



## **COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

University of South Carolina

# **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PACKET 2017-2018**

January 22, 2018

# General Contact Information

## Your Greatest Resource

USC International Student Services  
Close Hipp Building, Suite 650  
1705 College Street  
Columbia, SC 29208

Phone: 803-777-7461  
Email: [iss@sc.edu](mailto:iss@sc.edu)  
Web: [iss.sc.edu](http://iss.sc.edu)

## College of Social Work

College of Social Work  
Hamilton College  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, SC 29208 USA  
[www.cosw.sc.edu](http://www.cosw.sc.edu)

Phone Number: 803.777.5291  
Fax Number: 803.777.3498  
Student Services Fax Number:  
803.777.6259

## HOUSING

### On-Campus Housing

Whether you're an undergraduate or graduate student, single or have a family, the University of South Carolina (USC) offers a variety of on-campus housing options. On-campus housing is very competitive so we encourage students to apply as soon as possible!

University-operated residence halls and apartments are available for both undergraduate and graduate students. Living on campus offers many conveniences, such as proximity to classroom buildings and easy access to libraries, computer labs, and sport and recreation facilities. Many dormitory rooms provide basic furnishings such as a bed, dresser, desk and chair as well as food services, and free cable. (As of 2016, housing options for students with families are no longer available.) The mission of the College of Social Work is to promote well-being and social justice of vulnerable populations through dynamic teaching, research, and service conducted with diverse people of South Carolina, the nation and the international community.

To learn more about housing options for undergraduates, graduates, and families, please visit the University's [Student Housing Website](#).

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### Off-Campus Housing

If you are unable to get on-campus housing, we recommend that students search for off-campus housing after having arrived. Temporary housing is available while you are searching and information can be requested from the International Student Services (ISS) office after arrival.

Many students choose to live off-campus, and there are many living arrangements available near campus, including renting a room in a private home or renting an apartment. These options offer many benefits, such as campus shuttle transportation, furnished apartments, and high-speed internet connection. Arranging for off-campus housing from overseas can be a challenging process. Our office offers the following links with the desire of making the process easier for you:

- USC's official Off-Campus Housing Message Boards, [Click here](#)
- Apartment Finder, [Click here](#)
- The State Newspaper, [Click here](#)
- My Apartment Map, [Click here](#)
- Craigslist, [Click here](#)

## CCFI ARRIVAL ASSISTANCE

Columbia Council for Internationals (CCFI) provides free pickup services to arriving international students. Students can arrange for the CCFI to pick them up at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport or Greyhound bus station at least two weeks prior to their arrival date. For more information or to fill out an Arrival Assistance Application, [click here](#).

## SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

It is imperative for international students to apply for a social security card if they plan to receive a graduate assistantship, work on campus (OPT) or off campus (CPT), open a bank account, or apply for a credit card. ISS provides information on how to get a social security number during the orientation, but the information is also available on their [website](#).

## IDENTIFICATION/DRIVER'S LICENSE INFORMATION

To apply for a driver's license or state identification card, you must submit several documents to the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (SC DMV). For more information, see the following [document](#).

## VISA INFORMATION

After admission to USC, you must apply for a student visa. ISS will assist you with this process. There is more information on their [website](#).

## HEALTH INSURANCE

The cost of health care in the United States can be quite high. A serious illness or accident could cost thousands of dollars in medical bills. Therefore, it is a University policy that all international students MUST purchase adequate health insurance coverage. Health Insurance reduces the cost of health care significantly, but covers only a portion of medical expenses. Furthermore, whether they register for classes or not, international students are mandated to pay health insurance for summer semester.

## UNIVERSITY SPONSORED HEALTH INSURANCE

The University offers a competitive health insurance plan for students. This is basic health coverage; any student with chronic illness should consult with ISS to discuss additional coverage that may be needed. Coverage is also available for spouses and dependents when requested. New international students receive University-sponsored health insurance information in their orientation packet. The University's insurance coverage will be added and paid as part of a semester's tuition and fees during the

registration period. For more information about the campus health insurance plan, you may visit the [Student Health Services website](#).

Please be aware that in the USA, many health insurance policies require the patient to pay a deductible (e.g., \$750 for in-network care or \$1,500 for out-of-network care) each year before the insurance pays anything. That is in addition to co-payments (i.e., partial payments) with each medical bill.

If you do not want the USC insurance plan, you must demonstrate that you have equal or better health insurance coverage through another provider. Your plan must meet the minimum requirements and you must then file a waiver request. For more information on the requirements and waiver request, [click here](#).

## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA RESOURCES

### University Writing Center

The University Writing Center provides writing assistance to all students (undergraduates and graduates alike) in all stages of the writing process from brainstorming to polishing final drafts. Students may make appointments with tutors up to two times a week, for a maximum of two hours. For more information, visit [the University Writing Center website](#).

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### Student Health Services

Most graduate students experience some level of loneliness, stress, and anxiety throughout the program. If you find yourself struggling with these emotions, contact the University Counseling Center. This is a great resource for students who seek assistance and emotional support from qualified counselors. The Counseling Center will conduct preliminary interviews with students via phone or in person to determine the appropriate level of support and then connect them to skilled counselors. Student health insurance will cover up to ten sessions per semester, and each session lasts for one hour. Walk-in hours are also available for crisis appointments during business hours. You can find more information on their [website](#).

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### Student Legal Services

The University offers legal consultations to fee-paying students concerning matters related to housing, landlord-tenant agreements, consumer protection, domestic relations, and employment laws. Students who seek legal services must fill out an appointment request or call the office to schedule appointments. Appointments are available from Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. For

more information regarding legal services or to make an appointment, visit their [website](#).

## THINGS TO DO IN COLUMBIA

[Five Points](#) is an area within walking distance of the campus and a very popular hangout for students, great for shopping, dining and entertainment! [The Vista](#), also known as the premier arts and entertainment district of Columbia, is another well-known area within walking distance of the University. Other options for shopping and dining include the [Village at Sandhills](#) in northeast Columbia and [Columbiana Centre](#) in northwest Columbia/Irmo.

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## Culture



The [McKissick Museum](#) (pictured on left) is located on the USC campus! The museum reveals the history of the university and houses collections from various departments and colleges throughout campus. You can learn about our state's history at the [South Carolina State Museum](#) or visit the [Columbia Museum](#), known as South Carolina's premier international art museum and features pieces ranging from European and American to Asian antiques.

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## Entertainment

The [Colonial Life Arena](#) is the largest arena in the state of South Carolina and is located right on the University campus! The arena features all kinds of events from orchestras to big name performers. Also located on campus is the [Koger Center](#) where you can see diversified events like Broadway shows, ballets, and symphony orchestras.

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## Shopping

The [International Student Services website](#) has compiled a list of local grocery stores that sell international ingredients and cooking supplies. There is also a list of local grocery stores and markets. ISS also provides transportation for international students to go to Wal-Mart, a large grocery/department store, every week during fall and spring semesters. For more information, visit [www.iss.sc.edu](http://www.iss.sc.edu).

## Sports & Recreation

Staying active through sports and recreation is a huge part of student life at USC. USC's [Sports Clubs](#) and [Campus Recreation](#) offer numerous opportunities for participation in teams as well as individual physical activity. You can watch USC student athletes compete against some of the top teams in the nation in numerous sports (e.g., football, basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, track and field, tennis, golf, swimming, and more). As a USC student, you receive free or reduced admission with student ID. For more information, check out the [Gamecock Athletics website](#). For minor league professional baseball, see the [Columbia Fireflies website](#).



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## Explore South Carolina



South Carolina has a lot of beautiful nature to explore! The state park system is well-developed and offers a variety of opportunities to get involved in the great

outdoors. Click here to view the [Congaree National Park website](#) or [River Alliance website](#) or [SC State Park website](#). Columbia's not the only city in South Carolina that has great things to offer! Check out the websites below to learn more about other exciting areas of the state! Click here to view the [Edisto Beach website](#) or [Folly Beach website](#) or [Myrtle Beach website](#).

## TRANSPORTATION ON AND AROUND CAMPUS

### University Shuttle Information

The Carolina Shuttle System provides free service on campus for students, faculty, and staff. The bus runs Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5:30 pm during the fall and spring semesters only. The evening shuttle runs from 5:30 pm to 12:30 am. The night shuttle runs Sunday through Thursday, from 12:30 am to 6:00 am. Operation times during the summer, reading days and holidays is limited.

For a map of the shuttle route, please [click here](#) or for more information visit [Vehicle Management & Parking Services](#).

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## Columbia Bus System

The city of Columbia operates the Comet, a bus system that serves the larger metro area. For route maps and other information, see the [website](#).

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## For More Transportation around Columbia

Again, the [ISS website](#) provides further information about transportation alternatives.

## ATM LOCATIONS

At the Russell House Student Center, the following ATM's are conveniently located along the exterior breezeway between the Grand Market Place and Thomson Student Health Center: Bank of America, BB&T, Founders Federal Credit Union, Palmetto Citizen's Federal Credit Union and Wells Fargo.

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

**International Friendship Ministries – Columbia** provides free conversational English classes, and, some tour opportunities as well as other services and resources to help international students. For more information, click [here](#).

**HIS International, Inc.** provides leadership forums and free lunch on campus at pre-announced times when school is in session. Networking with Americans as friendship partners allows international students the opportunity to understand the work culture of the United States. The organization provides opportunities to shadow professionals in various careers to learn practical things about that profession. HIS International, Inc. also conducts special sessions on doing resumes, succeeding in interviews, and other topics related to employment in the United States. For more information, click [here](#).

**English Programs for Internationals** is another program at USC. It provides English language assistance including test preparation, testing, language workshops, and language courses. For more information, click [here](#).