

International House Scholars Services

The purpose of the following checklist is to give newly arrived International Scholar helpful, step-by-step information about settling in Durham. Not everyone is going to need everything on this list. Approximate costs for different services associated with different needs and service are represented in bold parenthesis.

Preparations before leaving your home country

Reserve air tickets to Raleigh/Durham International Airport

The airport code is **RDU**. Visit <http://www.rdu.com/> for more information such as flight schedules, maps & directions, and ground transportation.

Transportation from the airport (RDU)

Arrange for someone from your department to pick you up at the airport. If this is not possible, you will have to take a taxi. Taxis are located directly outside both terminals at Raleigh Durham Airport. The cost to Durham will be between \$25 and \$35. A 10% tip is expected.

Arrange Temporary and Short-term Housing (\$70 - \$100 per night) (See HOUSING section below for more details)

We suggest you temporarily stay in a hotel for three to seven days until you find a place to live for security and convenience reasons. Three hotels that are within walking distance are listed below:

Purchase travel insurance for the first month of your stay in the US.

Especially important for those who will be on Duke's payroll or purchasing insurance in the United States. Before purchasing travel insurance make sure that it will cover **medical expenses** for your first month in the US.

Prepare initial expenses

- Cash
- Travelers' Checks (We recommend American Express)
- International Credit Card

A Note about **INITIAL EXPENSES**: You should be aware that your expenses in your first two weeks could easily total over \$2,000. If you spend the first week in a hotel, you will spend at least **\$500**. When renting an apartment you will have to pay an application fee of **\$25–\$50**, a security deposit (usually one month's rent), and the first month's rent. A **\$200.00** deposit is required to turn on your electricity. The telephone company in Durham charges **about \$40** to turn on landline phone service, and there is an additional cost of about **\$25** per month for local phone service. It is not required that you have a phone. Some people get a mobile phone and do not have a home line, but a cellular phone will not necessarily be cheaper.

Also, keep in mind that you will need to buy or rent furniture, as well as purchase household supplies. Remember to calculate the cost of at least the first two weeks of food. Add in the cost of renting a car if you want to be independently mobile.

Finally, if you are not going to be paid by Duke and thus need to purchase a health insurance plan on your own, you will have to pay for the entire insurance policy on the day you enroll. If not planned for, all of these expenses can be quite overwhelming. Please be sure to come with enough money to cover these initial expenses.

Get connected prior to arrival

Join intlhouse@duke.edu for...

- Searching for an apartment and/or roommate
- Selling and purchasing furniture, cars, etc.
- Looking for and/or sharing a ride
- And much more!

Visit our website to subscribe:

<http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu/forms/lists/intlhouse/>

Explore the “Services” and “Resources” sections of our website:

<http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu>

Explore the Services available for Duke International Postdocs: postdoc.duke.edu

- Join the Postdoc Listserv: <http://www.dukepostdocs.org/8.html>

Obtain Official documentation to drive a car in the US

- Home country license (most important, because you can legally drive on your home country's license while on a J or F visa in the United States.)
- International license (Can help as a translation if home license is not written in English)
- Certificate of your driving history (translated into English)
- Proof of your car insurance in your home country (translated into English)

First Steps after you arrive at Duke & Durham, NC

Getting to Durham from RDU Airport

- Arrange for someone from your department to give you a ride
- Or, you can take a taxi. Expect to pay \$25 -\$30 for a ride into Durham.

Rent a Car

Note about renting a car: Please be advised that while the car rental fees include the mandatory insurance required by state law, they do not cover theft of, or damage to, the car while it is in your possession. You will be liable for any damage unless you purchase additional insurance. For this reason, we recommend that you purchase collision damage waiver (\$12.95 per day) and supplemental liability insurance (\$8.95 per day). You will then be insured for any damage to the car, its passengers, and others if an accident occurred. You must have a valid driver's license, passport, and a credit card to rent a car. Also you must be at least 25 years old. If not you will have to pay

additional fees. Finally, the credit card MUST be in the name of at least one of the driver's of the car.

- ❑ Find information about rental care companies from this link:
<http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu/resources/handouts/transportation.html>
- ❑ Reserve a rental car at one of these websites: www.travelocity.com; www.orbitz.com; www.hotwire.com; www.cheaptickets.com

Register with International Office

❑ Visa Registration

8:30 am – 4:00 pm Monday – Friday????????????

International Office

300 Alexander Ave. Box 3882, Durham, NC 27710

Website: www.internationaloffice.duke.edu

E-mail: visahelp@mc.duke.edu

Tel: 919.681.8472 Fax: 919.681.8492.

❑ Check in with your department

- ❑ Set up your Duke e-mail account
- ❑ Ask for your Duke Unique ID
- ❑ OBTAIN YOUR DUKE ID CARD

❑ Will you be a paid employee of Duke? (Ask your department if you are unsure)

If yes then:

- ❑ Attend a Benefits Orientation (Your department should arrange this)
- ❑ Direct Deposit of your paycheck to your bank account
- ❑ Visit **International House** to sign up for medical evacuation & repatriation insurance
- ❑ Make an appointment with **Debbie Endsley** at Corporate Payroll Service to address any questions in reference to your individual tax liability. **NOTE:** Many countries have income tax treaties with The United States. These treaties may or may not exempt an individual from paying federal and state income taxes. Ms. Endsley would be available to assist you with all questions in this area. She may be reached at (919) 684-2642 or e-mail: debbie.endsley@duke.edu

For unpaid scholars at Duke or funding from another source:

- ❑ Enroll in J-1 approved medical insurance, if you did not purchase medical insurance in your home country. This can be done at the International House during Scholar Orientation (see orientation information below.)

For EVERY new scholar *and* spouse:

- ❑ Attend International House Scholar Orientation!! **Beginning August 6 2007, orientations will be offered Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 11am.**

If it is before August 6 2007 Please call (919) 684 3585 for the current schedule. You do not need to register ahead of time. Orientations are meant to provide customized information about housing, transportation, campus and city orientations, insurance, activities, and much more. We are located on the corner of Campus Dr. and Anderson St. (2022 Campus Dr.) Even if you feel comfortable settling in on your own, we recommend stopping by just to introduce yourself. We look forward to meeting you in person!

Take note of your medical insurance options: (More info on medical insurance below)

Health Insurance Costs for an Individual (Health insurance costs for family members is much higher):

- Scholar receiving a Duke Salary (\$21 to \$52/ month)**
- Scholar not receiving a Duke Salary (\$70 to \$170)** (We encourage all scholars not receiving a Duke Salary to sign up for health insurance at the International House immediately after their arrival.)

Arrange Accommodations and Housing

Arrange Temporary or Short Term Housing for your first week here:
Options in Walking Distance to Duke:

The Brookwood Inn

2306 Elba Street, Durham NC 27705

Tel: 919.286.3111

Fax: 919.286.5115

www.brookwoodinn.com

This is the closest hotel to Duke Medical Center. A basic room is \$75 per night (PLUS tax). This is the student rate. An executive room is \$89.00 a night (PLUS 13% tax). The executive room includes a mini refrigerator, microwave, ironing board and coffee maker. To obtain either of these rates you must tell the Brookwood that you are an international student and mention International House. These discounted rates also include a free small breakfast and access to other amenities. We can make a reservation for you if you let us know your arrival date at least one week in advance.

The Millennium Hotel

2800 Campus Walk Avenue, Durham NC 27705

Tel: 919.383.8575

Email: durham@mhrmail.com

www.millennium-hotels.com

This is more upscale than the hotels listed above. The Millennium offers a special international rate of \$139 (Duke Rate) PLUS 13% tax. This hotel has a swimming pool, dining room, airport pick-up (for a fee), free shuttles to Duke, and other amenities.

The University Inn

502 Elf St, Durham NC 27705

Tel: 919.286.4421/800-801-3441

The University Inn is located next to the Brookwood Inn, close to Duke Hospital. It offers a special international rate of \$62.00 (PLUS 13% tax).

Options with Driving Distance to Duke:

❑ Extended Stay America

3105 Tower Boulevard, Durham NC 27707

Tel. 489.8444, Fax: 489-8919

E-mail: dun@extendedstay.com, <http://www.extendedstayhotels.com>

Information: Furnished studios. South Square location. Duke rates are \$47 per day for a Queen suite. (If you get a suite with two double beds the price is \$55 per night.) If you stay for more than 7 nights (one week) QUEEN price jumps down to \$36 a night. Please use the code *DUKE* when calling or writing the hotel. There is a direct shuttle to Duke and back on weekdays (Monday – Friday). Also about a five minute walk to the TTA bus line (10 minutes to Duke).

❑ Homestead Studio Suites

1920 Ivy Creek Boulevard, Durham, NC 27707

Tel. 402.1700, Fax 402.1800

E-mail: DUR@extendedstay.com, <http://www.extendedstayhotels.com>

Information: Duke rates start at \$49 per day. (If you get a suite with two double beds the price is \$59 per night.) If you stay for more than 7 nights (one week) the price for a Queen jumps down to \$39 a night. Please use the code *DUKE* when calling or writing the hotel. There is a direct shuttle van to Duke and back on weekdays (Monday – Friday). Also on the TTA bus line (10 minutes to Duke).

❑ Will you be in Durham for less than 6 months?

If yes, then: Duke University oversees six furnished, two-bedroom apartments in an off-campus apartment complex. These apartments are for short-term international scholars only. They are within walking distance to the university and medical center, and the monthly rent is \$875 (including electricity and water). Telephone and television accounts are the tenant's responsibility. Single individuals may share an apartment. We want to stress that these apartments, although comfortable and convenient, are not luxurious and do have a limited availability. Contact I-House as soon as possible if you are interested.

❑ Look for Permanent Housing

Durham has nice and reasonable housing, but it is important to stay flexible and not expect to meet all of your needs because searching for housing in a new country is never an easy task.

We encourage you to rent a car for the first week of your stay.

We regret that we at International House cannot arrange your housing before your arrival. It is best that you are here in person to choose what is most appropriate for you and to sign a lease. We strongly suggest you correspond with your host department to see if someone will be available during your first week to assist you in getting settled. Also ask where they recommend you live, where other visiting scholars have lived, etc.

- ❑ **Take Note of ALL possible Housing Costs when making your decision:**
 - ❑ RENT (1 bedroom -- \$500 to \$900/ month; 2 bedroom -- \$650 to 1200/ month)
 - ❑ Application Fee: \$35
 - ❑ Initial Deposit: One Month's Rent
 - ❑ Electricity: \$40 to \$60/ month plus a refundable \$200 deposit
 - ❑ Home phone: \$25/ month for local service.
 - ❑ Household supplies: \$200
 - ❑ Furniture: \$400 -\$1000 (Almost all apartments and houses are NOT furnished, but do not worry. Buying used furniture or renting new furniture is fairly easy. Go to our website for more information on how to go about getting furniture.)
<http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu/resources/handouts>

- ❑ **Get an idea of possible Housing Options from these online resources:**
 - ❑ Duke Community Housing: <http://communityhousing.duke.edu>
 - ❑ Duke Dialogue Trading Post: <http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/trading.htm>
 - ❑ IntlHouse Listserv (see above to subscribe)
 - ❑ International House Housing Handouts: <http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu/resources/>
 - ❑ www.raleigh.craigslist.org

Other Settling Needs after Arrival

❑ Purchase a Car

Note about purchasing a car: Public transportation in Durham is limited but buses and taxi are available. Duke's own bus system is quite good but its range is limited to the border of campus. To drive in North Carolina you must have a valid driver's license from your home country. However, it a good idea to have an English translation of your license with you, and it is helpful for it to be on a notarized (legally verified) photocopy that includes both your license and its translation. North Carolina does not legally recognize International Drivers' Licenses (IDLs) issued outside the U.S.

If you plan to purchase a car, please keep in mind that car dealers and banks in the U.S. will have difficulty confirming your credit history. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that you will be eligible for a payment plan or a short-term loan. Be prepared to pay for the car in full. Car insurance is required to drive a car as well.

- ❑ **For more information about purchasing a car, go to our website:**
<http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu/resources/handouts/transportation.html>

- ❑ **Get acquainted with public transportation options in Durham** (Guides and Schedules available at International House)
 - ❑ Duke University Transit: <http://transportation.duke.edu>
 - ❑ DATA: <http://www.ci.durham.nc.us/departments/works/data.cfm>

- ❑ TTA: <http://ridetta.org/Home/index.html>
- ❑ Greyhound: <http://www.greyhound.com/home.asp>

❑ **Obtain a Duke ID Card.**

Note about the Duke Card: This is your campus ID card and allows access to the library, academic buildings, and gym (for a fee). If you are coming to Duke University, you should go to the Duke Card office located in the West Union building, West Campus, with your DS-2019, passport, and \$5 cash. If you are coming to Duke Medical Center, you must get your Duke Card through your sponsoring department—please speak with the department secretary. Duke Cards for spouses are obtainable for \$5 at the West Union office by showing the spouse’s passport and marriage certificate.

❑ **Apply for a social security number at least 10 days after your arrival**

Please come to I-House on Wednesdays at 9:45 am to join a trip to the Social Security Office. In order to obtain a Social Security card, you will need to bring :

- ❑ Your passport
- ❑ Your I-20 or DS-2019
- ❑ Your I-94 card (inside passport)
- ❑ Your letter from the I-Office (provided for you upon registration at Duke).
- ❑ Application form (provided at I-House)

❑ **Enroll children in school or day care:** Consult these handouts for information and options: <http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu/resources/handouts/forfamiliesandspouses.html>

❑ **Collect Information on activities for your spouse or family.** Remember your spouse and family members are also welcome to attend International House Orientation: <http://ihouse.studentaffairs.duke.edu/resources/handouts/forfamiliesandspouses.html>

❑ **Make sure you have MEDICAL INSURANCE**

❑ **J-1 Visas ONLY**

If you are here on a J-1 visa, the federal law requires that you and your dependents have appropriate medical insurance, including a policy that covers your evacuation to your home country. The Duke visa specialists (International Office) will send you more detailed information about the regulations. You may purchase medical insurance from your country as long as the insurance policy meets all the J-1 regulations. To see a copy of the regulations go to: http://www.international.duke.edu/J_Medical_Insurance.htm

❑ **If you are receiving a Duke Benefits package:**

Your medical coverage will not begin until 30 days AFTER your start date at Duke. You will want to secure a month’s traveler insurance from your home country. Also, you will need to sign up for the Repatriation of Remains and Medical Evacuation health insurance. We have that insurance policy here at International House.

❑ **If You are NOT receiving a Duke Benefits package:**

(If you do not know, check with your department)

While some scholars find it less expensive to purchase health/medical insurance in their home country, you may also purchase a health insurance policy upon your arrival to the U.S. If you chose to purchase health insurance after arriving, please ensure that you will be covered by travelers' insurance during your trip and first month in Durham.

Also, if you wish to purchase a policy here, you are required to pay the entire amount in one payment when you sign up for the plan. This can be quite costly (from several hundred to over one thousand dollars). Please write to us if you would like to receive more information about the health insurance plans we recommend.