



# Global FAU

CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

## International Student Pre-Arrival Guide Graduate Students

### PRE-ARRIVAL

#### 1) ACTIVATE YOUR FAU ACCOUNT

Review these [instructions](#), then [activate your FAU account](#) (FAUNet ID).

#### 2) REQUEST YOUR I-20

Log into [iStart](#) using your MyFAU (FAUNet ID) credentials and click on “New Student Initial I-20”.

- a) Complete the [Request for I-20 eForm](#) and upload your proof of funding document(s) (financial certification form).
- b) Complete the [Passport Information eForm](#) and upload a copy of your passport.
- c) *Transfer students only:* If you already have an F-1 Visa and have been attending another U.S. Institution, complete the [SEVIS Transfer In Request eForm](#) and upload your Visa information to transfer your SEVIS record.

#### 3) PLAN TO ATTEND OUR INFORMATION & Q&A SESSIONS

- The virtual [Information & Q&A sessions](#) are for newly admitted international students to assist with the transition to FAU. Each session is approximately 60 minutes and consists of a short presentation, followed by time for questions.
- You can view the schedule and register at the above link. You can also find recordings and documents from past sessions.

#### 4) PAY YOUR SEVIS FEE

You are required to pay the [I-901 SEVIS fee](#) (\$350) prior to applying for a Visa.

#### 5) APPLY FOR YOUR VISA

- Review the [Visa application and appointment information](#).
- Complete the Form DS-160 Visa application and pay the \$185 application fee.
- Let us know when your Visa has been approved.

## 6) REGISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION & IMMIGRATION CHECK-IN

- You are required to attend [International Student Orientation](#) in person the week before the semester begins.
- After you've arrived in the states, you must complete the virtual [Immigration Check-In](#) where you will submit your immigration documents to be reviewed by an international student advisor.
- [Register here](#) for both your Orientation and Check-In sessions.

## 7) REGISTER FOR NEW GRADUATE STUDENT ORIENTATION

In addition to the mandatory International Student Orientation, it is strongly recommended to register for the [New Graduate Student Orientation](#).

## 8) SUBMIT YOUR IMMUNIZATION DOCUMENTS

- Review the [immunization requirements](#).
- Log into [Medicat](#); enter your vaccine dates and upload supporting documentation. Processing time is around 5 business days.
- Questions about immunization compliance should be directed to [complianceservices@medicat.com](mailto:complianceservices@medicat.com).

## 9) MAKE YOUR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

- You are expected to arrive at least 1 week before the semester begins to move into housing, get settled, attend orientation and check-in, and take care of any other business.
- Book your flight and make your plans for local transportation to the campus area. See the [Travel and Transportation Guide](#).

## 10) MAKE YOUR HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS

- On Campus Housing
  - Priority for on campus housing is given to undergraduate students, but graduate students can still apply.
  - Check the [FAU Housing](#) website for application instructions and deadlines.
  - Submit your \$100 non-refundable housing deposit and contract through the [Housing Portal](#).
- Off Campus Housing
  - See the [Off Campus Housing Resources Guide](#) for information to help with your search.
- Book temporary housing (hotel, Airbnb, etc.) if your permanent housing is not ready upon arrival.

## 11) REGISTER FOR YOUR CLASSES

- Once you have registered for International Student Orientation and your immunization documents are processed, you should [register for classes](#).
- Review the [full-time courseload requirements](#) for international students.
- You may take maximum of 3 credits fully online each semester and the rest of your courses must be in person or hybrid in person.
- Review the [video tutorials](#) on how to search for and register for classes.
- Contact your academic department if you have questions regarding academic requirements and curriculum:
  - [College of Arts and Letters](#)
  - [College of Business](#)
  - [College of Education](#)
  - [College of Engineering and Computer Science](#)
  - [College of Medicine](#)
  - [College of Nursing](#)
  - [College of Science](#)
  - [College of Social Work and Criminal Justice](#)

## 12) PREPARE YOUR TRAVEL/IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

- Gather the following documents and prepare to carry them on you for travel and immigration purposes:
  - Transportation details and tickets
  - Passport with valid F-1 or J-1 Visa stamp
  - FAU I-20 or DS-2019
  - Additional supporting documents:
    - Proof of enrollment
    - Proof of finances
    - Other documents to help you answer questions about the purpose of your entry to the U.S., what you will be studying, etc.
- For more information about how to prepare for your entry into the United States, visit: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/getting-to-the-united-states>

## 13) PREPARE YOUR CASH FUNDS FOR ARRIVAL

- You should plan to arrive in the U.S. with at least USD \$5,000-\$7,000 cash, whether through traveler's checks or by wire transfer, to pay for your initial expenses.
- If you are using a private student loan in which the funds are disbursed directly to the university (e.g. Prodigy Finance or MPower), the funds cannot be disbursed without an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) or Social Security Number (SSN). It takes several weeks to obtain an ITIN or SSN. Email [studygroup@fau.edu](mailto:studygroup@fau.edu) for more information about private student loans and the ITIN process.

## POST-ARRIVAL

### 1) ATTEND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION & IMMIGRATION CHECK-IN

You should have already registered for the [International Student Orientation](#) (in person) and [Immigration Check-In](#) (virtual). Attend the sessions that you registered for. If you have not registered, please do so and attend those sessions.

### 2) ATTEND NEW GRADUATE STUDENT ORIENTATION

In addition to the mandatory International Student Orientation, it is strongly recommended to register for the [New Graduate Student Orientation](#).

### 3) SUBMIT YOUR OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

*Applies to students admitted via Study Group. May apply to other students.  
Can be done pre- or post-arrival.*

- You are required to submit a final official transcript from all higher education institutions attended. Official transcripts must be stamped and signed by an institutional authority. If a physical copy of the transcript is being submitted, it must be received by FAU in an unopened/sealed envelope bearing the institution's name and address. Please note: If you are submitting a paper hard copy transcript, it must be an original document on official paper issued by the institution – **photocopies or xerox copies are not acceptable.**
- **Your official transcript(s) can be submitted in one of the following ways:**
  - Have the signed/stamped official transcript sent via email directly from the institution's Registrar's Office or equivalent: [graduatecollege@fau.edu](mailto:graduatecollege@fau.edu) (*preferred method*)
  - Submit the signed/stamped/sealed envelope to International Enrollment Services in person or via standard mail:  
FAU Center for Global Engagement  
c/o Study Group Intl Enrollment Services  
777 Glades Rd, DP-49  
Boca Raton, FL 33431  
[Campus Map](#)

### 4) REQUEST YOUR OWL CARD

- The Owl Card is used to access various services and retail options at FAU. All students are required to obtain one, as it serves as your official photo identification, debit card, Owl Bucks card, library card, residence hall building key, meal card for those who have meal plans, and your ticket to many FAU events, including sporting events. You will need to present your OWL card to receive the benefits of the many services offered at FAU.
- Complete the [online form](#) to request your Owl Card.

## 5) REVIEW THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The [Academic Calendar](#) has all the important dates and deadlines for each semester. Be sure to review it each semester for the following and more:

- Classes Begin
- Last Day to Add/Drop Classes
- Last Day to Pay Tuition/Fees
- Holidays/University Closed
- Classes End
- Final Exams

## 6) PAY YOUR TUITION AND FEES

- Pay your tuition and fees by the payment deadline for the semester. If you plan to use an international payment via Flywire, be sure to pay at least 3-5 business days before the deadline to allow for processing time.
- Review the [Payment Methods](#)
  - Pay online via MyFAU > FAU Self Service
  - Pay by mail
  - [International Payments via Flywire](#)
  - [Installment Payment Plan](#)
  - International Student Loan
    - If your loan company sends the funds directly to FAU (e.g. Prodigy Finance, MPower, etc.), email [studygroup@fau.edu](mailto:studygroup@fau.edu) for additional info.

## 7) OPEN A U.S. BANK ACCOUNT

You are welcomed to open an account with any bank of your choice. [PNC Bank](#) offers student banking and has an office and ATM on campus. They will be available after international orientation if you would like to open an account with them.

## 8) GET A U.S. PHONE NUMBER

- If you have an unlocked cell phone, you can use your existing phone to get a sim card and sign up for a service plan with a U.S. provider. If your phone is locked, you may need to purchase a new phone.
- Some popular mobile service providers are Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint, but there are several others to choose from. Contact a service provider to discuss your options.

## 9) ATTEND CLASSES

- Make sure you know what time your classes start and where they meet.
- Be on time for your classes; tardiness is unprofessional, disrespectful, and may not be tolerated.
- Use the syllabus provided by each professor to know what materials are required for the course and what will be covered and when.