PREPARATION FOR ARRIVAL

Obtaining a visa
If you are coming on UT exchange programs, our office at UT will issue you the DS-2019 form, which we will mail to you approximately one month after we receive your application documents. Please be sure to complete all documents accurately and provide all requested material. If anything is missing or incomplete, it will delay issue of the DS-2019 form and thus your ability to apply for a visa. The DS-2019 form is valid for the period that you plan to study at UT, plus thirty days. This additional time will allow you to remain in the U.S. to travel after classes/exams end.

If you are coming to Knoxville through ISEP in Washington, D.C., the ISEP office will issue you a DS-2019 form which you take to the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest your home in order to obtain a J-1 visa.

SEVIS fee
Prior to applying for a J-1 visa, you must pay the SEVIS fee. For more information about the SEVIS fee visit http://studyabroad.utk.edu - Incoming Exchange - SEVIS Fee.

Arrival:
In the fall semester, you should arrive no later than Wednesday, August 10, 2016. In the spring semester, you should arrive on Wednesday, January 4, 2017. It is important that you arrive on time for the mandatory orientation, so please start booking your flights now.

You should try to fly into Knoxville, Tennessee’s McGhee Tyson Airport. Most international flights from Europe arrive in Atlanta, New York, Chicago or Washington DC, with flights from Asia coming into Los Angeles and flights from Latin America flying into Houston and Miami. You will fly into these major airports and then take a connecting flight to Knoxville. You should expect long delays at immigration and security checkpoints in your initial arrival city, so we advise that you schedule long layovers between your flights to reduce the risk of missing your connection to Knoxville.

It is very important that you keep your immigration documents with you and not in your checked baggage. Please see Appendix A for a suggested list of documents.

Knoxville’s weather
You cannot actually predict the weather because you really cannot tell what might happen during one 24 hour period.

- **Fall/Autumn** – This is one of the most beautiful times of the year in Knoxville, as this is when the leaves turn and you see an amazing range of colors – red, orange, yellow and brown. In September, it will still be very warm, and this often lasts into October. As the leaves change, the weather will get cooler, and you can expect some rain, but there might be a day or two when you can leave your sweater at home. By the end of November, winter is in the air.
- **Winter** – Knoxville is not the coldest place during the winter, but it is certainly time to get out your hat, scarf and gloves. Snow is not a common sight – we might see one or two snowstorms per season, but the snow only tends to stick around for a couple of days. However, Knoxville has been known to have blizzards and ice storms.
- **Spring** – By March, the weather usually starts to improve, and the trees start to bloom. In April, the days get warmer although this is when the temperatures can change by 25 degrees in one day. By May, the days are very warm, and summer will soon arrive.
- **Summer** – Hot, hot, hot! And wet! Summer storms in Knoxville are intense – thunder and lightning and a lot of rain, all of which only lasts for about 1 hour. Then the sun comes out, and you would never know it had rained at all.
What does this mean for you? You need to be prepared for all types of weather. Do not be surprised if it is t-shirt weather one day and winter coat weather the next. It is a good idea to dress in layers!

Jeans are a big favorite on campus, but you will see everything from orange jogging suits to military uniforms. You should bring whatever you feel comfortable in, and bring clothes that you can wear in any weather, from shorts to big coats. There are plenty of places for you to go shopping for new things, so leave some room in your suitcases so you can take your purchases back home.

**Packing**

You do not want to pack too much as you want to avoid paying any extra baggage charges. You can buy many items here, such as hairdryers and alarm clocks, for very reasonable prices, and you will not need to bring converters to operate them. Cumberland Avenue, the street that runs parallel to campus, has stores where you can buy shampoo and soap. We recommend that you bring photographs that remind you of home as they can brighten up your room, and your new friends may ask you about your family and friends at home. You might also want to bring your favorite music as anywhere can feel like home when you listen to something familiar and reassuring. Certain items are not permitted in the residence halls, so please check the housing [website](#) to learn what not to bring and review the [rules and regulations](#) for living on campus.