



UMBC

CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Fall 2023 Predeparture Orientation

International Student and Scholar Services



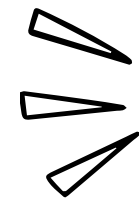
Reminder:

Please **type questions in**
the Q&A not in the chat

Our team is monitoring the Q&A during this session. The chat is for links we share, but it is not monitored for questions.

Your patience is appreciated as we answer your questions!





Agenda



- Working With ISSS
- Overview of student visa and entry process
- Scheduling the visa interview appointment
- The visa interview appointment
 - What to expect and how to prepare
 - Advice and tips
 - Possible outcomes
- Traveling to and arriving in the U.S.
 - What to expect
 - How to prepare
 - Settling In
- Resources
- Q & A



About ISSS

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS), a branch of UMBC's Center for Global Engagement, is dedicated to supporting UMBC's international student and scholar community and helping them achieve their academic, personal, and professional goals. ISSS offers a variety of programs and services to aide students in these endeavors:

- **Immigration Advising** - ISSS helps international students and scholars navigate the U.S. visa process and maintain valid immigration status by providing the guidance, knowledge, and necessary resources.
- **Community Building** - ISSS offers programming designed to help students make important connections within the UMBC community. These opportunities for intercultural exchange and mutual understanding enhance the UMBC international student experience.
- **Work and Internships** - ISSS works with current students and alumni to help them access the many employment and internship opportunities available to them by facilitating the use of benefits such as Curricular Practical Training (CPT), Optional Practical Training (OPT), and other employment authorizations.



What should I do if I have a question?



**Check the
website!**

**Ask us on
Live Chat**

**Submit a
Help Ticket**

**Advising
Appointment**



Have a Question for ISSS? Follow the steps below!

Step

1

Always check the website first!

- Always do this first! Visit iss.s.umbc.edu
- Most answers are found on the website and there are icons that link you to common topics

Searched and can't find an answer? Go to step 2

Step

3

Submit a Help Ticket

- Once you submit a ticket, all ISSS staff can see it (no need to CC staff)
- Current response time: 5-7 business days

Still require further assistance? Go to step 4

Step

2

Ask us on live chat

- Ask an ISSS advisor quick questions
- Keep it brief, other students may be in the queue
- Don't use live chat to follow up on I-20 requests or help tickets

Question too complicated? Go to step 3

Step

4

Advising Appointment

- An advisor can let you know if your situation requires an advising appointment
- Most questions are resolved before this step
- Don't need an appointment anymore? Cancel it!

Remember: don't use live chat, tickets, or appointments to follow up on the status of your I-20 or other requests

Important:

Please **do not** use live chat, tickets, or appointment to check on the status of your requests or I-20

Rest assured, once you submit your request in the portal, it has been received! Make sure it's submitted!

There are currently a **very high number** of requests. Advisors are working to process them as quickly as possible.

Following up on the status delays the turnaround time to process requests.

Your patience is greatly appreciated!



Where can I find this information?

How to work with ISSS and answers to your most common questions can be found on the



Contact Us
page here



Stay connected with ISSS



ISSS email list:
Read your email!



ISSS Portal:
iss-portal.umbc.edu



myUMBC Group:
ISSS Academy



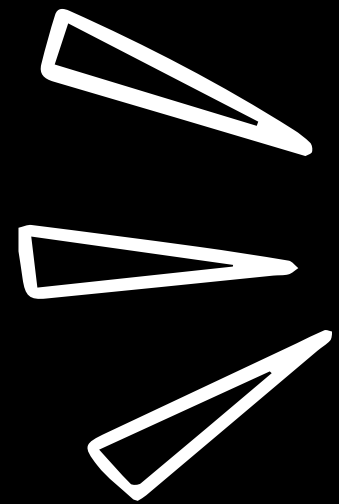
Contact Us:
iss.umbc.edu/contact/



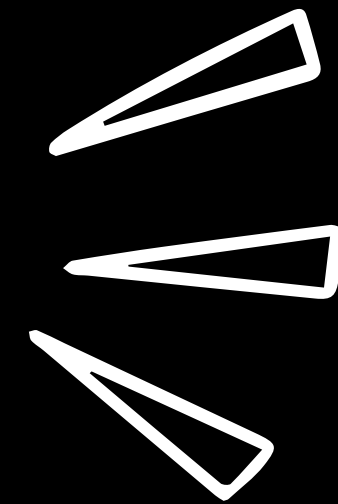
ISSS website:
iss.umbc.edu

Answers to most
of your
questions can be
found here!

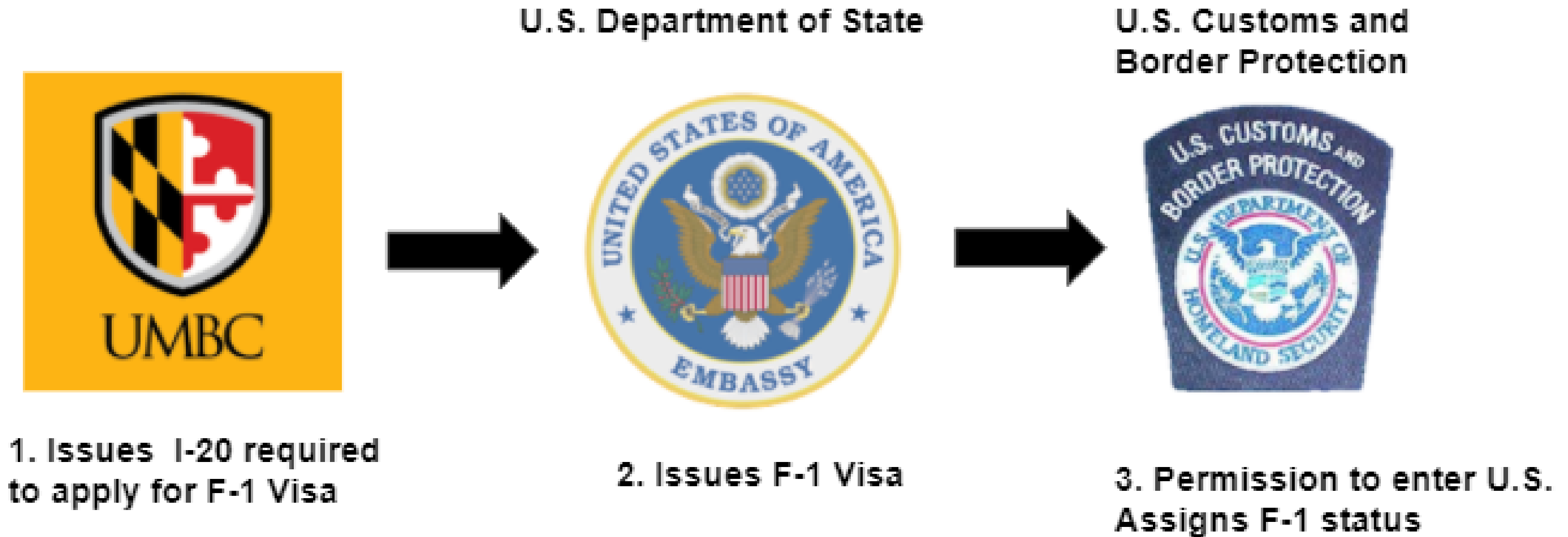




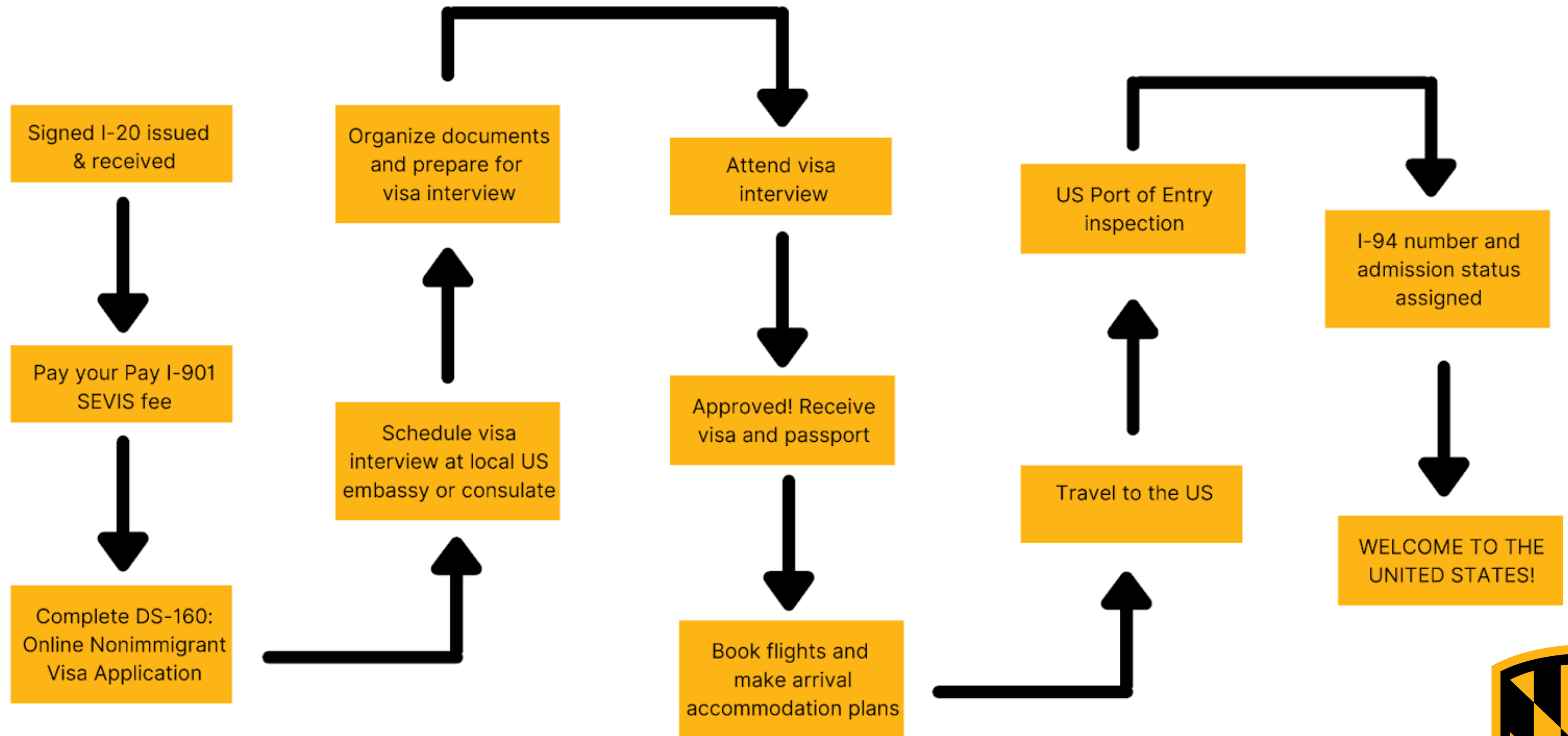
The Student Visa Process



The Student Visa Process



I-20 through Entering U.S.



The Visa Interview Appointment

Consular officer may ask:

- What do you intend to do after completing your degree?
- About your family's business in your home country or in the U.S.
- Why UMBC and why this particular program and degree?
- What are your long term career and academic goals?
- Where is UMBC?
- How will you support yourself while in the U.S.?
- How will you support your family in the U.S. or at home if they stay?



Tips for a Successful Visa Interview Appointment

- Be prepared to establish **ties to home country** and **nonimmigrant intent**
 - Do you or your family own property?
 - Investments or inheritance in home country?
 - Did you apply to the visa lottery in the past?
 - Do you have close relatives who are U.S. citizens or permanent residence?
- Do your research
 - What is UMBC? Where is UMBC? Why UMBC?
 - What do you know about Maryland? Baltimore? Baltimore County?
 - Be prepared to explain your academic program/field of study in layman's terms
 - Why did you choose UMBC and not a different university?
 - What are your career plans and how does this program help you achieve them?



Tips for a Successful Visa Interview Appointment

- **Practice, Practice, Practice**
 - Most interviews conducted in English
 - Speak for yourself
 - Be brief and be positive
- **Be honest**
 - A lie (however immaterial) will likely result in denial
- **Be concise and prepared**
 - Organize supporting documents in advance
 - Remember, you have 2-3 minutes (if you are lucky)

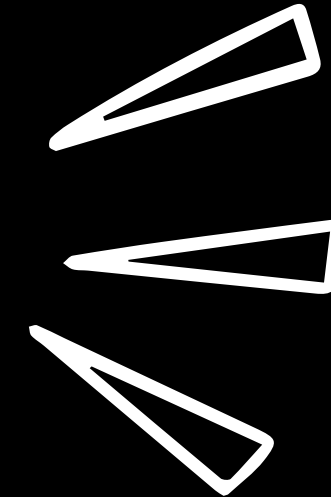
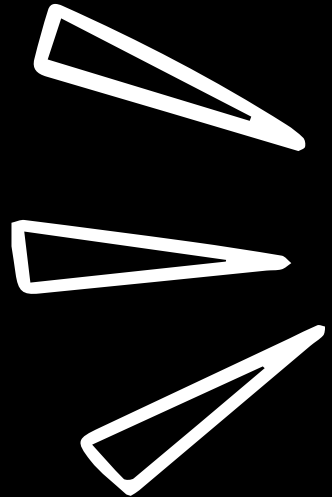


What if I Can't Get a Visa in Time?

- Must receive visa and enter U.S. by first day of classes
- Options if you cannot make this deadline:
 - **Defer** your admission to a future semester. Directions to defer your admission are here:
 - Graduate Students: <https://gradschool.umbc.edu/students/forms/>
 - Undergraduate Students: email admissions@umbc.edu
 - Begin your program **enrollment remotely** from outside of the US, if your department has online classes available, and can come to the US at the beginning of a future semester.
 - Check with your department directly about availability
 - Must be physically in US for two academic semesters for CPT/OPT
- Can I enter the U.S. with a visitor visa and study? No. B1/B2 visas do not allow the holder to study full time



Fall 2023 Considerations



Things To Consider: Your First Semester

- The earliest you can arrive in the US is 30 days before your I-20 program start date
- **Must enter US by the first day of classes**
- Be informed of travel and vaccine requirements in your home countries as well as in the U.S.
- Full time enrollment required (UG: 12 credits, Graduate: 9 credits)
- Students can only enroll one fully online course
- UMBC is offering a combination of in person, hybrid and online courses

Transfer Students:

- Students currently in F-1 status in the U.S. transferring to UMBC from another institution
- Please follow regular I-20 transfer guidelines
- Planning to travel home? Already at home and planning to return for Spring 2023?

Contact us: iss.umbc.edu/contact



Entering the US after Deferring

What happens to your I-20?

- **Program dates must be adjusted OR new completely new Form I-20 issued**
- Updated financial documents required if originals are over 6 months old
- **SEVIS fee is valid for one year**

Graduate Assistants (RA, TA etc)

- Work directly with department on updating your GA offer

Entry to the US

- **Must enter US by the first day of classes**
- Only able to enter the U.S. at most 30 days before the start of classes
- **“Earliest Admission Date” section on your I-20**



Deferring Your Admission To a Future Semester

Undergraduate Students:

- Contact UMBC Undergraduate Admissions - admissions@umbc.edu

Graduate Students:

- **Submit a Deferral of Admission Form**
- Contact Graduate Admissions with additional questions: gradschool@umbc.edu
- Your I-20 must be adjusted to reflect your new start date





Traveling to the U.S.



Traveling to the U.S.

- **A visa is not a guarantee of entry to the U.S., it is only permission to apply**
- F-1 Visa holders can request entry to the U.S. up to 30 days before I-20 start date
 - January 30th start date = December 31st earliest entry
 - August 30th start day = July 31st earliest entry
 - Check your I-20 for your "Earliest Admission Date"
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has broad authority at U.S. Ports of Entry
 - All arriving “applicants for admission” are inspected by CBP to determine admissibility



Traveling to the U.S.

Did you receive your visa with another school's I-20 but plan to attend UMBC?:

- Apply for a SEVIS Fee Transfer. Instructions on completing this are available here: [SEVIS Fee Transfer Request](#) under the title "How do I ask SEVP to transfer the I-901 SEVIS fee payment information from one SEVIS ID number to another?"
- Enter the US with your UMBC I-20
- This should be done **before** entering the U.S.



Inspection at Port of Entry

Primary Inspection

Required documents:

- Passport with at least six months future validity
- Form I-20

Suggested documents:

- Admission letter/academic transcripts
- Evidence of financial support



Inspection at Port of Entry

Secondary Inspection

- Not a cause for alarm
- Applicants to taken to secondary:
 - SEVIS technical issues
 - Efficiency
 - Extra screening
 - Review documents
 - Officer training issue
- Call UMBC Police at +1 410-455-5555 and ask to speak with an international student advisor



Admission to U.S.

Assigns I-94 number and admission status:

- F-1
- D/S
- May or may not stamp your passport

I-515A

- Temporary admission
- Must contact a DSO (ISSS team) to comply



Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number : 51415565885

Most Recent Date of Entry: 2017 July 25

Class of Admission : F1

Admit Until Date : D/S

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname :

First (Given) Name :

Birth Date :

Passport Number :

Country of Issuance : China



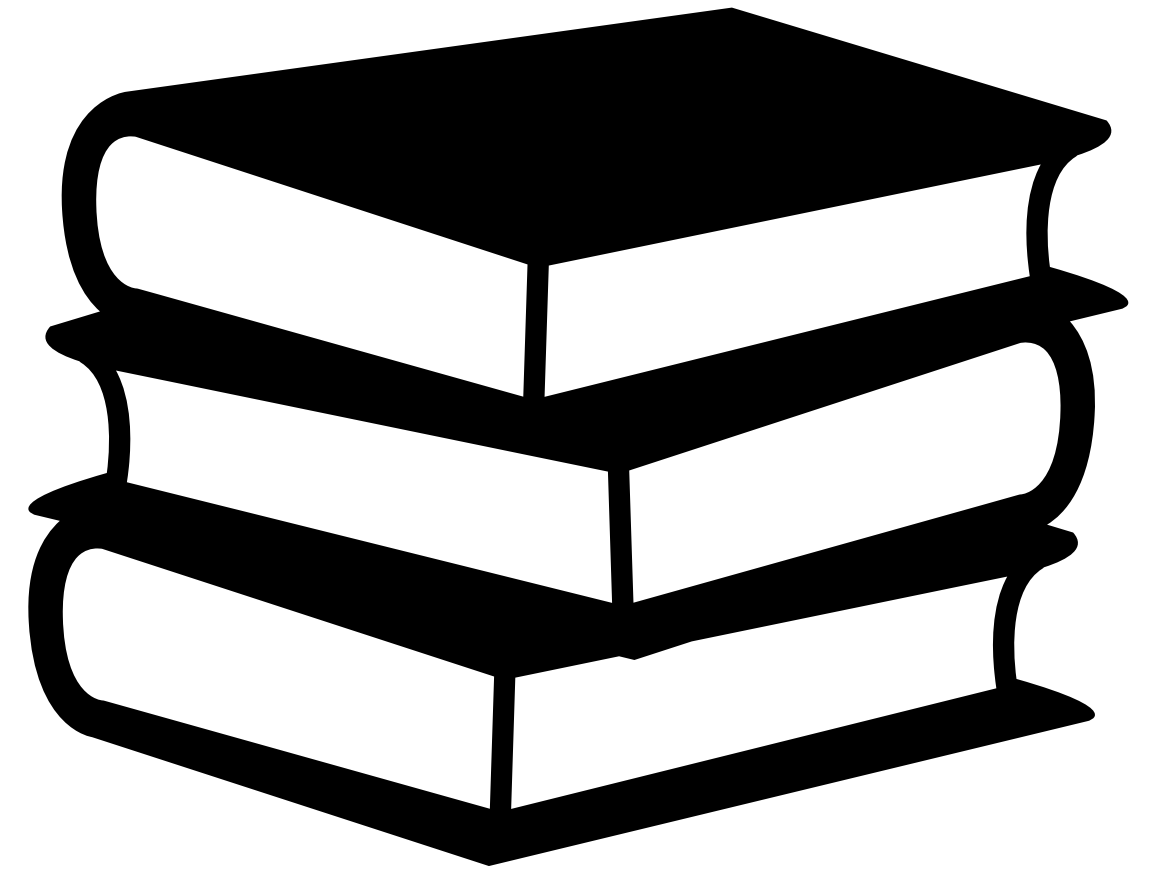
Port of Entry Tips

- Review International Student Arrival Guide
- Remain calm
- Keep your documents in your carry on luggage
- Ensure your passport has six months of future validity
 - Present F-1 visa foil, not B-1/B-2
- Do not lie to a CBP officer
- Know how to contact UMBC in case of emergency
 - After hours: 410-455-5555 ask to speak to "ISSS"
- Check your I-94 record



Resources

- NAFSA Ten Points to Remember When Applying for a Student Visa
 - Be sure to checkout the videos at the bottom!
- International Student & Scholar Services- “F-1 Visa Process” www.issc.umbc.edu
- U.S. Department of State Student Visa Page
- Your local embassy or consulate is always the best source of information



What To Pack

- Clothing: Baltimore has **4** distinct seasons

Summer:

- Avg. temp: 56.8°F (13.8°C) - 89.1°F (31.7°C)
- Very warm and humid. Some strong storms
- Wear: cool, loose clothing

Fall:

- Avg. temp: 43°F (6.1°C) - 68.4°F (20.2°C)
- Weather gets cooler, especially at night
- Wear: layers, sweaters & pants

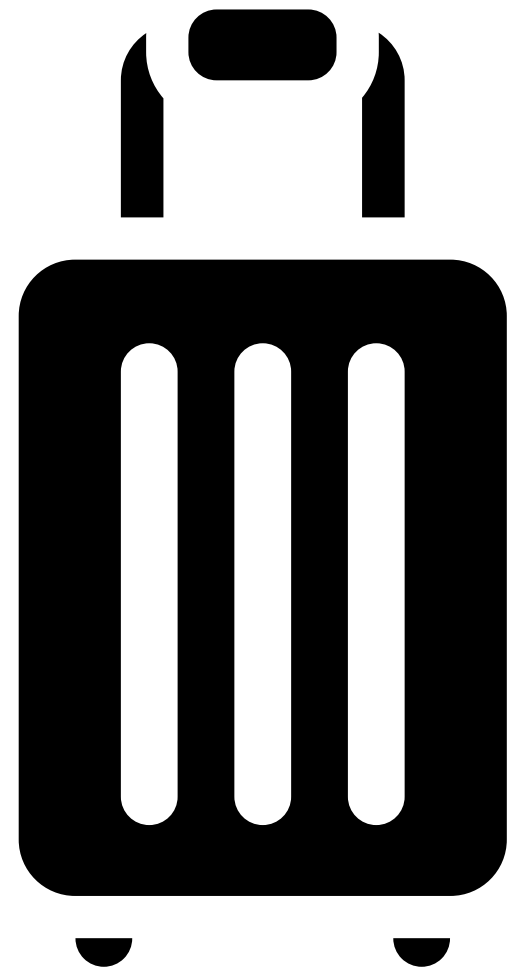
Winter:

- Avg temp: 29.1°F (-1.6°C) - 42.4°F (5.8°C)
- Weather is cold with some snow
- Wear: heavy coats, gloves, warm layers

Spring:

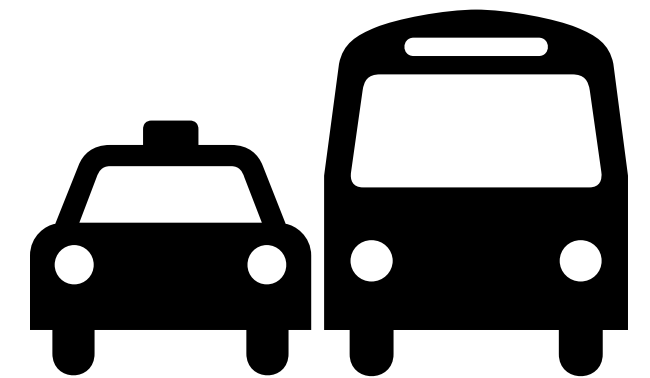
- Avg temp: 50°F (10°C) - 72.8°F (22.6°C)
- Weather starts getting warmer. Sun & rain
- Wear: Jacket & light layers for varied temps

- Personal items: books, music, something that reminds you of home
- Food: no live agricultural products! Dried spices are usually acceptable.
 - CBP General Food List
 - Many local stores carry foods from around the world
- Documents: in your carry-on luggage, NOT checked luggage!
- Cell phone: will you need a SIM card? Phone plan?



Getting From the Airport

- UMBC does not provide transportation from the airport
- You can arrive at ANY airport in U.S.
- The following airports are the closest to UMBC:



■ BWI (Baltimore Washington International Airport)

Distance to UMBC: 7 miles

Uber/Lyft/Taxi:

- Average trip cost: \$30-40 USD
- Taxi pickup on lower arrivals level
- Uber/Lyft meeting point on upper departures level

Super Shuttle:

- Average trip price: \$55 USD
- Must book in advance online [here](#)

■ DCA (Washington Ronald Reagan National Airport)

Distance to UMBC: 40 miles

Uber/Lyft/Taxi average trip cost: \$100 USD

■ IAD (Washington Dulles International Airport)

Distance to UMBC: 55 miles

Uber/Lyft/Taxi average trip cost: \$140 USD



Accommodation

Students are responsible for securing their own accommodation. This should be completed **before** departure from your home country.

On Campus Housing

- UMBC Residential Life reslife.umbc.edu
- Undergraduate Housing:
 - [Residence Halls](#)
 - [Walker Avenue Apartments](#)
- Graduate Housing:
 - [Walker Avenue Apartments](#)

Off Campus Housing

- [UMB Housing](#) - UMBC's sister professional school
- UMBC Off Campus Student Services ocss.umbc.edu
- Available to all students
- [Apartment Search](#)
- Roommate Search
- Assistance with understanding US renting practices



Off-Campus Housing and Resource Workshop

Hosted by Off-Campus Student Services

- July 27, 2023
- 12:30-3PM ET
- Information about leasing, off-campus housing options, transportation, and other resources that are available.
- For more information and registration visit:

<https://my3.my.umbc.edu/groups/ocss/events/118478>

Register HERE!





Settling In



International Student Arrival Guide

Refer to the International Student Arrival Guide for information on campus services, contacts and resources!

- Student organizations and events
- Campus facilities, programming and activities
- Rent & Off- campus housing information
- Shopping & budgeting
- Using UMBC platforms and email
- Directory of campus contact details

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Access the Arrival Guide anywhere!



Scan the QR code to download the Arrival Guide and share it with friends.

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Guide Extras

Look for the light bulb!
Find important tips & reminders here!



Learn what other students think! UMBC Global Ambassadors will share their top tips & advice for students!



Info for UMBC at Shady Grove
Pay attention to this icon if you are studying at UMBC at Shady Grove.



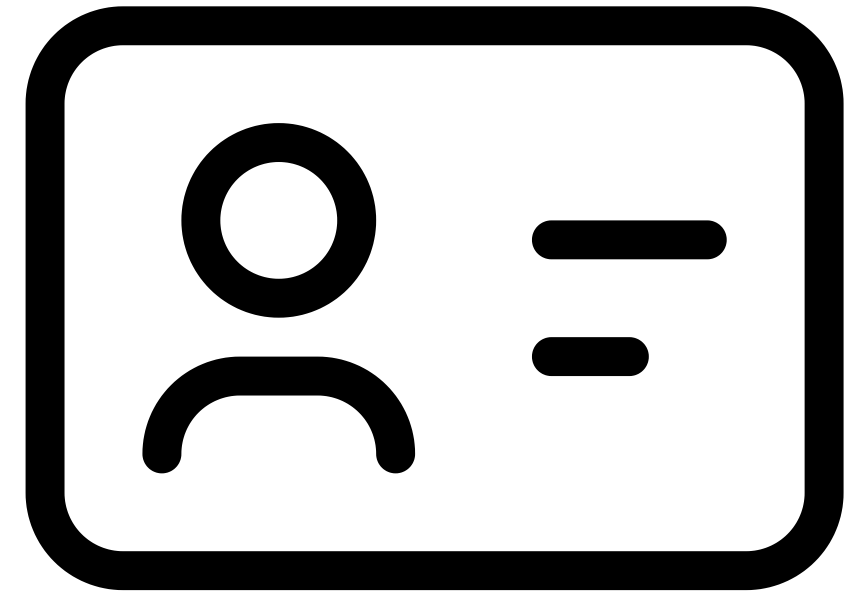
02

Check out our [new student arrival guide](#).



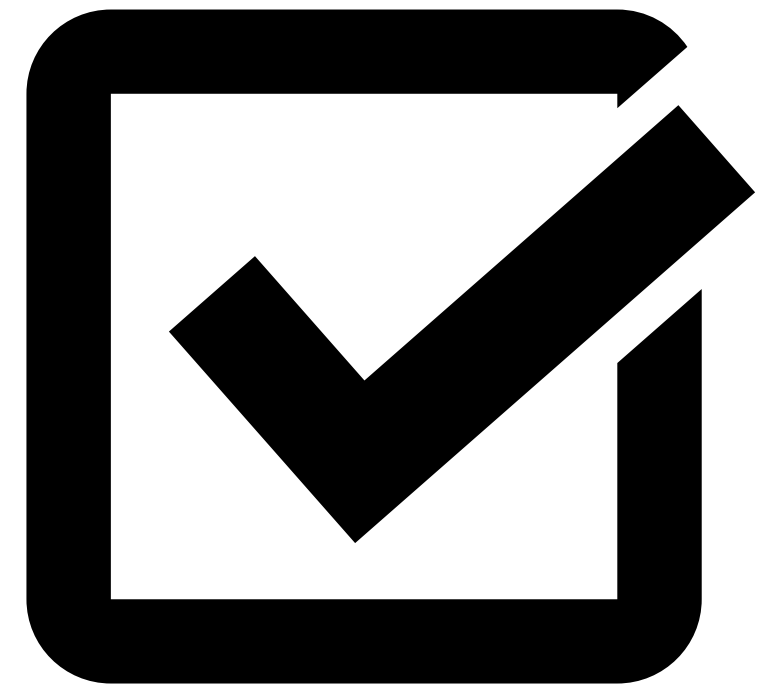
Campus ID

- You'll need your campus ID for most things on campus
- Request process is electronic - can do this from outside U.S.
 - [submit photo here](#)
 - receive a confirmation from Campus Card and Mail services
 - pick up campus card when you arrive on campus
- Campus ID is required to ride the UMBC shuttle
 - UMBC transit will accept a print out of your confirmation email until you have a physical campus ID card



How to Check In with ISSS

- All new international students must confirm arrival with ISSS via the ISSS Portal. Please check in through the ISSS Portal and not in person.
- Complete “New Student Arrival Documentation Check-in” in the ISSS Portal
 - **Select your Start Term**
 - **Upload documents:** Visa stamp page, I-94 record
 - **Update your personal information on myUMBC:** U.S. address, Foreign address, U.S. phone number, Foreign phone number, Emergency contact
- Check In can be completed **only** via the ISSS Portal - not at the ISSS Office



Orientations: Important Dates: Fall 2023

- International Student Orientation (online): **(Mandatory for all new students)**
 - Wednesday, August 23 (9am -1pm ET)
 - Links and more information will be sent to you directly 2 weeks prior
- University Orientations:
 - Graduate School Orientation (online via Blackboard)
 - gradschool.umbc.edu/students/orientation/
 - Undergraduate Orientation for Freshman or Transfer Students
 - Scheduled individually (more information: [Freshman or Transfer Undergraduate Orientation](#))
- Graduate Department Orientations:
 - Graduate Students, please check with your department directly for information and requirements regarding any orientations

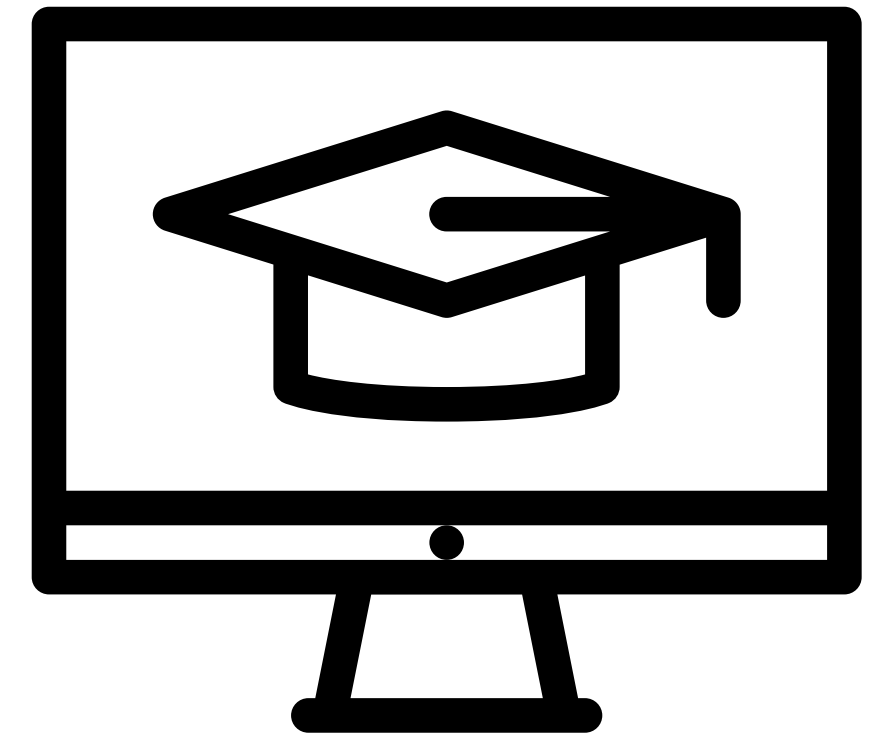


Register For Classes

- Freshmen and Transfer Undergraduate students: register during orientation
- Graduate students: register via myUMBC
 - **Make sure your myUMBC account is active**
 - Step by step registration instructions
 - Registration Tutorial Video

Students may only enroll in one fully online course

More information: Registering for Classes



Paying Your Tuition + Fees

- Bills are available via your myUMBC account
- Payments can be made via your myUMBC account
- Monthly payment plans are also available: Payment Plan
- Fall 2023 Billing Schedule:

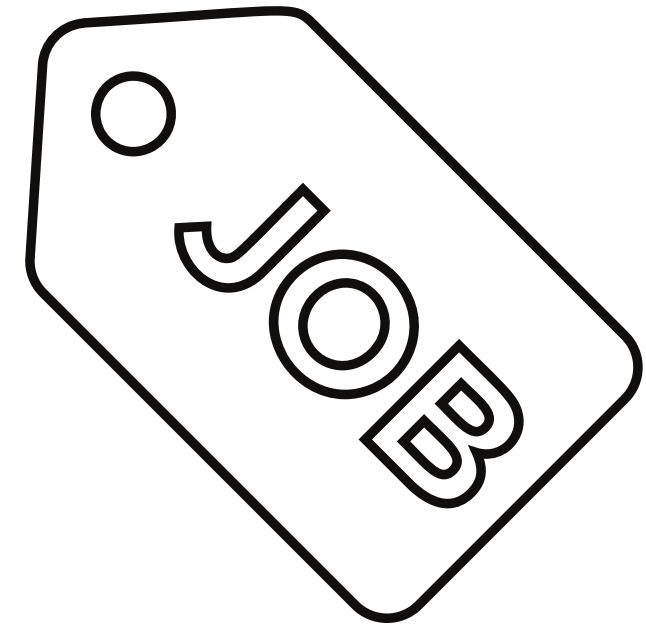
Register By	E-Bill Date	Due Date	Late Fee Charged
07/31	08/01	08/20	08/25
08/31	09/01	09/20	09/25
09/30	10/01	10/20	10/25

- Please contact Student Business Services with any questions regarding billing or tuition



Getting an On-Campus Job

- Can begin working as soon as you arrive in U.S.
- Positions must be **on campus and paid by UMBC**
- Apply through Handshake- make sure to visit the Career Center's online resources!
- If you're new to the U.S. you'll need a SSN after getting a job offer. ISSS will help you with that process
- How much can you work a week?
 - During semester: 20 hours
 - During summer/winter break: 40 hours



- Off Campus work is prohibited until you have completed two academic semesters



Campus Events

Dining Services and Event Center Hiring Event

August 22, 2023

In Person- Details coming soon!



myUMBC - Updating Your Contact Information

- Profile - About - View More
- Update the following:
 - Student Mailing Address, to your US address
 - Phone Numbers, once you set up a US number
 - Emergency Contacts - this is who UMBC will communicate with should you have a serious emergency
- Use the “edit” link to make changes to each field.

It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to update this information, which we need to make your immigration record active once you arrive, and is required by immigration law!



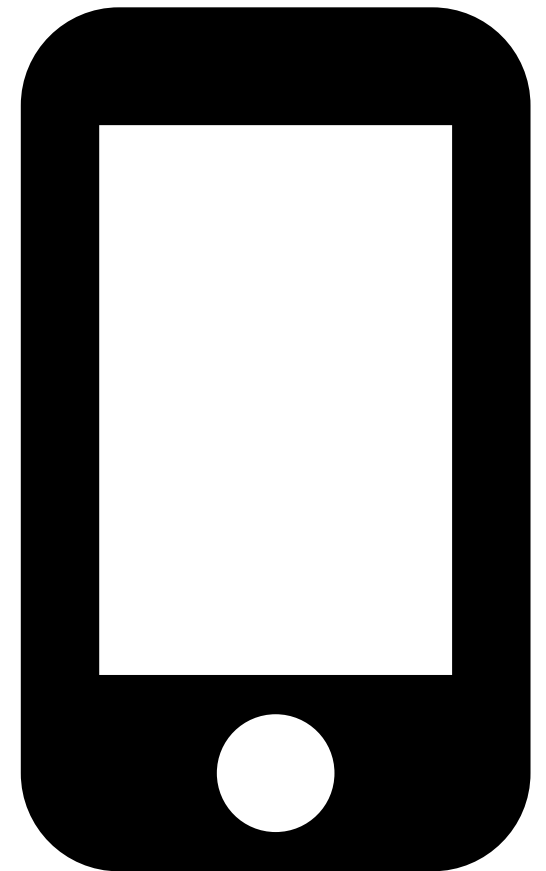


Life in the U.S.



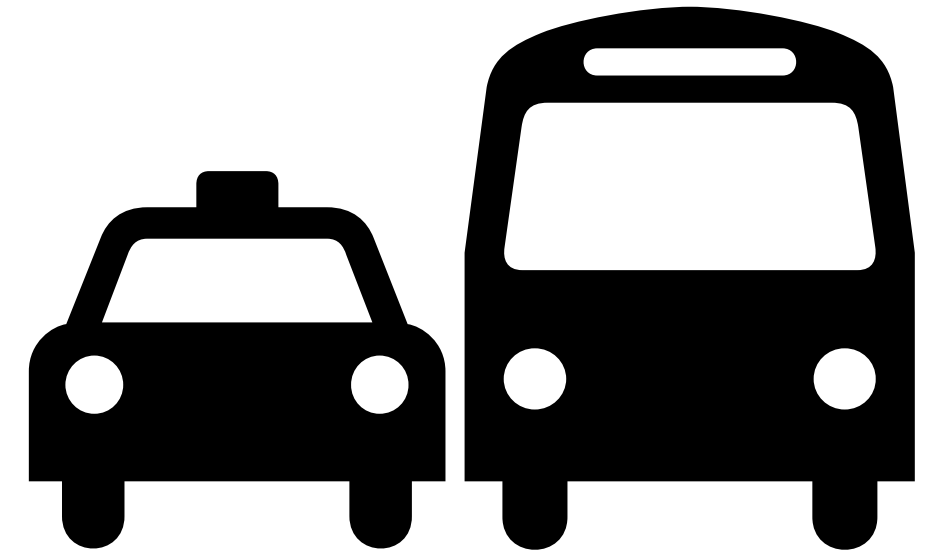
Phone Access/SIM Cards

- Able to use WiFi for using WhatsApp and other free communication tools
- If you want a U.S. number upon arrival, SIM Cards are the way to go!
CampusSims is a SIM card you can purchase before arrival
- ISSS has SIM cards available for students who might need them. The card is free, but you will have to pay for the plan you choose.



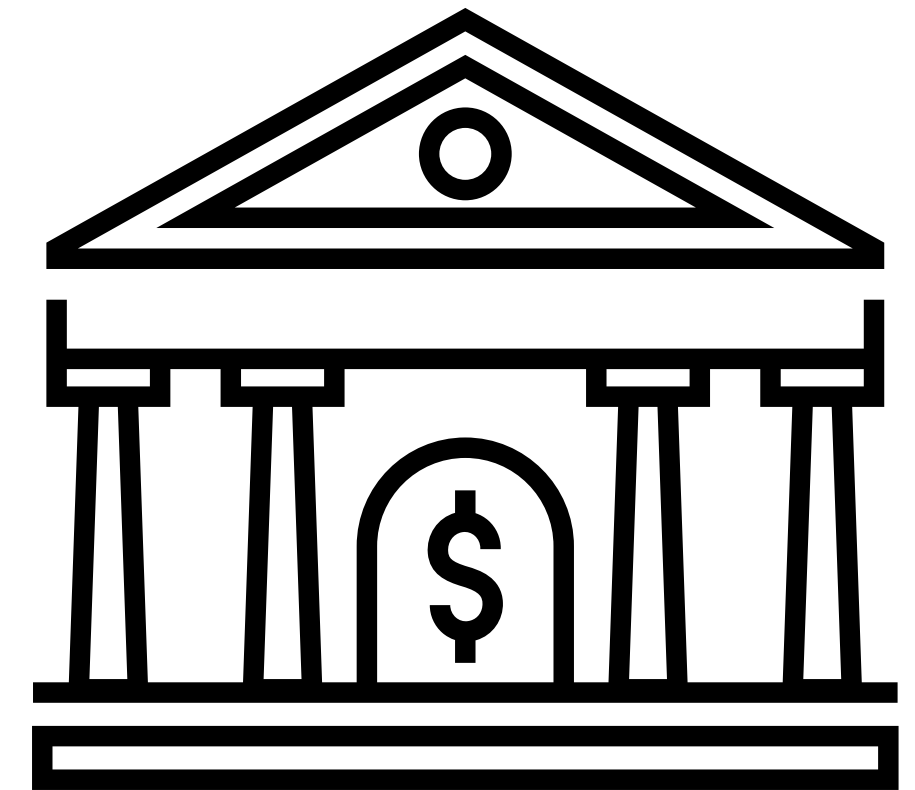
Getting Around - Transportation Off Campus

- Public Transportation: Maryland Transportation Authority
 - Bus: takes you throughout Baltimore, and surrounding cities
 - Metro: takes you throughout Baltimore
 - Light Rail: takes you throughout Baltimore
 - Fare: \$1.90 per trip, All Access College Transit Pass: \$52.90 per month
- Free Options:
 - Charm City Circulator (downtown Baltimore only)
 - UMBC shuttle
- Getting your License:
 - SEVIS record MUST be registered
 - Complete S.A.V.E Verification
 - Visit MVA's website
 - On campus parking permits are free. Please apply here: Parking Permits
- Traveling further outside of Baltimore and Maryland? Check out the arrival guide for long distance options



Banking

- Banks near campus
 - PNC Bank - on campus ATM
 - Bank of America
 - Wells Fargo
 - Maryland State Employees Credit Union - on campus ATM
- Financial Smarts:
 - Joint resource from UMBC and PNC Bank
 - Find banks and ATMS on campus
 - Learn how to budget, save and invest
 - Website: Financial Smarts
- Opening a Bank Account:
 - Each bank has different requirements
 - Passport, I-20, proof of address, initial deposit



Food + Shopping Near Campus

- Local Grocery stores near campus accessible by foot
 - Weis Market
 - Giant Food
- Local Grocery Stores Near Campus accessible by car/bus
 - H-Mart Korean Grocery
 - Lotte Plaza Asian Market
 - Great Wall Asian Supermarket
 - Wal-Mart
 - Patel Brothers Indian Market
- More information here: Grocery Stores in Downtown Baltimore
- Contactless food delivery and grocery delivery available via apps like: Instacart, UberEats, Doordash
- Experiencing food insecurity? Learn more about Retriever Essentials here
- Find more information about grocery stores and shopping in the International Student Arrival Guide



Living Costs - Plan Ahead

- Budgets/costs vary for each student
- UMBC Tuition Calculator (select "Out of State" for residency)
- Do you have a scholarship?
 - Make sure you understand what your scholarship does/does not cover
- Do you have a Graduate Assistantship?
 - Make sure you understand what is included in your assistantship
 - Understand your stipend and how that affects your costs
- Will you live alone? With family? Roommates?



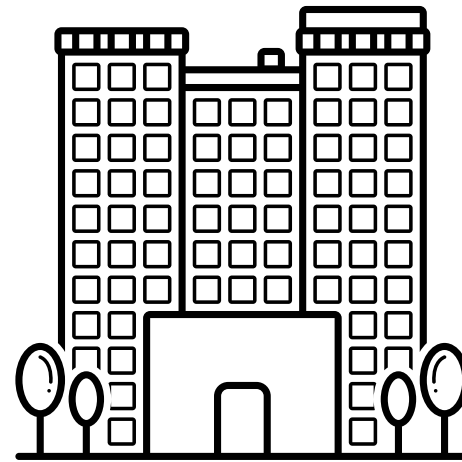
Example Costs in Maryland



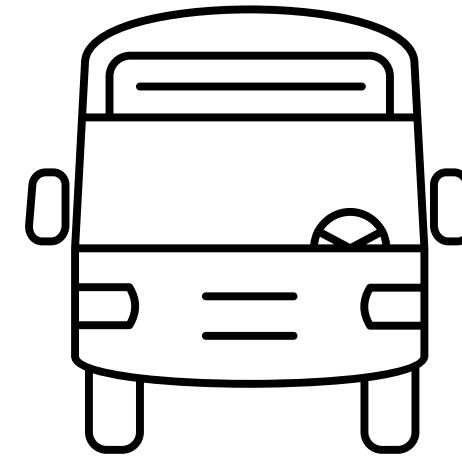
\$13.25
Min. Wage



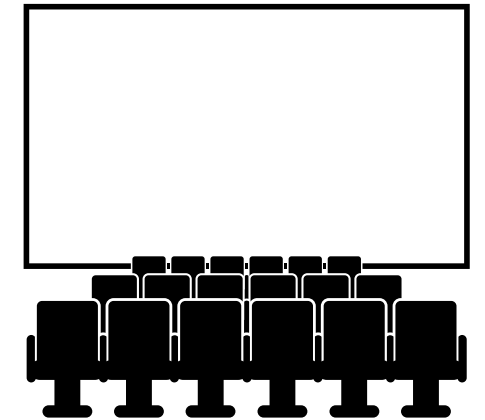
\$300
Monthly



\$1000
1 bedroom



\$1.50
One way
student



\$14
1 Ticket

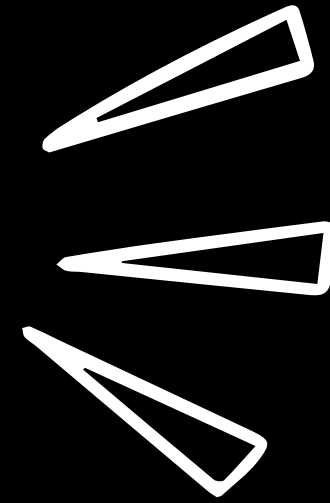
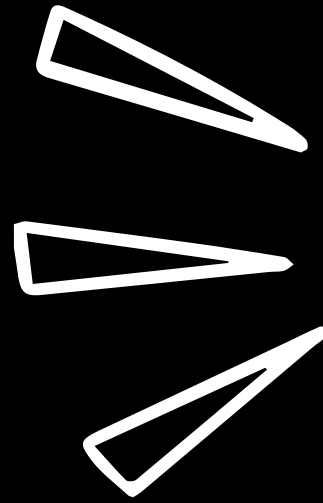
Please note these are estimates. Exact costs will differ for each individual.



Ask

a

Student!



Have a question about campus life or navigating UMBC?

Ask a Global Ambassador on Unibuddy!



There many student ambassadors from different home countries, areas of study and with a wide variety of personal interests

[Click here to meet and chat with the Ambassadors!](#)



How Global Ambassadors can help

Global Ambassadors can:

- Discover more about UMBC campus life
- Connect you with UMBC resources
- Learn about US & UMBC classroom culture and student life in the US!

Global Ambassadors cannot:

- Provide immigration support
- Help you get a job or provide CPT/OPT advice
- Offer academic advising or pick your classes for you

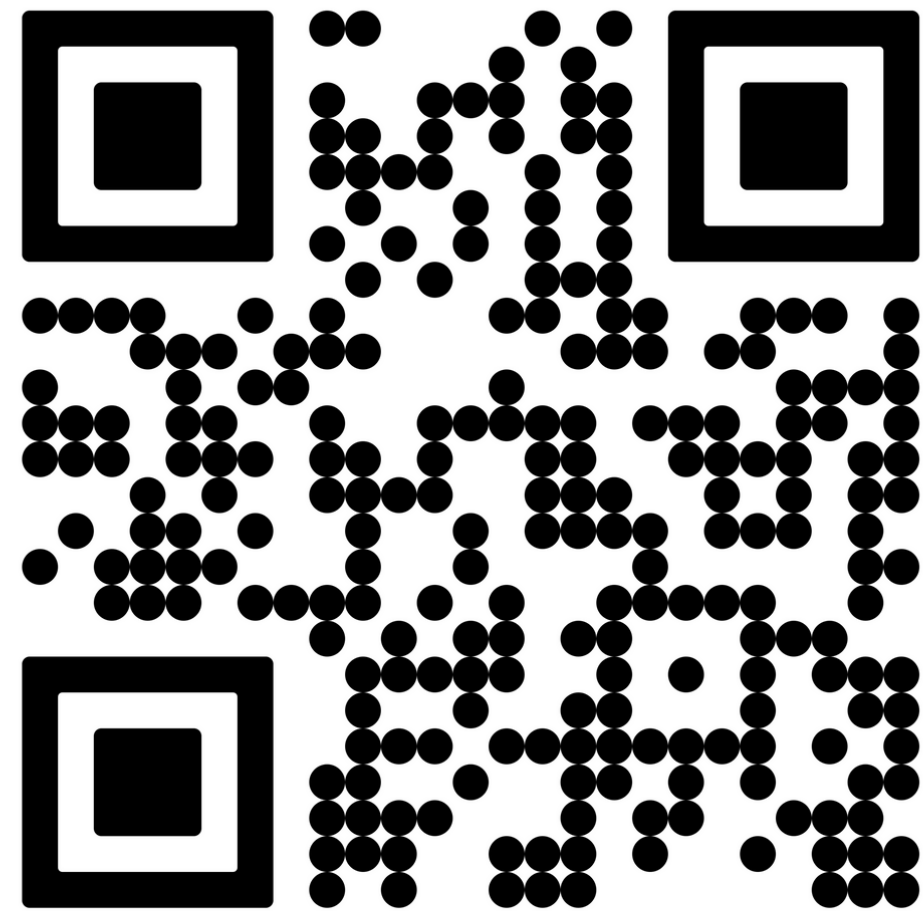
✧ ...BUT they can connect you with teams who will help you with these things! ✧



Meet other new students on Unibuddy Community!



Scan the code to join the Fall 2023 community!



- Chat with other admitted students as well as our UMBC Global Ambassadors
- Get to know your classmates and talk about student life at UMBC!
- Ask current student questions about starting at UMBC



Upcoming Events

A decorative graphic consisting of six white-outlined triangles arranged in two groups of three, pointing towards the central text. The triangles on the left are positioned at approximately 120, 180, and 240 degrees, while the triangles on the right are at approximately 300, 240, and 180 degrees.

Join Our Next Webinar!

Join ISSS info sessions and webinars to learn about UMBC, get your questions answered and hear from advisors and current international students.

Webinar dates and links to join are posted on the
Recent Student Communications page
issss.umbc.edu/new-student-communications/



Additional Resources

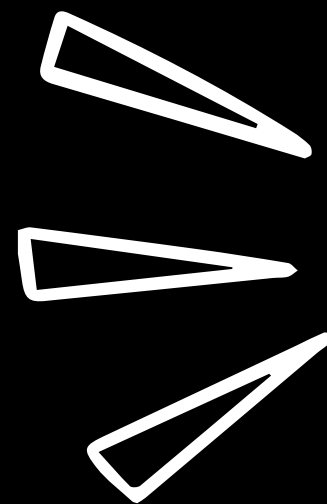
Want to review an information session?

- Any recordings and slides will be shared on the [ISSS Student Communications page here](#) a few days after each session.

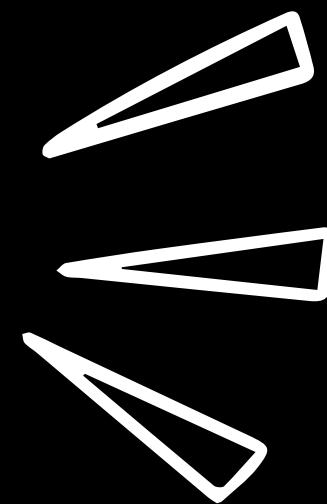
International Student Arrival Guide!

- Use this guide to find contact details and information you'll need about preparing for your arrival and your first weeks at UMBC. [Download the guide here.](#)





Q&A



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✧ ✧ **Keep up** with events at
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Congratulations!

We look forward to seeing you this fall!

