

Angelo State University

Member, Texas Tech University System



International Student
Pre-Arrival Handbook



Welcome to Angelo State University!

On behalf of the Center for International Studies at Angelo State University, we are pleased to welcome you to this university and would like to congratulate you on furthering your education. We are looking forward to meeting you soon! The following information aims to prepare you for your arrival in the United States. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at the following address, fax, telephone number or e-mail address:

Center for International Studies
East Office Annex Building
ASU Station #11035
San Angelo, TX 76909-1035
Phone: (325) 942-2083
Fax: (325) 942-2084
Email: meghan.pace@angelo.edu

Open Monday through Friday; 8am-5pm (Central Standard Time)

Pre-Arrival Instructions

I-20 Review:

Once you receive your I-20 please check the following:

1. Check your name, birth date and major on the I-20;
2. If any information is incorrect on the I-20 please contact us at meghan.pace@angelo.edu;
3. Read page 2 of the I-20 before signing and dating the document.

Visa Process:

To apply for an F-1 Student Visa:

1. You must first complete a student and exchange visitor program form and pay a \$200 visa application fee. The form can be completed on-line at www.fmjfee.com;
2. The fee must be paid and a receipt issued prior to your request for a visa interview from the U.S. Consulate.

Residential Programs (on-campus housing):

A housing application is required to reserve a room for on campus living. Students are required to live in university resident housing until they are 21 years old or have completed at least 60 hours of college level work. A \$200 housing application fee is required at the time of application. To reserve a room, please visit the website at: http://www.angelo.edu/dept/residential_programs/ You will need your campus ID number and PIN Number to apply for housing.

Texas state law requires all new enrolling students to show evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination or booster dose. The vaccination must have been administered within five years of enrollment, and the latest possible date to receive the vaccination is 10 days prior to the first day of the semester. For more information please refer to this web link: http://www.angelo.edu/services/registrar_office/meningitis/

Government Documents

Non-immigrant students admitted to the United States institutions of higher education must obtain certain documents prior to arriving to the university. Included are some procedures you will need to understand as you prepare to come to the U.S. and Angelo State University. Additional information will be available to you in the orientation meeting held for all new international students.

Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20)

You may have already received your I-20 otherwise; your I-20 is enclosed with this guide. You will use this form to prove that you have been accepted to this university when you apply for your visa.

Your passport is a booklet issued by your government which allows you to travel outside your country. You must obtain a passport before you apply for your visa. If you already have a passport, it must be valid for six months beyond the date of your arrival in the U.S. or it must be renewed.

Your visa is a permit, stamped or placed on a page of the passport by an official of another country's embassy or consulate that enables the holder to enter that country. You must have an unexpired U.S. F-1 visa in your passport on the date of entry to the United States. A visa is valid for a stated number of entries within a stated period of time. Please remember it may take a considerable amount of time to obtain this visa depending on what country you are from. So, give yourself plenty of time to obtain this visa before you plan to come to the United States.

Your I-94 Arrival/Departure record card will be given to you to complete right before your airplane flight arrives in the U.S. You should present this and your I-20 to the immigration officer when you enter the airport. Half of the I-94 card will be stapled to a page of your passport. The immigration office should also return your I-20 to you. Be sure you have all documents ready to be copied when you come to Angelo State.

Arrival at U.S. Port of Entry

Plan Arrival

You may be refused entry if you try to arrive more than 30 days before the start date on your SEVIS I-20 form.

Documents to be Submitted and Retained

If you place important documents in your baggage and it gets lost or delayed, you will not be able to present your documents at the port of entry. As a result, you may not be able to enter the U.S. Be sure to place the following documents in your carryon bags:

- Passport;
- SEVIS form I-20;
- Evidence of financial resources;
- Receipt for the SEVIS fee, Form I-797;
- Name and contact information of school official.

Complete Paperwork

Prior to arrival to the United States and while you are still on the plane, you will be given a form to record your entry into the U.S. This form is called the I-94 card. It is very important you print your name on this card as it appears in your passport. Many students have encountered problems when applying for a U.S. Social Security card if the name does not match the name on the passport. A U.S. Social Security card is required for employment in the U.S.

Port of Entry

You will go through U.S. customs and immigration for inspection and be asked to show your passport, visa, I-20 and I-94 card. The officer may ask questions about your studies; these questions are usually general in nature. It is important to remain friendly, polite, patient and completely honest while going through this process.

Customs Declaration

Prior to your arrival in the U.S. and while you are on the plane, you'll be given a customs declaration form to declare the amount of money and the value of items you are bringing into the country. You may be asked to pay taxes on money or goods exceeding a certain amount.

Although the inspection at the port of entry is generally efficient, plan on at least an hour delay. Students requiring additional or special inspection procedures may want to plan for a longer inspection time. This is important if you have to make a connecting flight.

Once inspection and immigration is complete, make certain you have the following:

1. Passport;
2. I-94 arrival/departure record (often stapled in your passport by official);
3. SEVIS I-20 unless taken by port of entry official;
4. Any additional letters or documents relating to financial support, scholarships, etc...

Things to Pack in Your Carry-on Bag

Important Documents and Necessities:

- Airline tickets;
- Passport;
- SEVIS form I-20;
- Evidence of financial resources;
- Receipt for the SEVIS fee, Form I-797;
- Official academic transcripts and English translations;
- Change of clothes;
- Medication, eye glasses and/or eye contacts;
- Name and contact information of school official:

Ms. Meghan Pace
Assistant Director & Coordinator for International Student & Scholar Services
Angelo State University
325-942-2083

Money

Bring enough money for your initial expenses. However, you do not want to carry thousands of dollars in cash with you. Always bring additional money in the form of traveler's checks or money orders. You may want to bring an international bank draft payable to yourself for opening a checking account at a local bank. Make sure to bring enough small bills (\$1s, \$5s, and \$10s). You will need them to tip the taxi driver or buy a quick snack from the vending machine.

If you plan on using a credit card issued by a bank in your home country, please make sure that the credit card is issued in your name (it cannot be issued in any other name than your own) and that it can be used in the U.S. Please be aware

that most credit cards have a daily purchase limit. You might want to contact your credit card company in advance of your arrival to the U.S. to check on the daily purchase limit and ask to have the limit raised if necessary.

Driver's License

If you have a valid international driver's license, bring this with you. To be able to drive a vehicle in the United States you must have either an international driver's license (this can be obtained in your country) or a U.S. driver's license (this can be obtained after arriving in the U.S. The international driver's license is valid for up to one year. After one year you will need to take a driving and written test for the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to receive a Texas Driver's license.

Things to Pack in Check-in Luggage

Clothing

San Angelo has an average of 250 sunny days a year with a mild, dry climate. During the summer months (June to September), temperatures often reach the 90's and even 100's. Light weight clothing is worn during these months. The winter months (late October to March), require warm clothing and an overcoat. Temperatures sometimes drop below freezing during winter and it occasionally snows. Bring a variety of clothing for the changing seasons. Students usually wear casual clothing. Both men and women wear trousers, blue jeans, short pants, shirts, sweaters and jackets. Men will find a suit or jacket and tie appropriate for more formal occasions. Women will probably want a few dresses, skirts and blouses. Traditional, national attire is appropriate for many occasions. It is better to bring clothes that are easy to care for, such as "wash and wear" items. Coin-operated washing and drying facilities are available in campus residence halls and in some off-campus apartment buildings, as well as at nearby laundry mats. Dry cleaning is more expensive.

Electronics

If you plan to bring any electrical appliances or computer equipment, remember the electrical current used for small appliances in the U.S. is 120 volts, 60Hz and require two flat-pronged plugs. Appliances from outside the U.S may require adapters which can be purchased at local stores. Many students choose to bring laptop computers with them from home. Apart from the Internet access at the open access computer lab, ASU also has wireless Internet services available at some designated areas on campus enabling you to use your laptop. For information, visit <http://www.angelo.edu/services/technology/network/residence/>.

Cultural Items

The Center for International Studies, along with the Multicultural Center, hosts several events throughout the year which highlights cultural heritage of foreign students attending ASU. We encourage you to bring items of cultural interest such as traditional clothing, music and photos for these events.

Books

You can bring reference books and novels that you enjoy reading. Carry a good bilingual dictionary if necessary to assist your translation.

Things NOT to Bring to the U.S.

Food from Home

U.S. Customs prohibits travelers from bringing any fresh fruit, vegetables and meat from other countries.

Large Amounts of Cash

Do not bring large amounts of cash as it can easily be stolen or misplaced. Bring your money in the form of a traveler's checks or money orders and deposit the money once you open your bank account here.

Non-Prescription Medicines

Students bringing prescription medication to the U.S. should bring a physician's letter stating what the drug is, what it treats and the quantity. The note must be in English. Some medications used in other countries are considered illegal in the U.S., are not permitted and may be confiscated.

240 Voltage Appliances

Do not bring 240-volt appliances as these are not compatible with the 110-volt sockets in the U.S.

Baggage Limitations

Check with your travel agent or the airline that issued your ticket for details on how many bags you can check in and how many you are allowed to carry with you. There are also strict weight limitations on some international flights.

Travel to Angelo State University

Make airline reservations to arrive at San Angelo Mathis Field Airport (airport code: SJT) located in San Angelo, Texas. A connecting flight to San Angelo can be made at the Dallas/Ft.Worth International Airport (airport code: DFW) when making flight reservations. After you have made your travel plans, be sure to telephone or e-mail the Center for International Studies to make arrangements for airport pick up before you leave your home country. Be sure to give us your arrival time and flight number! It is very important to let the Center for International Studies know when you plan to arrive in San Angelo to ensure your residence hall will be ready. After arrival, we can make plans for personal business such as banking, shopping, etc.

Other Important Information

Orientation

Mandatory international student orientation will take place on Wednesday, August 21, Thursday, August 22 and Friday, August 23, 2013. All students are required to attend all 3 days of orientation. If you fail to attend the mandatory international student orientation you will be required to pay a penalty of \$100USD and a hold will be placed on your records preventing you from registering for classes or receiving a transcript of completed credits until payment has been received by the Center for International Studies. A make-up orientation session will be available at a later date. Students who miss the scheduled orientation can attend the make-up session to have their fine of \$100USD reduced.

Please bring the following documents with you to orientation: Passport, Visa, I-20, and I-94. You will be permitted to move into your on-campus housing as early as August 19 at a rate of \$25 per night until the official move-in date of Friday, August 23. Meals will also be available on campus during this week. Classes will begin on Monday, August 26 and end on Friday, December 13. For future semester start and end dates please refer to the University Calendar: http://www.angelo.edu/services/registrar_office/academic_calendar.php.

Health Insurance

Angelo State University has a mandatory medical/health insurance requirement for all foreign students registered at the university. To assist in this process, medical/health insurance charges will be included in your fall and spring billing statement. International students classified as Exchange Students, Study Abroad Students and English Language Learning Students at the university are permitted to purchase an insurance policy in their home country and must

provide proof to the Center for International Studies of the insurance policy written in English no later than 10 days after the first day of school otherwise, students will be automatically billed for the ASU policy.

The Texas Tech University System contracted carrier is Academic Health Plans. To read more about the coverage offered to students please visit the Academic Health Plans webpage: <https://www.academichealthplans.com/angelo/index.php>

Registration

Before new students can register for classes, they must first meet with an academic advisor in the area of their major. After academic advising, students can then register for classes on-line provided they have met all other admission requirements.*

*All students who wish to attend a Texas public college or university, must take an approved TSI assessment exam prior to enrolling unless you are otherwise exempt. If you are required to take a TSI assessment exam you will do so after you arrive in San Angelo during the first semester of attendance. ASU does offer an approved exam and testing may be done on campus. The average cost is \$30-\$90. Any Exchange Student, Study Abroad Student or English Language Learning Student, not seeking a degree from ASU can sign a waiver to be exempt from this requirement. Degree seeking students cannot waive the TSI testing requirement. For more information please visit the Texas Success Initiative website at: <http://www.angelo.edu/dept/cae/tsi.html>.

Payment of Fees

You will be billed by the university, per semester, for tuition, fees, housing and meals on one statement, after you are registered for classes and signed up for on-campus housing. ASU only provides your bill on-line. You will not receive a paper copy of your bill in the postal mail. You may pay after you arrive in San Angelo by cash, check, money order, cashier's check, credit card or debit card. The university accepts MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express credit cards. (All credit cards must be issued in the name of the student.) Bills will become available on-line starting mid-to-late July. Payment must be made before August 23 at 5:00pm to avoid late fees.

You or your parents may pay your bill on-line through our "Web Payment" portal. You may access the portal at this web link: <http://www.angelo.edu/parents/> Click on "Web Payment" on the right hand side of the page. Students must set up a user name and password for their parents to log into the web payment system and pay the bill on behalf of the student.

Host Family Program

You should have received an e-mail with more information about our Host Family Program at ASU. I would encourage you to join this program as it is a great way to learn more about the American family and culture and a great way to meet new friends in the community of San Angelo. Our program is free and all you have to do is apply on-line at http://www.angelo.edu/dept/cis/host_family_program.html.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call or e-mail. On behalf of Angelo State University and the Center for International Studies, we are looking forward to meeting you and having you in San Angelo.

Safe travels,



Meghan Pace

Assistant Director & Coordinator for International Student & Scholar Services