

Exchange Visitor Handbook

Students

Office of International Affairs



Dear J-1 Student,

Welcome to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE)! We are excited to meet you on campus soon. SIUE is committed to globalizing its campus and recognizes the strategic advantage of supporting international partnerships between SIUE and institutions and organizations around the globe. SIUE believes in the importance of better understanding and improved communications between people of the United States and other nations of the world through international educational and cultural exchange.

The Exchange Visitor (J-1 Visa) Program was established by the U.S. government to facilitate the visit of international students and scholars to the U.S. Managed by the Department of State, the objective of the program is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries through educational and cultural exchanges. The Exchange Visitor (known as J-1 student in this handbook) under a student category attends SIUE temporarily or to seek a degree. Universities, research institutes and organizations can be recognized by the U.S. Department of State as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors.

The Office of International Affairs at SIUE is responsible for administration of the Exchange Visitor Program. This handbook provides important information about your immigration status and practical information for adjusting to life in the United States, specifically, Edwardsville, Illinois. We look forward to welcoming you to campus soon and working with you to further your professional goals and intercultural understanding.

Sincerely,

Mary Weishaar, PhD

Responsible Officer (RO) for J Exchange Visitor Program

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Office of International Affairs

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Exchange Visitor Program Guidelines

J-1 students are required by law to report to the sponsor within 10 days of arrival. Before your arrival on campus, you will receive information from the Office of International Affairs about the mandatory orientation for new international students. Be sure to check the email address you gave SIUE when you applied.

Department of State Requirements While Participating in the Exchange Visitor Program

- Update any changes in address or contact information in CougarNet within 10 days
- Enroll in courses full-time and remain in good standing
- Participate in cross-cultural activities

Grounds for Dismissal from the Exchange Visitor Program

- Engaging in unauthorized employment
- Engaging in activities not outlined on your DS-2019
- Failing to maintain health insurance coverage
- Violation of any SIUE academic integrity policies or student conduct guidelines
- Conviction of a criminal offense

BASIC J-1 VISA TERMINOLOGIES

SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System)

Federal government database that holds and tracks information on J-1 students.

U.S. J-1 Visa

All J-1 visa holders are referred to as exchange visitors. The J-1 Visa is an entry permit that is issued by the U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad for you to enter the U.S. to begin your program. The only time you are required to have a valid visa is when you are entering the U.S. from another country. You can stay in the U.S. on an expired J-1 Visa as long as you are maintaining your valid J-1 exchange visitor status.

I-94 Admission Record

The I-94 record, created by Customs and Border Protection (CBP), documents your arrival and lawful entry to the U.S. The I-94 will indicate your admission to the U.S. for duration of status, shown as “D/S”, which is the period of time you will be participating in your program (indicated on your DS-2019).

DS-2019 Form: Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status

You receive the DS-2019 form from SIUE after you are admitted to the University. It will be mailed to you by the Office of Admissions. You need to present this form to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your home country to apply for your J-1 Visa. This form contains your program information such as field of study, start and end date of your program, and other personal information relevant to your J-1 status. **You must have your original DS-2019 at the visa interview and at the U.S. Port of Entry.**

YOUR NEXT STEPS

Now that you have been admitted to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, you need to apply for a J-1 Visa and a J-2 Visa for any accompanying dependents.

SEVIS Fee

After receiving the form DS-2019, you must pay a mandatory one-time SEVIS fee and obtain a receipt BEFORE booking your visa appointment at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate. This fee may be **paid online**. The Department of Homeland Security will issue you an official paper receipt (Form I-797) acknowledging the payment of your SEVIS fee.

Note: J-2 dependents are not required to pay the SEVIS fee.

Apply for a J-1 Visa at a US Embassy/Consulate

After paying the SEVIS fee, you will need to make an appointment to apply for a J-1 Visa. An in-person interview is usually required. You may visit travel.state.gov to learn more about the visa application process and to find a U.S. Embassy or Consulate near you. When making an appointment, you should ask the consulate for a complete list of documents you need.

At minimum, you will need the following documents at your interview:

- Passport (must be valid for at least six months beyond DS-2019 program end date)
- Original DS-2019 for you and any dependents
- Official SIUE admission letter
- Receipt for payment of the I-901 SEVIS fee
- Proof of financial support
- DS-160 Visa application and fee

Additional requested documents may include evidence of any of the following:

- The purpose of your travel
- Your intent to depart the United States after your travel
- Your ability to pay all travel costs and living expenses

Attend Your Visa Interview

During your visa interview, a consular officer will determine whether you are qualified to receive a visa and which visa category matches your travel purpose. You will need to establish that you meet the requirements under U.S. law to receive a J-1 Visa. Ink-free, digital fingerprint scans will be taken as part of your application process. You will be informed by the consular officer if further processing is necessary for your application.

Complete Online Pre-Arrival Orientation

Before your program begins, you will receive a link to complete an online pre-arrival orientation module for J-1 students. Please complete this orientation as soon as you receive it.

Entering the U.S.

A visa allows a foreign citizen to travel to a U.S. port-of-entry and request permission to enter the United States. A visa does not guarantee entry into the country. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the port of entry have authority to permit or deny admission. You can learn more about procedures for entering the U.S. on the [CBP website](#). You are not permitted to enter the U.S. earlier than 30 days before your program start date.

PROGRAM COSTS

J-1 students are required to pay several expenses directly to SIUE. It is essential that you know what costs your sponsor or home institution will cover, if any. The following is a list of costs that students are likely to incur. Specified costs are valid as of April 2018.

- I-901 SEVIS fee \$180 one-time
- Visa application fee \$160 per applicant
- Travel expenses to and from Edwardsville
- Tuition (if not waived on an exchange program) per credit hour
- Fees per credit hour
- Housing (including rent and utilities)
- Meals (on-campus or off)
- Health insurance (including insurance for J-2 dependents)
- Other types of insurance—renter's insurance, car insurance
- Internet and phone service
- Transportation outside of the SIUE campus
- Personal expenses and entertainment costs
- Child care (if applicable)

ARRIVAL TO SIUE

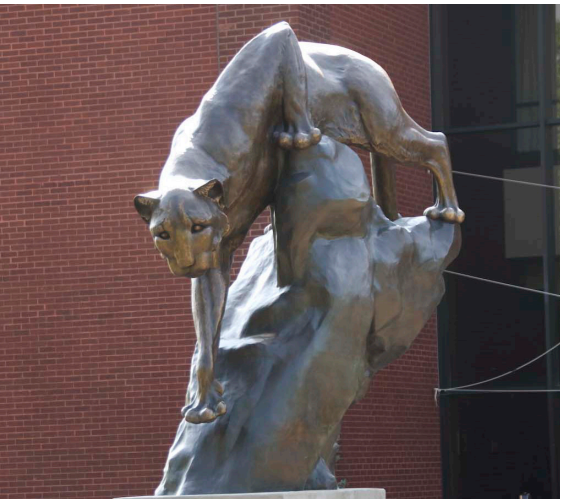
Students may request airport pick-up services from the Lambert-St. Louis International Airport if they arrive on certain dates before orientation. Information will be emailed to you regarding this service. If you do not wish to use this service, there are a number of options to get to SIUE from the airport. The [airport website](#) has information regarding transportation options including taxis, ride share and car service. You may also [rent a car](#) at the airport. It is recommended that you arrange your transportation before you arrive.

Airport

Lambert-St. Louis International Airport (STL) is approximately 30 minutes from SIUE by car. It is the closest airport to campus and all major airlines provide service to St. Louis.

YOUR FIRST WEEK CHECKLIST

Most importantly, when you arrive, you will check in with the Office of International Affairs and attend your mandatory orientation. The checklist with other important steps to complete can be found [on our website](#).



TRANSPORTATION IN AND AROUND SIUE

Madison County Transit

Madison County Transit offers safe and affordable bus transportation to SIUE and the surrounding communities. More information about MCT can be found [on their website](#). Bus schedules can be found online or can be picked up at the Morris University Center Information Desk at SIUE.

Driving in the United States

We recommend you bring both your driver's license from your home country and an International Driving Permit (IDP) if you plan to drive a car while in the U.S. An IDP does not replace a government issued driver license, but is its official translation. You may drive in Illinois without a valid Illinois driver's license if you are visiting or driving through Illinois with a valid driver's license from your home state or country (found on Page 5 of [2018 Rules of the Road Booklet](#)). We recommend you keep a copy of the [Rules of the Road Booklet](#) in your car when driving in the U.S. on your home country license.

You may apply for a driver license in the U.S. only if your DS-2019 is valid for at least one year and you have at least six months remaining on an authorized stay at the time of application. You may find more information about requirements [on our website](#).

Seat Belts and Car Seats

Safety belts must be worn by all passengers even if the vehicle has air bags. It is the responsibility of the driver to see that all front seat passengers [obey this law](#).

NOTE: Children under the age of 12 should not sit in the front seat if the car contains a passenger-side air bag. This can be dangerous and even deadly in an accident.

The Child Passenger Protection Act requires under federal law that children under the age of eight years be secured appropriately in an approved child restraint system, which includes a booster seat. Use safety seats and seat belts as required for your children at all times. Never hold a child on your lap in the car. Do not take a baby out of a car seat while the car is in motion. An unprotected child can be seriously injured in an accident, even if you are driving slowly.

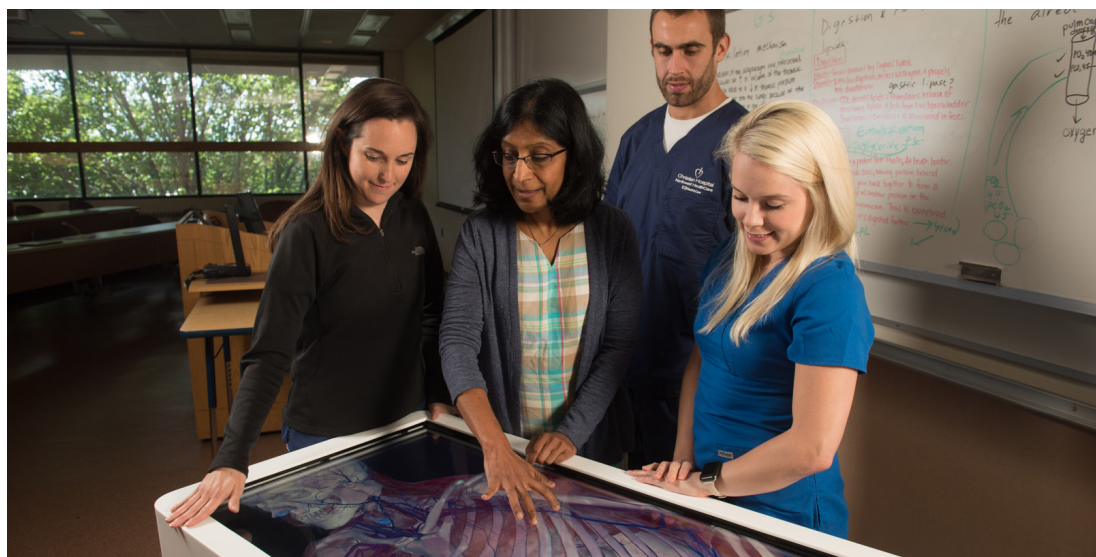
Buying a Car

You may buy a new car from an automobile dealer or a used car from a dealer or private individual. Financing may be obtained from the dealer or a bank. You must obtain a Certificate of Ownership from a car dealer or a Certificate of Title from an individual. The car must be registered immediately in the new owner's name. A Certificate of Title must be registered with the Illinois Secretary of State and transferred to the name of the new owner when the car is paid for. Illinois law requires you to purchase car insurance.

NOTE: Students attending SIUE through our cooperation with CCIEE in China through the CHEPD program are not permitted to buy a car during their first year on campus.

Campus Parking

If you will be parking on campus, you must purchase a parking permit from [SIUE Parking Services](#) located on campus in Rendleman Hall, Room 1113.



OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

Checking accounts allow you to deposit and withdraw money frequently and are a great way to pay your monthly bills. When you open a checking account, it usually comes with checks and a debit card and allows you to use them to make purchases and pay bills. Often there are minimum monthly balances and service fees which vary by the type of account you open.

Savings accounts are for long term deposits for earning interest. The interest, minimum balances, and service fees vary from bank to bank.

Banks usually do not charge extra fees when you are using your bank's ATM (Automated Teller Machines). If you use an ATM in a store or at other banks, you may be charged a transaction fee.

Banks offer many different financial services and you are not required to open an account. Compare the services and costs of several banks before choosing one. Find one with a branch on or close to campus. **The Bank of Edwardsville** has a branch located on campus in the Morris University Center.

GETTING A CELLULAR PHONE

Some mobile plans may require that you have a Social Security number (SSN) to set up a contract. Pre-paid plans (when you pay your monthly bill in advance) are available from most providers and do not require a SSN.

You have several options to set up service:

- Purchase a sim card from a provider to access cellular service.
- Purchase a new phone and sim card from a provider and sign a contract (usually for at least one year) for service through that provider.
- Purchase a "go phone" and purchase minutes and data as you need them from a retailer such as Target or Wal-Mart.



ABOUT EDWARDSVILLE AND SIUE

The SIUE campus is located in Edwardsville, Illinois, just 25 miles from the major city of St. Louis. Edwardsville offers many opportunities for entertainment, shopping and fun. Southern Illinois University Edwardsville celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2017. In 1957, Southern Illinois University opened two residence centers in Alton and East St. Louis. By 1959, enrollment had increased to 3,800—exceeding the capacity of the temporary facilities and services. Groundbreaking for SIU Edwardsville was held in 1963. In 1965, SIUE opened Peck Hall and Lovejoy Library in the midst of 2,660 acres of rolling land and woods.

Today, SIUE is a premier metropolitan university, offering a broad choice of degrees and programs ranging from liberal arts to professional studies. The School of Dental Medicine maintains its campus in Alton, using many of the same buildings that housed its first students in 1957. The East St. Louis Center remains dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families in East St. Louis and surrounding urban areas. SIUE is one of the largest employers in Madison County. We hope you enjoy the rich opportunities at SIUE that include:

Athletic Events

SIUE athletic teams include baseball, basketball, soccer, tennis and more. For information on athletic events or to purchase tickets, visit the [SIUE Athletics website](#).

Community Engagement

[SIUE Community Engagement](#) provides students the opportunity to apply academic knowledge, gain skills and experience, and contribute to the community. Volunteer opportunities are available throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area and within the University community.

The Gardens at SIUE

[The Gardens at SIUE](#) are comprised of woodlands, a pond, grasslands and an arboretum on a 35-acre site. The gardens are a living laboratory dedicated to supporting the educational and research mission of the university. The facilities and amenities feature renewable, recycled and sustainability-produced materials. Walking the paths and exploring the gardens is free and open to the public.

Lovejoy Library

If you are seeking a particular collection or resource to help with your research or teaching, [Lovejoy Library](#) can assist. On the library website, you can access research guides, live chat with a librarian, check out electronic and print resources, and access journals and special collections. The library also has individual and group research spaces.

Musical Performances

[The Department of Music](#) offers an array of performances throughout the year on campus.

Theater Productions

[The Department of Theater and Dance](#) produces four Main Stage theater productions and one dance concert each academic year in Dunham Hall and the Metcalf Theater. They also offer a variety of student-run productions.

MAINTAINING J-1 STATUS

Mandatory Check-in (validation of arrival) and Orientation

As a new SIUE J-1 scholar, your arrival must be updated in SEVIS. This process is called validation and must be completed as soon as possible. You are required to check in with the Office of International Affairs and attend a mandatory orientation session upon arrival. Failure to validate your arrival will result in automatic termination of your J-1 status in SEVIS. Before your DS-2019 start date, you will receive an email with the scheduled time of your orientation. You are required to bring the following documents to the office at your scheduled time:

- Your original DS-2019 and those of any J-2 dependents
- Your passport and those of any J-2 dependents
- Your J-1 Visa for SIUE and those of any J-2 dependents

International Affairs staff will have you complete paperwork indicating your address, phone number and emergency contact in your home country. Please bring this information with you. The orientation will include information regarding immigration and the SIUE community.

Valid Immigration Documents

Your DS-2019 must be valid at all times. **If you need to extend your stay, you must apply for an extension at least 30 days prior to the program end date on your DS-2019.** Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the validity of your DS-2019 form.

Health Insurance

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) regulations require that all J-1 Visa holders obtain health insurance that covers you and all accompanying dependents for your entire duration in the U.S. starting with the date of arrival and ending with the date of departure. Students and their dependents may also be subject to the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

Any J-1 student who refuses to comply with the DOS health insurance requirements is in violation of their exchange visitor status. SIUE is obligated to terminate any students who are in violation. All international students must purchase health insurance through an SIUE approved plan. SIUE's sponsored plan meets all DOS **minimum** requirements:

- \$100,000 for each illness or accident with a deductible to not exceed \$500 per illness or accident
- \$50,000 for medical evacuation
- \$25,000 for repatriation of remains
- Must cover pre-existing conditions at start of policy or with a reasonable waiting period
- Must not exclude coverage for perils inherent to exchange program activities
- May include provisions for co-insurance under the terms of which the scholar may be required to pay up to 25 percent of the covered benefits per accident or illness
- Meet one of the following requirements:
 - Underwritten by an insurance corporation having an A.M. Best rating of "A ♯" or above; a McGraw Hill Financial/Standard & Poor's Claims-paying Ability rating of "A ♯" or above; a Weiss Research Inc. rating of "B + " or above; a Fitch Ratings Inc. rating of "A ♯" or above; a Moody's Investor Services rating of "A3" or above
 - Be backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the exchange visitor's home country
 - Part of a health benefits program offered on a group basis to employees by the sponsor
 - Offered through or underwritten by a federally qualified Health Maintenance Organization or eligible Competitive Medical Plan as determined by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Contact Information Reporting

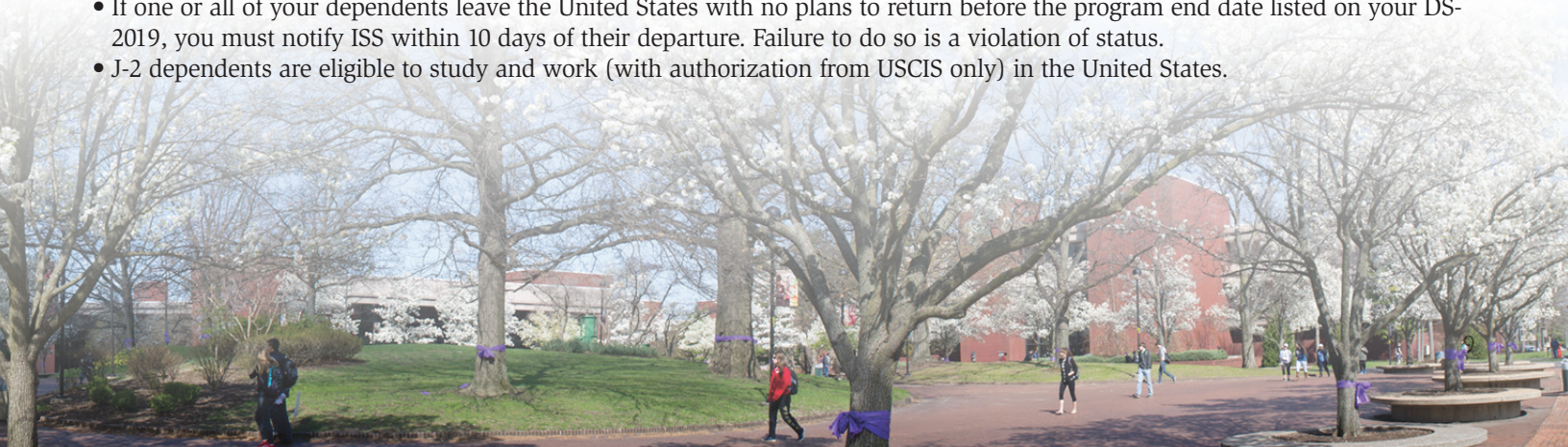
In compliance with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), you are required to have a valid address during your program. **You have 10 days to update your international advisor with changes to your personal information.** Your advisor will then make updates to your record in SEVIS. While active in your program, you are required to report the following information:

1. Your **mailing and billing address** is used as your local address for immigration purposes. This is where you are living on your J-1 program. This address cannot be your home country address, out-of-state address, department address, office or post office box.
2. Your **permanent address** is your address in your home country. This address cannot be a U.S. address or a post office box.
3. Your **U.S. phone number**. If you do not have a U.S. number while on your program, you should report a number where you can be reached within your host department.
4. Your **email address** that you check regularly.

J-2 Dependents

J-1 students are able to bring dependent spouses and children (under the age of 21) to accompany them on their program. These dependents must also follow immigration regulations.

- J-2 dependents must adhere to DOS health insurance requirements. Failure to maintain health insurance may result in the termination of the dependent visa.
- If one or all of your dependents leave the United States with no plans to return before the program end date listed on your DS-2019, you must notify ISS within 10 days of their departure. Failure to do so is a violation of status.
- J-2 dependents are eligible to study and work (with authorization from USCIS only) in the United States.



CHANGES TO YOUR DS-2019

Change of Major

If your major of study or degree program changes while at SIUE, be sure that your international advisor is informed. You will need to receive a new DS-2019.

Transfers of Program

If you decide to continue your program at another SEVIS-approved institution, you may be eligible to do so. Your SEVIS record will need to be transferred to the new institution by your international advisor.

Extension of Program

If it is necessary to extend your stay at SIUE in order to complete your program, your request must be approved by your international advisor. You will be required to show additional funding and proof of health insurance for the extension period.

EMPLOYMENT

J-1 students may be eligible to work on- or off-campus depending on their status with SIUE. You can find out if you are eligible through our [Employment webpage](#).

Social Security Number (SSN)

A SSN is an identification number which is required at the time of employment that allows the U.S. government to track all employees (including U.S. citizens). J-1 students are eligible to apply for a SSN with authorization documents from their international advisor if they wish. J-2 visa holders cannot obtain a number unless they have received an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card from USCIS.

LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

The Office of International Affairs is not able to provide assistance with housing arrangements for scholars. We recommend that you contact your host department for possible assistance and read the information below.

On-campus Housing

J-1 students may be eligible to live in an SIUE residence hall or Cougar Village apartment. All campus housing is within walking distance of the academic buildings. Year round shuttle service is also available free of charge from Cougar Village to the main part of campus.

In order to reserve a space, you should contact University Housing as soon as possible. More information about on-campus housing and an online application are available on the University Housing website. You will be required to pay a \$300 deposit to reserve your space. After signing the contract, you cannot change your mind and receive your money back. University Housing offers a [virtual tour](#) of spaces online.

Off-campus Housing

Accommodations available for rent off-campus include furnished and unfurnished apartments, houses, townhomes, and single rooms in houses. You can look for housing options in Edwardsville and other towns nearby which include Glen Carbon, Maryville and Collinsville. You can search the following resources for housing before you arrive:

- [Edwardsville Intelligencer](#) under "Today's Classifieds"
- [University Housing](#) off-campus website

Tips for Locating Off-campus Housing

- Compare prices.
- Do not sign a lease until you have inspected the apartment, house or room.
- Ask questions of former/current tenants or neighbors, if possible.
- Check the deposit policy to see whether it is refundable. Landlords will not refund a deposit if the apartment needs major cleaning or repairs at the end of your rental term.
- Check lease duration. Most rental contracts are for 12 months.
- Negotiate the terms of the lease if you do not agree with all items.

- Get everything you agree on in writing.
- Read the entire lease before you sign it.
- Follow all terms of the contract you sign.
- Buy renter or property insurance (optional, but recommended).

TRAVELING OUT OF TOWN

During SIUE holidays or break periods, you may want to travel to other parts of the U.S.

Air

You can make your own arrangements by looking for flights and hotels online. For convenience, fly out of **St. Louis Lambert Airport** (STL).

Bus

Bus service is available through **Greyhound** and other companies in downtown St. Louis.

Rental Car

Cars may be rented by the day, weekend, week or month. Prices and conditions vary. **Enterprise Rent-A-Car** offer car rental services on campus.

Train

The **Amtrak** train station is located in Alton, Illinois (about a 25 minute drive from campus). Tickets can be purchased **online**. We recommend you make reservations online in advance in order to receive the best rates. If a train says “sold out” online, always call to double check. If a train arrives outside of the station lobby’s business hours, it is important that you make pick up arrangements through a friend or taxi service prior to the train arriving in Alton in order to save time and stay safe. If Madison County Transit buses are running, you can take the bus to and from the Alton station.

CLIMATE

Edwardsville has four distinct seasons:

- **Fall/Autumn** (September to November) is cool, perhaps rainy and famous for the changing color of tree leaves.
- **Winter** (December to February) is cold, windy and often includes snow and ice.
- **Spring** (March to May) can be rainy and stormy, but also has sunny days with a mix of cool, warm and hot temperatures.
- **Summer** (June to August) can be very hot and humid with many thunderstorms.

Bad Weather

COLD temperatures here can reach -22F/-30C. It is important that you remember to dress properly. Several layers of clothes are better than one heavy coat. You should cover your ears and fingers as they can freeze easily. In addition to a coat, wear boots, a hat, gloves or mittens, and a scarf that you can wrap around your face.

ICE is dangerous to walk on and even more dangerous to drive on. Stay off it if possible. If you must walk, wear shoes or boots that have rubber grids, not smooth leather-soled shoes.

TORNADOES are storms with high winds that form a funnel cloud. These clouds can form very rapidly and do great damage in a short time. These conditions develop most often during the spring and summer. A “tornado watch” means weather conditions are right for tornadoes to develop. A “tornado warning” means that a tornado funnel cloud has been seen. Edwardsville has a disaster warning system that alerts you to a possible tornado. If you hear the sirens during bad weather, take cover on the lowest floor you can (a basement is preferred) away from windows. If outside, take cover face down in a ditch—do not stay in your car. The warning sirens in Edwardsville and at SIUE are tested the first Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. Be sure to familiarize yourself with their sound.

SIUE e-Lert

SIUE’s e-Lert is a messaging service that is used to notify faculty, staff and student cell phones when an urgent situation, such as a bomb threat or hostile intruder, occurs or when the University closes due to inclement weather. There is no cost to register for the alerts; however, standard rates may apply if your cell phone plan does not include text messaging. We highly recommended you sign up for the e-Lerts.

ACCESSING HEALTHCARE

PLEASE CALL 9-1-1 OR VISIT YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY ROOM (Anderson Hospital Emergency Room) for true health emergencies that happen at any time.

FOR NON-EMERGENCY CARE:

Always visit SIUE Health Service on campus first. The Health Services staff can help you with most needs and refer you to an outside physician if necessary.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The U.S. telephone number for emergencies is 9-1-1; you do not have to dial an area code or any other numbers. You can dial 9-1-1 from a pay phone without having to pay. If you call 9-1-1 from a landline, the dispatcher will know your exact location. If you call from a cell phone, the dispatcher can determine your approximate location, but you should be prepared to assist.

When you dial 9-1-1, a dispatcher will answer your call and direct it to a fire department, police station or sheriff's department. After you have clearly stated your location, what help is needed, and you have followed all directions given to you by the dispatcher, an ambulance, police officer, and/or fire truck are directed to your location. This number is for LIFE-THREATENING emergencies only (fire, car accident, a serious fall when someone is unconscious or bleeding, showing symptoms of a heart attack, or if someone is breaking into your house). There is no charge for dialing 9-1-1 to get help, but there will be charges for ambulance transportation.

SAFETY

While SIUE and the surrounding community are safe places, it is always important to be aware. The SIUE Police Department non-emergency number is 618-650-3324. The SIUE Police can also reach your international advisor if needed. To stay safe, be sure to also follow these tips:

- Leave your money in a safe place. Americans do not generally carry a lot of cash.
- Lock your doors when you are out and while you are sleeping. Carry your key with you and do not leave it where someone might take it.
- Walk with others when you are out at night.
- Be aware of your department's emergency policies and procedures.
- When using an automated teller machine (ATM), please be careful when going to and from the ATM. Never count your money in front of the machine or where others can see you. Remember to take your ATM receipt with you.
- If you encounter an emergency while on campus, push the large red button on one of the red emergency polls with a blue light. These are connected to the campus police department. A police officer will be sent to help you with your emergency.
- Never give strangers personal information about yourself, family or friends.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

If government agents question you, it is important to understand your rights. You should be careful about what you say when approached by federal, state or local law enforcement officials. Anything you say can be used against you in a criminal, immigration or civil case. Please [review our website](#) and feel free to print this information and carry it with you.

Avoid Immigration Scams

Be aware of telephone scammers posing as government/immigration officials requesting money or credit card information. In most instances, scammers will:

- Request personal information (SSN, passport number or A-number);
- Identify false problems with your immigration record; and/or
- Ask for payment to correct the records.

If you believe you might be the victim of an attempted scam, write down what you can about what they said and then hang up. Report this information to the Office of International Affairs. If necessary, we can help you determine whether it is truly a scam. Do not provide personal information or payment. Government agencies will not call to ask for payment over the phone. In addition, DHS will never call you to discuss immediate deportation.

COMPLETION OF PROGRAM

If you complete your program before the end date on your DS-2019, you are required to report this information to your international advisor. Your DS-2019 will be updated and you will have a grace period following your program end date to leave the U.S.

Grace Period

Upon completion of your program, you are allowed a 30-day grace period to prepare for your departure from the U.S. During this grace period, you are not allowed to participate in your program. You are welcome to travel within the U.S. during this period, but you cannot leave and reenter the U.S. during this time, unless you have a different approved U.S. visa.

212(e) Home Residency Requirement

Some visiting scholars may be subject to 212(e). If you are subject, there will be a notation on the bottom of your J-1 Visa that states "Subject to 212e two-year Home Residency Requirement," and you will have to reside and be physically present in your home country for at least two years before being eligible to receive certain U.S. immigration benefits:

- Eligibility for an immigrant visa or U.S. permanent residency
- Eligibility for employment-based visas
- Eligibility to change status to another non-immigrant visa category from within the U.S.
(exceptions to this are for A, G or U Visas)

If you have questions about whether you are subject to 212(e), contact your international advisor.

12-Month Bars on Repeat Participation

The 12-month bar states that anyone in a J-1/J-2 category must wait at least 12 months before becoming eligible to begin a new J-1/J-2 program as a researcher or professor unless they have transferred their program to a new institution.

