

# WELCOME TO MSU

PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE  
FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENTS & SCHOLARS



**MONTANA**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

## Dear New MSU Student or Scholar

The Office of International Programs (OIP) extends a warm welcome to you and looks forward to your arrival.

We are happy that you decided to join our diverse university. Out of a total of **15,000** students, approximately **750** come from abroad, representing more than **75** different nations. Our international students play an active role in both the intellectual and cultural life of our campus.

Scholars from many nations collaborate in research and educational projects at Montana State University. OIP is here to help you and guide you on all issues whether related to your life on campus, your academic choices or your legal status with immigration.

Our required orientation program for students will cover many topics of importance. Scholars receive individualized information during check-in with OIP staff.

This brochure is designed to help you prepare for your move to Montana. Please read it carefully and if you have any question, do not hesitate to contact our office.

Best regards from,  
International Student and Scholar Services Staff

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## Checklist Before You Leave

### Preparation

- Once you have received your letter of admission or invitation (for scholars) with I-20 or DS-2019 you need to obtain your visa at the American Embassy or Consulate. Make sure that the name on the I-20/DS-2019 matches exactly the name on the passport.
- Canadian citizens do not need a visa but they will need to show their passport, I-20/DS-2019 at the border as well as proof of financial support.
- Before you go to the Consulate, you must pay the SEVIS fee. Print and save a copy of the receipt and take it to your interview appointment (or to the border, if Canadian).
- You must provide proof of financial support for your studies or program and living costs at the visa interview and at the Port of Entry in the U.S..
- Make necessary arrangements with your financial sponsor to ensure that funds can be transferred as needed (see p. 4).
- Once you have your visa you can make arrangements for your plane ticket (see p. 7).
- Students who have obtained a visa and made travel plans, need to return the Confirmation Form to OIP via email, fax or mail.
- You can arrive in the U.S. up to 30-days before the date shown on your I-20 or DS-2019 form, however, you should not arrive later than the date listed.
- Apply for University housing as early as possible (see details p. 6).
- When you make your initial entrance in the U.S., your visa and your I-20 or DS-2019 must be for MSU.
- Students need to plan enough money to cover first semester expenses.
- Carry emergency contact numbers for home and Bozeman.
- Do not send luggage in advance of your arrival since the university does not have adequate storage. Until you know your address in Bozeman you may have letters sent to the OIP address.
- Place tags or labels on all of your suitcases and hand luggage with your name and OIP Address: 400 Culbertson Hall - Bozeman, MT 59717. Include a copy of the address inside the suitcase in case the tag is lost or destroyed. If a piece of luggage is lost, file a claim immediately at the airport. Temporary loss of luggage is a common problem, especially when making connecting flights in a short period of time. Therefore it is advisable to have enough clothing and personal items packed in your carry-on luggage to last for 2 or 3-days.

### Travel Documents

- Your passport must be valid for at least 6-months with the appropriate visa.
- You must carry your original I-20 or DS-2019 issued by MSU with you.
- At the border control they will stamp your I-20 or DS-2019.
- While traveling, do carry all important documents, money and bank drafts with you. Guard them carefully. Do not place them in your suitcase.

## Once On Campus

### OIP Check in

- As soon as you arrive you should first check in with the OIP office. Please come with your passport, I-20/DS-2019.
- Bring your health history and medical record in English, even if it was sent prior.
- If you have health insurance from home, please bring proof of that insurance.
- Your next step will be to obtain your “Cat Card” (student ID card).
- Then you can open a bank account on or off campus.

### Orientation

All students are **required** to attend the international student orientation which will give you a lot of essential details about the University, immigration rules, how to register for classes, social activities and recreational services. This will help you to achieve a smooth transition to your new environment. Each scholar is advised individually.

### Registration

At the end of orientation, students will be able to register for classes. You will need to connect to “myinfo” on the campus web site which will allow you to select your classes, register, check your account, etc...

### Fee payment

Approximately one week after registration students will have to pay semester tuition and fees, as well as campus housing and meal fees if applicable. The exact amount of tuition and fees will appear on one bill payable to MSU. Tuition and fees cannot be paid in advance of registration for classes. At the time of fee payment, you may elect to pay by the Deferred Payment Plan, which divides the total amount of your bill into four monthly payments throughout the semester. There is a \$30 administrative charge for use of the Tuition Payment Plan.

### Academic books

The courses that you choose with the help of your academic advisor will determine which books you need. All of these books can be purchased at the university bookstore.

### Special notice

After much discussion on the MSU campus, students, faculty and staff have agreed to move toward a tobacco-free campus. This new policy took effect in August 2012. Smoking and use of tobacco products will not be permitted anywhere on campus grounds. Areas near that campus that will permit smoking will be clearly designated. It is the intention of the campus community to improve the health of everyone at MSU with this policy. People who currently use tobacco will be offered a variety of support services to encourage them to stop the tobacco habit.

## Finance & Work

## Health & Insurance

### Finance & Banking

- Either your I-20 or DS-2019 will list the amount of money required for your studies or research at MSU.
- The amount listed for students is for two academic semesters and does not include summer.
- Tuition and fee estimates are based on 9 credits at the graduate level and 12 credits at the undergraduate level. Please note that tuition and fees are subject to modification by action of the State Board of Regents at any time. Increases in tuition of approximately 5% per year are to be expected.
- These levels establish the minimum full-time requirement to remain in legal status.
- Plan to have funds available to cover your first semester expenses with you, since the first semester needs to be paid as you arrive. This amount should be equal to half of the annual amount indicated on your I-20 or DS-2019. You may choose to pay by wire transfer or with a credit card. Please note that local banks often require a waiting period of up to 2-weeks to honor international bank drafts or out of state checks. The university only accepts: Visa, MasterCard and Discover.
- During your travels it is not wise to carry large amounts of cash. We recommend that you carry only \$100-\$200 to cover your travel expenses and the remainder can be brought as explained above.
- If you have an assistantship, please be aware that your first paycheck will be on September 11th for Fall arrival and February 11th for Spring arrival. These will be smaller paychecks than normal, because they will include payment only for days worked in August or January, respectively.

### Working in the U.S.

- Working in the U.S. is regulated by federal law.
- Foreign students are not allowed to work **off-campus** except by special permission of the U.S. immigration service, and then only after studying in the U.S. for 9-months and in a position related to the major field of study.
- Student employment **on-campus** is allowed without permission from the U.S. immigration service, however, it is limited to 20-hours per week during the academic year. It can be full-time during the breaks and summer vacation. You must visit OIP for further information and advising.
- Scholars coming to do research or other activities at MSU are permitted only to carry out the specific program described on the DS-2019 and any contract or agreement with MSU. Dependent spouses may be able to secure work permission; those who are interested should meet with OIP advisors for assistance.

### Health Requirements

Montana State law requires proof of immunization against certain diseases for all students. Please see the Medical History Record, which is included with your admission documents for exact requirements. These immunizations must be verified on a validated record or on medical history record by a physician or health agency, translated into English, and show the exact dates the immunizations were given.

You must complete and return the Medical History Record to the Health Service, or your registration will be delayed. If you do not provide this immunization verification you will be required to obtain these immunizations before you can register for classes. If your registration is delayed, you will have to pay a late registration fee and many of your chosen classes may no longer be available.

Before you send the Medical History Record with proof of immunization, we recommend that you make a copy for your personal record and bring it with you, in case the original is lost in the mail. The Medical History Record should be sent to: **Student Health Services, 121 Swingle Hall, MSU Bozeman, MT 59717 or faxed to Student Health Services at 1-406-994-2504.**

If you have any additional questions regarding the immunization requirements or the Medical History Record before your departure, please feel free to contact Student Health at 1-406-994-2311 or see their website: [www.montana.edu/health](http://www.montana.edu/health).

### Health Insurance

MSU's Student Health Service provides general medical and dental services for all enrolled students. Costs are minimal because all students pay a basic fee each semester as part of their tuition and fees. If a student needs emergency or specialized care at an off-campus clinic or the hospital, charges can easily be hundreds or thousands of dollars. Therefore, MSU requires all international students to subscribe either to the university health and accident insurance plan or show proof of adequate private insurance coverage. All scholars must also have insurance coverage. This must include sickness and accident coverage for a minimum amount of \$100,000/year. Emergency medical evacuation and repatriation insurance is highly recommended. Health insurance for the dependents of F-1 and J-1 students is also mandatory.

Most health insurance policies in the U.S. do not pay for 100% of medical expenses incurred by illness or accident. For example, with the university's health policy, which is typical for American medical insurance, you must pay all of the first \$200 of medical bills per semester, the insurance then pays 80% of the remaining amount. Thus, you must still pay 20% of all costs in addition to the first \$200. Most American insurance, including the university's, does not pay for the treatment of a condition that existed prior to the effective date of the policy, until you have had your insurance coverage for one full continuous year.

Finally, since the university's student health coverage does not cover the cost of eye examinations, eyeglasses or dental work, and these services are expensive in the U.S., it is advisable that you have this work done before leaving home. In any situation where the cost of medical treatment is not covered by the insurance **the student is responsible for payment.**

## Housing

### Campus living in Residence Halls

- MSU requires all freshmen and undergraduates who have earned less than 30 academic credits to live on campus in the university's Residence Halls (dormitories). Meals are provided in any of three dining rooms. All undergraduate students are guaranteed a room in the residence halls and are encouraged to spend the first semester living on campus.
- You should apply **before** you arrive. You can download a housing application from the website: [www.montana.edu/reslife](http://www.montana.edu/reslife). A non-refundable \$200 deposit must accompany each application and will be applied toward the housing bill.
- Once you have signed a contract for a semester you are obligated to pay the housing bill for the entire semester, even if you wish to move off campus before the semester ends.
- For those who have applied with Residence Life and paid the \$200 deposit, temporary accommodation can be provided before school starts. Arrangements can be made through OIP. The cost is \$10/night, and you will have to purchase your own food.
- Similar accommodation is available to students who live in dormitories when some halls are closed for vacation periods. Meals are not provided in the dormitories during vacation periods or during summer sessions enrollment and must be purchased separately.
- There are double or single rooms. All rooms have closets, single beds, dressers, study desk, chairs and curtains. Bed linens and pillows are provided, however, you must supply blankets, bedspreads and towels. You don't need to bring these items with you; you can buy them in Bozeman at reasonable prices.

### Family & Graduate Housing

You should **apply early**, at least 6 months ahead of time since there is often a waiting list.

- Inexpensive on-campus Family & Graduate Housing is available to families, married couples students who have earned at least 72 undergraduate credits, graduate students and single parents with dependent children.
- See this website for more information [www.montana.edu/fgb](http://www.montana.edu/fgb) or email [fgbo@montana.edu](mailto:fgbo@montana.edu).
- One, two and three bedroom units are available. Some are furnished. All include utilities and laundry facilities.
- We recommend that married students with a family secure their housing prior to arrival.

### Off-Campus Housing options

- Apartments, condominiums and houses are available for rent in the area surrounding MSU and in greater Bozeman.
- Rent including utilities, for one student per month will range from a low of \$500 upwards to \$1200.
- Students planning to live off-campus should check the classified section of the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* at: [www.bozemandailychronicle.com](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com) and plan to arrive two-weeks early to search for housing (a hotel will need to be secured until an apartment is found).

## Transportation & Temporary Housing

### Transportation

Serving Bozeman are four airlines with connections to major American cities: Delta, Frontier, Horizon and United Airlines. There is no train service from Bozeman but there is a Greyhound bus service.

In the city you can use the free Streamline Bus System, that will take you from the university to downtown, major shopping centers, and to the hospital etc...

If you send OIP your travel itinerary at least one week prior to your arrival, OIP will provide free transportation from the airport when you arrive.

[www.montana.edu/international/iss/arrival](http://www.montana.edu/international/iss/arrival)

You also have the option of using a taxi which should cost approximately \$35.

### Temporary Housing

If you arrive before the Residence Halls on campus officially open and you will be living in the Halls, the Office of Residence Life offers temporary rooms for approximately \$10/night. If you prefer to live off campus, you will need to stay in a hotel until you locate an apartment.

Below you will find a list of hotels which are relatively close to campus (see map on following page).

Please note that the hotel rates below are reference rates (quoted November 2013) and may have changed by the time you arrive. The rates indicated are for one night, during high season.

- **Royal 7 Budget Inn**  
310 N. 7th Avenue Bozeman, MT 59715  
Tel 406-587-3103  
Toll free U.S. only 1-800-587-3103  
October–May \$45 and June–September \$55
- **Magnuson Grand City Center**  
507 West Main Street Bozeman, MT 59715  
Tel 406-587-3158  
Toll free U.S. only 1-877-747-8713  
October–May \$69 and June–September \$77  
[www.bozemancitycenter.com](http://www.bozemancitycenter.com)
- **Lewis & Clark Motel** (closest to campus)  
824 West Main Street Bozeman, MT 59715  
Tel 406-586-3341  
Toll free U.S. only 1-800-332-7666  
October–May \$55 and June–September \$80

## Bozeman & Climate

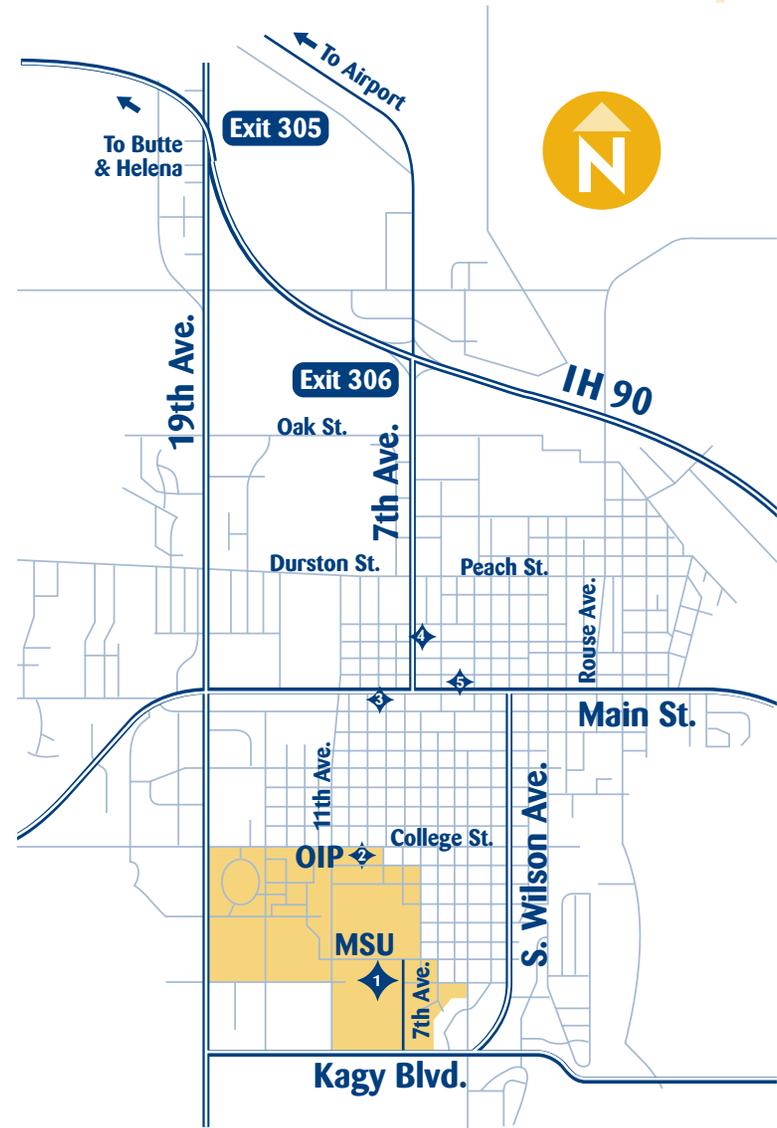
## Map of Bozeman

### Bozeman

Bozeman is a lively young city in the scenic Rocky Mountains that attracts many people for different reasons. With mountains, clean air and starry skies our town is a safe and beautiful place with an easy going Western style. It is an ideal place to live, work and study. Artists, writers and musicians find inspiration here. Bozeman is home to high tech companies that work with lasers, fiber optics, software and biotechnology. World-famous Yellowstone National Park is a short drive away. Visitors like to experience a traditional cowboy rodeo, see Native American Cultural exhibits and travel to nearby Canada. Local people enjoy many outdoor activities: hiking, backpacking, skiing, golfing, horseback riding, white water rafting, fly fishing, biking or soaking in a natural hot-spring. Historic downtown Bozeman has art galleries and restaurants for every taste, and coffee shops, museums and theaters for relaxation.

### Weather & Clothes

- In general MSU students and people in Bozeman dress casually and informally for (jeans, pants, T-shirts, sweaters).
- **Fall semester arrival:** In August and early September the average temperature should be around 70F/25C. With high temperatures of 88F/31C or above. The early morning and evenings will be cooler so a jacket might be necessary. In October and November it will be colder with temperatures ranging from 40F/4C and 50F/10C, heavier jackets, gloves and sweaters will be needed.
- **Spring semester arrival:** December, January and February temperatures can vary from cool to very cold with snow and ice. Average temperatures 20F/-7C. At an elevation of 5000ft/1650m Bozeman enjoys both sunny and snowy days in winter and is known as a tourist destination for its excellent winter sports and ski facilities. Since MSU is a pedestrian campus, you should plan a warm winter coat, boots, gloves and a hat or scarf. Generally the cold weather lasts an average of 3-months. Public buildings and housing all have good central heating systems.
- **Later spring and summer weather:** In March and April, temperatures are similar to those in October and November. May is a rainy month with warm and cool days. June is also rainy with warm to hot days. July and August are hot with little rain 75F/24C - 90F/32C.



1. MSU
2. OIP
3. Lewis & Clark Motel
4. Royal 7
5. Magnuson Grand City Center

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## OIP & International Campus Associations



## A.C.E. Language Institute

### OIP - International Student & Scholar Services

OIP is responsible for the general welfare of foreign students at MSU from admission to graduation and practical training. OIP provides support services, consultation and liaison for both students and scholars.

The office assists in the reception and orientation of foreign students and scholars, integration into the university and community, interpretation of immigration regulations and laws and other individual problems that may arise. Important services offered by OIP include pre-arrival, arrival assistance, general and immigration advising.

### International Street Food Bazaar

The International students/scholars on campus join together to make this event a success. Each country decorates a booth sharing music, handicrafts, native dress, photographs, prepares and sells food made with recipes from home. About 3,000 people from the community attend this event each year, which has proven to be a wonderful way to share culture. To prepare for this event and other possible international celebrations, we encourage you to bring a national costume and other items typical of your country.

### Global Culture Club (GCC)

The GCC is a student organization which strives to involve both foreign and U.S. students in activities. The purpose of the organization is to stimulate awareness of the multi-cultural nature of the world through social gatherings and field trips.

### Bozeman Friends of International Students (BFIS)

BFIS matches international students with community residents who want to share friendship and all that Bozeman has to offer. Matches between community friends and foreign students involve a minimal commitment of interacting with one another once a month for the first year of study. Many life long friendships have been made through involvement with this program.

### Other international associations

For a list of other international associations, please check our website:  
[www.montana.edu/international/msu/groups.htm](http://www.montana.edu/international/msu/groups.htm)

You can find details on the following associations: Chinese, French, German, Indian, Japanese, Malaysian, Muslim, Saudi, Spanish, Turkish, etc...

A.C.E. welcomes students for all levels of study in English: beginner, intermediate or advanced.

A.C.E. at Montana State University offers intensive English classes with native speakers for all levels. Listening, speaking, reading and writing courses are offered to all students who need to improve their language abilities. Full or part time courses are available.

#### Special classes are also available:

- TOEFL preparation
- Conversation and pronunciation
- Reading mechanics
- Writing on the computer
- Developmental writing
- College vocabulary
- GRE preparation

#### The best things about A.C.E. at MSU:

- No TOEFL to enter MSU after finishing our program (for undergraduate admission)
- Expert instructors who love to teach
- Challenging classes with up to 15 students
- Match up with a friendly American "Conversation Partner"

If English classes are not needed for yourself, you might have family or friends who are interested (details at the website below).

Apply online [www.cultural.org](http://www.cultural.org)

Tel 1-406-585-9832

Email [msuace@cultural.org](mailto:msuace@cultural.org)

## Quick Summary of Essentials

- Valid passport with appropriate visa
- I-20 or DS-2019
- Plane ticket
- Cash for travel
- Health records
- Health insurance records if applicable
- Special medication if applicable
- Useful phone numbers

## Suggested Items to Bring Along

- Medical prescriptions
- Bilingual dictionary
- Towel, washcloth
- Sweater, jacket and boots  
(note: winter clothes are easily found for purchase in Bozeman)
- Photos of family and friends
- Contact information for family, doctor and school in home country
- Your preferred toiletries
- International Driving License
- Items from home representing your culture
- Traditional clothes if applicable
- Additional pocket money  
(note: MSU students suggest budgeting additional money for all of the fun activities students enjoy in and around Bozeman)

## Contact Information

### Important Phone Numbers

OIP	1-406-994-4031
A.C.E.	1-406-585-9832
Registrar's Office	1-406-994-2601
Residence Life	1-406-994-2661
Family & Graduate Housing	1-406-994-3730
Student Health Services	1-406-994-2311
Students Accounts	1-406-994-5538
Campus Police	1-406-994-2121
Taxi in Bozeman	1-406-388-9999
Bozeman Airport	1-406-388-8321

### Websites and email

[www.montana.edu](http://www.montana.edu)  
[international@montana.edu](mailto:international@montana.edu)  
[msuace@cultural.org](mailto:msuace@cultural.org)

TERVETULOJA

مَرْحَبًا

WILLKOMMEN

EMAT DATANG

ยินดีต้อนรับ

ようこそ

MIPELA WELKAM YUPELA

WILLKOMMEN

BIENVENIDOS

VELKOMIN

BINGELELA

مَرْحَبًا

VALKOMMEN

BIENVENUE

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