



# Pre-Arrival Newsletter for New International Students

Spring 2009

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We regret that we cannot return telephone calls from overseas.

## WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE!!!!

This newsletter was produced by the Office of International Students and Scholars in order to answer many of your questions about coming to UNH. We have provided information about applying for your visa, arriving at UNH, new student orientation, the weather, and academic expectations. You have received additional information from either the UNH Admissions Office or from the UNH Graduate School. Our website ([www.unh.edu/oiss](http://www.unh.edu/oiss)) has information specific to the needs of new international students. The University's website ([www.unh.edu](http://www.unh.edu)) is a valuable resource as well. We look forward to welcoming you to our community of international students!

### Where in the World is UNH?

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) is located in Durham, New Hampshire, in the northeast region of the US known as New England. Durham is close to Boston, Massachusetts and the Atlantic Ocean, as well as New Hampshire's White Mountains and Lakes Region. Montreal, Canada, is only a five-hour drive away.

### Getting to UNH

#### By Air

We suggest that you fly into Logan International Airport in Boston, Massachusetts, and arrange for ground transportation to Durham, New Hampshire. The University of New Hampshire is not able to offer pick-up service at the airport.

During the academic year (late August through late May), the **C&J Trailways Bus** offers regular service to Durham. At other times, C&J stops in Portsmouth, NH, and Dover, NH, both of which are about ten miles from Durham. There is taxicab service available from either Portsmouth or Dover to Durham. To see the C&J bus schedule, visit their website: [www.citrailways.com](http://www.citrailways.com)

**Mermaid Transportation** will pick you up at the airport and deliver you to your residence hall. Call 1-800-696-2463 (in the US only) or visit their website ([www.gomermaid.com](http://www.gomermaid.com)) to make reservations.

**Flightline** also provides this service. (Visit their website at [www.flightlineinc.com](http://www.flightlineinc.com).)

#### By Train

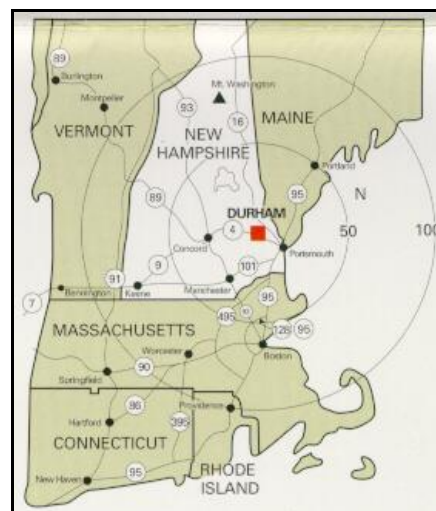
Amtrak provides train service from Boston, MA to Durham. To see the train schedule, make reservations and purchase tickets, go to the website: [www.thedowneaster.com](http://www.thedowneaster.com).

#### By Car

Durham is located on Route 4, a major east-west highway in the southeast corner of New Hampshire.

From the South, follow I-95 to Portsmouth, NH, and then follow the Spaulding Turnpike north to Route 4 West. Exit Route 4 at Route 155A and follow the signs into Durham.

From the West, follow Route 101 from Manchester, NH, to Route 125 North to the Lee Traffic Circle. Take Route 4 East to Route 155A and follow the signs into Durham.



### Inside:

- Applying for Visa
- Tips for Interview
- Preparing for Arrival
- Academic Information
- Directory of Resources



# Applying for Your Visa

Effective 9/1/2004, payment of a SEVIS fee is required prior to applying at a consulate or embassy for a student visa. For SEVIS fee (I-901) information, see: [www.fmifee.com](http://www.fmifee.com)



Enclosed is your "Certificate of Eligibility", either an I-20 or a DS-2019. Use this document to apply for your student visa at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate nearest your home. When you apply, bring original

documents showing your ability to cover your educational and living expenses in the U.S., such as original bank statements (in English and in U.S. dollars), award letters for assistantships and/or scholarships, or Affidavit of Support from a sponsor. See "Tips for a Successful interview".

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All applicants for a U.S. visa should anticipate longer processing times for their visa applications and closer scrutiny of their documentation. Background checks are required. These security checks will likely lengthen the processing time for visa applications by as long as thirty days.

Lines may be long in airports, so be prepared to wait. It is always a good idea to have a carry-on bag with a change of clothing and overnight toiletries, something to read, daily medications, etc. in case you encounter long delays or your luggage goes astray. There are restrictions on bringing certain substances onto airplanes, including liquids. Please refer to <http://www.tsa.gov/311/index.shtm> for current information.

Students from countries that have been determined by the U.S. Secretary of State to be sponsors of international terrorism should anticipate extremely close review of their visa documents and a high likelihood of denial.

For additional information about what you can expect when entering the US, please refer to this website <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/index.htm>.

Once you have your U.S. visa, keep your passport, financial documents, and Certificate of Eligibility available for inspection by U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel at your point of entry into the U.S. [Please do not pack them in your suitcase!] There will be many occasions during your trip when you will be asked to present your identification and immigration papers. Have them ready and accessible to you, but in a safe place so that they are not accessible to anyone else.

### Transferring from one school to another

If you are currently in the U.S. and have been attending another educational institution, we have enclosed a photocopy of the Certificate of Eligibility issued by UNH. When you enroll at UNH, we will have you sign the original to complete your immigration transfer.

### While Traveling to or within the United States

Everyone is especially cautious since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. You should be aware that all modes of transportation, not just airports, have increased their levels of security. Security and transportation personnel on the ground and in the air are extremely watchful for unexpected behavior. Listen carefully to the instructions given by security personnel and flight crews, and follow their instructions. If you are instructed to remain in your seat by the flight crew on an airplane, you must do so or you may be considered to be a threat to the safety of the flight. Do not leave any baggage unattended in a public place. Do not accept a package from anyone you do not know or from anyone who is not boarding the plane.

If you are currently in the U.S., and will travel outside of the U.S. before enrolling at UNH, we have enclosed the original Certificate of Eligibility. Use it to apply for a new visa, if necessary, and to re-enter the U.S.

### Attending school while in another non-immigrant status

There are many categories of immigration status which allow you to study full time. If you are offered a graduate assistantship (as a teaching, research, or project assistant), you may be required to change your immigration status in order to accept the assistantship. Employment as a graduate assistant cannot begin until you obtain approval of your change of status by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Consult with OISS if this is your situation.

### Unable to Attend?

If you are unable to attend the University of New Hampshire, you must return the enclosed Certificate of Eligibility to OISS.

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If you received more than one Certificate of Eligibility (from more than one university), you must report to and enroll in the school whose Certificate you use when entering the U.S. If you do not, you will have to apply to the US Department of Homeland Security for reinstatement to lawful student status.



## At the U.S. Consulate: Tips for a Successful Interview

Sometimes visa applicants are denied for reasons which can be avoided, if a little advance knowledge and common sense is applied. These tips may make your interview a successful one!

Understand that you will be interviewed as an intending immigrant – it is your responsibility to submit satisfactory evidence to the contrary.

Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English and not in your native language. Practice English conversation – preferably with a native speaker. You might even want to do some role-playing, with your partner taking the role of the consular officer and asking you questions about your anticipated studies in the U.S.

At all times, be friendly and courteous to the consular officer.

Keep in mind that all consular officers are under considerable time pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview. They must make a decision based heavily on the impressions they form during the first few minutes of the interview. Consequently, what you initially say and the impression you create are critical to your success.

Keep your answers to the officer's questions short and to the point. Listen carefully and make sure you understand each question. If you are not absolutely sure you heard the request correctly, ask the officer to repeat it.

Organize your supporting documentation so that it can be logically presented – without hesitation or fumbling through a briefcase. Do not bring papers with you to the interview unless you are prepared to present them. The consular officer may ask to see other papers you may be carrying with you – if you refuse, your visa will probably be denied.

Do not bring family members (other than accompanying dependents) to the interview.



Maintain a positive attitude. Do not engage the consular officer in an argument. If you are denied a visa, be sure to ask the officer to give you the reason why you were denied and for a list of documents (in writing if possible) he/she would suggest that you bring in order to reverse the decision. Also, if you can, get the officer's name.

Be prepared to discuss, in positive terms, what you expect to get out of your U.S. education. Be sure to say (even if not asked) how you will use your education upon returning to your home country.

If given the opportunity, try to impress the consular officer with your academic success thus far in your own country. If you achieved an especially high honor in completing secondary school or in achieving your first degree, don't hesitate to mention this during the interview.

If you have a relative, such as a brother or sister, who completed higher education in the U.S. and is successfully pursuing a career back in your home country, mention this. It will greatly strengthen your own application.

If your spouse is applying for the accompanying dependent visa, be aware that there are employment restrictions. (F-2 dependents may not work under any circumstances. J-2 dependents are eligible for employment, but not in order to directly support the J-1 spouse.) Be prepared to address what your spouse intends to do with his/her time while in the U.S. Attending school is a permitted activity for a J-2 dependent, but not for an F-2 dependent.

Be prepared to discuss any professional interests, associations, memberships or other social ties you intend to maintain with your own country.

If you are a male applicant and your country imposes mandatory military service, be prepared to state that you intend to fully comply with your country's laws concerning military service.

If you are married, especially with children, and your spouse is remaining behind in your own country, be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence. This can be a problematic area if you are the primary breadwinner in your family. If the consular officer gains the impression that your family will need you to remit money from the U.S. in order to support them, your visa application will almost certainly be denied.

## Good Luck!



# Preparing for Your Arrival

## Weather

Weather in New Hampshire is variable, with four distinct seasons. Summer weather can be expected in May, June, July, August, and September. Temperatures can reach the 90 degree range (Fahrenheit) in the summer, with lots of humidity making it feel even hotter. Autumn weather may begin in September and last into October. In autumn, the days become less humid and the nights become cool. The variety of deciduous trees in New Hampshire produces brilliant fall foliage that attracts tourists from around the world. The months of November through March bring us winter conditions, when cold winds, rain or freezing rain, sleet, and snowstorms are common and temperatures may fall below zero (F). Spring may arrive as early as March.



## Clothing

Because of the changing seasons, it is important to be prepared for variable weather. We recommend that clothing be cotton or a blend of cotton with a synthetic fiber for the warmer months, and wool or a blend of wool with a synthetic fiber

for the colder months. Rain repellent outerwear, waterproof footwear, and umbrellas will help. Mittens, hats, insulated boots, and warm overcoats are essential in winter.

Students at UNH dress casually for most functions, including attending classes. It may be appropriate to dress more formally for some social events. Your national dress is always welcome and will be appreciated at special events.

## Housing ([www.unh.edu/housing](http://www.unh.edu/housing))

First year *undergraduate* international students are required to live on campus. Smith Hall is known as International/Multicultural House. Smith Hall, Devine Hall, Hitchcock Hall, Randall Hall and the undergraduate apartments remain open through UNH vacations, except summer. To reserve a room, follow the instructions sent to you by UNH Admissions. Pay close attention to deadlines! Even if you are not 100% sure you will attend UNH, it is better to reserve a room and then cancel it than to delay in reserving a room.



International *graduate* students and undergraduates who are 21 years old and older may be assigned to Babcock Hall, the graduate student dormitory. Babcock remains open all year. It is important to request space in Babcock as early as possible! [See "Grad Housing" link on the Housing website.]

Students accompanied by their spouse and/or dependent children may request an apartment in the Forest Park apartment complex. There is usually a waiting list for an apartment. We advise students to come alone and to bring their families to join them after a semester or two. [See "Family Housing" on the Housing website.]

Off-campus housing (in the nearby communities of Newmarket, Dover, Lee, and Portsmouth) is limited and expensive. You may refer to the list of rooms and

apartments available off campus at the Information Desk in the Memorial Union Building on campus, or by visiting this web address: [www.unh.edu/mub/housinglist](http://www.unh.edu/mub/housinglist).

## Dining ([www.unh.edu/dining](http://www.unh.edu/dining))

Undergraduate students living on campus must purchase a University meal plan that allows them to eat in any of the University's dining halls. The dining halls serve three meals a day on weekdays, and on weekends provide brunch and dinner. Students living off campus and graduate students can choose to purchase a University meal plan. The University of New Hampshire's Dining Services has won numerous national awards for its cuisine, and provides meals to suit many different dietary needs.

## Financial Planning: Working and Paying Bills

Graduate students with assistantships can arrange with the University's Business Office to have the cost of University housing and dining deducted automatically from their paychecks over the semester. OISS will provide information about this during Orientation.



International students have limited opportunities for employment, which we will explain during your Orientation. You should not expect to support yourself with additional income from working. Unauthorized employment is a violation of your immigration status and has very serious consequences. Graduate assistants are authorized to work as part of the assistantship but cannot accept any additional employment, on or off campus.

Undergraduate tuition, fees, room, and board should be paid by the due date. Payments not received by the due date are subject to a late fee. Failure to pay all bills will result in non-registration, which is a violation of your immigration status. Bills must be accessed online via WEBCAT (<http://webcat.unh.edu>). To activate your UNH username and set your password, click on LOGIN HELP. Then follow the instructions for "New to UNH". After you have activated your UNH username and set your password, log in to Blackboard at <http://blackboard.unh.edu>. If you have any questions about this, contact Business Services directly (see below).

If you are receiving financial support from UNH or from your home country, be prepared to show an official letter of award upon arrival. Make sure all your financial agreements are in writing. If any of your bills are to be paid by third parties, follow the instructions on Blackboard about setting an authorized third party payer.

Questions regarding your tuition bill should be directed to:  
UNH Business Services  
Stoke Hall, 11 Garrison Avenue  
Durham, NH 03824  
Tel: (603) 862-2230  
Fax: (603) 862-2626  
Email: [Business.Services@unh.edu](mailto:Business.Services@unh.edu)



## Preparing for Your Arrival

### Bringing Funds With You

Check your home government's regulations concerning transferring funds to the United States. Expenses may be heaviest when you first arrive in the U.S. We estimate that you should have about \$700 available to you for incidental expenses en route and for living expenses when you first arrive. Keep about \$100 of this in cash, the rest in traveler's checks in U.S. dollars. Even if you are a graduate student with an assistantship, you must be prepared to cover your first month's expenses as it will take time for the University to process your assistantship and get you on the payroll.

### Matters of Health ([www.unh.edu/health-services](http://www.unh.edu/health-services))

The University of New Hampshire provides a variety of health services on campus during the academic year, funded by a mandatory health fee. In the summer, Health Services is open part-time and there is a fee for services. UNH Health Services sends new students a packet of information and forms which must be completed and returned directly to Health Services. (See also <http://www.unh.edu/health-services/requirements.html>)



**All international students must have health insurance.** UNH policy allows for NO exceptions to the requirement for all F-1 students to purchase this insurance from the University. If you are accompanied by your family, they also should be covered by medical insurance. Medical care is very expensive in the United States, and this requirement is for your

own protection in the event of serious illness or accident. Please comply with the deadlines established by UNH Health Services regarding purchasing insurance coverage. J-1 students have special provisos in their exchange agreements governing health insurance. To view the health insurance brochure, visit

[www.unh.edu/vpsas/UNHInternational.pdf](http://www.unh.edu/vpsas/UNHInternational.pdf).

Dental care and vision examinations are not included in the medical insurance. We recommend that you have your teeth and eyes checked before leaving your home. If you are currently taking any prescription medications, bring with you information about each medication and its original container. This will make it easier for U.S. doctors to order refills for you.

### Driving a Car in New Hampshire

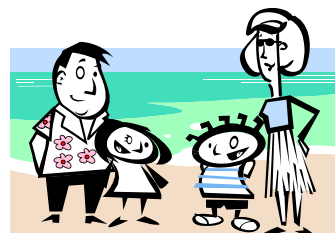
The State of New Hampshire does not recognize an international driver's license if you are here as a student. If you plan to drive a car, you will be required to obtain a New Hampshire driver's license. If you have a license to drive in your home country, it is important to bring with you a copy of your driving record and your current license. If you do not have a license to drive in your home country, you must provide documentation of that fact. You may refer to the DMV website for the exact procedures to follow in applying for a NH license, including what documents to bring from your home country:

(<http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/dmv/nonuscitizen/nusc2.html>)



### Bringing Your Family: What to Consider

Before you decide that your spouse and/or dependent children should accompany you to the United States, you should be aware that three things are very expensive in the Durham area: off-campus housing, child care, and insurance.



Housing is extremely limited and quite expensive in the area surrounding the University. While there is a bus system servicing some of the surrounding towns, it also is limited, and it is the only public transportation system in

the area. Finding housing near a bus line can be very difficult. Spouses may feel isolated and alone.

School-age children (ages 6 to 16) are required to attend school. You will need to provide their official birth certificates, school records, and complete medical history and immunization records. You will not be able to enroll them in school without these documents. **IMPORTANT:** Please see current State of New Hampshire requirements at [www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/IMMUNIZATION](http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/IMMUNIZATION).

Childcare centers (for younger children or after-school care) are expensive and usually have a waiting list. It may not be possible to find a center to take care of your child immediately.

Family members who accompany you should be covered by medical insurance. You need to demonstrate your ability to cover their living expenses while in the U.S. OISS estimates expenses as \$8,000 per year for the first family member and \$6,000 per year for each additional family member. U.S. consular officials may require proof of your ability to cover these expenses for the duration of your academic program.

Dependent spouses of international students in F-1 status are not eligible to be employed in the U.S. under any circumstances.

OISS strongly recommends that spouses and/or children not accompany you to the U.S. until you have completed one academic year.



# Academics and Cultural Information

## Academic Calendar

The University of New Hampshire's academic calendar begins with the Fall semester which runs from late August through mid-December. There is a short break in November for the Thanksgiving Holiday. There are several weeks of vacation between the end of the Fall semester and the beginning of the Spring semester, and many students choose to travel home during this time. Spring semester begins in the third week of January and ends in mid-May. There is a one-week Spring Break in March. From the end of May to mid-August, the University offers several sessions of summer courses which are not part of the regular academic year but which provide the opportunity to study and earn credits toward your degree.

## Full Time Status

International students must maintain their full-time student status. For undergraduate students, this means being registered for at least twelve credits each semester. For graduate students, the minimum required is nine credits unless you have a full assistantship. Graduate assistants must register for at least six credits.



## Classes

Most classes meet two or three times per week, and last between 50 minutes and 90 minutes. Class size varies from very large (for introductory courses) to quite small (advanced classes). English is used in all classes, except advanced foreign language courses. Textbooks are available at the local bookstores or may be purchased used from other students. Reference materials are available in the main UNH library or in the many branch libraries on campus.

## New Student Orientation

New international students arriving at the University of New Hampshire to begin their programs in January will be provided with an orientation session, during which the Office of International Students and Scholars will collect information from you and will provide you with information about your US immigration requirements, US employment and tax regulations, and other matters. It is vitally important that you attend the orientation session. OISS will inform you of the date, time and place.

## Academic Advisor

You will be assigned an academic advisor to help you plan your academic program. Your academic advisor may need to provide OISS with information about your academic progress and expected completion date. We recommend that you establish and maintain a good working relationship with your academic advisor, especially if you encounter any difficulties in your courses.

## Academic Experience

During Orientation, OISS will provide information on the American educational experience and how it may differ from your own. We will discuss expectations for class participation, the role of the professor, interactions between students and faculty, grading and testing, among other issues.

## Other Activities

Beyond the classroom, the University offers a wide range of cultural and recreational activities, including theater, art, films, concerts, lectures, recreational sports, nationally-ranked sports teams, and student organizations. UNH's proximity to Boston provides the opportunity to enjoy a cosmopolitan environment. UNH's proximity to New Hampshire's White Mountains and Lakes Region, as well as to the Atlantic Ocean, offers you the opportunity to engage in a variety of summer or winter activities.

Participating in a variety of activities provides you with a valuable opportunity for interaction and involvement with American students. You will find that many American students are eager to hear about your home country and your experiences. You may wish to bring items that are representative of your home country or culture, such as photographs, artifacts, national dress, etc. Sharing these with your American counterparts can be a mutually enriching experience.

**Welcome** 欢迎

Καλώς Ήλθατε

Добро пожаловать

**Bienvenu**

Benvenuti

**Bienvenido**

**Willkommen**

ようこそ

**Maligayang Pagdating**



## Directory of Resources

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### University Offices:

Admissions Office (Undergraduate)  
(603) 862-1360  
[Admissions@unh.edu](mailto:Admissions@unh.edu)  
[www.unh.edu/admissions](http://www.unh.edu/admissions)

Business Services  
(603) 862-2230  
[Business.services@unh.edu](mailto:Business.services@unh.edu)  
[www.finadmin.unh.edu/controller/busservstudent](http://www.finadmin.unh.edu/controller/busservstudent)

Forest Park Apartments  
(603) 862-2742  
[www.unh.edu/housing/famhousing](http://www.unh.edu/housing/famhousing)

Graduate School  
(603) 862-3000  
[Grad.school@unh.edu](mailto:Grad.school@unh.edu)  
[www.gradschool.unh.edu](http://www.gradschool.unh.edu)

Health Services  
(603) 862-1530  
[www.unh.edu/health-services](http://www.unh.edu/health-services)

Honors Program  
(603) 862-3928  
<http://unhinfo.unh.edu/honors-program>

Housing  
(603) 862-2120  
[Housing@unh.edu](mailto:Housing@unh.edu)  
[www.unh.edu/housing](http://www.unh.edu/housing)  
[www.unh.edu/mub/housinglist](http://www.unh.edu/mub/housinglist)

Office of International Students & Scholars  
(603) 862-1288  
[oiss@unh.edu](mailto:oiss@unh.edu)  
[www.unh.edu/oiss](http://www.unh.edu/oiss)

UNH Police  
(603) 862-1427  
[www.unh.edu/upd](http://www.unh.edu/upd)

UNH Registrar's Office  
(603) 862-1500  
<http://unhinfo.unh.edu/registrar>

Student Life at UNH  
[www.unh.edu/student/firstyear](http://www.unh.edu/student/firstyear)

Traffic Services/Parking Office  
(603) 862-1010  
[www.unh.edu/parking](http://www.unh.edu/parking)

University Operator  
(603)862-1234

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### Student Groups

Chinese Student and Scholar Association (CSSA)  
[www.unh.edu/cssa](http://www.unh.edu/cssa)

Graduate Student Organization  
[www.gradschool.unh.edu/GSO/](http://www.gradschool.unh.edu/GSO/)

Hillel  
[www.geocities.com/unh\\_hillel](http://www.geocities.com/unh_hillel)

Indian Students Association  
[www.unh.edu/sas](http://www.unh.edu/sas)

Muslim Student Association  
[www.unh.edu/msa](http://www.unh.edu/msa)

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### Local Accommodations

In case your travel plans require you to arrive in Durham before the residence halls are available, we have provided a list of local accommodations. Please contact them directly as we cannot make reservations on your behalf.

The Hotel New Hampshire  
(Holiday Inn Express)  
2 Main Street  
Durham, NH 03824  
(603) 868-1234  
[www.hotelnewhampshire.net](http://www.hotelnewhampshire.net)

The New England Center  
Strafford Avenue  
Durham, NH 03824  
(603) 862-2801  
[www.necc.unh.edu](http://www.necc.unh.edu)

Hickory Pond Inn  
One Stagecoach Road  
Durham, NH 03824  
(603) 659-2227  
<http://www.hickorypondinn.com/>