

Graduate Student's Arrival Key Guide

Indian Student Association welcomes new Indian graduate students in Florida International University. Sure ISA will assist your arrival and stay at Miami, Florida. From exotic beaches to its ever-warming sunshine, Miami is a wonderful place for continuing education.

Arrival:

You are advised to send your itinerary and time of arrival so we could arrange temporary accommodation (and also pick-up, if possible) for you. Also send your current snap so it is easier to recognize you during pick-up. Keep your passport, I-20 and I-94 card (a small card you receive during immigration clearance) safe and secure.

Housing:

Graduate students usually stay either at Fontainebleau or Vista Verde. Both are a mile away from Engineering Center. In case you prefer nearness to supermarket, ATM, Recreation Facility, and Main Campus, you might want to stay at Vista Verde. In case you prefer comfortable rooms, and sports (volleyball, swimming, squash etc.) you might want to prefer Fontainebleau. Both places cost around the same.

Generally housing is on lease. 6-month, 9-month, 12-month lease. They charge you from the day you move-in. They ask a deposit, usually one-month rent, application processing and lease fee. The rent ranges around \$750 for one bedroom (two can share) or \$1050 for two-bedroom (four can share). Depends if you prefer a quiet place you might opt for one-bedroom and share it with someone. In case of two-bedroom housing, four people can switch the cooking turns and life becomes easier. Apartments are not furnished. They do have air conditioner, carpeted floor, fridge, and electric stove.

Monthly Expenses:

Utilities (Water, Electricity and Phone-lines) need additional payment depending on usage. They range around \$35, \$100, and \$30 per month respectively. Washing machine and dryer are available on the housing and are pay-per-use. Monthly expenses reach around \$450 for sharing in two-bedroom apartments.

Groceries/Utensils:

You will find Indian stores for grocery at a small distance. But everything you eat is available. Since the electric stoves are flat, **bring flat-base utensils** if you are bringing any. Electric rice cooker are easy to work, so do not worry if you do not find space to fit in a pressure cooker. Moreover if you wish to bring pressure cooker, bring a big one to accommodate that at least five persons can eat.

Clothing:

You may not get time to do laundry every week, so bring plenty of undergarments and jeans. Jeans and shorts are the way of life here, so do not hesitate to include pairs of jeans and t-shirts when you arrive Miami. General climate of Miami is hot, so do not forget to bring sun glasses and swimming suit for a walk in beaches.

Don't forget to pack your traditional outfits for cultural gatherings and formal dressing for formal seminars and conferences. You might want to bring some warm

clothing for winter (just a sweater or light jacket will be enough. Also rain-coat/umbrella will be of great help for surprise downpours.

Money Matters:

Bring enough money (either in Traveler's/Cashier's Check and enough cash for immediate expenses). Though the I-20 says 100% tuition waiver, you will need to pay 10% of tuition by yourself (~\$650). And initial expenses might be high as you are settling in, along with deposits you will need to pay for housing (~\$400). Keep some cash in your wallet for on-the-way purchasing, taxi/super-shuttle conveyance, or miscellaneous.

Initial Stay:

Initial stay might be little hard since you do not know the place and people. Key is to make friends and share your laughs. Adjusting to new place will be fun. Do not hesitate to meet people and enquire them about your problems. If they can't help you immediately, at least they'll guide you to next person.

VERY IMPORTANT:

Keep your passport, I-20 and tickets readily available throughout your journey. Keep the I-94 card (a small card you receive after clearing immigration) safely.

Apply for your **social security** at earliest once you arrive and receive your contract letter/ employment from the university.

You CANNOT register for classes unless you have **Medical Insurance**. You can purchase it through University for wider coverage and better facility.

(**Note:** If you are purchasing through website: BE ADVISED that University WILL NOT be accepting "Study USA Healthcare" medical insurance plan starting Fall 2005).

Make sure to **register for the required credits (9 for graduate and 12 for undergraduate)** every semester. It is YOUR responsibility to remain in- status.

DO NOT:

- Your electrical gadgets like cell-phone chargers, iron, music system, electric shaver etc might not work, since power supply here is 110 V. Bringing such items may disappoint you since US has a different electrical plug-in system.

DO:

- Do **get involved** in the campus activities, as it helps you settle-in and make new friends on-campus. It also helps you to not getting home-sick and concentrate in developing your personal skills.

- **Do ask questions** if you have any. Be assured no one will interfere with your life so do not hesitate to approach people rather than waiting for someone.

- Make buddies and work together with your colleagues. It will keep your spirits high.

- Engage yourself with out-reach activities, community service, sports, and cultural activities. This is the time of your life to shine.

For further questions email: fiuisa@fiu.edu with "Graduate Student" in the subject line.