

PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

WELCOME.

Colorado State University is proud to welcome more than 2,000 international students and scholars from 90+ countries to study and work here in Fort Collins. Over the course of your stay, the Office of International Programs will assist you with your cultural adjustment, academic integration, professional growth, and personal support.

This guide provides information to help you to prepare for your first few weeks in Colorado. By reading this guide thoroughly, you will understand the services we provide to assist you in your transition to CSU and to be prepared for the tasks ahead. We look forward to having you on campus.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

For the latest information, visit isss.colostate.edu/pre-arrival

PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

- 1 OBTAIN IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS** PAGE 4
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 - I-20 or DS-2019 with a report date of your planned enrollment
 - Valid visa for Colorado State University
- 2 CREATE YOUR EID** PAGE 5
 - Create an electronic ID (eID): eid.colostate.edu
- 3 GET YOUR FINANCES IN ORDER** PAGE 5
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 - Make plans to pay tuition and fees before the deadline
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 - Submit health forms
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 - Graduate students: Register at isss.colostate.edu/orientation
 - Pathway and INTO CSU students: Learn about Orientation at intostudy.com/CSU



1 U.S. VISA AND IMMIGRATION-RELATED INFORMATION

For every immigration document you receive, check that the spelling of your name and your date of birth are exactly the same as listed on your passport. Passports must be valid for six months after your intended date of entry into the U.S. Copy all documents prior to departure. Carry all originals with you when you travel, and keep copies in a separate place.

OBTAINING A VISA

1. Receive I-20 or DS-2019 from Colorado State University

Your I-20 or DS-2019 form should be included in the mailed packet in which you received this pre-arrival guide. You will be required to submit this document when you apply for a visa at a U.S. Embassy/Consulate. You do not need a travel endorsement for your initial entry.

2. Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee

At least two weeks before your visa interview, pay this fee online at fmjfee.com. Input your name exactly as it appears on the I-20 or DS-2019 form. Print a copy of the online receipt and bring it to your visa interview. (Canadians should present this receipt at the U.S. border.) Make copies of this receipt and keep it with your other immigration documents.

3. Make a visa appointment at a U.S. Embassy/Consulate

Find your local U.S. Embassy/Consulate at usembassy.gov and schedule an appointment with them as early as possible. The wait time for a visa interview varies, but is always longer during the months of June, July, and August. Depending on your course of study and nationality, the visa officer may also have to get special clearances, which can require additional time. The earliest the U.S. Embassy/Consulate can issue an F-1 visa is 120 days before the start date of your program in the U.S. However, you can apply for your visa up to a year before your program. If you are applying for a J-1 visa, you may apply any time before the beginning of your program.

4. Complete the DS-160 form

The DS-160 form is a non-immigrant electronic visa application, available on your local U.S. Embassy/Consulate website.

5. Pay the visa application fee

Follow the instructions on your local U.S. Embassy/Consulate website to pay this fee.

6. Prepare and bring the following to your visa interview:

- Passport valid for at least six months
- I-20 or DS-2019 form (signed and dated)
- Admission letter
- Completed visa application forms (printed DS-160 confirmation notice)

- Two 2 inch x 2 inch (or 5cm x 5cm) photographs in the required format
- A receipt of the paid SEVIS I-901 fee
- Financial evidence of sufficient funds to cover tuition and living expenses during your period of study
- Any information that proves that you will return to your home country after finishing your studies in the U.S. This may include proof of property, family, or other ties to your community

7. Remain calm and answer all the Visa Officer's questions openly and honestly

ARRIVING IN THE U.S.

8. Plan Your Arrival

You will not be allowed to enter the country more than 30 days before the start of your program if you are an initial entry student. Plan to arrive the weekend before Orientation, on Saturday or Sunday.

Remember: Always carry your original I-20 or DS-2019 and passport on your person, not in your luggage!

9. At the Port of Entry

Proceed to the terminal area for arriving passengers. Present the following documents:

- Passport
- SEVIS form (I-20 or DS-2019)
- Customs Declaration Form (CF-6059), which reflects the address where you will live, not the address of the school or program

All visitors entering the U.S. must state their reasons for wishing to enter the country. You will be asked to provide information about your final destination. It is important that you tell the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer that you will be a student. Be prepared to include the name and address of the school program where you will enroll/participate.

Once your inspection is successfully completed, the inspecting officer will:

- Stamp your passport. Make sure this is stamped with your correct visa type (either F or J), correct date, and marked D/S for Duration of Status
- Assign you an Admission Number (I-94). You can locate your I-94 number at cbp.gov/i94. Print and check right away for accuracy upon each entry into the U.S.

Secondary Inspection Requirements

If the CBP officer at the port of entry cannot initially verify your information or you do not have all of the required documentation, you may be directed to an area known as "secondary inspection." Here the CBP Officer will attempt to verify your status by using the Student and Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS). If the officer needs to verify information with your school or program, contact:

Mark Hallett, Senior Director of International Student and Scholar Services: (970) 491-5917. In case of an emergency, Mark can be reached after-hours by calling the Colorado State University Police Department: (970) 491-6425.

10. International Post-Arrival Immigration Document Review

All new international students complete an immigration document review online after arriving in the United States. You will receive additional information about this process by email. Please make sure you have the required documents:

- Passport (including the U.S. entry stamp)
- I-20 or DS-2019 form
- The name and address of an emergency contact in the U.S. and your home country
- Current U.S. address and phone number

The Office of International Programs requires these documents in order to register your arrival in the SEVIS system as required by the U.S. Government. If a report is not submitted, you may be considered in violation of your immigration status in the U.S. If you cannot complete this process online, please visit the Office of International Programs in Laurel Hall as soon as possible with the documents above. You will not be able to enroll in classes until this requirement is completed.

For helpful information on applying for a U.S. visa, visit bit.ly/studentvisatips

2 ELECTRONIC ID (EID)

Your CSU eID allows you to access RamWeb, the CSU student portal, to register for classes, check grades, pay account balances, find student job listings and more. Creating an eID will also create your @rams.colostate.edu email address. Create your eID at eid.colostate.edu.

3 FINANCES

Bring enough money to cover your expenses during your first few days in the U.S., such as food, transportation, personal items and temporary housing. These expenses can be covered with major credit cards, debit cards and ATM cards, or traveler's checks. We don't recommend carrying more than \$1,000 in cash. You can set up a checking account at a local bank once you arrive, and wire money electronically as needed.

Calculate the estimated expenses for your first year at CSU online at iss.colostate.edu/finances.

TUITION AND FEES

The best way to pay tuition is through the International Funds option on RamWeb (ramweb.colostate.edu). Tuition and fees will be charged to your RamWeb account each semester, along with any on-campus housing and CSU health insurance charges. Learn more about paying tuition at iss.colostate.edu/finances.

Semester:	Billed to your Account:	Payment Due:
Fall	August	September 10
Spring	January	February 10
Summer	May	June 10

Late fees will be charged if the bill has not been paid in full by the deadline, and a registration hold will be placed on your account to prevent registration for future courses. For more information on billing, visit sfs.colostate.edu/payingyourbill.

Students should also budget approximately \$300 to \$600 per semester for textbooks.

4 HEALTH & INSURANCE

Checklists with more information can be found at:

- Undergraduate students: health.colostate.edu/new-student-checklist
- Graduate students: health.colostate.edu/graduate-new-student-checklist

All students are required to complete the following health-related tasks by the first day of classes. Many of these tasks can be completed online before you arrive at CSU. All documents must be created or translated into English. Consult your family members and doctor before you leave to complete the immunizations requirement, tuberculosis assessment and health history form.

- Immunizations: Submit your official immunizations records online through the Student Health Portal showing proof of the following:
 - Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine
 - Meningococcal (ACWY) vaccine
- Submit Health Forms
 - Tuberculosis Assessment and Health History
 - Authorization for Treatment of a Minor (if under age 18)
- Fulfill the Health Insurance Requirement
 - More information about health insurance coverage and costs at iss.colostate.edu/health_insurance
- Complete required online programs (available on RamWeb 30 days before classes begin)
 - Sexual Assault Prevention (all students)
 - AlcoholEdu (undergraduate students under age 23 only)
 - Schwab Moneywise on Campus: Transit Financial Wellness (undergraduate students) or @Work (graduate students)
- Create a YOU@CSU profile

5 HOUSING

Students must arrange their own living accommodations before arrival in Fort Collins.

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

All first-year undergraduate students (freshmen) are required to live on campus in the residence halls for their first two semesters. Housing is guaranteed for freshmen students. Transfer students and graduate students are not guaranteed housing, but may apply if they wish to live on campus.

Apply for housing immediately after you receive admission, as on- and off-campus space fills quickly.

Residence Halls

There are 15 residence halls on the CSU campus. Most residence hall rooms host two students in one room. Consider living in one of the Residential Learning Communities (RLC) to enhance your academic and social experience at CSU.

Apartments

CSU offers both single and family apartments. Furnished apartments as well as month-to-month leases are available. Aggie Village Apartments are a brand new global community for students interested in an intercultural experience.

For more information about on-campus housing options, visit housing.colostate.edu.

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

Off-campus housing is another option available for transfer and graduate students. If you prefer to live off-campus, you should begin your search as soon as possible.

The CSU Off-Campus Life office has many great resources for international students looking for housing, including a useful tool called CSU Rental Search: oc.colostate.edu/international-students.

Finding furnished apartments is rare. Many apartments require you to pay your first and last month's rent before you move in; plan accordingly.

Signing a lease:

Most apartment owners require a one year lease. Visit an off-campus rental in person before committing and signing a lease. Student Legal Services at CSU can help you with the lease signing process to make sure that the lease is legal and appropriate. Visit Student Legal Services online at: sls.colostate.edu.

Apply now – housing fills very quickly.

TEMPORARY HOUSING

Students should arrive by the weekend before Ram Orientation, which takes place the week before classes begin. If there are a couple of days between the day that you arrive and your arranged move-in date to your apartment or residence hall, you may need to find temporary housing for the first few nights you are in Fort Collins.

Temporary Home-stay Program:

The Fort Collins International Center offers a Temporary Home-stay Program, which provides up to 5 nights of free housing with a local community member for new students. This is a convenient way to find temporary housing and also a great opportunity to learn more about American culture and begin to make friends in the community.

Apply for your home-stay at least a month before you arrive, as this is a popular option for incoming international students and space is limited. Fill out the Home-stay Request Form online at iss.colostate.edu/housing.

International Student Groups:

If your country has an international student group at CSU, the group may be able to provide you with temporary housing. Visit the international student group website at iss.colostate.edu/international-student-organizations-at-csu.

Hotels and Hostels:

You may choose to stay in a hotel at an average cost of U.S. \$85 to \$150 per night. The closest hotels to campus are the Hilton and the Best Western.

Hostels are also an option for short-term stays, at an average cost of U.S. \$30 to \$35 per night. Two hostels that international students use regularly are the Solarium International Inn & Hostel and the Fernweh Inn & Hostel.

6 REGISTERING FOR CLASSES

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (NEW & TRANSFER)

Fully admitted undergraduate students should take the appropriate placement exams, accessible at otp.colostate.edu/placement-exams-1.aspx.

Orientation and Transition Programs at CSU will send you an email with instructions for completing the online Pre-Orientation Module. Once complete, you will be able to register for classes. If you do not sign up for classes before arrival, you will be able to sign up during Orientation. If you wait until Orientation you may not be able to sign up for desired classes, as they fill quickly.

Transfer students will need to submit more detailed information on previous courses if you wish to use that course credit toward your CSU degree. Learn more about transferring credit at registrar.colostate.edu/transfer-credit.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate students should contact their department to receive information about signing up for classes. Each graduate department has different policies about course registration. Contact information for academic departments may be found at graduateschool.colostate.edu/programs.

INTO CSU STUDENTS

If your admission to CSU is conditional upon improving your English skills, you will need to take an on-campus English test to determine your appropriate course level before you can register for classes at CSU or INTO CSU. Conditionally admitted students should attend the week-long INTO CSU orientation program which begins the Monday before the start of classes. Learn more at intostudy.com/CSU.

7 ARRIVAL AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

All new students must arrive in time to attend mandatory Orientation for International Students.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (DIA)

Fort Collins is most easily accessed by way of Denver, Colorado, a city an hour south of CSU. DIA is the most common way for students to arrive in Colorado. From there, it is 90 minutes by shuttle to reach CSU.

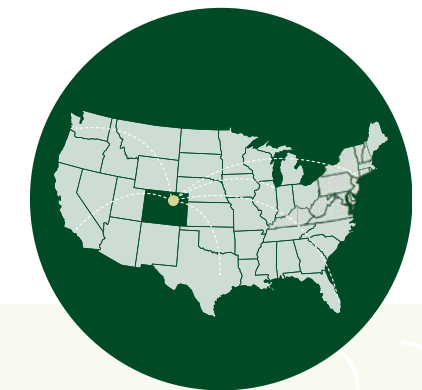
MAPS

Find a campus map at maps.colostate.edu

TRANSPORTATION TO FORT COLLINS

You should budget up to \$100 for transportation costs, depending on what method you choose. The most economical way to travel between DIA and Fort Collins is to take the Greenride (greenrideco.com). The shuttle service offers rides every day of the week, and drops passengers off at various Fort Collins locations, including major hotels and the CSU campus. For an additional fee, they can drop you off at a specific address.

You can also take a rideshare service, such as Uber or Lyft, which is typically about \$100. If you are traveling with others, you could split the cost of this rideshare service to lessen the expense.



8 ORIENTATION

To assist you with the transition from your home country to CSU, all new international students are required to attend mandatory orientation, held on the Tuesday and Wednesday before classes begin.

Orientation provides:

- Skills to manage requirements of U.S. immigration regulations and CSU academic policies.
- Foundational knowledge of American academic culture, with an emphasis on personal responsibility for learning, understanding, and following regulations.
- Tours of campus and the community.
- Trips to local stores for purchasing personal items.
- Evening social events to help you become acquainted with fellow students and the Fort Collins and CSU community.
- Information about U.S. laws, safety, health-care, and more.
- Useful tips about overcoming culture shock, interacting with U.S. Americans, and how to make the most of your time at CSU.

Register for orientation and learn more at iss.colostate.edu/orientation/.

BRINGING YOUR FAMILY?

If family members are accompanying you to CSU:

- Living Expenses may increase by 50 percent because of increased housing, transportation, food, and childcare costs.
- CSU does not offer spouse or dependent Health Insurance plans. Other health insurance options for your family can be found at connectforhealthco.com. Spouses or domestic partners of eligible students may access the CSU Health Network by paying the Student Health Fee on a semester basis, or paying for medical services as they are received.
- F-2 Dependents may not work under any circumstances. J-2 dependents may apply for work permission from the USCIS only if the income earned is to be used for support of the spouse or children, not for support of the J-1 student or scholar. Learn more at iss.colostate.edu/spouses_families.

CULTURAL MENTOR PROGRAM

Cultural Mentors are current CSU student leaders who support new international students through the pre-arrival and cultural adjustment process. Cultural Mentors are trained to work with students from around the world and each brings unique global experiences and perspectives to the position. Cultural Mentors provide vital assistance to the Office of International Programs by volunteering with orientation programs, hosting events and developing and supporting international student initiatives on campus. Your Cultural Mentor may be the first connection you make at CSU and might also become a great friend

FORT COLLINS INTERNATIONAL CENTER (FCIC)

FCIC is a local volunteer organization devoted to fostering international understanding, cultural exchange, and friendship among international students, domestic students, and the Fort Collins community. Learn about their programs and services at fortcollinsinternationalcenter.org.



Colorado State University

ARE YOU READY?

We hope this guide has been helpful and provided you with valuable information to aid in your pre-arrival preparations. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have additional questions.

We wish you a safe and pleasant journey and look forward to meeting you!

CONTACT & CONNECT

SIGN UP FOR EMAIL UPDATES

Weekly "International Info" emails advertise upcoming programs, activities and cultural events. Sign up at iss.colostate.edu/intlinfo

FACEBOOK

facebook.com/groups/CSUInternationalRams

OFFICE

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