



UNM

Office of International
Programs & Studies-OIPS

UNM's Link to the World- OIPS



Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What are some important phone numbers?**
 - a. International Admissions Office: 505-277-5829
 - b. Office of International Programs & Studies: 505-277-4032
 - c. Student Health & Counseling: 505-277-3136
 - d. Campus Housing Office: 505-277-2606
 - e. General University Information: 505-277-0111
- 2. When should I arrive in Albuquerque as a new student, and what do I do once I get there?**
 - a. New students can arrive in the US no earlier than 30 days prior to the start date on the I-20 (for F-1 students) or DS-2019 (for J-1 students)
 - b. You should get settled into your accommodations and then report to OIPS to sign up for a check-in session.
 - c. Review your welcome letter and the international student brochure that you received with your I-20 for complete details. The welcome letter is also on this website (from the homepage, click on “international students” and “incoming students”)
- 3. How do I get to UNM from the Albuquerque International Sunport (Airport)?**
 - a. UNM is about five miles from the airport. You can contact volunteers with International Students, Inc. to arrange for free airport pick-up (see the welcome letter for more details). You may also take a shuttle or a taxi from the airport. The Sunport (airport) shuttle is located on the first floor across from the Southwest Airlines baggage claim. You can also take a taxi. Here is some helpful contact information:
 - i. International Students, Inc.: ISIABQ@aol.com.
 - ii. Sunport Shuttle: 505-883-4966
 - iii. Albuquerque Cab Company: 505-883-4888
 - iv. Lowe's Taxi Cab: 505-604-7185
- 4. As a new student, where do I go if I don't have a place to live?**
 - a. If you haven't made living arrangements prior to your arrival in the US, check your brochure (page 10) for a list of hotels, or you can research your own temporary accommodations online.
 - b. If you are signed up to live on campus, check your housing information for the move-in dates. Usually, the dorms open 1 week before the start of fall classes. You will need temporary housing (i.e. hotel accommodations) if you arrive before the dorms open.
 - c. For permanent housing, check page 11 of your new student brochure for details and visit this website for more information: <http://och.unm.edu/>

- 5. I applied for a dorm months ago, but haven't heard anything. When do I find out my dorm assignment and receive move-in instructions?**
 - a. Housing assignments and information is usually sent out to all students (who have signed up for fall) around the week of July 4th every year.
- 6. How is the climate in Albuquerque?**
 - a. Albuquerque's climate is typically warm and dry, with low relative humidity. There are four distinct seasons so you want to plan your wardrobe for each. The winters can be very cold or sometimes mild, depending on the year. Spring is usually windy and cool, with occasional snow-fall late in the season. Summers are usually hot, with annual monsoons (seasonal afternoon rain showers) beginning typically in July. Fall is mild, with cool nights and less rain.
- 7. What should I know about Albuquerque?**
 - a. Visit the City of Albuquerque website to learn about the history of Albuquerque and our unique culture;
<http://www.cabq.gov/museum/history/foundingabq.html>
 - b. It's a great city if you love the outdoors! There are plenty of outdoor activities to engage in, whether you enjoy hiking, biking, skiing, fishing or just walking.
 - c. Old Town Albuquerque is a great "touristy" place to start, with great restaurants, places to shop, museums, the zoo and biological park.
 - d. Albuquerque is home to the International Balloon Fiesta, the largest hot air balloon gathering in the world. This is usually held in early October.
 - e. The annual New Mexico State Fair runs for approximately 3 weeks in September, with plenty of regional food, cultural events, art and carnival rides to engage in.
 - f. The Sandia Peak Tramway is located at the base of the Sandia Mountain Range (east side of the city). This is the world's longest passenger aerial tramway, taking you from the base of the mountains to the top – with some of the best views you've ever seen!
- 8. How do I get to know other students?**
 - a. OIPS organizes regular events called "social hours" every couple of weeks throughout the school year. This is a great way to meet other students and participate in a variety of activities. If you've signed up for the OIPS listserve and/or the (World Student Alliance) Facebook Account, you'll receive information on all of our events!
 - b. You can also participate in University wide events throughout the year, or join a club or organization (UNM has over 300). To find out more information, visit <http://www.unm.edu/~sac/>
- 9. How do I sign up for the OIPS listserve and facebook account?**
 - a. To subscribe to the listserve:
 - i. Send a message from your email account to: listserv@unm.edu
 - ii. Leave the subject field blank
 - iii. Type in the body of the message: subscribe intlstud-L Firstname
Last Name
 - b. To join Facebook:

- i. Go to www.facebook.com
- ii. Enter your personal info and assign a picture to your profile
- iii. Click on “Groups” tab and search for “World Student Alliance”
- iv. Join this group
- v. Look out for event “notifications” on your homepage or find planned events

10. Can I work in the US legally?

- a. Opportunities exist for F-1 or J-1 students to work in the US only after they meet specific requirements and are authorized to work in advance.
- b. Work authorization (with exception to part-time on-campus employment) will be indicated on your I-20/DS-2019 as proof of work eligibility.
- c. Please browse this website for specific details (from the homepage click on, “international students”, “current students” and “Working in the USA”), and speak to an advisor in OIPS before you start working.
- d. *Note: working in the US without authorization is a serious violation of your immigration status and can lead to termination of your immigration record and deportation from the US!*

11. Is international orientation and check-in mandatory for all new students?

- a. Yes. A “hold” is placed on your student account preventing you from registering for classes at the time of admission. You must complete both orientation and check-in to have the hold removed, to have your immigration record validated, and to prevent disenrollment from the University. You will also receive your ID numbers at this time, which will allow you to obtain your UNM ID Card and create your email account. New students should review their welcome letter and brochure for important dates and further information.

12. How can I create my UNM NetID/UNM email address?

- a. After attending a check-in session at OIPS, you will be given a temporary Social Security number (SSN) and your UNM ID number.
- b. Go to <https://my.unm.edu> and click on “Create a UNM Net ID”. Follow the prompts to set up your ID and email address.

13. I’m a new student arriving in the US after the start date on my I-20/DS-2019, will I have any problems?

- a. If you’re arriving late and the start date on your UNM immigration document is in the past, you should contact the university.
- b. If you’re a graduate student, contact your department and ask for a letter giving you permission to enroll in classes late, and if you have an assistantship, the letter should indicate that your position will be held for you and that you can begin this late as well.
- c. If you’re an undergraduate, you should contact the Dean of Students Office to report your late arrival and get permission for a late orientation session (you should have this in writing as well).
- d. Immigration officials may ask for this documentation when arriving in the US when they notice your start date has already passed.
- e. *Note: The last day to register for classes for the semester is usually the end of the second week of classes, so if you’re arriving after this it may be*

too late to register for the semester. If you think you may be arriving later than this, please call OIPS and ask to speak to an advisor for guidance.

14. I have a “hold” on my account, preventing me from registering for classes.

Why can’t I register?

- a. If you have a hold and don’t know why, you can come and speak to an OIPS advisor. If it’s a hold from our office, it’s possible that you still need to complete a check-in session. We can tell you what other department may have a hold for you, but we cannot remove holds from other offices.

15. How do I apply for a work visa (i.e. H1-B) or permanent residency in the United States?

- a. These questions can be complicated depending on your current status in the US and specific circumstances. It is best to come to OIPS to speak with an advisor about these types of application. While advisors can give you basic information on these status questions, we deal primarily with F and J visas and will refer you out to immigration lawyers for specific filing assistance and application review. For a list of immigration lawyers, please see our website (from our homepage, click on “handouts” and “immigration contacts”). We also have an immigration lawyer come and speak once a semester at our work visa and permanent residency workshop. Materials from the last presentation can be downloaded from our homepage.

16. I need to renew my visa, can I go to Mexico?

- a. While many students choose this option, we always advise that you come and speak to an OIPS advisor before you decide to do this, as it may be risky for some students. See our handout on “Applying for a new F-1 Visa in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico” (from our homepage, click on “international student”, “current students”, “Travel, Visa and Status Info”, “Traveling out of and returning to the US”, then open the document).

17. What immunizations do I need to come to UNM?

- a. While immigration regulations do not require specific immunizations, UNM does. In most cases you will receive a letter from the University detailing this requirement after admission. If you did not receive it, or would like access to it again, see the following document on the Student Health & Counseling website for instructions:

<http://shac.unm.edu/ImmunizationRequirements.pdf>

18. Do I need health insurance, and if so, how do I get it?

- a. Yes, health insurance is required for all international students and proof of insurance must be provided at the start of the semester (the deadline will be given to you at check-in). It is a good idea to purchase travel insurance to cover you until you have arrived in Albuquerque and enroll in an insurance plan.
- b. If you have an assistantship, in most cases your insurance will be paid by your department. An advisor will explain your plan and give you an informational booklet at your check-in session.
- c. If you need to purchase your own insurance, OIPS has an International insurance plan you can purchase, or you may select from the two plans

available at the health center. You can also select your own provider from another source. Information will also be given to you at check-in.

- d. To start learning about the plans available to you at the University, return to our homepage and click on “Handouts” and “Health Information”.

19. Can I get a credit card or cell phone in the US?

- a. Many international students have trouble getting a credit card in the US. First, you need to have a job and social security number (SSN). Many credit card companies want you to have some credit history in the US before issuing a card to you (but you can't show credit history in the US without credit!!). So, for those students with an SSN, you may have to check with different companies to see if they'll issue a card to you.
- b. A similar issue exists regarding cell phones. Most companies require you to have an SSN in order to get a cell phone. If you have a job, then you're eligible for a social security number. If you don't have a job/SSN, it is recommended you look into the pre-paid cell phones that don't require a contract. You can buy these at places like Walmart, Kmart and various other locations.

20. Where can I get an academic transcript?

- a. You can print an unofficial transcript (required for most requests at OIPS) from your LoboWeb account (my.unm.edu).
- b. You can also request an unofficial or official transcript from the Records & Registration Office. Official transcripts cost \$5.00.

For other questions, browse our webpage – chances are, you'll find your answer!! You can also come in and speak with an advisor at our *walk-in hours from 1-3pm, Monday-Friday.*