



Pre-arrival Information for New International Students

2004-2005

**University of Rochester
INTERNATIONAL
SERVICES
OFFICE**

Table of Contents

About the ISO	<u>3</u>
Non-Immigrant Visa Category: F-1 and J-1	<u>4</u>
SEVIS – Student and Exchange Visitor Information System	<u>5</u>
I-901 / SEVIS Fee	<u>6</u>
Obtaining Your U.S. Visa	<u>7</u>
Visa Application Decisions	<u>8</u>
Tips to Remember When Applying for a Student Visa	<u>9</u>
Immigration Transfers	<u>10</u>
Change of Status	<u>10</u>
Preparing for Your Trip	<u>11</u>
University Requirements	<u>12</u>
Off-Campus Housing	<u>12</u>
Personal Items	<u>13</u>
Arriving in the U.S.	<u>14</u>
Arriving in Rochester, NY	<u>15</u>
International Student Orientation Program	<u>16</u>
Health Care in the U.S.	<u>17</u>
Cultural and Language Adjustment	<u>19</u>
Important Reminders	--
Index: UR Campus Contacts	--
RIC Application for Friendship Volunteer Form	--



UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OFFICE

Congratulations on your admission to the University of Rochester. The International Services Office (ISO) staff looks forward to meeting you and providing any assistance you may need to make your stay here a pleasant and productive one. This booklet has been prepared to provide information to assist you in obtaining your visa, as well as to provide general information about the University of Rochester and the city of Rochester. Helpful suggestions on preparing for your trip to the United States are also included.

About the ISO

The International Services Office interacts with departments within the University community to advocate for and address the various needs of international students. The ISO provides programs and services for more than 1200 international students, 600 international “scholars” (faculty, researchers, post-docs), and 700 spouses and other dependents from 90 countries. The ISO is the University’s official liaison with the Department of State, foreign and American consulates and embassies, and the Department of Homeland Security for student issues. This Office administers the F-1 Student and J-1 Exchange Visitor Programs, under specific government regulations through the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

The ISO is responsible for issuing visa documents and advising students on all immigration matters. It serves as an information resource to assist internationals in adjusting to the United States, the University and the Rochester community.

International Services Office
209 Morey Hall, RC Box 270446
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627-0446 USA
Phone: (585) 275-2866
Fax: (585) 244-4503
Email: questions@iso.rochester.edu
ISO on the web: <http://www.iso.rochester.edu>

International Services Office Staff

Cary Jensen, Director
Kathleen Strout, Associate Director and Senior Scholar Advisor
Sylvia H. Kless, Senior International Student Advisor
Joyce Ostberg, International Scholar Advisor
Juliet Lloyd, International Student Advisor
Sumie Jacoby, Systems Administrator
Laurie Smith, Program Coordinator
Patricia McGrath, Program Assistant
Stephanie Beetle, Program Assistant
John Boufford, Program Assistant

Non-Immigrant Category: F-1 and J-1

Certificate of Eligibility

The document included with this packet is the Certificate of Eligibility needed to apply for a U.S. student visa (I-20 for the F-1 Visa or DS-2019 for the J-1 Visa). Decisions concerning the issuance of the appropriate Certificate of Eligibility are determined by the ISO and depend on your program and source(s) of funding. For example, students receiving significant government support (U.S. or foreign government) are generally issued the DS-2019, whereas students using personal/family funds or University support are often issued an I-20. See below for distinctions between these programs.

Dependents

Previously requested documentation for any dependents should also be included in this packet. Each dependent will need his or her own Certificate of Eligibility and will have to apply for the corresponding visa category (F-1 students will have F-2 dependents; J-1 students will have J-2 dependents). If you intend to have dependents join you in the U.S. at a later time, please notify the ISO after your arrival for assistance.

Primary Differences between Student Visa Categories

F-1 Program	J-1 Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No residency requirements prior to applying for a change in immigration status while in the U.S. or applying for a new visa category abroad• Funding from any combination of sources is permissible• F-2 dependents are <i>not</i> eligible for <u>any</u> U.S. employment without changing visa category• Health insurance coverage is not mandatory according to government regulations. However, the University requires all full-time students to carry health insurance and <i>highly recommends</i> carrying additional health insurance for all F-2 dependents• See page 2 of I-20 for further information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential 2-year home residency requirement (both J-1 and J-2), based on the skills or government funding, before gaining eligibility to change or adjust visa status, including long-term employment or U.S. permanent residency• A significant portion of funding must be from sources other than personal or family funds• J-2 dependents are eligible to apply for U.S. work authorization• Health insurance coverage is <i>mandatory</i> for all J-1 students and J-2 dependents. Failure to maintain appropriate coverage will result in termination from the Exchange Visitor Program• See page 2 of DS-2019 for further information

Cancellations: If you decide NOT to attend the University of Rochester, please notify the ISO and return the I-20 or DS-2019

SEVIS – Student and Exchange Visitor Information System

What is SEVIS?

Every new international student admitted to colleges and universities in the U.S. must be enrolled in the **Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)**, the new mechanism employed by the U.S. government to track the arrival, enrollment and departures of international students and their dependents. SEVIS is an internet-based system that requires schools and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to exchange data on the immigration and academic status of international students and their dependents. Information pertaining to an F-1 or J-1 student or dependent's stay in the United States is available to U.S. embassies and consulates as well as to the inspectors at the ports of entry to the U.S.

SEVIS Documentation

By the time students receive the I-20 or DS-2019; their information will have *already* been entered into SEVIS. **Please review the items listed on this document to ensure that your personal information was entered accurately.** The details listed on the I-20 or DS-2019 is shown exactly as they are reported through SEVIS. If you discover an error, please notify the ISO immediately! Any errors should be reported and addressed *before* you visit your local U.S. consulate. (Please note that the name on the I-20 or DS-2019 must match the passport exactly and cannot be changed to reflect a preferred alternative name or spelling.)

Prior to a new international student's visa application and arrival in the U.S., SEVIS requires the following details: official name, date of birth, country of citizenship, country of birth, city of birth (J-1 applicants only), foreign address, source and amount of financial resources, academic program, level of study, program start and end dates. Similar information and corresponding documents must also be provided for all dependents who will accompany the student to the U.S. After arriving in Rochester, there will be additional SEVIS reporting requirements, which both the student and the University will be responsible for monitoring. *Thus, it is essential that all international students report to the ISO for an Immigration Check-In upon arrival.*

As of September 1, 2004 the U.S. Department of Homeland Security requires that each new F-1 student issued an *initial* I-20, or J-1 Exchange Visitor issued an *initial* DS-2019 is required to pay a \$100 SEVIS fee prior to his or her consular interview.

The SEVIS fee receipt must be taken to the consulate interview and border crossing.

You can only pay the fee after the initial I-20/DS-2019 has been issued by the ISO. **FORM I-901** is used to pay the SEVIS fee. The most efficient way to pay the fee is through the website, www.FMJfee.com with a credit card. The fee can also be paid by Western Union *Quick Pay*. A third method is to pay with a check or bank draft drawn on a U.S. bank sent via mail or courier. This method is acceptable but is not recommended since it may take up to a month for processing and return of the receipt. Please follow the instructions and print the payment confirmation, which can be used until the original receipt is mailed to you. Be sure to have a functional printer ready since you have only one opportunity to print your receipt.

Who has to pay the fee?

- Individuals exempt from visas, such as Canadians, are required to pay the \$100 SEVIS fee prior to crossing the border.
- Individuals applying for a change of status to F-1 or J-1 student in the U.S. must also pay the SEVIS fee prior to submitting their application.
- The SEVIS fee is not required for F or J dependents.
- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you have previously been enrolled at a U.S. school, but you are no longer enrolled and you have been outside the United States for more than five months, even if you have a valid F-1 visa in your passport.
- You do not need to pay the SEVIS fee if item 3 on your Rochester I-20 states "*transfer pending from <name of school>*", even if you will be applying for a new F-1 visa.

Procedure for paying Sevis Fee:

1. Obtain I-20 or DS-2019 from UR.
2. Access form I-901 online at <http://www.FMJfee.com> or use the form I-901 sent with your I-20 or DS-2019.
3. Complete form I-901, answering all questions. Be sure to enter your personal information EXACTLY as it appears on your I-20 or DS-2019. The SEVIS ID number will begin with 'N' and the School Code for the UR is BUF214F00034000.
4. Pay fee online, through Western Union *Quick Pay*, or by mail. We recommend paying the fee online, following the online instructions. If paying by mail follow instructions on the I-901.

For more detailed information about the fee payment process please see the I-901 section of the U.S. Customs and Immigration website, <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/>.

Role of the ISO

While the ISO has official responsibilities delegated from and authorized by the federal government, it is **not** part of the Department of Homeland Security or any other government agency. Our staff is dedicated to the University's mission of assisting our international students and exchange visitors to be successful in achieving their academic goals in the U.S.; however, we must also follow federal regulations in order to ensure our ability to continue to bring international students to the University of Rochester. We hope you will assist us in this goal by reading, understanding and abiding by the code of regulations that will govern your stay in the U.S. as an F or J visa holder.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Obtaining Your U.S. Visa

Having received your Certificate of Eligibility from the University of Rochester, you will need to make an appointment with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country to complete a visa application *as soon as possible*. A valid visa serves as an admission ticket and will allow you to enter the United States at an appropriate port of entry. For a list of U.S. embassies and consulate offices worldwide, along with links to directions, application forms, hours, fees, etc., please see the ISO website at <http://www.iso.rochester.edu> and select the link for Prospective Students and Scholars.

All applicants must provide the following:

- A Certificate of Eligibility, form I-20 or DS-2019, obtained from the University of Rochester. Be sure to sign the document in *blue* ink, directly below the school officer's signature.
- Application forms DS-156 and DS-158, plus a passport-sized photograph. Some applicants will also be required to complete form DS-157.
- A passport valid for at least six months after the start date listed on your I-20 or DS-2019
- Proof of financial support, as listed on the I-20 or DS-2019. These documents should match the funds listed in both amounts and sources.
- Original letter of admission to the University of Rochester and other program documentation
- Proof of ties to your home country (see section on visa application tips for more information)
- Transcripts and diplomas from any previous institutions attended
- Scores from standardized tests required by the university (i.e. TOEFL, SAT, GRE, GMAT, etc.)
- Visa processing fee (currently \$100)

Applicants with dependents must also provide:

- Dependent I-20 or DS-2019 and appropriate application forms
- Proof of the student's relationship to dependent (e.g., marriage or birth certificate)

Check with your local consular office for other requirements, specific to its application process.

Interview Requirements

F-1 and J-1 visa applicants are also required to complete a personal interview with a consular officer (applications may no longer be submitted through the mail). Please be aware that such interviews are now required for almost all non-immigrant visa applications. As a result, many consulates are experiencing a high demand for such interviews and scheduling is often difficult. **It is recommended that you contact the embassy or consulate early to request an appointment**, with plenty of time to process the application and receive the visa before you will need to leave your home country. Please see tips offered later in this booklet for further advice on this process.

PLEASE NOTE: Canadian Citizens

Canadian students do not need a visa to enter the U.S., but you will be asked to present appropriate documents at the U.S./Canadian border. Students should present a valid passport or other proof of Canadian citizenship, proof of admission to the University of Rochester, the UR Certificate of Eligibility, and proof of financial support. It is essential that you enter the U.S. in the appropriate status, so be sure to have complete documentation with you. Upon entry, you will be issued an I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) indicating F-1 or J-1 status. NOTE: Landed Immigrants in Canada from former British Commonwealth Countries are required to obtain a U.S. visa. Please check with a U.S. consulate in Canada to determine if you are subject to this requirement.

Visa Application Decisions

Approvals

After successfully meeting the requirements outlined, your application for a student visa should be approved by the interviewing consular official. The appropriate visa stamp (F-1 or J-1) will be placed on a page in your passport. It may take the consulate a few days to process the approval and return the updated passport to you. Due to current government regulations, if your application is approved before your academic program is scheduled to begin, **you will not receive the visa stamp more than 90 days before the start date listed on your Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019).**

Delays

- Students from certain countries or those considered to be majoring in “sensitive areas of study” as determined by the U.S. government may be required to undergo a security clearance before the visa can be issued. Such clearances can add weeks, or even months, to the amount of time needed for visa approval – *please plan accordingly*. Sensitive fields, primarily those in the sciences, technology or engineering, are listed on the Technology Alert List (TAL). To review security clearance criteria, including TAL fields and country list, please visit: <http://www.iso.rochester.edu/visadelays.htm>. If you become subject to this requirement and your visa application is delayed due to further security review, please notify the ISO or your department representative as soon as possible.
- If your record does not appear in the SEVIS system at the U.S. consulate or embassy even though you have presented your SEVIS I-20 or DS-2019, please contact the ISO immediately, by email to: questions@iso.rochester.edu. Please include the date and location of your initial visa interview. We will notify SEVIS to resubmit this information directly to your local consulate.

Denials

If the interviewing officer does not feel that you have shown sufficient evidence to warrant a student visa to the U.S., he or she will issue a denial. The consulate is then required to provide a written explanation for the denial, before you leave the interview. If this happens, please notify the ISO right away and, if possible, fax a copy of the denial notice to the ISO at (585) 244-4503. You will need to decide whether you will attempt to apply again.

The most common reason for a visa denial is a failure to prove non-immigrant intent to the consular officer. During the interview, you must present evidence that you do not intend to abandon your home country and that you have significant economic, professional, and family ties that will bring you home once your program is completed. Please read through the Tips to Remember section of this booklet for more guidance.

If you choose to reapply, you will need to provide new information or documents when you submit the application. The consulate will not reconsider an applicant’s case if additional materials are not available for review. Depending on the timing of a second interview, you may need an updated Certificate of Eligibility as well. Be sure to check with the ISO.

Tips to Remember When Applying for a Student Visa

Adapted from NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Ties to Your Home Country: Under U.S. law, all applicants for non-immigrant visas are viewed as intending immigrants unless they can convince the consular officer that they are not. You must therefore be able to show that you have reasons for returning to your home country that are stronger than those for remaining in the United States. "Ties" to your home country are the things that bind you to your current place of residence (examples include: job, family, financial prospects that you own or will inherit, investments, etc.). You may be asked about your specific intentions or promise of future employment, family or other relationships, educational objectives, grades, long-range plans, and career prospects **in your home country**. Each person's situation is different, and there is no magic explanation or single document, certificate or letter that can guarantee visa issuance.

English: Anticipate that the visa interview will be conducted in English, not in your native language. It may be helpful to practice English conversation with a native speaker before the interview, but do *not* prepare a speech. It is also important that you speak on your own behalf; the consular officer wants to interview you, not a family member. If you are attending an English Language program at UR, be ready to explain why knowledge of English will be useful to you in your home country.

Academics: Be familiar with the academic program to which you have been admitted and how it fits into your career plans. You should be able to explain how studying in the U.S. relates to your future professional career, focusing on how you will use those skills *when you return home*.

Be brief: Consular officers are under considerable pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview, since there are so many applicants to be seen. In general, they can allow for only 2 to 3 minutes per interview and must make a decision during that time. As a result, the initial impression you create is very important, so be sure to keep your answers short and specific.

Supporting Documentation: It should be clear, at a glance, to the consular officer what written documents you are presenting and what they signify. Lengthy written explanations cannot be quickly read or evaluated, especially during such a short interview. Remember to bring *original* versions of all supporting documents, if available, with you to the appointment.

Not All Countries are the same: Applicants from countries suffering economic problems or from countries where many students have remained in the U.S. as immigrants often have more difficulty getting visas. They are also more likely to be asked about job opportunities at home after their study in the U.S.

Employment: Your main purpose for coming to the U.S. is to study, not for the chance to work before or after graduation. While many students may work part-time during their studies, such employment is incidental to their main purpose of completing their U.S. education. You must be able to clearly articulate your plan to return home at the end of your program. If your spouse is also applying for an accompanying F-2 visa, be aware that F-2 dependents cannot, under any circumstances, be employed in the U.S. If asked, be prepared to address what your spouse intends to do with his or her time while in the U.S. Volunteer work and attending school part-time are permitted activities.

Dependents remaining at home: If your spouse and children are remaining behind in your country, be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence. If the consular officer gains the impression that your family members will need you to remit money from the U.S. in order to support them, your student visa will almost certainly be denied. If your family does decide to join you at a later time, it is helpful to have them apply at the same post where you applied for your visa. Please note: Indicating that your spouse will remain at home while you study in the U.S. is not likely to convince the consulate that you do not intend to immigrate. Other evidence will be needed.

Maintain a positive attitude: Do not engage the consular official in an argument. If you are denied a student visa, ask the officer for a list of documents he or she would suggest you bring in order to overcome the refusal, and obtain in writing an explanation of the reason you were denied.

Immigration Transfers

Students currently attending another U.S. institution in valid F-1 or J-1 immigration status and who wish to study at the University of Rochester are considered *immigration transfer students*, regardless of whether they will also transfer academic credits into their UR program. These individuals are responsible for maintaining their immigration status during the transition period between schools. Once a student's SEVIS record is transferred and the appropriate Certificate of Eligibility has been issued, the student must then report any information changes (such as a change of address) to the ISO at the University of Rochester.

Mandatory ISO Check-In Procedures:

Transfer students, along with all new international students, are required to present all immigration documents at the ISO ***within one week*** of their arrival in Rochester. At this time, your transfer will be completed through SEVIS and an updated Certificate of Eligibility will be issued. Failure to fulfill this check-in requirement in a timely fashion may cause problems when traveling or registering for your first semester at UR. You must arrive in Rochester and complete your transfer to UR within 5 months from the end of your previous program (either the completion date of a prior degree or the SEVIS release date from the old school, whichever is earlier).

On-campus employment in between academic programs:

Transfer students are permitted to work on-campus during academic breaks, in accordance with standard F-1 and J-1 regulations. However, once your SEVIS record is transferred to UR, you are no longer able to work at your previous institution; any on-campus employment at this point must be done at Rochester. **You must report to the ISO and complete the Immigration Check-In before starting any employment.** Please contact the ISO with any questions on these regulations.

Traveling outside the U.S. before attending UR:

Immigration transfer students may decide to travel outside the U.S. between academic programs. If you have the opportunity to complete your ISO Immigration Check-In before leaving, please do so. You will then be able to travel with your updated I-20 or DS-2019. When leaving the country, be sure to follow proper exit procedures, which will make your return much easier.

If your current visa stamp has expired or will expire before you return, you will need to apply for a visa renewal, usually *in your home country*, before you are permitted to re-enter the U.S. It is recommended that you schedule your visa appointment as soon as possible, to reduce the impact of processing delays. You must still present all relevant documents and fulfill the interview requirement before a renewal can be granted. If you are subject to security clearance, the consulate may also require that you be cleared again before the visa is issued, especially if your last clearance is more than 12 months in the past or your academic program has changed dramatically.

If your current visa stamp, listing a previous school, will still be valid when you travel to Rochester, you are free to travel as normal. You may reenter the U.S. on a valid visa listing your old school by simply presenting your new University of Rochester I-20 or DS-2019 to the immigration inspector at the port of entry. **Do not attempt to enter the U.S. using the I-20 from a previous program.** You must still be prepared to show additional documentation, such as proof of financial support, if asked.

Change of Status

If you indicated that you intend to remain in the U.S. and change your immigration status from another visa type to either F-1 or J-1 status, your Certificate of Eligibility has been issued to indicate that a Change of Status is requested. You will need to compile the necessary documents and file your application with the appropriate USCIS Service Center. Please contact the ISO for guidance on these procedures and visit www.uscis.gov for the necessary information and application forms. If, after indicating a Change of Status, you decide to return to your home country and apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa directly through the embassy or consulate, please notify the ISO of this decision.

Preparing for your Trip

Travel Arrangements

Once your visa has been approved, you will need to coordinate your trip to the U.S. You are expected to arrive in Rochester no later than the start date listed on your I-20 or DS-2019. For students wishing to travel earlier, you will only be permitted to enter the country **up to 30 days** before that date. Please keep this in mind when booking your flight and making other arrangements. Many international students use this time to get settled in Rochester before their academic program begins.

You should make reservations and buy your airline tickets as far in advance as possible. It is recommended that you plan to fly directly to Rochester from your port of entry (For example, Rochester is over 300 miles from New York City, a one-hour flight, over a five-hour drive, and a seven-hour train ride). Be sure to ask the airline if there are any restrictions on the number, size, or weight of baggage items.

Documentation

It is essential that you have the appropriate documents with you when you enter the country. As a safety precaution, please **carry these items on your person** when you travel, not in your checked baggage. It is best to bring original versions of these documents, whenever possible.

Required Immigration Documents: (You must be prepared to show these documents at the U.S. border)

- UR Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20 or Form DS-2019)
- Valid passport, with appropriate visa stamp
- Letter of Admission from the University of Rochester
- Proof of financial support, which match or exceed the figures listed on your I-20 or DS-2019
- Appropriate documents for all dependents: passport, visa stamp, Certificate of Eligibility, proof of relationship (proof of marriage for a spouse; birth certificates for all children)
- I-901 SEVIS fee receipt
- *Note: your I-94 Admission Card will be completed and issued upon your arrival to the U.S.*

Suggested Documents: (You may find these items to be helpful once you arrive in Rochester)

- English translations of personal medical records, for yourself and any dependents
- International driver's license or certified English translation of your valid license (if you plan to drive in the U.S.)
- Evidence of adequate health insurance coverage, if you are currently covered
- Completed University forms and other information required by various UR offices

Travel to Canada and Other Countries

Many students travel to Canada and/or other countries during their studies in the U.S. If you anticipate wanting to travel abroad, you may want to apply for the required visas before leaving your home country. It could be far more convenient than traveling to another city in the U.S. to complete this process. The nearest Canadian Consulate is located in Buffalo, NY, which is a one-hour drive from Rochester. Other foreign consulates and embassies are located in New York City and Washington, DC. However, before applying for such tourist visas, you should contact the consulate to establish whether processing times might cause delays in your trip to Rochester. To avoid paying unnecessary application fees, you should also consider whether the visa would be likely to expire before you are able to travel.

University Requirements

As an international student, there are important immigration regulations that must be properly addressed before you are able to study in the U.S. This booklet and the staff of the ISO are available to help with these procedures. However, as an incoming University of Rochester student, you will need to attend to University requirements, as well, which will help you prepare for life on campus. You should maintain close contact with several campus offices during this process (see index; pg. 18):

University Billing

The Office of the Bursar handles billing and tuition payment issues for all University students. They can help explain available payment plans, billing procedures, and methods of payment. Please note that if the necessary forms and information are not submitted to the Bursar's Office, you may be prohibited from timely course registration.

Health Care Coverage

University Health Services (UHS) provides confidential basic health care services to all full-time UR students. All incoming students are required to provide personal health information, including immunization history and details on any existing health insurance policy. Students are *strongly* encouraged to maintain appropriate health insurance coverage for all dependents. For additional information, please see the section in this booklet on Health Care in the U.S.

Campus Housing

The Office of Residential Life (ResLife) oversees various aspects of undergraduate and graduate student living, including residence hall operations and room/roommate assignments. Undergraduate students in the College are required to live on campus their freshman and sophomore years, and all undergraduates living on campus will need to complete the appropriate contracts with this office. Susan B. Anthony Halls and deKiewiet/Valentine Towers are open during winter and spring breaks; undergraduates may want to request one of these if anticipating staying over breaks. Information regarding undergraduate housing can be found in the Enrolling Student Packet. The University also operates graduate and family apartment-style housing, which is mostly unfurnished. To be considered for the limited graduate spaces available you should contact Graduate/Family Housing as early as possible. Graduate departments mail housing information and graduate housing applications directly to their students. Students may also contact Graduate/Family Housing directly to be sent such materials. If you are unable to obtain or do not want campus housing, you will need to arrive in Rochester early to find and settle in to private housing (see below). Students in the Eastman School of Music should contact the local Residential Life office in the Eastman Commons Student Living Center, as housing requirements and procedures may differ.

Contact information for these offices is listed in the index at the end of this booklet.

Off-Campus Housing

For students who do not receive a housing assignment or choose to live off-campus, you should plan to arrive in Rochester 2 to 4 weeks prior to the start of your program. You will need this time to locate suitable housing, purchase furniture, and become familiar with transportation to and from campus. Listings of housing vacancies in the Rochester community are available on the Internet via <http://ochousing.reslife.rochester.edu>. You can request assistance in finding apartments through the Off-Campus Housing Office.

When renting an apartment, most tenants are required to pay the first month's rent and a security deposit (equal to one month's rent) at the time that they sign the lease. If the apartment is not damaged while you are living there, the security deposit will be returned in full when you move out. You will need to have sufficient funds available when you arrive in order to cover these costs and to purchase necessary items, such as furniture, linens, and books. Students who expect to receive an assistantship or fellowship to pay for items like these should understand that the first stipend check often cannot be issued for at least a month. Therefore, you will need immediate access to adequate funds before your arrival. We suggest you plan on at least US \$2000 upon arrival.

Personal Items

Financial Support

Please keep in mind that you will need *immediate* access to US funds as you get settled in Rochester. The actual amount a student needs will vary greatly. Relevant factors include whether he or she will live in campus housing, have access to a University dining plan, bring dependents, have a need to purchase furniture or transportation, etc. Graduate students whose financial package includes an assistantship, fellowship, or other cash award should understand that these funds might not be immediately available upon your arrival. Due to payroll requirements, it can often take 3 - 4 weeks to receive the first check. Therefore, you must be prepared to cover your initial expenses *without* relying on this award.

Packing for Rochester Weather

The weather in Rochester varies quite a bit throughout the year. The summer months, June through much of September, are often very warm and breezy, with daytime temperatures between 70° F and 85° F (21° to 30° C). Temperatures can drop as low as 10° F (-12° C) during the winter months, November through March, with even lower wind chills and frequent snow accumulations. Other months are moderate in temperature. During the coldest months, you *will need* a warm, heavy coat (preferably resistant to wind and water), waterproof boots and gloves. You can purchase these items here if you prefer not to transport them from overseas. Additionally, it is worth noting that most American students generally wear informal and comfortable clothing in the classroom (such as: jeans, t-shirts, sneakers, etc.)

Tips for Airline Travel

- **Keep your passport, other important documents, money and travelers checks on your person at all times.**
- You should plan to carry a small flight bag with medications you may need, valuable belongings, a change of clothing, and any essential personal hygiene items. You should not pack these items in your checked baggage, just in case your baggage is lost or misdirected during your flight.
- Be careful at airports – do **not** leave your bags unattended or with strangers!
- Carry some U.S. currency with you when you travel. You may need to make a telephone call, purchase a meal, pay for taxi fare, or rent a baggage trolley when you arrive.
- Expect the unexpected. Check in for all flights well in advance of your scheduled departure time. If you are planning on spending the night in a hotel, either in transit or upon arrival in Rochester, you should guarantee your reservation with a credit card in case your flight is delayed and you arrive later than expected.
- When checking baggage internationally, be aware that you must personally reclaim your luggage and carry it through customs upon arrival in the U.S. If you are connecting to another flight, a domestic flight to Rochester, you can then recheck your luggage with the airlines afterwards.

Shipping

You may opt to ship items from your home country, rather than bringing them with you when you travel. We suggest that you coordinate delivery with your department or have someone ship these items after you arrive and have a specific shipping address, as the ISO *cannot* accept such packages. Be sure to research all your local shipping options, including International Parcel Post, to ensure that your packages will clear U.S. customs inspection and that you get the best price for this service.

Arriving in the U.S.

What to Expect

When you first arrive in the U.S., you will have to perform specific inspection procedures at the port of entry. **You will be permitted to enter the U.S. no more than 30 days prior to the program start date listed on your Certificate of Eligibility.** This travel restriction is due to current U.S. government regulations and is subject to change.

At your port of entry, an Immigration Officer will ask to examine your travel documents (passport, visa, I-20/DS-2019, financial documents, etc.) and will then determine whether you are permitted to enter the country and for what period of time. This indication will be made on your I-94 card. In addition, you will need to obtain clearance from a U.S. Customs Officer, who may or may not perform an inspection of your personal belongings when you arrive from overseas. Depending on your port of entry, you may also be required to have your photograph taken and/or your fingerprints scanned, in accordance with the recently implemented US-VISIT system. For further information on these regulations, you may visit the website for U.S. Customs and Border Protection at: www.customs.gov.

Do not attempt to enter the U.S. on a visitor/tourist visa (B-2) or under a visa waiver program. A change of status from B-2 to F-1 in the U.S. is rarely approved, requires a "Prospective Student" notation on the B-2, and takes several months, during which time you will be in violation of your visitor status if you begin classes. A change of status under a visa waiver is not a possibility.

Form I-94: Arrival/Departure Record

Form I-94 (pictured here) is a white card, which is usually distributed on the airplane before landing. You should list your given and family names on this document *exactly* as they appear on your Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019). At the port of entry, your I-94 will be stamped to indicate the date of your arrival, your status in the U.S., and the expiration of that status.

If you have shown all the necessary documents, your I-94 should be stamped with a classification of "F-1" or "J-1" (depending on your visa type) and the code "D/S", for Duration of Status.

Departure Number	(Stamped at Port of Entry)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1	U.S. IMMIGRATION
_____	(Port of Entry)
Immigration and	ADMITTED
Naturalization Service	(Date of Entry)
I-94	Class F-1
Departure Record	Until D/S
14. Family Name	_____
15. First (Given) Name	16. Birth Date (Day/Mo/Yr)
_____	_____
17. Country of Citizenship	
_____	SAMPLE

Special Registration

In addition to registering with the US-VISIT system at the port of entry, some non-immigrants may be required to undergo further registration through a program called Special Registration, based on a variety of factors including country of citizenship or birth. If you are subject to Special Registration, you will be given instructions on a special departure procedure you must follow, and your I-94 card will be notated with a "FIN Number." Please visit the ISO upon your arrival if you believe you have been registered under this program.

Arriving in Rochester, NY

Mandatory ISO Check-In

All international students must report to the ISO *within one week* of their arrival in Rochester. The ISO is required by federal immigration law to report your arrival at the University and verify your non-immigrant status through the SEVIS program. To complete this mandatory check-in, please bring your passport, Certificate of Eligibility, and all other immigration documents to the ISO in 209 Morey Hall. Check-In will also be provided at the Eastman School of Music. Contact the ISO upon your arrival for information on ESM Check-In.

Airport Pick-up

The ISO and the Office of University International Relations are pleased to offer limited airport pick-up service for international undergraduate students arriving in time for the international portion of their student orientation program and to help these individuals get settled into campus dormitories. Graduate students are advised to contact their department for guidance in this matter.

Undergraduate students are expected to arrive in Rochester the day before their International Student Orientation Program (ISOP) begins. For the Fall term 2004:

- Undergraduates in the **College** should arrive on **August 21, 2004**
- Undergraduates at the **Eastman School of Music** should arrive on **August 22, 2004**

These students will find the appropriate date listed on the Certificate of Eligibility as the program start date. These are the *only* dates that Airport Pick-up will be offered.

Once your travel plans are confirmed, please notify us of your arrival time so arrangements can be made for your pick-up. You can submit this information to the Office of University International Relations and request additional details by contacting Laurie Smith at: urglobal@rochester.edu.

If you are unable to arrange for someone to meet you at the airport in Rochester, you may take a taxi to the University. The cost will be approximately \$10. It is customary to give the driver a small tip in addition to your fare (approximately 10% to 15%).

Local Hotels (for early or late arrivals)

Comfort Inn Central

395 Buell Road
Rochester, NY 14623
PHONE: (585) 436-4400
FAX: (585) 436-6496

Across from Rochester airport
Free Shuttle to UR (2 miles)

Holiday Inn Rochester - Airport

911 Brooks Ave.
Rochester, NY 14624
PHONE: (585) 328-6000
FAX: (585) 328-1012

Adjacent to Rochester Airport
Free Shuttle to UR (2 miles)

Econo-Lodge Rochester South

940 Jefferson Road
Rochester, NY 14623
PHONE: (585) 427-2700
FAX: (585) 427-8504

3 miles from UR; Free Shuttle to campus
Free Shuttle to/from Rochester airport

Clarion Riverside Hotel

120 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14604
PHONE: (585) 546-6400
FAX: (585) 546-1341

¼ mile to Eastman; 8 minutes to UR
Free Shuttle to/from Rochester airport

To ensure availability and the best rates, reservations should be made prior to departure.

International Student Orientation Program (ISOP)

Fall Orientation Programs

The orientation programs offered by the ISO are designed to provide essential information on maintaining your valid F-1 or J-1 non-immigrant status and are considered *mandatory* throughout all University divisions. We will also give details about programs and services offered by the ISO and other University offices. It is our hope to assist you in adjusting to life in the United States and to the University of Rochester.

Orientation topics include: immigration and tax information, SEVIS requirements, employment on and off campus, health care in the U.S., the American classroom, cultural adjustment, safety concerns, banking, and transportation on and off campus, obtaining a NYS driver's license, computer classes, English classes, American customs, library and campus tours, and local shopping options. In most instances, representatives from the U.S. Social Security Administration will also be available during orientation.

The College – Undergraduate: ISOP will be held the day before the general orientation program begins for all incoming freshmen. Students are expected to arrive the day before ISOP, as indicated on their I-20 or DS-2019. International transfer students, both immigration and academic transfers alike, should note that they are still required to attend, regardless of whether they have studied in the U.S. before. Parents are certainly welcome to attend this orientation program with their student.

The College – Graduate and School of Medicine and Dentistry: Many graduate departments will be coordinating their own orientation programs prior to the start of classes. In most cases, the ISOP for this population will be held before those individual programs begin. The start date on your I-20 or DS-2019 reflects the date of ISOP. Attendance is mandatory; please make travel plans accordingly.

Eastman School of Music: Eastman students, both undergraduate and graduate, will be required to attend a special session for international students as part of the general Student Orientation Program, the date of which is indicated on the Certificate of Eligibility. You will need to arrive in Rochester before this date (undergrads living in campus housing should arrive just one day before).

Simon School of Business: International students new to the Simon School will participate in the general orientation program, with a special session offered by the ISO, which will include information on maintaining your immigration status and your ability to work in the U.S. Representatives from the Social Security Administration will also be available to help with your Social Security application.

Eastman Dental Center: EDC will offer its own orientation program geared to the special needs of students in the Dental Program. During this program, a representative from the ISO will present information relevant to international students and provide these individuals with an opportunity to complete their mandatory Immigration Check-In.

Other Orientation Programs

Matriculated students starting at other points during the year and students participating in non-degree programs will also receive important information regarding immigration matters at the required ISO Immigration Check-In, within your first week at the University.

Special Note on U.S. Social Security Numbers:

During your mandatory ISO Immigration Check-In, you will receive an ISO Social Security letter and application instructions, which will allow you to apply for a U.S. Social Security Number. This identification number is required for payment of graduate awards and any employment in the U.S.

Health Care in the U.S.

Health care services offered in the U.S. are of very good quality but are *extremely* expensive. The United States does not provide socialized medical care and there is no national system of health insurance coverage. Rather, individuals must obtain health care coverage for themselves and their families through non-government providers. Purchasing health insurance in the U.S. can drastically reduce health care costs when you or your family members need medical care. The specific benefits you are entitled to will depend on your insurance policy but many plans often include full or partial coverage for diagnostic laboratory tests, hospitalization, emergency services, and prescription medications. Without health insurance, these services can cost thousands of dollars.

UHS and the Student Health Plan

Under the Student Health Plan, all full-time students at the University of Rochester are required to carry adequate health insurance coverage for the duration of their academic program and are subject to a mandatory health fee every year they are matriculated. This plan entitles students to primary health care services through the University Health Service (UHS). Spouses and children over 16 years of age may also obtain medical care at UHS. Children under the age of 16 must obtain medical care from a childcare specialist or pediatrician.

Please note: The material presented here is applicable to all full-time students. However, part-time students and those students who will participate in a short-term (less than one academic year) or non-degree program may not be subject to the same requirements/benefits outlined below. Please contact UHS or your department for more information (www.rochester.edu/uhs or see index).

• Mandatory Health Fee

All full-time students must pay the mandatory health fee, which covers the cost of visits to the University Health Service and the University Counseling Center for the academic year (September 1 through August 31). This fee is \$522 for the 2004-2005 academic year. This fee *does not* cover the cost of visits to UHS made by spouses or children over age 16; they will be charged a fee at the time of their visit. Children under age 16 cannot be seen at UHS.

• Health Insurance

All full-time students must also have health insurance. Health insurance covers services not covered by the mandatory health fee, such as the cost of laboratory tests, x-rays, hospitalization, and surgery. International students are strongly encouraged to enroll in the health insurance plan offered by the University Health Service. This plan, Blue Cross Blue Shield (BC/BS), provides good coverage for students. The cost for the year (September 1, 2004 through August 31, 2005) is estimated at \$888. This insurance provides coverage for the student alone, not family members.

Students who have health insurance that is comparable to the BC/BS insurance may substitute this health insurance in place of the University policy. Before doing so, you should verify that your current policy will extend coverage while you are in Rochester. If you do choose to use your own health insurance, you must also bring evidence of this coverage with you. The mandatory health fee is still required, even if you have your own insurance.

NOTE: The combined cost of the mandatory health fee (\$522) and health insurance (\$888) through the University Health Service is \$1,410. This coverage does not include family members.

• Health History Form

All students **must** complete a *Health History Form*. The form requires students to provide information about specific immunizations. You are urged to schedule a medical examination early with your family physician, to allow sufficient time to be able to submit the Health History Form to UHS by June 30. You must meet the specific immunization requirements for New York State; these requirements are listed on the Health History Form. We recommend that you bring copies of your medical records and for any dependent family members who will accompany you when you come to the United States.

For more information about health insurance or the Mandatory Health Fee, contact the UHS Insurance Advisor. You may email questions about the Health History Form directly to the coordinator. All contact details are listed in the index on page 18.

Health Care for Families of Students

As mentioned above, health insurance coverage for your family is a necessity while living in the U.S. The University Health Service offers these health insurance options for students with dependents:

A student with a spouse *but no children* can enroll his or her spouse in the Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance and mandatory health fee for an additional \$1,410 per academic year. This option allows the spouse access to the same UHS services as a full-time student.

Students with a spouse and/or children can enroll in a family insurance plan. The cost for the family insurance plan is \$7,369.32 per year, with an increase expected January 1, 2005. This plan includes coverage for the student, spouse, and children. (Students choosing the family insurance must still pay the annual mandatory health fee of \$522.)

The cost of family health insurance through other providers ranges from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per year. You should also plan for the cost of visits to the doctor by your family. Doctors' visits are usually not covered by insurance. You should contact the University Health Service for additional information about health insurance and health care.

NOTE: J-1 Exchange Visitors are required by law to carry health insurance for themselves and any J-2 dependents.

Medical Evacuation/Repatriation Insurance

By government regulation, individuals in active J-1 or J-2 status must carry supplementary insurance for medical evacuation and repatriation of remains. This is in addition to health insurance. The University of Rochester has extended this requirement to include F-1 students, as well.

Therefore, all UR international students and scholars are subject to mandatory enrollment in the University's group policy, offered through MEDEX International. You will be automatically enrolled in this policy at a cost of \$20 per year, which is directly applied to your term bill. Details on the services provided by Medical Evacuation and Repatriation Insurance will be provided during your International Student Orientation Program or when you complete your Immigration Check-In.

Students with dependents have the option of adding their spouse and/or children to this coverage for an additional \$20 per year each. Dependent enrollment forms are available in the ISO upon arrival.

Cultural and Language Adjustment

Rochester International Council (RIC)

The Rochester International Council is a community volunteer organization that offers international students hospitality and opportunities to participate in American family life.

Friendship Volunteer Program – Friendship volunteers (local individuals or families) are matched with international students in order to offer practical assistance and social interaction. They may help you shop for clothing, food and household items, open a bank account, practice English, and understand American culture. Your hosts may invite you to their home for dinner and conversation, to share the holidays and special events or take you to places of interest including museums and historical sites. They will not impose their political or religious beliefs on you.

If you would like to be assigned a Friendship Volunteer, complete the “Application for Friendship Volunteer” in the back of this booklet and return it to RIC (their address is printed at the bottom of the form and in the index of this booklet). Applying early will increase your chances of being assigned a Friendship Volunteer, although assignments for a Friendship Volunteer may also be made after you arrive in Rochester. You may do so by visiting the RIC office, which is conveniently located down the hall from the ISO in Morey Hall.

RIC also has an International Wives’ program, a Global Perspectives program, which allows international students to share their cultures with local school children, and many social activities throughout the year. Please contact them directly if you would like further information (*see index*).

Literacy Volunteers – English Conversation Classes

Literacy Volunteers of Rochester is a local organization that provides free English language classes for members of the UR community. Free English Conversation classes are offered once a week from September through May. Experienced English as A Second Language teachers volunteer their time to assist students and spouses with speaking and understanding the English Language. All are welcome. Unfortunately, no childcare is available. Specific dates and times are announced each academic year. Please contact the ISO for more information.

English as a Second Language

Various English language programs are offered through the College, the William E. Simon School of Business, and the Eastman School of Music. The Office of Special Programs (OSP) coordinates such programs for the College by offering part-time ESL courses during the academic year, placement tests to determine English proficiency, and an intensive summer program. If you are interested in these programs, please contact OSP directly (*see index* for details). Students in other divisions of the University should contact a department or admissions representative for information about available opportunities for English language training.

Important Reminders

- **Apply for your visa as early as possible**
- **The visa stamp will not be issued more than 90 days before your program start date (listed on the I-20 or DS-2019)**
- **You will not be permitted to enter the U.S. more than 30 days before your program start date (listed on the I-20 or DS-2019)**
- **ISO Check-In is *mandatory*; be sure to report to the ISO within one week of your arrival in Rochester**
- **Contact the ISO if you have any problems or concerns**

***Good luck and safe travels.
We look forward to greeting you in Rochester!***



Index: UR Campus Contacts

Office of the Bursar

Office of the Bursar
330 Meliora Hall
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627 USA
Phone: (585) 275-3931
Fax: (585) 461-3356
Email: bursar@admin.rochester.edu
Web site:
www.rochester.edu/adminfinance/bursar

University Health Service

University Health Service
Web site: www.rochester.edu/uhs
University of Rochester
Box 617, 250 Crittenden Blvd
Rochester, NY 14642 USA

Health History Form Coordinator

Karen Bucci
Email: hfh@uhs.rochester.edu
Phone: (585) 275-0697
Toll free: (888) 363-2519
Fax: (585) 275-5353
(For questions about the immunization requirement and the Health History Form.)

UHS Insurance Advisor

Laurie Strang
Email: lstrang@uhs.rochester.edu
Phone: (585) 275-2637
Fax: (585) 506-0149
(For questions about health insurance or the mandatory health fee.)

Rochester International Council

229 Morey Hall
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627 USA
Phone: (585) 275-8779
Fax: (585) 756-8086
Email: jw@rirc.org
Web site: www.rirc.org

Offices of Residential Life

Undergraduate Housing

Office of Residential Life
020 Gates, SBA Hall
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627-0468 USA
Phone: (585) 275-3166
Fax: (585) 506-1886
Email: housing@reslife.rochester.edu
Web site: www.reslife.rochester.edu

Graduate/Family Housing

University Apartments Office
020 Gates, SBA Hall
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627-0468 USA
Phone: (585) 275-5824
Fax: (585) 506-1886
Email: uapts@reslife.rochester.edu

Eastman School of Music Housing

Residential Life - Eastman Commons
100 Gibbs Street
Rochester, NY 14605 USA
Phone: (585) 274-1251
Fax: (585) 274-1047

Off-Campus Housing

Brian S. Fleming
020 Gates Wing, SBA Hall
Rochester, NY 14627 USA
Phone: (585) 275-2259
Fax: (585) 506-1886
Email: brian@reslife.rochester.edu

English as a Second Language

Office of Special Programs
University of Rochester
PO Box 270358
Rochester, NY 14627 USA
Phone: (585) 275-2344
Fax: (585) 461-5901
Email: esl@rochester.edu

ROCHESTER INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL
APPLICATION FOR FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER
(PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION)

Date Rec'd _____ DB'd _____
Coord _____ Sent _____
Make 2 copies:
To Coord: Original to Family ____
Copy for office ____
Ofc.: Copy for student file ____

UR

Last Name: _____ Gender: Male Female Married: Yes No
First Name: _____ Date of Birth: (month/day/year) _____
Nationality: _____ Country of Residence: _____
Will your spouse accompany you to the US? Yes No Ages of children who will accompany you: _____

Information about yourself (Hobbies, interests, etc.)

Please list any dietary restrictions you and/or any members of your family who will accompany you to the US have. Include any food allergies or preferences i.e. vegetarian or vegan.

How long do you expect to study in Rochester? _____
Month and year you expect to arrive: _____
What college will you study at? (i.e. Eastman School of Music, College of Arts & Sciences) _____
What department will you study in? (i.e. Biology, Simon School, Music) _____
What type of degree do you expect to receive? BS MS MBA PHD Other _____

Please provide contact information at which you may be reached from now until your arrival in Rochester:	Please provide your Rochester address (if known):
Current Phone Number:	Rochester Phone Number:
Current Fax Number:	Rochester Fax Number:
E-mail address (PRINT CLEARLY):	

RETURN THIS FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:

Rochester International Council
229 Morey Hall, University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627 USA

Telephone (585) 275-8779
Fax (585) 756-8086
Web: <http://www.rifc.org>
Email: jw@rifc.org