based fees. These cover campus activities and services at SDSU. The amount was \$221 per semester for the 2003-2004 year. This amount is subject to change at any time.

*** If you have not yet submitted your SDSU Exchange Student Course Form, you must do so. It can be downloaded from www.sa.sdsu.edu/isc/print_EXap.htm. This form is for information purposes and course planning only. You must still register for your classes through Weblines or by phone.

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Create an SDSU Portal and Register for your Classes Online (*continued*)

*** PLEASE REMEMBER that depending on your major, as a short-term visiting student, it could be difficult for you to take higher-level classes in your field at SDSU. If you are interested in studying Business Administration, Communication or any other of our impacted programs shown at www.sdsu.edu/impactedmajors, please read the web page carefully regarding the specific requirements to enter those majors as well as remember that having the appropriate prerequisites is absolutely necessary in order to obtain permission from faculty to take certain classes. Please also try to select classes from no more than three different disciplines/majors. Unfortunately, the registration system allows only up to three disciplines at a time. Therefore, to avoid confusion, plan classes carefully and in time for priority registration. Please realize that there is not always room in the classes and you may face disappointment upon your arrival here. We encourage students to select at least four additional courses in case you have difficulties adding the classes you have selected.

STEP

4

Obtain Your J-1 Visa and Review Your Legal and Financial Requirements

Obtain Your Visa

A valid student visa is required for entry to the U.S. (Note: Canadian citizens do not require visas but are required to present the DS-2019 at the port of entry.) If you are outside the U.S. and do not already have a valid student visa, take your passport and DS-2019 to the nearest U.S. Consulate to obtain a visa.

View <http://usembassy.state.gov> for information about your consulate's process for non-immigrant visa applications and to download the visa application form. When you apply for your visa, you will need to show proof of sufficient funds available to meet all expenses.

You will receive an I-94 on the airplane (small white card) that the DHS (Department of Homeland Security) official will staple into your passport next to your visa. Please safeguard your I-94 and DS-2019; you will need these documents to prove your legal status in the U.S. When you enter the U.S., you will present your valid visa and DS-2019.

The Home-Country Residence Requirement

Some J-1 students will be subject to the two-year home-country physical presence requirement. This means that the exchange visitor is required to spend at least two years in the home country before coming back to the U.S. The purpose of this requirement is to have the home country benefit from the exchange visitor's experience in the U.S. Not all exchange visitors are subject to the requirement. If you have questions about the requirement, including whether or not you will or will not become subject to it, please raise them with the Consular Officer when you apply for your visa. To determine if you are subject to the requirement, check the "annotations" section on your visa stamp in your passport.

Legal Requirements: Full Course of Study

Every exchange student is required to enroll as a full-time student each and every semester; this means a minimum of 12 units per semester (approximately 4 classes) for undergraduate and a minimum of 9 units per semester (approximately 3 classes) for graduates. Courses in Extended Studies or Open University do not count toward full-time status.

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Obtain Your J-1 Visa and Review Your Legal and Financial Requirements (*continued*)

Financial Requirements

Each exchange student has a different agreement regarding fee payment to SDSU. For information regarding your exchange agreement, call the International Exchange Program Coordinator at (619) 594-1982 or check with your exchange coordinator in your home country. (Please note, that CSU-IP participants are required to pay additional fees. Please check Step 3 for more information.) Plan to have funds readily available for your initial expenses – fees, housing, health insurance, books and miscellaneous expenses. Since bank drafts can take several weeks to clear, you will need traveler's checks or World Money Orders. Plan to have at least \$2,000 available upon arrival. A breakdown of expenses is shown on <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/isc/EXstep1.htm>.

Employment Opportunities

Do not plan on employment as a means of financial support. Permission for off-campus employment is never granted by the U.S. Immigration Service during a student's first academic year. On-campus employment is allowed and students are encouraged to seek out opportunities. In some cases, this may require permission from a sponsoring agency other than SDSU (ISEP, Fulbrights, etc.). This process may take 2-4 weeks before you are allowed to work.

Note: If you have any questions whatsoever regarding your immigration status, contact the International Student Center immediately to talk to an International Student Adviser.

STEP 5

Meet Immunization Requirements

If you do not comply with the following requirements during your first semester at SDSU, you will not be allowed to register for a second semester. If you were born on or after Jan. 1, 1957, you are required to show proof of immunity to measles, (Rubeola) and rubella (German measles) within your first semester at SDSU. Submit medical documentation to Student Health Services proving immunity **OR** receive the measles and rubella vaccinations (available at no charge at Student Health Services).

Hepatitis B

If you are age 18 or under when you begin studying at SDSU, you are also required to provide proof of immunization against hepatitis B within your first semester. Submit medical documentation to Student Health Services proving immunity **OR** proving that you have started the three-dose series of hepatitis B vaccine (you may receive the vaccine at Student Health Services or your private medical provider). If you start the series during your first semester, you must complete the series by the end of your third semester. (Student Health Services must see medical documentation of at least one immunization per semester to prevent an immunization hold on the next semester's registration).

What is adequate proof of prior vaccination?

Medical documentation of prior immunization requires the date, type of vaccination, and a doctor's or nurse's signature, initials or office stamp. School records are not acceptable proof unless a doctor or nurse signs them. Students may also receive vaccines at Student Health Services. For more information about immunization requirements, visit www.sdsu.edu/immunization or call 619-594-HEALTH (4325).

STEP 6

Prepare for your Role as an Exchange Student

As an exchange student to SDSU, you may take advantage of both academic and non-academic opportunities. An especially rewarding part of your exchange is to share with SDSU students information about your home country and university. We urge you to take a moment and think about how you will promote your culture and institution on campus.

One very important way to share with others is to participate in our bi-annual Study Abroad Fair. At this fair, we invite exchange students to be available at tables to talk to students about their countries. In addition, we would also like you to participate in one or two of the following; (1) our weekly study abroad meetings; (2) classroom presentations; and (3) residence hall forums.

As such, we would like for you to select a few things from the following to bring with you from your home:

- Institutional Information
- Postcards
- Native/traditional apparel
- Photographs
- Souvenirs
- Posters
- Small candies
- Other memorabilia that reflect your home culture.

We will then ask that you display these during the Study Abroad Fair, as well as at the other presentations, and talk about your home campus and country to interested students.

Remember: exchange programs only work when you get involved.

STEP 7

Check in at the ISC

Report to the ISC to complete the check-in process upon your arrival in the U.S. Failure to check-in at the ISC could result in termination of your SEVIS record and loss of your J-1 status. During the check-in, you will be able to meet one-on-one with an ISC staff person. This person will review and make copies of your immigration documents, ensure that you're on the right track to get your studies started and assist you with any questions you have.

Remember to bring your immigration documents, insurance documents, and/or a check, credit card or money order for the fall 2004 insurance policy.

For questions, contact the:

**International Student Center
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-5101**

**Web: www.sdsu.edu/isc
Email: isc.reception@sdsu.edu
Phone: (619) 594-1982
Fax: (619) 594-1973**