Checklist for International Students

☐ Sign your I-20/DS-2019.

☐ Pay your SEVIS fee. THIS SHOULD BE DONE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO OBTAIN YOUR VISA AND MAKE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS.

☐ Contact the nearest U.S. consulate to apply for a U.S. visa. Apply for a passport, if you don’t have one.

☐ Make flight arrangements for travel to Bemidji, Minn. (airport code is BJI), to arrive BEFORE the orientation program start date. We provide airport pickup from the Bemidji airport only.

☐ Send in Arrival Notification form or e-mail international@bemidjistate.edu (form enclosed).

☐ Set up MyBSU e-mail account and StarID account if you have not already done so.

☐ Complete the Residential Life application for on-campus housing. You are required to live on campus your first year at BSU.

☐ Bring your immunization records to take to the BSU Student Center for Health and Counseling once you arrive.

☐ Review the City of Bemidji website to familiarize yourself with the city: www.ci.bemidji.mn.us.
International Student Orientation

There is a **mandatory orientation** prior to the start of classes. Please refer to your admission letter for the dates of orientation. During the orientation, topics such as advising, registration, immigration policies and regulations, banking, and activities are discussed. We also try to have fun!

As stated on the “International Student Agreement” form you have signed prior to admission, the orientation is mandatory, and a hold will be put onto your account to prevent course registration until you attend the orientation. Please make sure your travel plans allow your arrival in Bemidji in time to attend all orientation activities. **We suggest making flight arrangements to arrive at least two days before the orientation program start date.**

**ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENTS**

During the International Student Orientation program at the beginning of a semester, all international students will undergo assessment to determine placement levels for Academic American English. If your English assessment results indicate placement in the Intermediate Academic American English or Advanced Academic American English courses, you will be required to enroll in the applicable course your first semester. If your result is above the minimum score, you will test out of Academic American English. Post-test results at the end of the semester will determine the need for subsequent enrollment in Academic American English courses your second term. The Accuplacer will be administered to assess placement in mathematics courses.

**TUITION AND FEE DATES**

During your first semester, tuition and fees should be paid in full no later than the Friday before the first day of the term or you will be dropped from all classes. Students will not be dropped for non-payment if they have made a minimum down payment of tuition and fees of 15% or $300 (whichever is less), and signed up for an active payment plan contract. The full amount of health insurance is also due the Friday before the first day of the term.

**BANKING**

You are encouraged to establish a bank account upon arrival in Bemidji in order to keep your money safe. Most people in the United States have checking accounts, saving accounts or both. Most students pay for school and other expenses using checks, credit cards, or bankcards. Students also frequently use ATM or debit cards when shopping. Banking information will be provided to you during orientation. If you arrive a few days ahead of the start of orientation, you should open a bank account upon arrival. Again, you should have immediate access to $5,000 USD upon arrival.

**TRANSFERRING CREDITS**

If you are transferring courses/credits to Bemidji State University from a U.S. college or university, a degree audit report (DAR) will be provided to you only after you have sent your arrival notice. Your DAR will include those classes and/or credits that have been accepted in transfer. You will then need to meet with the chair of your academic department for a discussion on how your transfer courses may apply to your major.

To transfer courses/credits from a non-U.S. college or university, we require all students to have their coursework evaluated by a professional credit evaluation agency. BSU will accept evaluations prepared by any National Association of Credentials Evaluation Services (http://www.naces.org/members.html) member. Once we receive your evaluation and arrival notice your DAR will be provided.
Preparing for Travel to Bemidji State University

Congratulations again on your acceptance to Bemidji State University!

We are aware of the complexities of attaining the student visa and would like to offer several tips. Please verify that the information on your I-20 (for F-1 visas) or DS-2019 (for J-1 visas) is accurate, and make certain it has been signed by Bemidji State’s Designated School Official.

PAYING YOUR SEVIS FEE:

As soon as you receive this packet, you should pay your SEVIS fee!

Unless otherwise exempt, you must pay a SEVIS I-901 fee to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. To pay the I-901 fee, go here: https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/. Be sure to keep your receipt because you will need to show proof of payment when applying for the visa.

NOTE: Currently, citizens of Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, or Cameroon will not be allowed to pay the SEVIS fee online — you MUST pay either by mail or at a Western Union office (if accessible).

More information can be found here: http://www.bemidjistate.edu/services/international/international-students/resources/immigration-and-visas/sevis-fee/

OBTAINING YOUR VISA:

As soon as you make your SEVIS fee payment, you should make your visa appointment arrangements.

Contact the nearest U.S. consulate for instructions to obtain your student visa. (J-1 students follow the same basic directions as F-1 students, but substitute “DS-2019” for “I-20”.) Apply for your visa early to provide ample time for visa processing.

- Visit the following website for complete information on applying for your visa from the U.S. Department of State: http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange.html.

For visa interview tips, please see: https://www.bemidjistate.edu/services/international/international-students/resources/immigration-and-visas/

Canadian students do not currently require a student visa. You need to check your I-20 for accuracy and sign #11. You will need proof of payment of the SEVIS fee. Submit your I-20 to the U.S. Border Patrol when you come into the country to study. You may be required to show evidence of sufficient funds and additional identification and/or verification of admission.

F-1 students in the U.S. who are transferring to Bemidji State University:

If you are transferring directly from another U.S. institution, please request to have your I-20 transferred to Bemidji State University. Once your SEVIS record has been released to BSU, we will then create a BSU I-20 for you to pick up upon your arrival in Bemidji. However, if you are planning to leave the U.S. before arriving at BSU, you will need to contact us to make arrangements to get your BSU I-20 prior to departing the U.S. You will need to use BSU’s I-20 to re-enter the U.S.

ARRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) helps secure U.S. borders, facilitate the entry and exit process, and enhance the integrity of our immigration system while respecting the privacy of our visitors. At the U.S. port of entry, they make the final admission determination and, for international students and exchange visitors, determine the period for which they are authorized to remain in the United States. At air or sea ports of entry, they will scan your passport to create an electronic I-94 record. If you are crossing a land border you will still receive a paper I-94. The IPC will need a copy of your I-94 for immigration or public benefits like applying for OPT or a driver’s license. You will be able to print out the electronic version from the (CBP) website: www.cbp.gov/ or if you entered through a land border you will need to provide us with a copy.
MAKING TRAVEL PLANS

If you are flying to the United States, book your airline ticket directly to Bemidji, Minnesota, USA, airport code BJI. Plan to arrive a few days prior to orientation.

WEATHER: You will experience four seasons in Bemidji: Fall (5-20 C); Winter (below -20 C); Spring (5-30 C); and Summer (30-38 C). If arriving in January, bring or wear a coat or warm outer clothing in the event you are not able to purchase appropriate clothing right away.

We recommend that you have immediate access to $5,000 USD for things like health insurance, registration and housing deposits. You will also need spending money for food, personal items and unplanned events. Please keep your money in a secure place prior to arranging your bank account. Any amount over $10,000 USD must be declared.

AIRPORT PICKUP

We offer shuttle service for new international students with on-campus room assignments who fly directly to the Bemidji airport ONLY. You must notify the International Program Center for pickup by mailing the enclosed Arrival Notification form, or by e-mail. We can’t meet you if we don’t know when you are arriving!

Becoming a BSU Student

SETTING UP StarID

All BSU students have a StarID and MyBSU account assigned. You will need to activate your StarID as well as your MyBSU account in order to apply for on-campus housing (required your first year at BSU). If you applied online, you may have already been assigned a StarID. If so, skip to “logging into MyBSU and E-Services.”

1. Go to http://starid.mnscu.edu
2. At the top, click on “StarID Self Service”
3. Click on “Activate StarID”
4. You will arrive at a page with these options:

   Students
   Tech ID (Student ID)
   Library Card Barcode
   Personal Email Address
   Verification Code

5. In the Students section, click on “Personal Email Address”
6. Enter the email address that you used when you applied to BSU, and a verification code will be emailed to you.
7. Check your email for the verification code and enter it in the box shown below:

   Please enter the unique verification code and your email or last name.

   Verification Code *  
   How to get a verification Code?  
   Email Address OR Last Name *

8. It will display your StarID in yellow at the top of the page and will ask you to create a password. Please write down your StarID and your password. You will need them in the future.
Logging into MyBSU and E-Services

1. Go to https://www.bemidjistate.edu/mybsu/
2. Click on “Activate New Account”
3. Complete steps 1-3 by providing your 8-digit Tech ID, last name as it appears on your I-20 or DS-2019, and date of birth in the YYYY/MM/DD format.
4. Log in with the StarID and password you created above.

ARRANGING YOUR ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

You are required to live on campus in one of our residence halls for your first year at BSU. Residential Life at BSU is committed to creating a caring environment that encourages academic success, individual respect, personal growth, and a sense of responsibility toward our community and a global society. Residence hall services are provided as a part of the residence hall living experience and are included in the living cost of each resident. Please visit the Residential Life webpage at www.bemidjistate.edu/services/reslife/ for more detailed information regarding our on-campus housing and meal options.

Housing is available in the BSU residence halls during all breaks. If you wish to stay at BSU during breaks you should discuss this option with your Residential Life staff.

Steps to applying for housing online:
1. Make sure you are logged into MyBSU.
2. Click on “e-services” under your name
3. Click on the blue “go to MnSCU e-Services”
4. Select “Housing and Dining” on the left column
5. Under “Your Selections,” click on “Apply for Housing.” Choose the correct academic year, (For example, Academic Year 2015-2016 includes Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters.)

Please note that as a new international student your pre-payment of $150 is not required.
You will make your payments during the week of orientation.

HEALTH INSURANCE

You will be required to purchase the insurance plan offered through BSU before enrolling in classes, regardless of any other health coverage plan, unless you can provide written verification that your government or sponsoring agency accepts full responsibility for any medical claims that might occur.

You must be prepared to pay for your health insurance during orientation. Bemidji State University bills for your insurance coverage annually.

HEALTH SERVICES

BSU has a Student Center for Health and Counseling to attend to your health care needs. You are encouraged to use this facility. You will find that the Student Center for Health and Counseling is convenient and helpful. Medicines and treatments are available at a low cost.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT/TB TESTING

Minnesota State Law states that all students born after 1956 and attending Minnesota colleges and universities must be immunized for Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) and Diphtheria/Tetanus (Td).

Complete the Immunization Records form and return it to the BSU Student Center for Health and Counseling. All students are also required to have a TB test upon arrival. Please be sure to bring your immunization records with you when you arrive in Bemidji. More info can be found at: http://www.bemidjistate.edu/services/international/international-students/resources/immunization/
Arrival Notification

To plan for your arrival and enrollment at Bemidji State University, we ask that you notify us as soon as possible to confirm your attendance and arrival information.

Attendance at International Student Orientation is mandatory. The dates of orientation can be found on your admitted letter. Please plan your travel to arrive at least TWO DAYS prior to the beginning of orientation. Be sure to make your travel arrangements early as flights to Bemidji are often full around orientation.

Courtesy transportation from the Bemidji Regional airport to the BSU campus is available for those students planning to live on campus.

Complete the information below and mail or scan and email to international@bemidjistate.edu. Send information on your arrival date, time and flight number as soon as possible and indicate if you wish to have transportation from the Bemidji Airport to the BSU campus.

If your arrival is delayed or changed, you may call the International Program Center at (218) 755-4096 from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday, or email: international@bemidjistate.edu.

Outside of our business hours, please contact the BSU Public Safety office at (218) 755-3888.

Arrival Information: Complete the following information and mail, or you may e-mail the info to us at international@bemidjistate.edu

Name ______________________________/______________________________/__________________________
Last (family name)    First (given)     Middle

BSU Student ID #: ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Address ____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

Phone: ______________________________  E-mail: ________________________________________________________

Mode of transportation into Bemidji: ____Airline ____ Bus____ Other ________________________________________

Date of arrival in Bemidji _____________________________    Time of arrival in Bemidji ____________a.m./p.m.

Name of airline/bus ______________________________  Flight number/bus number____________________

I would like to be picked up at the Bemidji airport/bus terminal: ________ YES   ________ NO

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Bemidji State University
Deputy Hall 103
1500 Birchmont Dr. NE #13
Bemidji, Minn.  56601
Fax: 218-755-2074
Tel.: 218-755-4096
www.bemidjistate.edu/services/international

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