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I want to welcome you to UNMC and our partner, The Nebraska Medical Center. Our common vision is to be a world renowned health science center and health system. This means:

- Delivering state-of-the-art health care through academic and private practice models;
- Preparing the best educated health professionals and scientists;
- Ranking among the leading research centers;
- Advancing our historic commitment to community health;
- Embracing the richness of diversity; and
- Creating economic growth in Nebraska.

UNMC is a dynamic environment in which to learn. The opportunities in health care and the health sciences today are limited only by your aspirations. We challenge you to reach your full potential with appropriate faculty guidance, encouragement and support. Your success is our success. No calling is more important.

My best wishes as you begin this exciting journey.

Jeffrey P. Gold, MD
Chancellor, University of Nebraska Medical Center
We are pleased that you have made the decision to join the vibrant community at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Your presence on our campus contributes to the rich tapestry of UNMC students, staff, and faculty.

We hope that you will take advantage of the resources and services offered as you establish roots at UNMC and in Omaha. All around you are individuals, groups, and activities that serve to enrich your life and help you feel at home in your new community.

The staff of International Health and Medical Education welcomes you and hopes that you will always feel free to stop by for assistance, ask questions, or just say a friendly hello. We extend warm greetings and wishes as you begin your academic program here.

Ward A. Chambers, MD
Executive Director
International Health and Medical Education
University of Nebraska Medical Center
Welcome to UNMC, where cutting-edge research leads to world-class care. You are entering an academic health science center where possibilities for personal growth and learning are limited only by your own diligence, intelligence and imagination. Here, you will study and work with researchers and health care professionals known around the world as experts in their fields. You will learn from the best because we want you to be the best in your chosen discipline.

Congratulations on your first step toward a career through which you will surely make a difference in this world.

H. Dele Davies, MD, MS, MHCM
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Dean for Graduate Studies
Professor of Pediatrics
BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

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ADVANCED PREPARATION PRIOR TO ENTRY

Careful planning and preparation by students and exchange visitors can ensure that the process goes smoothly. Here are some things you should do:

- Before leaving your country, confirm that your passport and visa are still valid for entry into the United States. The passport should be valid for at least six months beyond the date of your expected stay.

- Check to see that your visa accurately reflects your correct visa classification.

- If the visa states the name of the institution you will attend or identifies the exchange program in which you are participating, verify that this information is accurate as well. If your review indicates any discrepancies or potential problems, visit the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to obtain a new visa.

- Students and exchange visitors entering the United States for the first time under their respective non-immigrant visa classification may only be admitted up to 30-days prior to the program start date.

- When you receive your U.S. non-immigrant visa at the Embassy or Consulate in your country, the consular officer will seal your immigration documents in an envelope and attach it to your passport. **You should not open this envelope!** The Customs and Border Protection Officer at the U.S. port-of-entry will open the envelope.
WHAT TO PACK

The following checklist will help you make sure you haven’t missed anything important.

☐ Money, credit cards, checkbook, traveler’s checks, financial records (copy of bank statements and list of account numbers)

☐ Emergency money (keep U.S. $100 hidden somewhere on your person in the event of an emergency)

☐ Clothing, including clothes for winter months such as heavy clothing, boots, coat, hat and gloves or mittens. See the information about weather in Omaha in the section that follows.

☐ Official academic transcripts and English translations

☐ Medical and dental records, including immunization and vaccination records and prescriptions, eyeglasses and insurance records

☐ Marriage certificate and birth certificates for all family members

☐ Passport and plane tickets

☐ National and international driver’s licenses

☐ A list of the names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of key contacts, both in the U.S. and at home, including the contact information for friends and family who live in the U.S.

☐ Books, including a dictionary and phrase book

☐ Business cards

☐ When you travel, you should carry some specific documents on your person. Do not check them in your baggage! If your baggage is lost or delayed, you will not be able to show the documents to the Customs and Border Protection Officer. As a result you may not be able to enter the United States.
You should bring enough money with you to cover your first month’s expenses until you are able to transfer funds from abroad. This will be at least U.S. $1,500 but probably more (look at your budget to be sure).

Your carry-on bag should also include one change of clothing.

Make two photocopies of any important document. Leave one copy at home and bring one copy with you, but keep it separate from the originals. It might be worthwhile to bring several spare sets of passport photographs in case you need to get a new passport or visa.

The following items may seem inconsequential, but you will find them very useful: pen and pad of paper, safety pins, paper clips, sewing kit, extra buttons, first aid kit, alarm clock or watch, calculator, flashlight, spare batteries and plastic bags. If you lock your luggage, ensure that is a lock approved by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). More information about TSA approved locks can be found at tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assistant/locks.shtm.

Label your luggage inside and out with your name, contact information. If your luggage is lost in transit, this will help the airline return it to you. Needless to say, critical documents, medicines, and other supplies should be carried in your carry-on luggage.

It can be very expensive to transport a lot of belongings. It might be better to buy what you need in the U.S. If you decide to send your belongings separately, your main options are by boat and by air. Shipping items by boat takes longer, but is also about half the cost of sending them by air. Allow 8 weeks for items to arrive by boat, or one or two weeks for items shipped by air.
BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Before you depart, you should be aware of USDA’s guidelines for bringing agricultural items into the United States. USDA restricts or prohibits many of these items from entering the country because they could carry pests or diseases that could threaten human health or devastate the environment, crops, agricultural animals, ornamental plants, and community landscapes. Individuals who fail to declare non-commercial agricultural items may be subject to penalties ranging from $1,100 to $60,000 per violation.

For more information about items that are not allowed, visit aphis.usda.gov/travel/index.shtm

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME (DST)

Daylight Savings Time—often referred to as “Summer Time,” “DST,” or “Daylight Savings Time”—is a way of making better use of the daylight in the evenings by setting the clocks forward one hour during the longer days of the summer, and back again in the fall.

CLOCKS BACK OR FORWARD?
The clock moves ahead (= losing one hour) in the spring when DST starts, and falls back one hour (= gaining one hour) when DST ends in the fall. To remember which way the clock goes, keep in mind one of these sayings: “spring forward, fall back” or “spring ahead, fall behind.”

WHEN WE CHANGE OUR CLOCKS

Most of the United States begin Daylight Savings Time at 2:00 a.m. on the second Sunday in March and reverts to standard time on the first Sunday in November. In the U.S., each time zone switches at a different time.
WEATHER

Omaha experiences all four seasons. Summer brings average temperatures ranging from the mid to high 80s during the heat of the day to the mid-60s at night. In the spring, the average high temperature is around 63 degrees and the average low is about 40 degrees. Fall weather in Omaha usually stays around 70 degrees during the day cooling off to the mid to low 50s at night. Wintertime average high temperatures are in the mid-30s with average lows dipping to the mid-teens. However, these are just average temperatures and not a prediction of what the weather will be like.

- July, on average, is the warmest month
- January is usually the coolest month
- The most precipitation normally occurs in May
- Average yearly snowfall is approximately 28 inches and usually falls during December, January and February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>LOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>32˚F / 0˚C</td>
<td>12˚F / -11˚C</td>
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<td>March</td>
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<td>63˚F / 17˚C</td>
<td>40˚F / 4˚C</td>
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<td>May</td>
<td>74˚F / 23˚C</td>
<td>51˚F / 11˚C</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>84˚F / 29˚C</td>
<td>61˚F / 16˚C</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>87˚F / 31˚C</td>
<td>66˚F / 19˚C</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>85˚F / 29˚C</td>
<td>64˚F / 18˚C</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>77˚F / 25˚C</td>
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<td>65˚F / 18˚C</td>
<td>41˚F / 5˚C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>48˚F / 9˚C</td>
<td>28˚F / -2˚C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>35˚F / 2˚C</td>
<td>16˚F / -9˚C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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WHAT TO EXPECT WHILE TRAVELING

• If the inspector cannot automatically verify your information or you do not have all of the required documentation, you may be escorted to an interview area known as “secondary inspection.” Secondary inspection allows inspectors to conduct additional research in order to verify information. Verifications are done apart from the primary inspection lines so that an individual case will not cause delays for other arriving passengers.

• It is recommended that you have readily available the name and phone number of your student advisor at UNMC in case your admission/participation needs to be verified.

• Failure to provide proper documentation and to comply with entry/exit procedures is cause to refuse the student or exchange visitor admission into the United States. In limited circumstances, if a student or exchange visitor is mostly, but not fully in compliance, he/she may be issued a Form I-515A, Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor. This form authorizes temporary admission for 30 days into the United States and requires the student or exchange visitor to take immediate action to submit proper documentation. Non-compliance with the directions contained on these forms can result in future adverse action.
TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT IN OMAHA

There are a number of ways you can arrange for transportation from the airport in Omaha. Here are some options.

RENTAL CARS
ADVANTAGE 800-777-5500
ALAMO 800-462-5266
AVIS 800-831-2847
BUDGET 402-348-0455
DOLLAR 800-800-4000

SHUTTLES
The Ground Transportation Center is located inside of Door #3 on the lower level of the terminal building. Certain shuttles have phones there. Local hotel/motel (with or without shuttles) phone boards/reservation centers are located near the north and south baggage claim areas.

BLACK TIE LIMOUSINE & SHUTTLE SERVICE 800-938-2608
Travel to/from Omaha, Sioux City and Sioux Falls located in Sioux City, Iowa

DASHABOUT ROADRUNNER 800-720-3274
Greater Nebraska

I-80 EPPLEY EXPRESS 800-888-9793
Kearney / Grand Island / York / Lincoln / Omaha

OMALINK 877-473-5465
Van shuttles and town cars serving Nebraska and Iowa

OMASUX EXPRESS SHUTTLE 888-233-1131
Travel to/from Omaha to Sioux City / Sioux Falls and surrounding area

TAXIS
HAPPY CAB 402-333-TAXI (EXT. 8294)
CHECKER CAB 402-333-TAXI (EXT. 8294)
YELLOW CAB 402-333-TAXI (EXT. 8294)
SAFEWAY CAB 402-333-TAXI (EXT. 8294)
CITY TAXI 402-933-8700
BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

HOTELS IN OMAHA
Call or reserve online

CLOSE TO AIRPORT

SUPER 8 CARTER LAKE/ EPPLEY AIRPORT
3000 Airport Dr., Carter Lake, Iowa
402-346-7600
super8.com

CANDLEWOOD SUITES OMAHA AIRPORT
2601 Abbott Plz., Omaha, Nebr.
402-346-7600
candlewoodsuites.com

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS HOTEL & SUITES OMAHA AIRPORT
2510 Abbott Dr., Carter Lake, Iowa
402-346-7600
hiexpress.com

COUNTRY INN & SUITES
2210 Abbott Dr., Carter Lake, Iowa
402-346-7600
countryinn.com

SLEEP INN & SUITES AIRPORT
2525 Abbot Dr., Omaha, Nebr.
402-346-7600
sleepinn.com

DOWNTOWN OMAHA

DOUBLETREE HOTEL OMAHA-DOWNTOWN
1616 Dodge St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-346-7600
omahadowntown.doubletree.com

THE MAGNOLIA OMAHA
1615 Howard St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-341-2500
magnoliahotelomaha.com

ECONO LODGE DOWNTOWN
2211 Douglas St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-345-9565
econolodge.com

HILTON GARDEN INN OMAHA DOWNTOWN/ OLD MARKET
1005 Dodge St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-341-4400
hiltongardeninn.hilton.com

HILTON OMAHA
1001 Cass St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-998-3400
hilton.com/Omaha

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT OMAHA DOWNTOWN
101 South 10th St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-346-2200
marriott.com

EMBASSY SUITES HOTEL OMAHA
555 South 10th St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-346-9000
embassysuites3.hilton.com

BEST WESTERN SEVILLE PLAZA HOTEL
330 North 30th St., Omaha, Nebr.
402-345-2222
VISA INFORMATION

A visa is a grant of permission to enter the country. The U.S. entrance requirements are as follows:

- You must be healthy. Specific admissible health conditions change from time to time, please consult your U.S. embassy or consulate for current information.
- You must be law-abiding. Criminal behavior is grounds for deportation.
- You must be able to support yourself financially during your stay.
- You intend to leave the U.S. after you complete your studies.

There are three types of student visas:

- **F-1 (Student Visa)** The F-1 visa is for full-time students enrolled in an academic or language program. F-1 students may stay in the U.S. for the full length of their academic program plus 60 days. F-1 students must maintain a full-time course load and complete their studies by the expiration date listed on the I-20 form.

- **J-1 (Exchange Visitor Visa)** The J-1 visa is issued for students needing practical training that is not available in their home country to complete their academic program. The training must be directly related to the academic program. The J-1 visa obligates the student to return to their home country for a minimum of two years after the end of their studies in the U.S. before being eligible to apply for an immigrant (permanent residence) visa.

- **M-1 (Vocational Student Visa)** The M-1 visa is issued for students attending non-academic trade and vocational schools. The M-1 visa is valid for at most one year. Recipients of an M-1 visa may not change fields of study. Switching from an M-1 visa to a F-1 visa is not permitted.

Of these, the F-1 and the J-1 are the most common for international students.
BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

SPouse AND CHILDREN

• Your spouse and unmarried, minor children who intent to reside with you during your study may apply for F-2 or M-2 visas. Your school must issue them an individual Form I-20, which is required to apply for their visas. You must provide a copy of your F-1 or M-1 visa and provide proof of relationship.
• Your minor children are permitted to attend school in the United States while accompanying you.

CHANGING VISA STATUS AFTER ARRIVAL

The B-2 visa (Tourist Visa) is not considered a student visa for full-time study. Studying in the U.S. on a B-2 visa is grounds for deportation. Switching from a B-2 visa to a F-1 or J-1 visa after arriving in the U.S. is extremely difficult and may be grounds for deportation or prosecution for visa fraud. If you intend to enter the U.S. with a B-2 visa and possibly switch later to a F-1 or J-1 visa, be sure to get the visa with a “Prospective Student” stamp on it. You’ll probably need to supply a copy of a letter of admission before they will grant you a B-2 visa with a “Prospective Student” stamp on it. As a general rule, if you intend to enter the U.S. as a student, you should get a F-1 or J-1 visa. If you decide to change status after arriving in the U.S., you should wait at least 60 days to avoid presumptions of visa fraud.

MAINTAINING VISA STATUS AFTER ARRIVAL

If a student on a F-1 visa is not able to complete their studies by the expiration date on the I-20 form, they must apply to the school’s foreign student advisor for an extension 30 days before expiration. Extensions are normally granted for academic and medical reasons so long as there have been no violations of visa status.

It is possible to transfer schools after arrival on an F-1 visa. You will need to notify your current school of the transfer and obtain an I-20 form from
the new school. You will complete the student certification section of the I-20 and must deliver it to the foreign student advisor at the new school within 15 days of beginning attendance at the new school.

If you are changing majors at your current school, you do not need to notify the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS). If you are changing degree programs (e.g., from a bachelor’s degree to a master’s degree program), you will need to have the foreign student advisor update your I-20 to reflect the new degree objective. This will produce a new I-20 with new validity dates.

**TIP:** Always keep all I-20 forms issued to you, regardless of the dates or programs they reflect. Do not discard or destroy any I-20 forms unless directed to do so by your foreign student advisor.
PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the end of your intended stay in the U.S.

Before leaving for the U.S., make a photocopy of the page containing your photograph and passport number. If your passport is lost or stolen, this will make it easier to replace the passport. Keep the photocopy in a safe place, but do not carry it with your passport.

If your passport is lost or stolen, notify your embassy and the police immediately.

SUFFICIENT FINANCIAL RESOURCES

To get a F-1 visa approved, you will need to demonstrate that you have sufficient funds to pay for the first year of study and that you have resources available to cover the rest of your educational program. For a M-1 or J-1 visa, you will need to demonstrate that you have sufficient funds to pay for all tuition and living costs for your entire stay in the U.S.

The information you provide on the I-20 form (F-1) or DS-2019 form (J-1) will be scrutinized very carefully by both the foreign student advisor at the school and the USCIS. If you don’t have the resources necessary for study in the U.S., you will not get a visa.

ADDITIONAL VISA INFORMATION

Once you are in the U.S., check your visa status carefully before traveling to other countries. Your visa must permit multiple entry. Otherwise, you might not be allowed to re-enter the U.S. when you return from your trip. It is very difficult to get a new U.S. visa outside your home country and the U.S. if you’ve been denied re-entry into the U.S.

For students on an F-1 visa, your passport must be valid for at least 6 months when you enter the U.S. and your I-20 must have been signed by the foreign student advisor within the past six months. You must also
have a valid F-1 visa stamped in your passport and carry documentation of financial support. The rules for students on a J-1 visa are similar, except the DS-2019 form must have been signed by your sponsor within the past year. But there are exceptions for students on both visas, especially for students who have changed their visa type while in the U.S. or who come from certain countries, so check with your international student advisor before any trip outside the U.S., including trips to Canada or Mexico. There are also limits on the amount of time you may stay outside the U.S. before your visa becomes invalid.

**PROVING NON-IMMIGRANT INTENT**

You may need to establish that you intend to return to your home country after your studies are complete. You may need to demonstrate economic, personal, social and cultural ties to your home country. Some of the methods of doing this include:

- Providing a list of the names, addresses, ages and occupations of close family members who remain in the home country.
- Providing documentation of financial ties to the home country, such as ownership of real estate.
- Providing evidence of job prospects in the home country, such as a letter from a potential employer.
- Providing an explanation of why equivalent educational training is not available in your home country or as suitable.

Likewise, if you have close relatives or financial interests in the United States, you may have difficulty getting a visa. If a consular officer believes that you intend to immigrate to the U.S., the officer must, as a matter of law, deny the visa.

You may be required by the USCIS to post a Departure Bond to guarantee your departure.

For more information visit travel.state.gov/visa
PARTICIPATION IN STUDENT HEALTH COVERAGE THROUGH FUND B

Fund B is mandated by the Chancellor and is approved by the Board of Regents to support Student Health operations.

All UNMC Students are automatically enrolled in Student Health Fund B during registration if taking:

- 7 or more hours as an undergraduate student;
- 4 or more hours as a graduate student;
- 4 or more hours during Summer Sessions (both undergraduate and graduate students)

Part-time students (taking less than 5 hours) and dependents of students are allowed, but not required, to participate in Fund B.

Fund B for Student Health begins at 12:01 a.m. on the first day of the semester for which the premium covers. Fund B coverage ceases for UNMC students at 11:59 p.m. on a student’s termination date, graduation date, or the last day of the semester (for continuing students).

STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

In addition to payment of Fund B (as described above), UNMC requires that full-time students have inpatient (hospitalization) insurance. Full-time students who wish to waive/decline UNMC’s endorsed student health insurance program may do so by providing proof of coverage through their parents, spouse, employer or their own personal plan. If you decline the insurance you must be able to document that insurance from your home country will cover expenses in the U.S. In most cases it is better to purchase the UNMC endorsed student health insurance. If you wish to waive/decline the student insurance, you must fill out an electronic waiver form that can be found at www.care.unmc.edu. Failure to complete the waiver will result in an automatic charge for the insurance to your tuition statement.

Also, all PhD students, regardless of enrollment status, must either accept the fee for health insurance or file the paperwork to formally waive the charging of the insurance fee.

For further information on health insurance see the student handbook (net.unmc.edu/care/docs/handbook.pdf).
IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

It is the intention of UNMC Student Health to provide knowledge of, and take precautions to prevent, communicable diseases for students preparing to enter the health care profession. Immunizations are an extremely important part of this effort for students during their tenure at UNMC and as future medical care providers. Much of what healthcare students and professionals do in the health care setting comes under federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines. Under these guidelines, and those set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are certain sets of immunizations that are required of all healthcare workers.

UNMC Student Health, along with The Nebraska Medical Center’s Healthcare Epidemiology Department, has put in place an immunization policy which adheres to the recommended guidelines set forth by the CDC for healthcare workers.

Specifically, all UNMC students are required to provide evidence of vaccination against, or immunity to, the following:

- Rubeola (measles)
- Rubella
- Mumps
- Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis
- Polio (if traveling outside of the Western Hemisphere)
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Tuberculosis (required annually)
- Hepatitis B
- Influenza immunization is strongly recommended for all students (and is required for all Nursing Students).

For the specific immunization requirements, visit the UNMC Student Health website at unmc.edu/familymed/immunizations_new.htm.

STUDENT HEALTH CONTACT INFORMATION

Student Health Office: 402-559-5158
Appointments: 402-559-7200
Fax immunization forms to: 402-559-8118
Fax for prescription refills: 402-559-5550

Tere Batt, Student Health Coordinator 402-559-5158  |  tbatt@unmc.edu
AFTER YOU ARRIVE

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AFTER YOU ARRIVE
UNMC AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The purpose of the UNMC Ambassador Program is to pair incoming international students with other students who have lived in Omaha for at least one year. Current UNMC students volunteered for the program and were provided with an orientation program. A Student Ambassador will be assigned to international students expressing an interest in the program. The Ambassadors will assist new students in their adjustment to living in Omaha through a variety of social activities. An email will be sent to international students during the summer asking if they wish to participate.

HOUSING

A variety of on-campus and off-campus housing options are available. For students with families, as well as single graduate students, the UNMC student housing is a popular choice. All rental units are located on the UNMC campus, within a short walking distance to all campus buildings. Properties consist of one, two and three bedroom units. Prices range from $485-700 per month for a one bedroom and $580-900 per month for a two bedroom apartment. Additional housing details can be found on the UNMC housing website, www.unmc.edu/housing. All rental agreements are made through the Business Services Department, Rental Property Management. The on-campus student apartments are located at the east end of the Student Life Center parking lot. Maintenance and campus security are available 24 hours a day. Leases are based on the academic year. Parking is provided. For additional information, contact Esther Collins at 402-559-5201 or ecollins@unmc.edu. Students should also know that there is a waiting list for UNMC housing; therefore, they should contact Esther Collins as early as possible if they are interested in living in the UNMC apartments.
The majority of students that choose to live off campus live near UNMC, while others find apartments in other areas of the city that may require a longer commute. There are a few apartment buildings between 36th and 38th Streets and between Farnam and Jones Streets that are reasonably priced and are located in a relatively safe part of the city so you can still walk to campus. Most students recommend not searching for apartments in the North, South and especially East of these blocks. Apartments that fit your requirements and price range can be found throughout Omaha. There are many apartments and homes to rent between the UNMC campus and 72nd Street. Drive times are only about 10 minutes and these neighborhoods are nice. An excellent resource for housing options off-campus is Real Estate with Honors. Their website is www.realestatewithhonors.com.

WEB SITES THAT MAY BE HELPFUL DURING YOUR HOUSING SEARCH ARE:

- rent.com
- apartments.com
- apartmentguide.com
- forrent.com
- unmcrealestatewithhonors.com
- omaha.com
- omaha.craigslist.org
- angieslist.com

Some things to keep in mind when you are searching for apartments:

1. Most apartment complexes will require the security deposit and first-month’s rent at lease signing. The security deposit could range from $250 to an amount equivalent to one-month’s rent.

2. If you are bringing a pet a pet deposit will be required, which ranges from $150-$400. In addition, you may be asked to pay a monthly pet rent. Some complexes only allow cats and some only cats and small dogs.

3. At the time of lease signing, you will also be asked to fill out an application for services from the Omaha Power Public District (OPPD) for electricity and the Metropolitan Utilities District (MUD) for natural gas and water. If you do not have a payment record with either one of these companies, you will be asked to pay a security deposit to have these services started. OPPD and MUD can ask for a deposit in the range of $50-$200. The exact amount is often determined by the average monthly payments from the previous tenant.
4. Most leases are one-year long. In some cases you will be able to sign six-month leases or go on a month-by-month basis. With shorter leases the monthly rate may be higher.

UNDERSTANDING APARTMENT LISTINGS
Apartments for rent are often described using cryptic language and abbreviations. You will need to learn to decode apartment listings in order to find a place that meets your needs.

Common abbreviations: incl (included), elec (electricity), 1 1/2 baths (one full bathroom and one with just a toilet and sink), a/c (air conditioning), w/w (wall to wall carpeting), h/w (hardwood floors), dw (dishwasher), furn (furnished), cpt (carpeted), gar (garage for a car), yard (includes a backyard), eff (efficiency), immed (available immediately), fp or frplc (includes a wood-burning or gas fireplace). A security building has a locked front door in addition to locks for each apartment.

Rental costs depend primarily on the size, condition and location of the apartment, and whether utilities are included. Larger apartments and apartments which are closer to the school or shopping usually cost more.

The first distinguishing characteristic is the type of the apartment. The different types are defined as follows:

• **Sleeping Room.** A sleeping room is a single room, usually furnished, located in a private home, with a shared bathroom and kitchen. This is the least expensive option, but provides little privacy.

• **Efficiency.** An efficiency is a single room with a private bathroom. The room will include a small alcove that serves as a kitchen and should provide a stove, refrigerator, sink and cabinet space.

• **Studio.** A studio is somewhat larger than an efficiency, and has a separate kitchen and eating area.

• **One, Two or Three Bedroom.** Regular apartments include a separate kitchen, bathroom, living room and/or dining room and the number of bedrooms advertised.

The next important consideration is what is included in the rent and what isn’t.
• **Utilities.** If the advertisement says that utilities are included, that usually means electricity, heat/gas and water/sewage, but not telephone or cable TV. If the advertisement doesn’t specify any utilities, assume that you will be responsible for paying for them. If heat is included, this sometimes means that the landlord controls the temperature, not you. Water and sewage fees are usually paid by the landlord, except if you are renting a house.

• **Furnished or Unfurnished.** A furnished apartment will include a bed, chest of drawers or dresser, a couch or sofa and a dining room table and chairs. A furnished apartment will also include a stove and refrigerator. An unfurnished apartment will include a stove and refrigerator, but nothing else. A furnished apartment will cost extra each month. Graduating students often sell their furniture to incoming students. Most apartments rented are unfurnished.

• **Parking.** If you intend to own a car an apartment that includes a garage or off-street parking is best. It is sometimes difficult to find a parking space on the street, especially if many students with cars live nearby.

• You should also ask whether there are any laundry facilities. In apartment buildings there is usually a coin operated washer and dryer, but not always.
LEASES

A lease is a written contract between the tenant (you) and a landlord which allows you to use a dwelling for a designated period of time in exchange for monthly rent payments. The lease outlines the restrictions on the use of the dwelling and the responsibilities of tenant and landlord. A lease is a legal document and should be read carefully before signing.

If you don’t understand part of the lease, ask the landlord or a friend to explain it to you. Don’t be afraid to cross off sections with which you disagree just because it is a printed form. Both you and the landlord must initial any changes to the printed lease. If the landlord promises to make certain repairs or there are pre-existing problems with the property, attach a list to the lease and have the landlord sign it. The list should include all problems, including leaking faucets, clogged drains, stains on the walls and rugs, peeling paint, cracks and holes in the walls and ceiling, non-functional kitchen appliances and anything else you notice.

When you pay for the rent and security deposit, get a receipt. Get a separate receipt for the rent and security deposit. It is best to pay the rent by check and to use a separate check for the security deposit. You will need this at the end of the lease in order to recover your security deposit. To get your security deposit returned when you move out, return the key to the landlord and provide a forwarding address. We recommend sending this by certified mail, return receipt requested, so that you have proof the key and forwarding address were received by the landlord. The landlord then has 30 days to return your deposit or send you a list of the repairs, their actual cost and any money left in the security deposit.

RENTER’S INSURANCE

Many students obtain renter’s insurance to insure their possessions against fire or theft. The landlord is not responsible for your belongings if they are destroyed in a fire or stolen. Most renter’s insurance policies also protect you if someone is injured while in your apartment. Ask for replacement value coverage, so that the insurance covers the cost of replacing the item.
AFTER YOU ARRIVE

MOVING IN

INTERNET SERVICE
The major companies that provide internet service in Omaha are Cox and CenturyLink. Cox provides high speed internet through your television cable connection. CenturyLink provides high speed internet through your land line phone.

TELEPHONE SERVICE
Many students will choose to have a cell phone. There are a few options to choose from. The two basic options for cell phone service are called prepaid and contract. Prepaid are plans in which you pay for the minutes you use before you use them. When your minutes are close to being used up, you purchase more minutes. Stores such as Target and Walmart often sell these phones.

Cell phones with a contract have monthly charge that you pay whether or not you use the minutes the plan includes. Some of the companies that provide cell phone services are Sprint, AT&T, Verizon, Cricket and T-Mobile. Each company has stores in the area that sell their services. Best Buy and Nebraska Furniture Mart are stores where you can purchase services from many of these different companies in one place.

For a land line, the two companies in Omaha to choose from are Cox and CenturyLink. When asking about the monthly charge for phone service be sure that you ask for a listing of all taxes and fees that will be required as well. Taxes and fees can be a significant portion of the entire phone bill.

Another choice for a home phone is Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP). This is a phone service that uses your internet connection to make phone calls. There are many service providers for VOIP and an internet search can help you find the one that is best for you.

Local telephone calls are included with your monthly phone charge. Long distance calls will incur an additional per minute long distance charge.
International phone calls often cost significantly more than domestic calls. However, many internet services such as Skype and Google Voice offer free or low priced international phone calls. This technology is always changing, so search the internet or talk with fellow international students about which are the current best options.
AFTER YOU ARRIVE

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

In most communities in the United States, but not all, dialing 911 on any phone will connect you to emergency services such as ambulance, fire and police. You do not need to put money in a pay phone to dial 911. Likewise, your college or university will have an on-campus emergency service with its own telephone number.

You should memorize these telephone numbers. You should receive a card with these phone numbers when you obtain your UNMC ID card. When on the UNMC campus, dial the security number rather than 911. Security will dispatch someone to your location immediately and then call 911 if needed. UNMC security officers are familiar with the campus and may be able to reach you sooner than Omaha police officers.

Another way to get emergency help is to dial 0, which reaches a telephone operator. Tell the operator that you have an emergency and the street address and city where help is needed. The operator will connect you to the appropriate emergency service.

Call the emergency telephone numbers if you need help immediately in a life-threatening situation. For example, you should dial 911 if a crime is in progress, someone is badly injured or ill, there is a fire or you fear for your life.

For non-emergencies you should call the non-emergency telephone number for the local police station or campus police. For example, if a car is blocking your driveway, someone broke into your apartment but is no longer there or to report vandalism.

**EMERGENCIES 911**

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HOTLINE  402-559-5111**
(This is the security office at UNMC. International students may call this number to ask for assistance with problems they encounter while new to living in Omaha.)

**OMAHA POLICE (NON-EMERGENCY)  402-444-4877**

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  211**

**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA’S PHONE DIRECTORY**
nebraska.edu/4in1
DEPENDENTS AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dependents of a non-immigrant visa holder of any type, including F-1, are not prohibited from attendance at either a public primary school, an adult education program or another public educational institution.

CHILD CARE

If your children are too young for school and both parents are away during the day, you will need to enroll them in a day care center. Day care can be very expensive, costing between $100 and $200 a week or more.

For temporary care during the evening, you can hire a neighborhood teenager or college student to baby-sit your children for $5 to $15 an hour. Ask your neighbors, friends and colleagues for recommendations. You can also post an advertisement on bulletin boards on campus.

CHILD CARE CENTERS AROUND UNMC

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<tr>
<th>Backyard Preschool</th>
<th>Kidz First Child Development Center</th>
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<td>5001 Leavenworth Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>402-346-1385</td>
<td>402-553-1600</td>
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<tr>
<th>Blossom Time Childcare</th>
<th>Little Lamb’s Daycare and Preschool, Inc</th>
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<td>4915 Chicago Street</td>
<td>4408 Capitol Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>402-554-1606</td>
<td>402-554-1171</td>
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<tr>
<td>blossomchildcare.net</td>
<td>littlelambs.biz</td>
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<tr>
<th>Donna’s Little Darlings</th>
<th>Montessori Learning Center of Dundee</th>
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<tr>
<td>1025 South Saddle Creek Road</td>
<td>5103 Capitol Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>402-558-7050</td>
<td>402-558-6018</td>
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<tr>
<td>donnaslittledarlings.com</td>
<td>montessoriofdundee.com</td>
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<th>Kathy’s Kinder Kids</th>
<th>NE Medical Center-Family Place</th>
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<td>4175 Cass Street</td>
<td>115 South 42nd Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>402-553-5733</td>
<td>402-552-2375</td>
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<tr>
<th>Kids Count 2 Childcare Preschool</th>
<th>nebraskamed.com</th>
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<td>4827 Dodge Street</td>
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<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
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AFTER YOU ARRIVE

**DRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES**

For more details visit dmv.ne.gov/examining

1. An International Driving Permit (IDP) translates information contained on your driver’s license into 10 languages so that officials in foreign countries are able to interpret your license. An IDP supplements a valid government-issued license—it does not serve as a replacement for a license. If you are stopped by law enforcement, you will most likely be asked to produce both your IDP and your official driver’s license. The United States does NOT issue International Driving Permits to foreign visitors, so you will need to obtain this before traveling to the U.S.

2. If you are going to reside in the U.S., you can get a U.S. driver’s license once you are in the U.S. Since you have to present at least two documents showing that your home address is in Nebraska it may take a few weeks to have these documents. The website referenced above shows which type of documents you can provide.

3. Additionally, all USCIS documents are verified prior to the issuance of a license or State ID Card. This verification process can take up to twenty (20) federal work days to complete.

4. There is a written test and a driving test. After you complete the written test, you can get a Learner’s Permit that allows you to legally practice driving. Do not practice driving before you get this permit.

5. Driver’s licenses are issued from the state you reside in, not from the federal government. Once you receive your driver’s license, you will be permitted to drive in all other U.S. states. The laws in each state vary from one to another. It is your responsibility to know and obey the laws of the state you are driving in.

6. Do not purchase a driver’s license online as these are all fraudulent. You have to go to the local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office in person to take your written and driving test.
7. The local DMV offices are listed below. They are open during federal work days Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- 4208 S 50th St
  - Omaha, NE 68117
  - 402-595-2039

- 7414 N 30th St
  - Omaha, NE 68112
  - 402-595-2040

- 5730 S 144th St
  - Omaha, NE 68137
  - 402-595-2424

- 2910 N 108th St
  - Omaha, NE 68164
  - 402-595-3106

**GETTING A DRIVER’S LICENSE**

To get a driver’s license in the US, you first need to pass a written test, and then you must pass a driving test. For detailed information visit [dmv.ne.gov/examining/pdf/engdrivermanual.pdf](http://dmv.ne.gov/examining/pdf/engdrivermanual.pdf)

**Written Test:** This is a basic test to make sure you understand the rules of driving. After passing this exam, you are given a Learner’s Permit which gives you the right to legally practice driving for the driving test.

**Driving Test:** You driving skills will be assessed by an official who rides in the passenger seat while you drive. You must provide the vehicle for the test.

**F1 VISA DRIVER LICENSE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:**

- I-20 from your school in US
- Enrollment verification letter from school
- If you will have job, you will need to have a Social Security Number. If not, you will have to get a form or letter like “Certification of Non-eligibility for Social Security number” or something similar either from Social Security administration office or Department of Transportation office.

You can also take classes to learn the information needed to pass the written test and practice for the driving test.

For more information [dmv.ne.gov/examining/trngtest/com.html](http://dmv.ne.gov/examining/trngtest/com.html)
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Omaha does not have an extensive public transportation system. However there are bus routes to many places. Fares are less than $2 and you can purchase ride cards that are good for multiple rides at a reduced price.

Go to ometro.com for more information on fares and routes.
GETTING A SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

Social Security numbers generally are assigned to people who are authorized to work in the United States. Social Security numbers are used to report your wages to the government and to determine eligibility for Social Security benefits. Social Security will not assign you a number just to enroll in a college or school.

If you want to get a job on campus, you should contact your designated school official for international students. This official can tell you if you are eligible to work on campus and give you information about available jobs. Also, your school may approve certain limited off-campus employment, as permitted under Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations. If your school has authorized you to work either on or off campus, and you meet Social Security’s eligibility requirements described in the next section, you can get a Social Security number.

For more information go to socialsecurity.gov

NEBRASKA OFFICE LOCATION
604 North 109th Court
Omaha, Nebr. 68154
866-716-8299
800-772-1213

OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Tuesday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (noon)
Thursday - Friday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Closed on Federal Holidays

DIRECTIONS
Office located at 108th and Dodge on the North side.
AFTER YOU ARRIVE

CHECKING ACCOUNTS

You will need a checking account to pay bills, such as rent and utilities. It isn’t safe to send cash through the mail. It also isn’t safe to carry large amounts of cash on your person, so you should pay for most of your purchases using a check or credit card.

To open a checking account visit a bank and ask to open a checking account. You will need to deposit money into the account when you open it. You can deposit cash or traveler’s checks or arrange for a wire transfer from your home bank. American Express also offers a variety of services that make it easy to withdraw money from your checking account back home. Additional deposits and withdrawals may be made at any time.

The bank will ask you for your Social Security Number. If you are exempt from this requirement fill out an IRS Form W-8, which you can obtain from the bank.

Most checking accounts will include a debit card you can use to withdraw money from your account at any ATM, 24-hours a day. This lets you make deposits, withdrawals and other transactions (e.g., balance inquiries) at any time, even when the bank is closed. ATMs are located throughout the city near shopping areas and sometimes inside grocery stores. Most people don’t carry a lot of cash because they can get cash from an ATM when they need it. ATMs limit the amount of your daily withdrawals usually to a maximum of $300.

If your ATM card is ever stolen notify the bank immediately. Your liability for a stolen or lost card is limited to $50 if you report the loss promptly.

Be careful in selecting an ATM to use because the bank that owns the ATM can charge a fee (typically $1 - $3) in addition to any fees your own bank may charge for ATM withdrawals. So it is best to use your ATM card to withdraw money only from ATMs owned by your bank. Although you can make withdrawals from almost any ATM, these fees can add up.
CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards are such an ingrained part of the American way of life that you will have trouble making certain purchases with anything other than a credit card. If you want to place an order by phone, cash a check, rent a car or buy airline tickets, you need to have a credit card. However, you can often use the debit card from your checking account for these transactions as a credit card.

Many international students find it difficult to get a credit card in the U.S. because they do not have an established credit history. So if you already have a major credit card such as a MasterCard (Eurocard, Access, Chargex), Visa (Barclaycard, Carte Bleue) or American Express, it is a good idea to bring it with you. American banks can check your credit limit on the foreign card. This may make them more likely to issue you a credit card. Also, if you opened a checking or savings account with a bank that offers credit cards, it may be easier to get a credit card from that bank since you have money on deposit with them.

Because getting a major credit card is difficult for international students, you should take every opportunity to establish a good credit record. Be careful to not bounce any checks. If you open a department store credit card, pay the bills promptly. Mailing your payment late several times or missing a single payment can ruin your credit rating. After you’ve established a good credit history, it will be easier to get a major credit card. The major credit cards in the U.S. are Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover.
TRAVELER’S CHECKS

Traveler’s checks are one of the safest ways to transport money. If the traveler’s checks are lost or stolen, you can easily get them replaced. Do not countersign the checks until you are ready to use them.

If you bring traveler’s checks with you to the U.S., you should bring traveler’s checks that are denominated in U.S. funds. Most businesses will accept U.S. denominated traveler’s checks. Taxi drivers and bus drivers will not accept traveler’s checks, so you should bring some U.S. currency with you as well.

Within the U.S. you can purchase traveler’s checks from many travel agencies, banks, Thomas Cook and American Express offices for face value plus a 1% commission. The American Automobile Association (AAA) sells them to members without charging a commission.
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SHOPPING SUGGESTIONS FROM OTHER STUDENTS

- **Bakers** (bakersplus.com) This is a grocery store close to UNMC campus on the southwest corner of Leavenworth and Saddle Creek Road.

- **Crossroads Mall** This mall has Target, Sears and Barnes & Noble. Student Rating: 2/5

- **Westroads Mall** (westroadmall.com) This mall features JC Penney’s, Younkers, Von Maur, restaurants, a movie theater and a lot of other shops. Make sure you check for offers on the website before you shop.

- **Offers:** westroadmall.com/sales-events Student Rating: 5/5

- **Walgreens** (walgreens.com) There are many Walgreens in town. One is located walking distance from campus. They have everything except fruits and vegetables. Make sure you check for coupons and online offers before you visit. Rating: 5/5

- **Family Dollar** (familydollar.com) This store is in walking distance (4412 Dodge Street) and you can get practically everything here. Check this place out before you venture out any further. Student Rating: 4/5

- **Midtown Crossing** (midtowncrossing.com) This is an entertainment district one mile east of campus on Farnam street. There are moderate to expensive restaurants here. There is a movie theater, a park area and many public events in the summer. Also, on Wednesday evenings there is a Farmers Market which has fresh vegetables and foods from local growers and food preparers (cheese, meats, eggs, pastries and pies).

- **The Old Market** (oldmarket.com) This is the downtown area of Omaha. It is east on Farnam and between 10th and 13th streets. There are restaurants of all types and price ranges. There are also stores that sell music, books, furniture, novelties and clothing. A farmers market is held on Saturday mornings in the summer and early fall.
The U.S. Postal Service delivers letters and packages. You can also purchase stamps and money orders here. They deliver mail both domestically and internationally.

Letters and correspondence are usually sent by First-Class Mail within the United States. There is no need to pay extra postage for air mail, because all First-Class Mail is routinely sent by air. On the other hand, when sending mail abroad you should pay for air mail because surface mail travels by ship and is considerably slower.

**ADDRESSING MAIL**

When addressing mail for delivery within the United States, don’t forget to include the zip code. If you don’t include a zip code, delivery will be delayed. You can use a five-digit zip code if you don’t have the nine-digit zip code. The zip code should be placed on the same line as the city and state, after the state, not before.

The following is an example of how you would address a letter to a person named “John Student”. The number “12345-6789” is the nine-digit zip code. You should print the address in capital letters and omit punctuation, since that makes it easier for address reading machines to scan the address.

```
MR JOHN STUDENT
1234 MAIN STREET
CITY STATE 12345-6789
```

For detailed information about how to address mail, visit usps.com/send/addressing-tips.htm
OTHER SHIPPING SERVICES

In addition to the U.S. Postal Service, there are several companies that offer shipping services for letters and packages. The primary advantage of the U.S. Postal Service is the inexpensive rates for delivering letters. Also, only the U.S. Postal Service can deliver packages to a PO Box. The other shipping companies are only able to deliver to a street address.

The major shipping companies are:

FedEx: fedex.com
UPS: ups.com
DHL: dhl.com
SAFETY AND SECURITY

Most people you meet in the United States will be friendly and helpful. However, there is still a moderate amount of crime. A few simple precautions will help keep you safe. Visit crimemapping.com for more information about crime rates in Omaha and other major cities in the U.S.

The following common tips will help prevent you from becoming the victim of a crime.

- **Tips for the Home.** Remember to lock the doors and close the windows to your apartment when you are not at home. You should also install window locks or stops on all the windows, especially if you are renting a first-floor apartment. Some people leave on lights and a radio to give the impression that someone is home.

- **Tips for the Car.** Keep your car doors locked at all times. Get a map and know where you are going and how to get there before you leave on a trip. Always park your car in a well-lit area. Never leave valuable articles or packages on the seat; lock them in the trunk.

- **Walking at Night.** Don’t walk alone at night. Try to walk with a group of friends. Walk on busy well-lit streets and avoid poorly lit and deserted areas. If you are lost, walk as though you know where you are going and stop at the police station or a gas station for directions. Do not hitchhike, especially if you are female. It is not safe.

- **Crossing the Street.** In the United States cars drive on the right side of the street, not the left. So on most streets cars will be approaching you from your left. Many international students have been hit by cars because they expect the cars to approach from the right. Always cross the street at a corner and look both ways before crossing the street.
LEGAL AID

If you are arrested in the U.S. for a serious crime, you have the right to not say anything until you have spoken to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you by the court free of charge.

The American legal system differs significantly from legal systems in other countries. The person accused of a crime is considered innocent until proven guilty. The accused person is also entitled to a trial by jury for serious offenses, such as murder, rape, burglary and drug trafficking. Conversations with your attorney are private and cannot be used against you. These rights are guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. If you are not already familiar with the U.S. legal system your attorney can explain it to you.

If you plead guilty to a serious crime or are convicted of a serious crime, you will be subject to deportation.

IMMIGRATION RELATED WEBSITES

AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (AILA)
aila.org

AILA is a national bar association of more than 5,200 attorneys who practice immigration law. For more information, call 1-202-216-2400, fax 1-202-371-9449 or write to American Immigration Lawyers Association, 1400 Eye Street, NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20005 USA.

AMERICAN IMMIGRATION CENTER
us-immigration.com

This site provides information about topics relating to U.S. immigration.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IMMIGRATION ISSUES
wave.net/upg/immigration/students.html

This site has articles on a variety of topics relating to visas and international students.

IMMIGRATION
immigration.com

This site is maintained by an immigration lawyer. It includes a copy of the FAQ posting for the immigration-related Usenet newsgroups.
One consequence of traveling to another country is culture shock. The stress of a new situation, confusion due to language difficulties and a number of small cultural differences add up to culture shock. You might feel depressed, be homesick for your country and family, have difficulty sleeping or concentrating and avoid contact with others.

If you experience these symptoms, try talking to someone. All currently enrolled students are provided with free counseling services at the Counseling and Student Development Center (unmc.edu/stucouns).

While preparing yourself ahead of time can help you deal with culture shock, you cannot completely avoid going through it at some level. Living and working conditions as well as the pace of life may seem totally unlike your familiar world, but the more you know, the more you can learn about what to expect when you arrive.

Before you ever leave home, study up on the area you will call home when you get to the U.S. Learn about unspoken rules and expectations, social manners and current affairs. Talk to anyone you know who has studied in the U.S. and ask them about their experience.

Most importantly, go into your adventure with an open mind. Put aside any stereotypes or preconceptions you already have. People experience culture shock because of mismatched cultural cues and expectations. When these cues collide, hostility and confusion ensue. Notice similarities and differences without judging them and realize that you can experience something as different without labeling it as inferior. Respect the new culture without denying your own.
STEREOTYPES

Don’t believe all of the stereotypes you may have heard about Americans. Even the ones that are true in general may not be true about specific individuals or a large segment of the population. For example, although Americans tend to be louder and more boisterous than people from other cultures (especially at athletic events), many of the people you meet will be quiet and polite. Some people may be intolerant and afraid of people from other cultures, but most will be pleasant and welcoming. Remember that American films and television exaggerate in order to generate excitement. So this gives a distorted picture of what life in the United States is really like.

Americans do tend to be more informal than people from other countries. It is common for Americans to wear casual clothing to school and to greet professors by first name. Nevertheless, good manners and politeness are always appropriate.

However, there are situations and environments in which formality is the norm. Some businesses require their employees to wear a uniform or a suit. It would be inappropriate to wear a T-shirt and blue jeans to a job interview. Some of the more expensive restaurants require formal attire. Americans tend to dress up for cultural events (the opera, theater and ballet) and to dress down for athletic events. Americans usually wear formal attire at weddings and funerals.
PERSONAL SPACE

When two people are talking to each other, they tend to stand a specific distance apart. Each person has an invisible boundary around their body into which people they do not know well are not welcome. If someone comes inside their boundary, they will feel uncomfortable and move away to increase the distance between them.

The average personal distance varies from culture to culture. Americans tend to require more personal space than in other cultures. So if you try to get too close to an American during your conversation, he or she might back away. Try to be aware of this and if the person with whom you are speaking backs away a little, do not try to close the gap.

Also, some Americans avoid physical contact while speaking. Touching is often too intimate for casual acquaintances. So don’t put your arm around their shoulder, touch their face or hold their hand unless you know this is acceptable. Shaking hands when you initially meet is usually always acceptable.

DEMEANOR

Americans are much more assertive that most international visitors. Speaking for yourself and attempting to persuade someone to adopt your view are not only not taboo, but expected. You may need to become more assertive and speak out on your own behalf more than you might be used to. Take the initiative and volunteer information that will be of interest. In an interview, talk about your goals and accomplishments. It is ok to criticize someone’s opinion, as long as you are providing feedback that is helpful.

Eye contact is also important and expected in conversations. It is not a sign of disrespect, but instead an indication of openness, honesty and enthusiasm.
FORMS OF ADDRESS

American names are written and spoken with the given name first and the family name last. So John Smith’s family name is Smith, not John.

In a formal setting, address men as “Mister” (abbreviated as “Mr.”), married women as “Misses” (abbreviated as “Mrs.”), and unmarried women as “Miss” (abbreviated as “Ms.”). However, the distinction between Mrs. and Ms. is not as common now-a-days. Often both married and unmarried women go by Ms. If the person has an M.D. or Ph.D., they will often be addressed as “Doctor” (abbreviated as “Dr.”).

In an informal situation, Americans will introduce each other by first name without titles. If you are introduced to somebody by first name, you can address him or her by first name the next time you meet. The only exception would be for someone who holds an important position, such as the university Chancellor or Vice Chancellor. Unless they tell you otherwise, faculty should be addressed using their title and last name (e.g., “Professor Smith”).

When in doubt, use the formal manner of address, since it is better to error on the side of formality. It is also appropriate to ask how they prefer to be addressed.
TIPPING

The words “tip” and “gratuity” are used interchangeably, with “gratuity” having a slightly more formal connotation. Restaurants do not include a service charge in the bill, so you should tip the waiter 10 - 20% of the total bill. If service was slow or particularly bad, some Americans will tip only 10%. Likewise, if service was particularly good, it is appropriate to tip 20%. Tipping is only appropriate in restaurants which offer table service. You do not tip the cashier in a fast food restaurant.

Taxi drivers expect to get a tip equal to 15% of the total fare. If the driver was especially helpful or got you to your destination more quickly than you expected, give a 20% tip. Hotel bellhops expect a $1 tip for helping you with your bags. If you order room service, the gratuity is included in the bill. Coat checkroom attendants expect $1 per coat. Hairdressers and barbers expect a tip of 15% of the bill. Valet parking attendants expect a $1 tip.

Bribery, although common in many other cultures, is not considered appropriate and is often illegal in the U.S. Attempting to bribe a police-man will certainly get you arrested.

RELIGION

The U.S. Constitution guarantees religious freedom for all faiths. Omaha has many Christian churches and Jewish synagogues. There is also a Hindu temple, an Islamic Center and a Buddhist temple. The best way to find out more information is to search online for these various houses of worship.

Freedom of religion also means that you’re likely to be solicited by people who want to invite you to their religious group. Some of these groups can be quite aggressive. There are a few that target college students, especially international college students. It is often best to avoid these people. If you are interested in their religion do research about the group online. Then, if you want to, initiate contact with the group.
SOCIAL VISITS

Americans often plan social gatherings on short notice, so don’t be surprised if you get invited to someone’s home or to see a movie or baseball game without much warning. If you are busy, do not be afraid to decline the invitation. Perhaps suggest a time that would be better. Your host will not be insulted.

If a friend has invited you to drop by anytime, it is best to call before visiting to make sure it is convenient for them. Do not stay too long, since you do not want to overstay your welcome.

For a casual dinner invitation, do not arrive more than 5 minutes early, because your host may still be preparing for your visit. Arriving more than 10 minutes late is considered rude if very few people were invited. If many people were invited, it is ok to arrive a little late, even as much as half an hour late. For example, it is ok to arrive late for a party, for a potluck dinner or for a social gathering involving a large group of people. The main consideration is whether there are enough people in the group so that your late arrival will not be noticed.

At a party, don’t be surprised if you are asked what you do for a living. This is a normal opening line of conversation and not an insult.
BUSINESS VISITS

Business visits, on the other hand, tend to be extremely punctual. If you arrive late to a business appointment, it will reflect badly on you. So try to arrive on time or even a little early. If you know that you will be arriving late, you should telephone ahead to let them know of the delay.

If a business meeting takes place over a meal, expect the business discussions to begin after everyone has been seated. Socializing tends to occur after the business is concluded, not before. This is in contrast with the practice in many other countries, where the purpose of the meal is to socialize and get to know each other before any business is discussed.

When businessmen or businesswomen meet, they usually introduce themselves by shaking right hands. When you shake hands, don’t crush their fingers, but also don’t hold their hand too lightly. A firm handshake is best and is a sign of self-confidence. This is an important aspect of American culture, so if you are not familiar with this form of greeting, practice with an American friend.

Business cards are not normally exchanged upon meeting. If you need a colleague’s contact information, it is ok to ask them for their card. It is also ok to offer someone your card. But there is not an elaborate ritual of exchanging cards as in other cultures.

BUSINESS CLOTHING

Proper business attire is important in the U.S. If you dress inappropriately for an interview, for example, your chances of getting the position are significantly reduced.

Men should have at least one suit, consisting of a coat and tie with a white button-down shirt. Dark suit colors, such as navy blue, black or dark gray, are best. The tie should match the suit and not be flashy.

Women’s clothing is more difficult to describe. The goal is to achieve a conservative and professional look. Notice what other professional women are wearing and dress similarly.
SMOKING

Smoking has become more socially unacceptable in the U.S. Smoking is prohibited in government and public buildings, schools and many businesses. In Nebraska, smoking is prohibited in almost every indoor environment other than some hotel rooms, stores that sell only tobacco and tobacco related items, facilities doing research related to the health effects of smoking and private residences (which are not licensed child care programs). Businesses, schools and public places have different rules about smoking outside on their property. Usually the rules are posted, but if they are not ask before you smoke.

Tobacco products may not be sold to anyone under 18 years old. Federal law requires stores to ask to see a photo ID for anyone under 27 years old. Buying cigarettes for a child or giving a child a cigarette is illegal. Smoking on airplane flights within the U.S. is prohibited. There are severe penalties for smoking on an airplane or in an airplane lavatory. Smoking is prohibited on all public transportation.

If you are a guest in someone’s home, you should ask whether it is ok to smoke. If there are no ashtrays in the house it is a good sign that smoking is not acceptable.

CALENDAR DATES

In the United States, dates are written as month/day/year. This is the opposite of the British method, in which dates are written day/month/year. So while 4/3/67 would be March 4, 1967 in Europe, it is April 3, 1967 in the United States. It is best to write out dates using the month name in order to avoid confusion.
The American calendar is filled with numerous holidays. The following table shows some of the more popular holidays. National holidays have been indicated in bold face. Most non-essential government offices will be closed on these National Holidays. Banks and post offices also tend to be closed on these days and many businesses will also give their employees the day off.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOLIDAY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>January 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</td>
<td>Third Monday in January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Hog Day</td>
<td>February 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine’s Day</td>
<td>February 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President’s Day</td>
<td>Third Monday in February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Patrick’s Day</td>
<td>March 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April Fool’s Day</td>
<td>April 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriots Day</td>
<td>Third Monday in April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s Day</td>
<td>Second Sunday in May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td>Last Monday in May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flag Day</td>
<td>June 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s Day</td>
<td>Third Sunday in June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>July 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>First Monday in September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus Day</td>
<td>Second Monday in October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halloween</td>
<td>October 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Day</td>
<td>Tuesday after the first Monday in November in years divisible by 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Day</td>
<td>November 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
<td>Fourth Thursday in November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>December 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRUG</td>
<td>COMMON INDICATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tylenol</td>
<td>Temporary reduce fever and relief of mild to moderate pain associated arthritis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advil</td>
<td>Temporary relieve minor aches and pains associated with the common cold, headache, toothache, muscular aches, back pain, arthritis, menstrual cramps, and etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Sudafed Pseudoephedrine</td>
<td>Pseudoephedrine is indicated for the temporary relief of sinus and nasal congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudafed PE Phenylephrine</td>
<td>Phenylephrine is indicated for the temporary relief of sinus and nasal congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zyrtec</td>
<td>Temporary relieve allergic symptoms, such as running nose, sneezing, itching of the nose of throat and watery eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRUG</td>
<td>COMMON INDICATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin</td>
<td>Temporary relieve allergic symptoms, such as running nose, sneezing, itching of the nose of throat and watery eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benadryl</td>
<td>Temporary relieve allergic symptoms, such as running nose, sneezing, itching of the nose of throat and watery eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepto Bismol</td>
<td>Temporary relief symptoms of diarrhea, indigestion, upset stomach and nausea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imodium</td>
<td>relief of symptoms of diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delsym</td>
<td>Cough suppressant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAND NAME</td>
<td>商品名</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abreva</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advil Cold and Sinus</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advil</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrin</td>
<td>鼻福靈</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aleve</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anbesol</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirin</td>
<td>阿司匹林</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benadryl</td>
<td>苯那发,苯那塞,可他敏</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin</td>
<td>开瑞坦</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin-D</td>
<td>开瑞坦-D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colace</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayquil</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delsym</td>
<td>－</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramamine</td>
<td>梓苯海明,晕海宁</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## OVER THE COUNTER DRUG TRANSLATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRAND NAME</th>
<th>GENERIC NAME</th>
<th>INDICATION</th>
<th>商品名</th>
<th>药品名</th>
<th>主治</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halls cough drop</td>
<td>Menthol or pectin</td>
<td>Antitussive</td>
<td>薄荷醇, 果胶</td>
<td>薄荷醇, 果胶</td>
<td>止咳</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imodium</td>
<td>Loperamide</td>
<td>Antidiarrheal</td>
<td>洛哌丁胺</td>
<td>洛哌丁胺</td>
<td>腹泻</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motrin</td>
<td>Ibuprofen</td>
<td>Anti-inflammatory/ Analgesic</td>
<td>布洛芬</td>
<td>布洛芬</td>
<td>消炎止痛</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucinex</td>
<td>Guaifenesin</td>
<td>Expectorant/ antitussive</td>
<td>愈创甘油醚</td>
<td>愈创甘油醚</td>
<td>祛痰, 止咳</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neosporin</td>
<td>Polymyxin B, Neomycin, bacitracin</td>
<td>Topical Anti-infective</td>
<td>多粘菌素B, 硫酸新霉素, 杆菌肽锌</td>
<td>多粘菌素B, 硫酸新霉素, 杆菌肽锌</td>
<td>外敷, 抗感染</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyquil</td>
<td>Phenylephrine, chlorpheniramine, dextromethorphan, acetaminophen, or doxylamine</td>
<td>Cold and allergy relief (night time)</td>
<td>苯腎上腺素, 氰苯那敏, 右美沙芬, 撲热息痛, 多西拉敏</td>
<td>苯腎上腺素, 氰苯那敏, 右美沙芬, 撲热息痛, 多西拉敏</td>
<td>夜用感冒鼻塞药</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orajel</td>
<td>Benzocaine</td>
<td>Oral cavity Analgesic (toothache)</td>
<td>苯佐卡因</td>
<td>苯佐卡因</td>
<td>牙痛</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepto Bismol</td>
<td>Bismuth subsalicylate</td>
<td>Antidiarrheal</td>
<td>碱式水杨酸铋</td>
<td>碱式水杨酸铋</td>
<td>拉肚子</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robitussin</td>
<td>Guaifenesin, dextromethorphan,</td>
<td>Cough relief</td>
<td>愈创甘油醚, 右美沙芬</td>
<td>愈创甘油醚, 右美沙芬</td>
<td>止咳</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudafed</td>
<td>Pseudoephedrine</td>
<td>Cold and sinus relief</td>
<td>伪麻黄碱</td>
<td>伪麻黄碱</td>
<td>感冒, 鼻塞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tylenol</td>
<td>Acetaminophen</td>
<td>Analgesic,</td>
<td>撲热息痛</td>
<td>撲热息痛</td>
<td>止痛, 退烧</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zyrtec</td>
<td>Cetirizine</td>
<td>Allergy relief</td>
<td>西替利嗪</td>
<td>西替利嗪</td>
<td>过敏,流鼻涕</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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