Welcome
WELCOME

Congratulations on your admission to the University of Northern Iowa. We realize it has been a challenging year for everyone and want to take this opportunity to start looking forward to the future and your enrollment at UNI.

We are committed to helping you have a successful and enjoyable college experience. We hope your time at UNI will be some of the best years of your life as you make new friends, get involved on campus and complete your degree. Like thousands of international students before you, we hope you will eventually consider UNI your “home away from home.”

You may have many questions as you get ready to move to UNI. We hope this brochure will help provide you with the information you need to make the proper preparations and let you know what to expect. Please read all of the sections carefully and follow the suggested steps. You can also refer to information for prospective students at internationalengagement.uni.edu/. Please contact us if you have any additional questions or need assistance.

Again, we look forward to meeting you and wish you a safe journey to UNI!

Sincerely,

Kristi Marchesani, Ph.D.
Director of International Admissions and Recruitment

International Student Promoters (ISP)
Don’t wait until you arrive on campus to meet current international students. ISP is a student organization devoted to promoting UNI across the globe. Around 30 students from different parts of the world participate in ISP every year. Members are always eager to meet incoming students, answering their questions and helping them get acclimated to UNI. To meet some of these students, visit intladm.uni.edu/isp, chat on intladm.uni.edu/unibuddy or email uni.isp@uni.edu.

International Family Friendship Program
The International Friendship Program matches UNI international students with families or individuals in the Cedar Falls and Waterloo area. The goal of this program is to promote cultural exchange between international students and American families. Students who apply for this program seek to learn more about American culture by becoming a part of a family and defining a home away from home. Families volunteer to participate in activities with an international student as a way to learn about the student’s country and to build a friendship.

For more information and the student application, please visit internationalengagement.uni.edu/ioso-family-friendship-program.
1. COMMIT TO UNI.
To accept your offer of admission, please visit admissions.uni.edu/accept. All undergraduate students must first complete this to access orientation and housing sign up. Please use the Flywire option to pay the $320 acceptance fee by credit card or bank wire.

2. APPLY FOR HOUSING.
UNI is accepting housing contracts for the 2022-2023 academic year. You can learn more about housing and begin the application process here: uhd.uni.edu/housing/contract-live-campus

3. APPLY FOR YOUR STUDENT VISA.
In your admission packet, you should have received your immigration Certificate of Eligibility for the University of Northern Iowa. Please visit www.ice.gov/sevis/i901 for assistance. If you have not received yours, please email the Office of International Admissions at international.admissions@uni.edu to determine what is needed to complete your file.

4. REVIEW THE ORIENTATION SCHEDULE.
You can view the orientation schedule here: internationalengagement.uni.edu/orientation. The schedule will be updated periodically with current information.

5. MAKE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS.
Check the program start date on your I-20 or DS-2019 and plan to arrive to UNI prior to that date. After you’ve booked your flight and secured housing, visit internationalengagement.uni.edu/orientation to complete the Arrival Form, and we will arrange free local transportation to bring you to your new home.

6. TAKE YOUR MATH PLACEMENT EXAM.
All first-year undergraduate UNI students are required to complete the online ALEKS math placement exam prior to orientation. Your results will assist you and your academic adviser in choosing appropriate math course(s). Visit success.uni.edu/aleks-math-placement for more information, and to access the exam.
VISA INFORMATION

Visa Application Process
Upon receipt of your Form I-20 or DS-2019 from the University of Northern Iowa, apply for a visa at the United States Embassy or consulate closest to your place of residence. For a complete list of requirements and specific information on how to pay the visa fee, visit usembassy.gov. Visas cannot be issued more than 90 days prior to the program start date on your I-20/DS-2019. But don’t wait until then, however. Start gathering necessary documents for your student visa application now.

F-1 and J-1 students are required to pay a one-time, non-refundable I-901 SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) fee prior to the visa appointment. The fee is $350 for F-1 students and $220 for J-1 students. The fee is payable at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) website: fmjfee.com.

Items needed during your visa interview:
- I-20 or DS-2019 (Be sure to sign your form)
- Valid passport
- School admission letter
- Completed visa application with required photographs
- I-901 SEVIS fee and visa application receipt
- Financial documents showing how you will pay for your educational and living expenses for at least one year

Be prepared to answer questions concerning:
- Your major field of study
- Your decision to attend UNI
- Sources of money for your studies
- Your intent to return to your home country after completion of your studies in the United States

If the consular officers find you ineligible for a visa:
- They must return all documents to you
- They must give you written reasons for the denial
- You may secure additional documentation as needed, and reapply

*I have learned so much since I stepped on campus. I’ve met so many people and been a part of so many activities and events. If you have a passion for something, you will definitely find a community for it here at UNI. Getting involved has helped me become the person I am today.*

Bilal
Finance
Pakistan
Arriving in the United States
When planning the date of your arrival, please be aware that you are not eligible to enter the United States more than 30 days prior to or after the start date on your I-20/DS-2019. Make sure to carry your immigration documents with you on the plane. Do not check them with your luggage. You will need the following immigration documents to enter into the United States:

- Valid passport
- Valid F or J visa in your passport
- Form I-20 or Form DS-2019

United States immigration officials at the port of entry will make the final determination about your admissibility as a student.

For initial admission, you must:
- Show the immigration official the UNI Form I-20/DS-2019 and your passport
- Attend the school specified on your visa

The immigration official should:
- Examine your Form I-20/DS-2019 and return it to you
- Stamp your passport

Immigration procedures to follow when transferring to UNI from another university in the United States:
If you travel outside the United States before coming to UNI:
- Inform the International Student Advisor at your current school of your intent to transfer to UNI. Your advisor should make the necessary entry into SEVIS.
- Obtain Form I-20 from UNI.
- Be sure that your F-1 visa is valid or obtain a new visa.
- Present your UNI Form I-20 to immigration officials upon reentry to the United States.
- Upon arrival, bring the UNI Form I-20 and your passport to the Office of International Engagement (OIE) for immigration check in.

If you come directly to UNI without leaving the United States, bring the UNI Form I-20 and your passport to the OIE for immigration check in.
Live the UNI experience!
Choosing to live on campus affords you the full UNI experience. With a mix of traditional, suite- and apartment-style dorms, you will find the accommodations you’re looking for that place you at the center of campus life. Our dorms provide you easy access to events and activities happening around campus, surround you with friends, offer learning beyond the classroom and, of course, make the walk to class that much shorter. Plus, you’re never far from getting something great to eat from the #1 College Food in Iowa. Living on campus helps ease the transition to college life, gets you involved and makes you feel connected, all while earning better grades and staying on track for graduation in four years.

“I have learned a lot since I left home for UNI. I know quite a bit about America and its culture now. I have become more independent. I have become a better student through my classes.”

Ye Liang (Joel)
Computer Science
Malaysia
What to Bring?

Generally, international travelers have a limited amount of available luggage. The amount and exactly what students bring vary among their preferences and also the type of residence that they have chosen. Keep in mind that if you need additional items, they are likely available for purchase after you arrive.

Every traditional residence hall room has the following items:
- Single bed, mattress and mattress cover for each person
- Desk and chair for each person
- Room sink (except Rider Hall)
- Wastebasket and recycle container
- Closets and drawers
- Drapes or mini-blinds
- Unlimited Internet access
- All the utilities you’ll need

You can bring (these items are only suggestions):
- Pillows, blanket, sheets and towels (or purchase a linen packet from OIE for $65)
- Toiletries
- Clothing items
- Room decorations
- Computer

More Tips

- Students generally dress casually for classes and are free to dress in whatever way they feel comfortable that is within reason.
- You will have several opportunities to showcase traditional clothing items, if you choose to; therefore, if you wish and have enough room in your luggage, bring those items with you.
- Shopping centers are close to campus and can be reached conveniently by walking, biking or car. During orientation, you will have opportunities to go shopping to purchase items as needed.
Students living in the traditional and suite-style dorms have the All-Access Meal Plan.

**Common Features**
- Wired & Wireless Internet
- Computer Lab
- Laundry Room
- Lofts

**Single Rooms**
Most dorms have single room options. Availability and type vary depending on the dorm and occupancy levels. However, most first-year students live in a traditional double room with a roommate.

**360° photos available online**
[uhd.uni.edu/housing](http://uhd.uni.edu/housing)
Students living in the apartment-style residence halls have the option to select a meal plan.

**Upper Division Student Housing**
Second-year+ students have the option to contract for a room in any of our STEP and upper division halls, which allow for a more independent lifestyle, while still taking advantage of the benefits and conveniences of living on campus.

Rates can be found at [uhd.uni.edu/housing-rates](http://uhd.uni.edu/housing-rates).

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**RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES**

All of our residential communities offer programming designed around the stage of a student’s career on campus.
HOUSING + DINING CONTRACT PROCESS

PANTHER PROFILE

After you’ve been admitted to UNI, begin the online housing contract. Lifestyle profile information within the contract is designed to help you find a roommate you can comfortably live with.

Search for potential roommates and begin a conversation to discuss the possibilities of rooming together. If you both agree to be roommates, you should request the other student on your housing contract.

Go to uhd.uni.edu/contract to begin your contract

LIVE 2 SUCCEED

New students who contract to live on campus for two years will receive (during year two):

- $500 Scholarship
- Priority room selection

Go to uhd.uni.edu/live-2-succeed

COMPLETE YOUR CONTRACT ASAP!

Your completed contract date determines your priority reservation date (PRD) for room selection in the spring. So, the sooner you complete yours, the better your chance of getting into the dorm and room you prefer!
**Short-Term Housing**
Hotels may be a convenient solution if you need a place to stay if you arrive early or are accompanied by family members. Please keep in mind that you are responsible for the cost of the hotel stay. When contacting any of the hotels, mention you are affiliated with UNI and ask for a special rate. For a complete list of hotels available in Cedar Falls and Waterloo, please visit the Cedar Falls Tourism and Visitors Bureau website at [cedarfallstourism.org/places-to-stay/hotels-motels](http://cedarfallstourism.org/places-to-stay/hotels-motels).

**UNI and Surrounding Area**

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**Off-Campus Housing**
On-campus housing is recommended, but not required at UNI. The university cannot arrange off-campus housing for students and public transportation is limited. If you prefer to arrange off-campus housing, you may find the following resources helpful in the process.

- apartments.com
- hotpads.com
“Thanks to the organizations and opportunities that UNI offered, I was able to meet a lot of new people and friends. I found a new family at UNI.”

**Astrid**

Communication: Electronic Media, ’17

El Salvador
Once you’ve finalized your housing plans and received your student visa, it’s time to organize your travel plans to Cedar Falls.

Each semester, the university hosts an international orientation and registration program prior to the start of the semester. Students are asked to arrive for this program. You will receive an email with detailed information on arrival dates and can find updated details at internationalengagement.uni.edu/orientation.

Please book your flight to Waterloo Regional Airport (ALO), which is served by American Airlines offering connecting service with Chicago O’Hare International Airport (ORD). If you cannot fly into ALO (10 minutes away from campus), you may look into potential flights to the Eastern Iowa Airport (CID), which is located one hour away from UNI. If you have any problems or questions, please contact the Office of International Engagement (OIE) at international@uni.edu.

Once you have your travel plans finalized, please complete the online Student Arrival Form found on the OIE website. The OIE will arrange for your pick-up and transportation to the UNI campus free of charge (if you are arriving during the specified pick up dates) and assist you with settling into campus.
International Student Orientation (ISO) is designed to assist you with your transition to life in the United States and at the University of Northern Iowa. ISO provides a welcoming and exciting environment lead by current student leaders. The program will help you learn how the university works, how to find and use resources that will help you be a successful student, and meet fellow students and university faculty and staff who will play a big part in your time at UNI.

ISO begins the week before school starts each fall and spring semester, and it is mandatory that you attend the orientation sessions during the week prior to starting your first semester on campus. There is a $360 one-time orientation and matriculation fee that will be charged to your account. Prior to the program start date, you will receive arrival information to ensure a smooth transition to UNI. For more information on ISO, please visit internationalengagement.uni.edu/orientation.

Some of the activities and events offered for you during orientation include:

- Class registration
- Exploring campus and community
- Health insurance and services
- Shopping trips
- Opening a bank account
- Immigration questions
- Employment in the United States
- Getting involved
- The classroom and education system in the United States
- Paying your bills
- Safety and security
- Culture shock

ISO also provides many opportunities to get answers to all your questions, meet new friends and have fun.
Being on your own in a new country can be scary, especially when you happen to get sick. Rest assured, you’ll find UNI has an on-campus health clinic to care for you. Full-time medical doctors and nurses provide a wide array of medical care including mental health services, immunizations/allergy injections, minor surgical procedures and treatment of illnesses and injuries. Students who register for five or more semester hours of credit are automatically assessed a mandatory student health fee in their tuition cost. This fee entitles students to many services at no cost, some services for a minimal fee and other services for regular fees.

**Student Health Insurance**
Costs associated with health care in the United States can be substantial. Insurance is designed to protect individuals from the extraordinary costs associated with serious medical emergencies. Health insurance is mandatory for all international students. More information about the Student Health Clinic and the requirements for health insurance can be found at [health.uni.edu/insurance](http://health.uni.edu/insurance).

**Required Health Screening**
All UNI students must submit proof of two measles, mumps and rubella vaccinations. Included in your admissions packet, you will find more detailed information on how to fulfill this requirement. During orientation all international students will be required to participate in a mandatory health screening for tuberculosis. More information about the Student Health Clinic mandatory health requirements can be found at [health.uni.edu/requirements](http://health.uni.edu/requirements).

More information and resources regarding UNI’s response to COVID-19 can be found at [forwardtogether.uni.edu/](http://forwardtogether.uni.edu/)

UNI stands for great people, UNI stands for opportunity, UNI stands for the future ... so don’t hesitate!

_Semyon_
Geography
Russia
BILLING INFORMATION

All tuition, mandatory fees and contracted room and meal plan expenses are billed directly to the student by the Office of Business Operations. Students are billed one semester at a time. U-Bills are available electronically and can be reviewed in the MyUNIverse portal.

You can enroll in a payment plan option which allows the university bill to be split into five payments per semester. There is a $20 fee to enroll in the payment plan. More information about billing can be found at studentaccounts.uni.edu.

You do not necessarily need to have the full cost of living available upon arrival. When planning how much money to bring with you, understand the dining centers have limited hours during the ISO and although some meals will be provided, you will be responsible to purchase a few meals on your own. Also keep in mind that it may take a few days for funds that are transferred to your bank account to clear and become available.

UNI accepts cash, check, credit card, or international bank payments through Flywire.

FLYWIRE

The university partners with Flywire for a cost-effective way for international students to wire funds from their home country bank. Students will be offered excellent exchange rates allowing them to pay in their home country’s currency (in most cases) and save a significant amount of money compared to traditional bank wire costs. The posting of your payment to the university will be faster, you will have the ability to track your payments and flywire will notify you when the university has received the payment. Visit flywire.com/pay/uni to register and then follow the instructions to make a payment.

Bringing Money to the United States

During International Student Orientation, you will have the option to open a bank account in the United States. Although this is not a requirement, it is highly recommended that you do as some of your living expenses will require payment by checks from a U.S.-based institution. If you are planning to pursue student employment, you will also need to have a bank account to deposit your paychecks.

For safety reasons, it is very important that you do not travel with large sums of cash in your possession. There are much safer options to bring money into the United States when you arrive. These options include:

- Money Order: You may choose to get a money order or cashier’s check in U.S. dollars in your own name. In this case, you may deposit the money order into your own personal account after opening one in the U.S.
- Bank Wire: Most banks are able to transfer money internationally. After opening your bank account in the U.S., you may request funds to be transferred from the bank in your home country to your personal account in the U.S. Although there are fees associated with this service, it is possibly the safest option to transfer funds internationally.
- ATM Withdraw: In some cases, students may be able to withdraw money from the bank in their home country using an ATM or debit card. Check with your bank to make sure this is an available option to you. Daily limits and fees may also apply for this option.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. **WHEN DO I SIGN UP FOR CLASSES?**
   An academic advisor will assist you in registering for classes during ISO. Graduate students will work directly with their academic department. Students are not allowed to register for courses prior to attending ISO.

Q. **I CAN’T LOG INTO MYUNIVERSE PORTAL, WHAT SHOULD I DO?**
   If this is the first time you are trying to log into the MyUNIverse portal, follow the first-time users information at [it.uni.edu/catid-faq](http://it.uni.edu/catid-faq). If you have logged in before and are no longer able to log in, you may have to reset your password. To do so, send an email to servicedesk@uni.edu requesting your password to be reset. Include your university ID number and username in the email. For additional questions you may find the Consultant Center Assistance Chat at it.uni.edu.

Q. **HOW MUCH MONEY DO I NEED TO BRING?**
   The amount of money needed varies among students; however, it is important to plan to have some cash available immediately upon your arrival. You will need funds for meals and other immediate expenses.

Q. **HOW DO I COMMIT TO UNI?**
   To accept your offer of admission, undergraduate students must complete an online acceptance form and pay our acceptance fee, available at admissions.uni.edu/accept.

Q. **DO I NEED A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER? IF SO, HOW DO I GET ONE?**
   A Social Security Number (SSN) is not issued to any student in the United States who is solely studying and not working. If you decide to get a job on campus, you will then work with the Office of International Engagement (OIE) to obtain a SSN.

Q. **HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR A CELL PHONE PLAN?**
   You will have the opportunity to sign up for a cell phone plan from a provider that does not require students to have a Social Security Number. You may also choose one of many pre-paid phone options, which are available at different business locations in Cedar Falls.

Q. **WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?**
   Staff in the Admissions and OIE offices are happy to assist with any questions! Email us with questions at international@uni.edu.
1. **SUCCESS AFTER GRADUATION**
   UNI alumni are making their mark on the world in nearly every field and every profession. Ninety-four percent of last year’s graduates are employed or continuing their education.

2. **A TOP 20 BEST VALUE UNIVERSITY**
   UNI ranks #17, by College Factual, as a “Best Value College for International Students”, due to our high graduation rate, low average student debt, affordable tuition and overall great value.

3. **FACULTY WHO KNOW YOUR NAME**
   As a teaching-focused university, UNI faculty put students first. Our average class size is just 25 students, so you’ll really get to know your classmates and professors. And 95 percent of classes are taught by faculty, not graduate students or teaching assistants, which means you’ll learn from professional educators with years of teaching experience.

4. **YOU ARE WELCOME HERE**
   The Cedar Falls community is friendly, inviting and safe. UNI is ranked among the “Safest College Campuses in America” by the National Council for Home Safety and Security.

5. **FUN TIMES ARE EASY TO FIND**
   UNI has more than 270 student clubs and organizations, so there’s bound to be at least one (and probably many more) that sound like fun. Music, theatre, Greek Life, honor societies, student government, faith-based organizations — we could go on and on but we only have so much room on this page! Come to the Student Involvement Center and we’ll hook you up.

**ACCEPT YOUR OFFER!**

[admissions.uni.edu/accept]
Connect with us!

- International Admissions
  002 Gilchrist Hall
  University of Northern Iowa
  Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0018, USA

- intladm.uni.edu
- WhatsApp - +1 319 273 8073
- international.admissions@uni.edu
- Chat with current international students at intladm.uni.edu/unibuddy

The University of Northern Iowa does not discriminate in employment or education. Visit policies.uni.edu/1303 for additional information.