Important Immigration Resources

Save these important dates!

August 14
Residence Hall Move-In for International Students

August 15–16
International SOAR: New Student Orientation

August 23
First Day of Classes

September 4
Tuition and Fees Due

Additional important dates can be found at go.iit.edu/academic-calendar

ILLINOIS TECH
## International Student Checklist

### IMMEDIATELY

- [ ] Check your Illinois Tech student email account via my.iit.edu
- [ ] Arrange your visa appointment at your local United States embassy or consulate office
- [ ] Purchase flight and prepare documents to enter U.S.
- [ ] Submit Room and Board Contract
- [ ] Register for mandatory SOAR: New Student Orientation

### THIS SUMMER

- [ ] Send your final transcripts by mail to Illinois Tech
- [ ] If you are transferring from another university outside the U.S.:
  1. Submit course descriptions to the Office of Undergraduate Admission; and
  2. Submit course descriptions and official course-by-course evaluations from ECE or Educational Perspectives
- [ ] Complete the math and writing placement exams (not applicable for visiting and exchange students)
- [ ] Submit any AP, IB, AS, or A-Level examinations to Illinois Tech
- [ ] Submit Immunization Verification Form and other necessary health requirements to Student Health and Wellness Center
- [ ] Contact your academic adviser to discuss your course schedule for the semester
- [ ] Plan possible draft schedules for your first term and register for courses

### WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN CHICAGO

- [ ] Check in with Illinois Tech’s International Center within one day of arrival to campus
- [ ] If required, complete the English Language Assessment when you arrive at Illinois Tech
- [ ] Purchase your books
- [ ] Pick up your HawkCard student ID card
- [ ] Attend mandatory SOAR: New Student Orientation

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**We’re Here to Help**

The International Center provides a variety of services to assist Illinois Tech students, including help with cultural adjustment to life in the United States, immigration advising and assistance with the preparation of U.S. government-related documents, and cross-cultural activities that promote intercultural perspectives. Every year the International Center sponsors programs such as the International Festival and the Thanksgiving holiday program, which allows international students to spend the U.S. Thanksgiving Day holiday with an American family. The International Center can also help with any questions you have about your immigration status or the preparation of documents you need to apply for internships or jobs in the U.S.

### International Orientation Session

Besides the regular SOAR orientation session, a specific international orientation session will be held during Welcome Week to help you learn about cultural adjustment in the U.S. and services for international students on campus. Make sure to register, and plan to attend both sessions.

### International Registration Hold

The international registration hold that is placed on your account will be removed as soon as you arrive on campus and check in with the International Center. Make sure to bring your student ID, passport, and immigration documents when you go to check in. You should do this as soon as possible after you arrive at Illinois Tech.

### Student Resource Fair

The International Center helps sponsor a student resource fair during Welcome Week to introduce you to important resources on and around campus. If you’d like to open a bank account in the U.S. or get a cell phone, representatives from different banks and phone companies will be at the student resource fair to help you get started.
## F-1 STUDENTS

**Step 1**
Receive I-20 in the mail, check information (name, date of birth, program information) to make sure it’s listed correctly.

**Step 2**
Pay SEVIS I-901 fee of $350*. Make sure to save the receipt of your payment.

*Note: Illinois Tech’s school code is CHI214F00379000
*Fees are subject to change

**Step 3**
Complete the online visa application and schedule an interview.
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html

## J-1 STUDENTS

**Step 1**
Receive DS-2019 in the mail, check information (name, date of birth, program information) to make sure it’s listed correctly.

**Step 2**
Pay SEVIS I-901 fee of $220*. Make sure to save the receipt of your payment.

*Note: Illinois Tech’s program number is P-1-00266
*Fees are subject to change

**Step 3**
Complete an online visa application and schedule an interview.
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html

### 10 Points to Remember for Your Visa Interview

1. **Ties to your home country:** Under United States law, all applicants for non-immigrant visas, such as student visas, are viewed as intending immigrants until they can convince the consular officer that they are not. You must demonstrate that you have reasons for returning to your home country that are stronger than those for remaining in the United States.

2. **English:** Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English and not in your native language.

3. **Speak for yourself:** Do not bring parents, family members, or friends with you to the interview.

4. **Know the program and how it fits your career plans:** Be prepared to articulate the reasons why you will study in a particular program and your selected institution in the United States. You should also be able to explain how studying at Illinois Tech relates to your future professional career when you return home.

5. **Be brief:** Because of the volume of applications received, all consular officers are under considerable time pressure to conduct quick and efficient interviews. They must make decisions, for the most part, on the impressions they form during the first minute or two of the interview. Keep your answers to the officer’s questions short and to the point.

6. **Don’t give scripted answers.** You should know a few quick, fun facts about Illinois Tech that align with your interests. This can include fun events like the Pumpkin Launch, Homecoming, or Game of Hawks. Or learn about one of our athletics teams and student organizations! Learn more about what makes Illinois Tech interesting at https://www.iit.edu/student-experience.

7. **Additional documentation:** It should be clear to the consular officer what documents you are presenting and what they signify. Bring additional documents (such as your admission letter, transcripts or marksheets, standardized test scores, financial documents, SEVIS payment receipt, etc.) but present them only if requested.

8. **Employment:** Your main purpose in coming to the United States is to study and complete your degree, not for the chance to work before or after graduation. You must be able to clearly articulate your plan to return home at the end of your program.

9. **Dependents remaining at home:** If you have a spouse or children and they are remaining in your home country, be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence.

10. **Maintain a positive attitude:** Do not engage the consular officer in an argument.

**Tip:** Check in with your nearest U.S. embassy or consulate to confirm when you can register for a student visa appointment.

For tips on acquiring your visa, watch this video: go.iit.edu/visa-tips
# Does Illinois Tech require me to buy a specific computer?

There is no specific laptop requirement, although the Office of Technology Services does publish a list of recommended specifications for whatever laptop students bring. Illinois Tech students can also receive special pricing from Dell and Apple on new computers: [https://ots.iit.edu/pc-mac/student-pcs-macs](https://ots.iit.edu/pc-mac/student-pcs-macs)

If you do not bring a computer to Illinois Tech, you will find plenty of computer labs on campus equipped with a variety of software to assist you in completing your class assignments.

# How do I know what books I need, and where do I buy them?

Once you register for courses, you can visit the Illinois Tech Bookstore website to look up the textbooks that are required for your courses. The campus bookstore offers a variety of options, which include buying new or used textbooks, renting a textbook for the semester, or purchasing an e-textbook that you can access on a computer or tablet.

# What is the weather like in Chicago?

The weather in Chicago is quite distinct at each time of year, so you will experience the weather of all four seasons when you are living here. As you might have heard, it can be quite cold here in the winter. Average temperatures in the winter can range from 0 to -10 degrees Celsius, with record low temperatures as low as -30 degrees Celsius. Strong winds in the winter can make the temperature feel even colder, and we also receive quite a bit of snow. We recommend bringing (or buying upon arrival) a very heavy winter coat and snow boots to keep you warm during the frigid months of winter.

Despite the sometimes-harsh climate of winter, summers in Chicago are quite warm and humid. Average temperatures can be as high as 25–30 degrees Celsius with very humid air. Luckily, our location next to Lake Michigan provides nice breezes to cool you off and gives you a chance to take advantage of the more than 20 beaches in the city.

# How will I get around Chicago?

All students at Illinois Tech receive a Ventra U-Pass. The U-Pass gives you free, unlimited access to all of Chicago’s public transportation lines on trains and buses. Any time you want to get around the city, you just swipe your U-Pass and you’ll be on your way!

# What are some travel tips you’d recommend?

Besides your passport and visa, you will also need to bring your I-20 or DS-2019 with you to present to the border officer when you enter the United States. Be sure to bring that documentation in your carry-on bag and keep it with you at all times. We also recommend that you carry a small amount of U.S. currency and phone numbers of important offices on campus with you (such as those for Residence Life or the International Center). Finally, you may want to consider making a travel plan with your family and deciding on a time when you will contact them to let them know you’ve arrived safely on campus.