



IEP Student Pre-Arrival Guide

FALL 2015

USC MARSHALL INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM





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Welcome Message

Dear Exchange Students,

No matter where you are sitting now as you read this letter, there is one thing that we all have in common, and that is being a member of the **Trojan family**. **And that's what we, the IEP hosts, are here for: to welcome you into our family and to make you feel at home here at the heart of downtown Los Angeles.** Through the various events you will experience during the semester, we hope to show you the best of what the university we love has to offer.

Like you, many of us were once newcomers to Los Angeles, and may have been lost at some point while trying to adjust to such a new environment. We hope the following international student guide will be helpful in providing you with useful information, from what to pack before you leave **to restaurants and shopping locations in the area, so that you won't be as lost as we once were and have the best possible time at USC.**

And since you're probably more interested in learning about the opportunities in downtown Los Angeles rather than reading this welcome message, we will say no more here and wish you all the best during your stay.

Welcome to USC and Fight On!

Paul Hwang **Tianna Li**
Lead Host Lead Host

Aside from your basics such as toiletries, personal items, shoes, etc., below is a list of a few more specific items which you will need for your semester at USC.

Packing Tips



Formal wear

The majority of your classes will require formal presentations for which you will need to dress in a business suit. Unless you plan on participating in many professional events, one set should suffice.

Personal documents

Bring not only your original passports, identification cards, bank cards, visas, etc., but also make at least 2 copies of each. The copies will be handy should you need to submit paperwork or lose your documents while abroad.



Warmer clothing

While Southern California is known for its sun and warmth, it can get chilly at night, and even during the day once fall starts to settle in September. Bringing a light jacket should be enough, but if you get cold easily, you can opt for a warmer one.

A Unlocked Phone

If your phone is unlocked to allow usage of SIM cards from different carriers, it will be a lot easier and more convenient to set up your phone plan.



If you have have arranged a personal friend/family pick-up from the airport upon your arrival, then you don't have to worry. For everyone else, below are some options that you can take to get yourself from the airport to campus.

Travel from LAX to USC



Taxi

Independent Taxi
+1 (800) 521 8294

Company Yellow Cab
+1 (800) 200 1085

Bell Cab of LA
+1 (800) 666 6664

Beverly Hills Cab Company
+1 (800) 273 6611

The price for a ride from LAX to USC varies between \$50-\$60.

Other options:

Super Shuttle
(www.supershuttle.com)

Uber
Lyft



Prime Time Shuttle

The Prime Time Shuttle is a shared van service and can be reserved via online at: www.primetimeshuttle.com

Use the USC code: 326658 to obtain a 10% discount.

The majority of you should choose "USC UPC North Campus Housing" as your drop off location under "school." Make sure to select the "Shared Van" option. For the "required phone number" you may enter (626) 657 0013.

Price will be \$13.50 to USC, plus tip (required).

Once you exit baggage claim at LAX, find a Prime Time stop in the inner curb under a white sign labeled "Prime Time."

This information is for general USC housing only. For more specific information which may vary by housing, please contact your specific building or ask your IEP host buddy to help obtain information.

Living in USC Housing

What will be provided?

- * Couch
- * Dining table & chairs
- * Stove & sink
- * Refrigerator
- * Microwave (excluding in apartments)
- * Bed (twin extra-long)
- * Desk & chair
- * Dresser & closet

What will NOT be provided?

- * Bedding (sheets, blanket, pillow)
- * Clothes hangers
- * Soaps, toilet paper
- * Cleaning supplies
- * Plates, utensils, cups, etc.
- * Small appliances
- * Pots & pans
- * Other cooking accessories



Check out **Target** superstore at **735 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles** to find all your household needs and more!

Other Notes:

- * When checking in, let them know that you do not have your USC ID yet so that they can provide you with a temporary access card to your building.
- * Do NOT forget to bring your USC ID card and your keys at all times. The first time you forget, the Customer Service Center will unlock it for you, but after that they will start to charge you.
- * The Customer Service Center (CSC) handles all packages if you ever need to mail something to your dorm. Some CSCs also provide free printing and rent out vacuum cleaners for your convenience—just ask.
- * If you live in an apartment, most likely your electricity will not be covered. Make sure to check your account balance from time to time so that you pay off that bill without getting late fees put on you.

You'll be able to find basic household necessities, drinks and vegetables, and packaged and fresh foods at the following nearby stores.

Local Groceries



Website: <http://www.freshandeasy.com/>

Address: 3335 South Figueroa Street

Hours: Open 24 hours

Fresh&Easy Express is in a convenient location underneath the Gateway apartments. The store carries smaller quantities of basic foodstuffs, including meats, packaged food, fruits, and vegetables. Visiting Fresh&Easy Express is suitable if you wish to grab a quick item.

Website: <https://www.ralphs.com/>

Address: 2600 South Vermont Avenue

Hours: 6AM—1AM



Ralphs is harder to get to and carry groceries back by foot or bike, so you may want to carpool with other students. Ralphs is well-stocked with a wide range of foods, drinks, and simple necessities and is open late. You could get a week or two's worth of groceries from one visit to Ralphs.



Website: <http://www.cvs.com/>

Address: 3335 S. FIGUEROA ST.

Hours: 7AM—12AM

Like Fresh&Easy, CVS is conveniently located under Gateway. The store contains some foods and a range of household and personal goods. However, they also carry smaller quantities, so come here if you are looking to pick up something quick.

The area around campus has a range of dining options within walking distance, should you ever need to grab a meal nearby.

Local Restaurants

Viztango Café

Italian

3017 S Figueroa St.

\$8-13

Chick-fil-A

Chicken sandwiches

3748 S Figueroa St.

\$5-10

Subway

Sandwiches

3335 S Figueroa St. / 975 W
Jefferson Blvd.

Panda Express

Chinese

2828 S Figueroa St.

\$8-11

Mercado La Paloma

Food court (various)

3655 S Grand Ave.

\$5-10

Manna's

Indian

2823 S Vermont St.

\$6-12

Chipotle

Mexican

3748 S Figueroa St.

\$4-10

Trio House

Asian fusion

3031 S Figueroa St.

\$8-10

Crunchbutton

<http://www.crunchbutton.com>

Choose from a range of nearby restaurants and get food delivered to your door! Pay either by cash or credit card.

Many of you will want to obtain an American SIM card and phone plan for your stay. We hope you find the following information relevant and useful.

Cell Phones

We suggest for exchange students to get prepaid plans or pay-as-you-go plans, since contracts would usually require for you to sign for two years.

Unlocked phones may be eligible to use with a US SIM card, depending on the provider/plan you choose.

In the US, we have four major providers:



<http://www.verizonwireless.com/b2c/>



<http://www.att.com/shop/wireless/plans/>



<http://prepaid-phones.t-mobile.com/>

The Sprint logo, featuring the word "Sprint" in a bold, sans-serif font on a yellow background, with a stylized black and white graphic element to its right.

Sprint

<http://www.sprint.com/landings/prepaid/>

For those of you who wish to open a bank account, please find the following information useful. However, unless you really need a bank account, we suggest that you do not need to set up one for the semester because of hidden fees and other inconveniences.

Banking

Applications for a bank account will normally require:

- 1) Passport/Government identification
- 2) **USC identification, certified letter, transcript, or national driver's license**

Additional services which often come with a bank account include:

- 1) Mobile banking (access to services from your smartphone)
- 2) Online banking (access to services online)
- 3) International banking partnerships

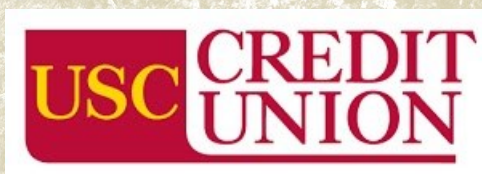
These all can vary with the bank, so be sure to check information thoroughly before getting an account, especially various fees that could be applied to your account.



<https://www.bankofamerica.com/deposits/checking/personal-checking/>



<https://online.citibank.com/US/JRS/>



<https://www.usccreditunion.org/product-landing/checking/>



<https://www.wellsfargo.com/checking/>

USC takes great measures to making sure we are all safe on and around campus. That being said, always be aware of your surroundings and be smart—**don't put yourself in dangerous situations.**

Security & Emergency

USC has our own police force called the Department of Public Safety (DPS). You will see them all over campus. They have similar powers as the city police officers, which includes giving fines and tickets.

DPS office location:

Parking Structure A (PSA)

Emergency number:

213-740-4321

Non-emergency:

213-740-6000



Photos by Nicollson Fernandes & Amaresh Sundaram Kuppuswamy



In the surrounding areas of USC, you will see men and women dressed in yellow jackets standing around on the streets. On the back it should say "CSC Security Staff". They are also here for our security so if you have an emergency, go to them, as well.

United States emergency number: **911**

Dial from any phone for urgent help including fire, ambulance, police, etc.!

Traveling overseas can be taxing on your body and you may encounter unexpected illnesses. We hope the information below can help you keep yourself healthy while abroad.

Maintaining Your Health

Hospitals

Keck Hospital of USC

1500 San Pablo St Los Angeles, CA

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

6500 Wilshire Blvd Los Angeles, CA

Los Angeles County Hospital

2051 Marengo St Los Angeles, CA

Pharmacies

USC Pharmacy (on-campus)

3601 Trousdale Parkway, Student Union 101.

Monday-Friday 9:00am-6:00pm (Sat/Sun closed)

CVS Pharmacy (near campus)

3335 S. Figueroa St. Los Angeles

The norms and customs which you encounter while in Los Angeles may be different than those in your home country. Below is some information on a couple of general norms to help you get started on adjusting to your new life for the semester.

Other Useful Information

- * **Sales tax in the Los Angeles area is 9.75%** of the price listed on the shelf, tag, or menu. Add the sales tax amount to the listed price to estimate your total cost.
- * **Tipping is required** for dine-in restaurants, taxi drivers, shuttle drivers, tour guides, valet service, hotels, etc. but NOT fast food or at stores. A tip of **15-20% of the total (pre-tax) bill** is adequate.
- * Remember, the date format used in the United States is **MONTH/DAY/YEAR**. So 12/2/2015 would be December 2, 2015.
- * **Earthquake safety is important in California**, which is a very earthquake-prone area. While the likelihood is low that you will experience a major earthquake during your stay here, it is best to take precautions and make sure that you know what to do when one does happen.
 - ⇒ If you are indoors, **take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture** and hold on until the shaking stops. If there is not a sturdy table or desk nearby, **cover your face and head with your arms** and crouch at a corner of the building.
 - ⇒ If you are outdoors, **stay outside** and **move away from structures** (buildings, streetlights, wires, etc.) and to an open area.
 - ⇒ The **main cause of injuries** during earthquakes is due to **falling debris**.
 - ⇒ **Stay away** from glass, windows, outer doors/walls, and **anything that could fall**.
 - ⇒ **Do not** go outside until the shaking stops entirely.
 - ⇒ **Do not** use elevators.

Take a look at the table for unit conversions if you are not familiar. It is also important to know the exchange rate for US dollars for when you go out to buy stuff. The exchange rate may change over time, but here is a general sense of current exchange rates.

Units & Exchange Rate

The United States uses imperial units of measurement instead of metric units. Take a look below if you are not familiar with the unit conversions.

Fahrenheit	100	38	Celsius
	90	32	
	80	27	
	70	21	
	60	16	
	50	10	
	40	4	
	30	-1	
	20	-7	
	10	-12	
0	-18		

Temperature

1 inch = 2.54 centimeters

IN	1	5	10	15	20	25	30	35
CM	2.54	12.7	25.4	38.1	50.8	63.5	76.2	88.9

1 foot = 0.3 meters

FT	1	5	10	15	20	25	30	35
M	0.3	1.5	3	4.5	6	7.5	9	10.5

1 mile = 1.6 kilometers

MI	1	10	20	30	40	50	60	70
KM	1.6	16	32	48	64	80	96	112

1 pound = 0.45 kilograms

LBS	1	20	40	60	80	100	120	140
KG	0.45	9	18	27	36	45	54	63

It is also important to know the exchange rate for the US dollar when you go out to shop. The rate will vary over time, but here is a general sense of current exchange rates:

1
USD =
 0.91
EUR
 or
 0.64
GBP
 or
 6.21
CNY
 or
 123.5
JPY



See you on campus!