

International Student Letter

Welcome to The Woods! We are looking forward to welcoming you to our community in person this August. International students often have questions about coming to The Woods and the U.S. to study. You may find the following suggestions helpful as you make your final plans. If you have additional questions you may contact us at:

CampusLife@smwc.edu

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College requires all students to submit a completed immunization record that will be kept on file in the Student Health Center. It is necessary for you to submit your immunization records and any other pertinent information. We provide an [immunization form](#). It is recommended that you make an appointment with your medical provider soon so that this form can be completed.

We also ask that you complete an [emergency contact form](#). This will be kept on file and utilized in the event of an emergency hospitalization so that we may provide the attending physicians with information regarding allergies and special medical situations. The form will also be used for the names and phone numbers of individuals that you would like us to contact for you in the case of an emergency.

Insurance is required for international students at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College. Insurance coverage from your home country is not adequate for U.S. medical costs and they do not cover repatriation or medical evacuation in case of serious illness or injury. As indicated in the expense section of your I-20, you will be required to choose from several approved policies upon your arrival here or show proof of purchase of one of those plans upon arrival. You may visit the website of several of those providers from home.

Checklist For Before You Leave Home

- Complete and email the following forms:
 - [Emergency Contact Form](#)
 - [Immunization Form](#)
 - [Housing Application](#)
 - [Travel Form](#)
- Purchase international insurance. This insurance needs to begin the day you arrive at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and needs to continue until your departure in May. It is important that you purchase the correct insurance. Here are some options:
 - www.compassbenefit.com

- www.hginsurance.com
- www.isoa.org
- www.studentinsure.com/it
 - The insurance plan we recommend is through International Student Organization. Their website is <http://www.isoa.org>. Please select Compass Gold plan, as it meets the minimum requirements.
- Tell your friends and family how to contact you – let your family know you will contact them upon your safe arrival.
- Leave copies of important documents (passport, Visa, I-20) at home in the event of lost luggage while traveling.
- Keep the bottom section of the SMWC Travel Form on your person when you travel so that you have contact information in case you miss a flight or are somehow delayed.
- Carefully consider your arrival time before you purchase your airline ticket. Please arrange to arrive on August 13, 2018 in Indianapolis between 12:00-1800 EST (12:00-6:0 p.m.) local time. The college will arrange transportation from the airport to the college.

Finances

Here are some things to consider when you think about money, travel, and living in a foreign country.

- Obtain a major credit card (MasterCard/Visa, etc.) before you leave home. It will be more difficult for you to get one when you are here.
- Do **not** travel with or keep large amounts of cash on your person, in your luggage, or your hotel room. A better option is traveler's checks or credit cards.
- The Campus Life Staff will take you to a local bank soon after you arrive. Once you have opened a bank account here, for a small fee, your family will be able to wire transfer money directly to your personal account.
- Special insurance is required (see next topic) to cover high U.S. medical expenses.

Packing

The Campus Life Staff will take you shopping within the first few days of your arrival to purchase bulky items such as bed linens, room furnishings, desk lamps, alarm clocks, or heavier clothing if needed. The weather in Indiana varies from cold and snowy winter (December thru March) to warm and humid in the summer (June thru September).

Students on campus dress in very casual manner – jeans, slacks, or shorts in warmer weather. You may wish to have one or two more dressy outfits available as well. Sweaters, hats, gloves, scarves, boots, and heavy coats are needed in the winter.

You will have opportunity to share your culture while you are here. International students often bring cultural items, traditional dress or small gift items from home. Pictures of home and family decorate your room and are nice for you to share with us.

Arrival Procedures

A College representative will meet you at the Indianapolis Airport on August 13, 2018 in Indianapolis between 12:00-1800 EST (12:00-6:00 p.m.) local time. If you arrive before noon (1200) EDT, collect your luggage and wait in the baggage claim area. A College representative will meet you there when they arrive at the airport. The College representative will have a sign saying Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (SMWC). Please look for that sign.

Help After Orientation

SMWC has many resources for international students. Some of the resources include: the Campus Life Staff, Academic Advisors, Learning Resource Center and Tutors, Student Counseling Center, Campus Minister, Student Health Center, and others. The campus is very friendly and you will find your professors, other students, and other staff members eager and willing to help you.

U.S. Government Requirements for F-1 Students

There are some requirements for international students on an F-1visa that we will discuss in more detail during orientation. Here are some important points to consider now.

- You must take 12 credit hours of class every semester.
- You may not work except on campus.
- You may not leave the U.S. without the signature of a Designated School Official from SMWC.

Health Services Clinic

The Student Health Center is open 4 days per week on campus during the academic year to answer your health needs or questions. The staff provides urgent care and can refer you to specialist or other providers in the area if needed. The College has various agreements with the local hospitals and several physicians to provide both physical and mental health services.

Hall Closings

The residence hall (Le Fer Hall) in which you will live and campus food service will close during Fall Break, Christmas Break, and Spring Break, and possibly a few shorter breaks during the Academic year. Most students plan to travel or visit friends during the breaks.

If you need housing during campus closings you will need to contact Campus Life. Kitchens are available, but you will need to purchase and cook your own food at these times if you stay.

Please contact Campus Life if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

[Aimee Janssen-Robinson, Ph.D., CHES](#)

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