



Dear Incoming Double Degree Program Students,

Thank you for your patience, and for your diligence in working on your pre-arrival requirements in iTorero!

I see that a few of you have not yet completed the pre-arrival requirements in iTorero. If this is the case for you, please prioritize the **Certification of Finances section in iTorero** – in which you are asked to upload a bank document proving availability of funds for your program in the U.S. – and **submit it no later than this Friday at 1:00pm California time**. This is a necessary requirement for you to satisfy before your Form DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for the J-1 Visa) can be issued.

If you have already completed the Certification of Finances section and the other pre-arrival requirements in iTorero, thank you!

I will send everyone's Form DS-2019 and visa application packet this Friday, provided that you have submitted the necessary financial documents.

NEXT STEPS

* **Passport and Visa:** If you need to apply for or renew your passport, this must be done immediately.

As mentioned above, your **visa application packet** will be sent to your home university this Friday (my apologies for the delay, and thank you for your patience). This packet will contain your Form DS-2019 immigration document along with instructions for obtaining a J-1 ("Exchange Visitor") student visa. Once you receive this packet, you will need to schedule an appointment to obtain your visa. **All international double degree students must obtain a J-1 student visa in order to participate as a student at USD – you may NOT use a tourist visa or any other visa type.** The only exceptions are students who have U.S. citizenship or U.S. permanent residency (green card). You will receive detailed information regarding the J-1 visa application procedure in your packet.

*** Housing in San Diego:**

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

You should have received an email from the USD Residential Life Office last week, either to your personal email address or to your USD email address. Information about on-campus housing options can be found on this website: <https://www.sandiego.edu/residentiallife/student->

[housing/upperclassmen-and-transfer-housing.php](#) (Please note that you will be applying for "upperclassmen" housing if you wish to live on campus.)

We typically recommend that students live on campus, particularly students who do not plan to have a car or are unfamiliar with San Diego. On-campus student housing is furnished, so you would not need to purchase furniture, and all necessary utilities and internet service are included and already connected. If you would like to live on campus, it is important to complete your housing application in a timely manner (my recommendation is to submit your application by mid-June).

If you have any questions about on-campus housing, please email housing@sandiego.edu.

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

If you plan to live off campus, be sure to search for housing near USD, not UCSD (a different university with a similar name). These [resources](#) can be used to aid in your search. Please beware of scams. Never transfer or send money to a landlord before you have seen the residence and have met face-to-face.

I've created this [Google sheet](#) for exchange students and international double degree students who are interested in living off campus and would like to find a roommate. You can use this simple sheet to contact each other if you would like to live together off-campus.

You may be able to find slightly more affordable accommodations off campus in an apartment or a room in a shared house; however, please keep in mind that off-campus housing is typically unfurnished and the cost of rent does not typically include utility fees (water, electric, gas, etc.), so you will need to factor in those additional costs. If you choose to live off campus, you would indeed also need to consider the added costs of transit to and from campus. It is often possible to find low-cost furniture on websites like [OfferUp.com](#) or at stores like Ikea or Target. We will take you on a shopping trip to Target during Orientation.

Many students find they are unable to secure housing in San Diego from abroad. For this reason, students often stay in a hotel or Airbnb accommodation for about a week when they first arrive to San Diego while they search for more permanent housing. If you need to stay in a hotel when you first arrive, USD students receive discounted rates at [these hotels](#).

You are welcome to post on these Facebook pages if you are looking for a roommate:

<https://www.facebook.com/USDOISShousing>

<https://www.facebook.com/usdgradlawoffcampushousing/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/330365963839528/about/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1301299533346722/>

*** Immunization Requirement:** USD requires all incoming students to complete a questionnaire regarding your exposure risk for Tuberculosis as well as a form about your immunization history. Based on these forms, you may be required to receive additional immunizations before the start of fall semester classes, which can be done in your home country with your personal healthcare provider or upon your arrival in San Diego at the USD Student Health Center. If you choose to be enrolled in the

USD international student health insurance plan, there is no cost to receive the required immunizations at the USD Student Health Center when you arrive.

Please complete the mandatory questionnaire and form at <http://www.sandiego.edu/health-center/immunizations/requirements.php> under the section "Accessing TB Screening Questionnaire and Submitting the Immunization Records." If you encounter any difficulty or have questions or concerns pertaining to USD's immunization requirement, please contact the USD Student Health Center at usdhealthcenter@sandiego.edu and include in your email that you will be an international student at USD during the fall semester along with your 9-digit student ID number.

*** Get in the Habit of Checking Your USD Email Account Regularly Before You Arrive:** Your USD email address will be your USD One username with the extension @sandiego.edu

1. Log into my.sandiego.edu using your USD One username and password
2. Click "Torero Mail" at the top of the webpage

*** Packing Tips:** We recommend that students bring one or two large pieces of luggage and one small carry-on piece of luggage. It will probably be about 26-30 degrees Celsius during the daytime when you arrive and around 12-20 degrees Celsius at night. Unless you plan to travel to the mountains or a colder city while you are here, you will not need heavy winter clothing, as even in December/January the temperature will likely not drop below 10 degrees Celsius. I recommend packing a few sweaters or long-sleeved shirts in addition to a light or medium-weight coat or jacket that you can layer, along with many warm-weather outfits. We also suggest you bring one or two dressy/somewhat formal outfits.

INTERNATIONAL EXPO: Each March, the International Center hosts an international fashion show. If you would like to participate (everyone is welcome!), please bring an outfit that represents your country's traditional clothing.

Please see the attached Packing List for more tips. (You will notice that this list was originally created for students traveling to Europe. Most of these items, however, are still applicable to you.) ***If you do not have all of these items, do not worry!*** We will take you on a shopping trip on the afternoon of Thursday, August 29th to get any items you may need to purchase once you arrive. We recommend that you do pack one set of linens and a towel for the first two nights you are here prior to the shopping trip, though, as on-campus residences do not include towels, sheets, or pillows.

*** Flights/Travel to San Diego:**

You may begin booking your flights and making travel arrangements. However, please keep in mind the following information:

1. If you wish to live on campus, **move-in day will be Tuesday, August 27th.** If you plan to live off campus, we also recommend that you arrive to San Diego by Tuesday, August 27th, as social orientation activities will begin the evening of August 28th and **the first MANDATORY orientation session will be held the morning of Thursday, August 29th.** Plan to arrive BEFORE this date. Please notify me immediately if you have doubts about being able to arrive in time for the mandatory session on August 29th.

2. If you wish to arrive early, you will be able to enter the U.S. using your J-1 visa up to 30 days before the official program start date (official program start date: August 28, 2019); however, please note that we cannot guarantee on-campus housing before August 27th.
3. Final exams for the Fall 2019 semester will be held December 16th - December 20th. The [final exam schedule](#) can be viewed here. The winter holiday will begin on December 21st and classes will resume for the Spring 2020 semester on Monday, January 27, 2020.
4. Because we cannot guarantee that your embassy/consulate will grant you a J-1 visa and in very rare cases students have been denied a visa and have needed to cancel their enrollment at USD, you may wish to consider purchasing cancellation insurance for your plane ticket.

*** Bank Account:**

If you would like to open a bank account in the U.S., there are several banks located near USD, including a US Bank branch on the USD campus. You do not need a social security number to open an account, only your passport and Form DS-2019. You will have the opportunity to open a bank account when you arrive in the U.S.; however, it is not mandatory.

*** Cell Phone:**

The USD bookstore (called the Torero Store) allows students to purchase a SIM card if you already have an unlocked cell phone. The bookstore may also have a few refurbished phones for sale at a discounted price that you could purchase in conjunction with a SIM card. Alternatively, during Orientation week, we will take you on a shopping trip where you can shop mobile providers.

*** Academic Calendar:** View the USD [2019-2020 academic calendar](#) for a list of holidays, breaks, the final exam period, etcetera. **Please disregard the "New Student Orientation" dates listed on the academic calendar, though, as these dates are different for international students.** You will receive a detailed Orientation calendar from me before your arrival that lists dates and times of all Orientation sessions and social events that pertain to you.

*** Your Class Schedule:** As a reminder, you are able to view your fall semester course schedule by following these steps:

1. Log into my.sandiego.edu using your USD One username and password
2. Select "My Academics" under "Torero Hub" on the left side of the page
3. Click "Concise Student Schedule" in the "Registration Tools" box in the middle of the page and select "Fall 2019"

Please keep in mind that course registration at USD is quite competitive and making changes to your course schedule can be difficult and problematic. **Do NOT attempt to make changes to your course schedule on your own.** If you have any questions or concerns regarding your course enrollment, you will have time to address these issues with your academic advisor during Orientation.

You will also have the opportunity to sign up for recreational/sports classes once you arrive if that interests you.

* **Find us on Facebook & Instagram:** Connect with us virtually by joining the USD Office of International Students & Scholars Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/USDOISS/> and the USD International Student Organization Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/986241044773614/> or on Instagram @usd_iso

* **Forthcoming Information:** You will receive information regarding local transportation, parking (if you decide to rent or buy a car), wireless internet access, dining options, textbooks, optional campus employment, directions from the airport and a campus map, a list of fees and payment instructions and more from me in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Jessica Forrester | Exchange Program Coordinator

jforrester@sandiego.edu

PACKING TIPS

- ✓ Lay out everything you think you need on your bed. It should fit on your bed! **NOW PUT HALF BACK.**
- ✓ Luggage will be stored in your bedroom / apartment. Consider using a duffle bag on wheels rather than a huge suitcase. They are easier to store and can double as under-bed storage.
- ✓ Look at the weather patterns for your host country!
- ✓ Remember the electrical current is different in Europe – plan accordingly with adaptors and converters where needed.
- ✓ If you are bringing electronic devices, make sure you have the proper adaptors / converters.
- ✓ You may want to consider extra batteries and memory cards for your camera.
- ✓ Hair dryers / flat irons / curling irons are *likely* to blow a fuse or start a fire! The investment in country is worth it :)
- ✓ A small suitcase lock is great for turning your suitcase into your safe abroad. **DO NOT USE THIS WHEN FLYING.** It will be cut off.

BOTTOM LINE : Be prepared but travel lightly. ***Limit yourself to two pieces of luggage plus a carry-on.*** There will be many new things abroad you'll want to have.

ESSENTIALS

Europe has nearly everything we have here ... the only difference may be brands and price. These are things you can't necessarily buy or want to make sure you have.

☐ PASSPORT & VISA!

- ☐ Student ID
- ☐ Money : local currency to start [\$200]
- ☐ Guidebook | Phrasebook

☐ PHOTOCOPIES!

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Visa
- ☐ Credit & Debit Cards
- ☐ Acceptance Letter(s)

☐ ALL PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

- ☐ in original packaging
- ☐ Copy of Rx

TOILETRIES

Available in Europe, but maybe not the brand you have to have. If that's you, see how much of each product you use over a few weeks. This will help gauge how much you actually need. (Hint: likely not 20 bottles.)

☐ Shampoo

- ☐ Conditioner
- ☐ Soap
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Razor(s)
- ☐ Shaving Crème
- ☐ Hair Products
- ☐ Hair brush / comb

☐ Glasses

- ☐ Contacts
- ☐ Contact Solution
- ☐ Gender Specific Items
- ☐ Sunblock
- ☐ Lotion
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste

☐ Floss

- ☐ Mouthwash
- ☐ Nail Trimmer / File
- ☐ Makeup
- ☐ **RX MEDICATION FOR THE DURATION!**

CLOTHING

Europeans have many subtle differences when it comes to clothing. Athletic shoes and flip-flops are not part of daily apparel. Sweatshirts are *scarce*. Avoid too much college pride in your wear ... this is obsolete in a European wardrobe.

☐ Under garments

- ☐ Socks
- ☐ Shorts
- ☐ Jeans / Pants
- ☐ Skirts
- ☐ Dresses
- ☐ T-shirts (long & short sleeve)
- ☐ Sweaters
- ☐ Sweatshirts (limit these)

☐ Jackets (light & heavy)

- ☐ Scarves / Mittens
- ☐ Swimwear
- ☐ Pajamas
- ☐ Comfy Shoes (read: BEWARE COBBLESTONE)
- ☐ Boots
- ☐ Sandals
- ☐ Flip-flops (shower & beach *only*)
- ☐ Sunglasses

☐ Jewelry (nothing you'd be heartbroken to lose)

- ☐ Watch
- ☐ Belts
- ☐ Hats
- ☐ Work out clothes (you'll use these a lot less than you think)
- ☐ One Nice Outfit

SCHOOL

Oh yes ... it is *study* abroad, after all. FYI European stationary and writing supplies are *fantastic*. I recommend purchasing this in country as it makes going to class more novel and keeps your luggage weight down.

- ☐ Flash Drive
- ☐ Notebooks
- ☐ **Laptop (charger & converter/adaptor if necessary)**
- ☐ Writing Utensils

EXTRAS

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earplugs / Eyemask | <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry Detergent
(handwashing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Small suitcase lock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Umbrella | <input type="checkbox"/> Gifts (visiting locals or homestay) | <input type="checkbox"/> JOURNAL! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photos of family & friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydro Towel (compact & quick dry
= good for travel) | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Alarm Clock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beach Towel | <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Luggage (for small trips) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ziplock bags | <input type="checkbox"/> Purse / Day Bag | <input type="checkbox"/> Camera (batteries/memory card/charger) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing Kit | | |

FIRST AID KIT

Again, this is all available abroad but unless you are fluent in the language you may want to have a few staples for “just in case” when you first arrive.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Band-aids | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-vitamins | <input type="checkbox"/> Pepto Bismol / Tums |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold & Flu Tablets | <input type="checkbox"/> Allergy meds | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ibuprofen / Aspirin | <input type="checkbox"/> General Antihistamines | |

The lists above are intended as *suggestion only*.
Please use your personal judgment and discretion when packing.
This list will serve you best if used as a guide in your planning.