

DESTINATION OCCIDENTAL



GUIDE TO COLLEGE LIFE AT OXY FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

OXY
Occidental
College

<http://www.oxy.edu/international-programs-office/>
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WHAT INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS CAN DO FOR YOU

As your advisors, we are here to serve all international students of Occidental College. Some of the services we offer are as follows:

- Provide information about your responsibilities as international students on visa and assist in processing the necessary forms needed to maintain valid status.
- Provide advice and referral on personal and/or academic matters.
- Serve as a liaison on your behalf with college officials and the federal government.
- Provide official letters of certification for banks and social security.
- Advise the International Student Organization.
- Give workshops on changes in immigration laws, cross cultural communication, etc.

WHEN TO CONSULT OXY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE

Change in Academic/Enrollment:

- Declaring or changing your major(s) and/or minor.
- Reduction of your course load below 12 units
- Enrolling concurrently in another institution
- An extension of your program beyond the end date on your I-20 or DS-2019
- Return to campus after a leave-of-absence or study abroad
- Transferring your immigration records to another institution;

Employment Reason

- Getting a Social Security number for on-campus employment
- Authorization to work off-campus
- Summer work options

Special Visa/I-20/DS-2019 Circumstances

- Replacement of a lost I-20 or DS-2019
- "Reinstatement" to lawful status after violation of status
- Change of status to/from another visa type

Lawful travel outside the United States

- Change in Personal Information
- Change of address, either US or foreign

Contact Us

Johnson Hall #102, 1600 Campus Road F-16, LA, CA 90042
323) 259-2533 | ipo@oxy.edu | www.oxy.edu/ipo

WELCOME TO OXY!

You are an important part of our community at Occidental College, contributing to the diversity that is a hallmark of our campus and our city. You are joining a unique academic institution in the United States. Oxy enrolls approximately 2,100 students and is one of the few small, residential liberal arts campuses in greater Los Angeles. During your time at Occidental, we urge you to share the culture of your home country in innovative ways and to delve deeply into your experience in the United States. There are a myriad of opportunities which await you.

Please use Destination Occidental to assist you both in **preparing for your time at Oxy** and **as a reference while you attend Oxy**. You will find important information on pre-departure necessities, such as visas, traveling to the US and arrival information. This publication is meant to help you after your arrival, as well, to help you with cultural adjustment, academic policies and other issues that may need review.

Be sure to explore the Occidental website over the summer before arrival so that you can be informed about all departments and expectations at Oxy.

As degree-seeking international students, you are an integral part of the Oxy community. As such, the extensive information on the Oxy website will give you invaluable information. Be sure to look there first to answer questions.

RECOMMENDED OXY WEBSITES FOR YOU TO EXPLORE

International Programs Office: oxy.edu/ipo

International Students: oxy.edu/international-programs-office/international-students

Academics: oxy.edu/academics

Academic Ethics: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics>

Academic Support:

Writing Center: oxy.edu/writing-center

Academic Mastery Program: oxy.edu/academic-mastery-program

Scientific Scholars Achievement Program: oxy.edu/ssap

Peer Learning Programs: oxy.edu/center-digital-liberal-arts/peer-learning

Student Support & Advising

Advising Center: oxy.edu/advising-center

Disability Services: oxy.edu/disability-services

Experiential Learning & Research

Center for Community Based Learning: oxy.edu/center-community-based-learning

Office of Community Engagement (SLICE): oxy.edu/office-community-engagement

Student Culture

Multicultural Summer Institute: oxy.edu/multicultural-summer-institute

Office of Religious and Spiritual Life: oxy.edu/office-religious-and-spiritual-life

Office of Student Life: oxy.edu/student-life

Calendar & Catalogs: <http://oxy.smartcatalogiq.com/>

Student Voices: <https://www.oxy.edu/admission-aid/student-voices>

Resources & Support: oxy.edu/life-oxy/health-safety

ORIENTATION & CLASS REGISTRATION

ABOUT ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

The International Programs Office conducts International Student Orientation for new first year, exchange and visiting language assistant international students to Oxy just before all other new students arrive at the College. This program addresses many topics of importance to international students who are new to the US. Topics such as cultural adjustment, differences in expectations inside and outside the classroom and other important issues designed to ease your transition to a new culture will be addressed.

It is designed for students with little or no experience with US culture. *Programming is not relevant to students who went to high school in the U.S. or Canada, or who have 2 or more years experience with U.S. culture, or who lived at Oxy spring 2021.* Students must register for this program by the deadline.

By invitation only.

Contact the International Programs Office if you have questions.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- New Students: [oxy.edu/new-students](https://www.oxy.edu/new-students)
- New Students Orientation Program: [oxy.edu/new-students/orientation](https://www.oxy.edu/new-students/orientation)
- New Student FAQ: <https://www.oxy.edu/new-students/incoming-first-year-faq>

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PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

VISAS

In order to attend Oxy legally, you must have a valid F1 student visa stamped inside your passport. In order to apply for this at the nearest US Embassy or Consulate, Occidental (Oxy) will issue you an I-20 document (*Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status – for Academic and Language Students*) once you have committed to attend. Please know that it is unlawful to attend Oxy on any other kind of visa, such as a B tourist visa or a F2 visa. Please contact us if you have a US Passport or green card or other visa type.

OBTAINING AN F-1 VISA FOR THE FIRST TIME

Is this the **first time** you will be attending school in the US? As a non-U.S. citizen studying in the U.S., you will need to obtain an F-1 student visa before entering the country and as soon as possible after you receive your I-20 document. The I-20 document is issued by Occidental and sent to you so that you may apply for an F student visa.

WHAT IS VISA?

- A visa is a stamp inside your passport. It is your official authorization permitting travel to the United States for a particular purpose.
- Your F-1 visa is proof that you have the permission of the United States government to travel to the U.S. as a student and remain for the time allotted under your I-20 (*Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status – for Academic and Language Students*).
- While your F-1 visa is valid, you may leave and re-enter the U.S. according to the number of entries printed on your visa.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR VISA?

There are several steps to apply for a visa. **Please consult the instructions available on the [embassy or consulate website](#) where you intend to apply.** Note that F-1 visas cannot, as a general rule, be obtained from inside the U.S. There may be exceptional cases through a lengthy and expensive process on condition of special approval.

To apply for an F-1 visa please see the official US travel website for the most updated [F-1 visa application process](#). Many times, you will be asked to

bring the following documents for the visa interview:

- **Passport:** valid for six months after your official completion of studies. The date of completion of program is noted under the “Program of Study” section of your I-20.
- **Nonimmigrant Visa Application**, Form DS-160 Confirmation Page
- **Payment Receipt of SEVIS Fee.**
- **I-20 document**, which was mailed to you by Occidental College.
- **Evidence of financial support:** such as an original Certificate of Finances from your bank, personal bank statements, or a letter of financial award from Occidental College, proving that you have sufficient funds to support your studies at Occidental. You submitted this documentation to the College with your application and it was signed and returned to you by a College official. The amount that you are required to demonstrate is listed on your I-20 form under the “Finances” section.
- **Acceptance Letter** from Occidental College
- Proof that you have a permanent residence outside the United States.
- Two or more unofficial passport-sized photographs (if you were unable to upload online in Form DS 160)

Did you attend high school in the US?

International students who attended high school in the US and return home prior to attending Oxy must confirm that their current visa stamp is still valid. **If it has expired, you must apply for a new F-1 visa stamp prior to re-entering the US.**

Additional materials may be required by the U.S. consulate to prove your eligibility for a student visa. Please contact the U.S. consulate before you go to be sure you have all required materials.

These may include:

- Evidence of English proficiency.
- School records to verify academic preparation.
- Additional evidence of strong ties to your home country or of your ability to support yourself financially while in the United States.
- Application fee.
- Personal interview.

OTHER THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT F-1 VISA

- Normally, your F-1 visa will be a “multiple-entry” visa for the duration of your degree or exchange program. You may use your visa to re-enter the U.S. up to the expiration date, as long as you have a valid I-20.
- If you receive an F-1 visa with different entry permission such as a *single entry* visa or one for a period shorter than your academic program or degree, please notify the International Programs Office upon arrival. You may remain in the US with an expired F visa stamp, but if you leave the country, the visa will need to be renewed prior to re-entry.

OTHER NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

Besides your F-1 visa, passport and supporting documents, we recommend that you bring the following documents with you (not in your checked luggage) to Occidental College:

- Medical and dental records, including certificates of immunizations and vaccinations.
- Birth Certificate.
- Prescriptions for medications that you take regularly, or for eyeglasses.
- International driver’s license or a driver’s license from your own country (if you drive)

TRANSFERRING YOUR SEVIS RECORD

- If you are **currently attending another institution in the U.S. on an F-1 visa**, your SEVIS record must be transferred to Occidental College. Contact the Designated School Official at your current US institution to complete the proper procedure.
- Once Occidental has your SEVIS record and all of your supporting documentation (the Certification of Finances), you will be issued a new I-20 document reflecting Occidental College details.
- If you leave the U.S. over the summer, you must re-enter on your Occidental College I-20 document. Generally, you are allowed to re-enter the US to begin a new school no more than 30 days before the start date on your I-20.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- **Visa Procedure:** <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/global-engagement/international-programs/international-students/new-students/apply-visa>
- **US Visas:** travel.state.gov/content/visas/en.html
- **Visa appointment & processing wait times:** <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>
- **Study in the States:** <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/>

FINANCES

<https://www.oxy.edu/admission-aid/costs-financial-aid>

FEES & INSURANCE REQUIREMENT

- Overview of expenses for the academic year (ten months) can be found on the college website.
- In addition, international students are **required** to enroll in and purchase the college Student Health insurance plan. The cost of this plan is estimated at \$3,063 for the year. This is charged to your student account along with tuition, fees, room and board charges.

ACTIVATE YOUR STUDENT ACCOUNT ONLINE

- Over the summer, you will receive the *New Student Orientation Packet*. In the package, you will receive login information and be asked to activate your Student Account (www.oxy.edu/student-business-services/ebill)
- For more information on making payments, please see visit oxy.edu/student-business-services.

PAYMENT METHODS

- **Send Personal Check, Cashier's Check or Money Order: in US dollars:** Please be sure to write your Occidental Student ID number on your payment. Any returned check is subject to a \$20 returned check fee. Payment can be mailed to:

Occidental College
1600 Campus Road M-20
Los Angeles, CA 90041

- **Pay Online from Checking/Savings Account:** Write a check online or use your debit card via TouchNet. There is no additional fee for using this service. To use this service, log in to ebill.oxy.edu.
- **Electronic Funds Transfer:** Please provide your bank with the following information in order to wire funds, and ensure that the student's name appears on the transfer. Funds must be sent in U.S. dollars.

Please note, the College's bank does not charge a wire transfer fee, however your bank or an intermediary bank may charge a fee without you being aware of it, in which case your payment to us will be short by the amount of the fee.

As the College cannot absorb the cost of the fee, please check with your bank before you make a wire transfer to Occidental so you are fully informed about the cost of making your payment in this form.

Wire to:

Community Bank, Pasadena Branch, CA USA

ABA No.: Contact Us

For credit to: Occidental College

Account #: Contact Us

RE: Student's Name & ID#

Community Bank address:

505 E Colorado Blvd Pasadena, CA 91101

For more information please visit www.oxy.edu/student-business-services/student-accounts/making-payment

MONEY IN THE US & BANK ACCOUNT

- Bring sufficient cash to meet the initial cost of getting to the campus and at least one month's expenses before you are able to set up a bank account here, about US\$1,000.
- There are several banks within walking distance of Occidental College. You may wish to **open a checking account. IPO will provide you with a Bank letter to facilitate opening a bank account.** Once you receive this letter, take your passport and oxy ID (and other documents just in case) to the nearby bank to open your account.
- To reduce the risk of traveling with a lot of money in cash, you may want to consider one of the following to access your money:
 - ⇒ ATM or Debit card (the most widely accepted cards have a Visa or MasterCard logo), as this would be the fastest and most economical way of getting money
 - ⇒ Traveler's checks (in U.S. dollars)

PACKING

- ⇒ A bank check (also called a cashier's check) drawn up in your home country in U.S. dollars
- ⇒ [Wire funds](#) to Occidental to cover fees

CLOTHING AND CLIMATE

- *August through Beginning of October* : The temperature will be hot (90-100 degrees Fahrenheit/ 32-37 degrees Celsius) during the day and cool at night. Bring a light sweater in the evening, even on the hottest of days. Dress in L.A. is very casual. Some students purchase a small fan in case they are assigned to rooms without a air conditioning.
- *October*: The temperature begins to cool down a little bit. Pack a jacket or cotton sweater,
- *December-February*: It may rain occasionally. Pack a warm sweater for chilly nights. The temperature may go down to 35 degrees Fahrenheit.

LINENS

You will need to bring your own linens, or purchase them from local stores after you arrive. When purchasing bedding, please be aware that dorm beds

are not the standard size. They are twin x-long, 38 x 80 inches. We recommend pre-ordering on-line with delivery to Oxy.

There are several stores located a short distance from Occidental should you wish to purchase items upon arrival.

VOLTAGE

The electricity voltage in the U.S is 110 volts. Most plugs have two flat, parallel prongs. If you are planning to bring appliances such as hairdryers and electric shavers you will need both a plug adapter and a voltage converter. An adapter is a piece that fits your existing plug on one side, and the flat, two-pronged U.S. plug on the other. A voltage converter converts the electricity current so that your appliance will function. This is the same for computers, though many computers have built-in converters, therefore you will only require a plug adapter.

SHOPPING NEAR THE AREA

There are several stores within a short distance of Occidental. These are close and convenient, by public transportation.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- **What to Bring (Oxy):** <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/rehs/residence-halls/amenities-chart-what-bring>
- **What Not to Bring (Oxy):** <https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/res-ed-housing-policies/prohibited-items>
- **Shipping your Belongings (Oxy):** <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/rehs/amenities-chart-what-bring>

ARRIVAL IN THE US

AT THE AIRPORT

ARRIVAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Your I-20 document lists the **latest** date by which you may arrive at Occidental College under “Program of Study” section under “Program Start Date.”
- If you will be **delayed** beyond that date, you must contact IPO immediately.
- **You may arrive in the US up to 30 days before Program Start Date listed on your I-20.** If you are planning on traveling in the US before coming to Oxy, make sure you count the days properly. Contact International Programs if you have any questions about your arrival period.

DOCUMENTS TO CARRY WITH YOU— NOT IN YOUR CHECKED LUGGAGE

- Valid passport with visa stamp
- Acceptance letter from Occidental
- I-20 form from Occidental, as well as all previously issued I-20 documents
- All supporting documents

CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION

- You will need to clear U.S. Customs upon arrival to the United States.
- If you are scheduled to change planes in the U.S. prior to arrival in Los Angeles, you should expect to clear customs at the first airport where you land.
- Show your passport and I-20 to the immigration inspector. The customs officer may ask you several questions regarding your visit to the U.S. such as, “Where is Occidental College located?”, “How are you paying for your university tuition?”, “Where will you be living?” or “What are you studying?” The customs officer will then take your picture and fingerprint you.
- Your document will be returned to you after examination.
- **Agricultural Inspection:** After picking up your luggage and turning in the completed customs form, the officers will need to know whether you have any food with you. Please note that all food from foreign countries must be carried in sealed containers i.e. cans or

USEFUL WEBSITE

- **US Customs Advice:** <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors>
- **Know Before you Visit:** <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/know-before-you-go>
- **Border/Airport Wait Times:** www.cbp.gov/travel/advisories-wait-times

factory wrappers. Perishable or opened food must be declared and Customs has the right to confiscate it.

GETTING TO OXY FROM THE AIRPORT

Once you are finished with the customs process, follow the signs for “Ground Transportation.” There will be designated areas for taxis and shared shuttles.

Do not hesitate to ask an airport attendant which way to go. **If you are taking a taxi, or ride share, ask the driver to deliver you to 1600 Campus Road. Due to construction, please check the LAX website for updates.**

A typical trip from LAX to Oxy takes about from 2 to 3 hours because the driver stops at each person’s individual destination. We highly recommend making a reservation online beforehand.

- [See this Oxy webste for further instructions and information.](#)
- [Los Angeles International Airport](#) is undergoing construction—be sure to check their website for changes and updates!

HOTELS NEAR OXY & DISCOUNTS

Some students prefer to arrive in Los Angeles prior to orientation in order to do some sightseeing and to adjust to the time difference. If you arrive early, you are responsible for finding and funding your own housing.

- [Google Map List:](#) of nearby hotels and inns or
- [Visit the Oxy webpage](#) for discounts and promotions

PRACTICAL ADVICE

No matter which form of transportation you use (shuttle, rideshare or taxi cab), it is customary in the US to tip the driver at least 10% in addition to the charge.

LIVING AT OXY

HOUSING

<https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/rehs>

RESIDENCE HALLS

- All first year students, both international and domestic, will live in residence halls on-campus with their assigned roommates. At Occidental, you will share a room with one or two other students in one of thirteen residence halls on campus.
- You will be notified of your housing assignment over the break by Oxy e-mail.
- Each residence hall on campus has its own theme for the year. Around each theme, there will be interesting planned events for the hall residents and the Oxy community.

COMMODITIES IN HOUSING

Each room has a bed and mattress, a desk, a closet and drawers, a study desk and a chair for each student, a refrigerator, a microwave and wireless internet. The residence hall as a whole will have shared bathrooms, a living room lobby with a TV and sofas, a study room and a computer laboratory with internet-connected computers.

RESIDENCE HALL ADVISORS

Each residence hall has Resident Advisors (RA's) who are there to make your living experience safe, comfortable and fun. RA's are returning Oxy students in their third or fourth year of study who put on events in order to develop a sense of community among people living in the same hall. They receive training so that they can be a resource to you if you have problems or questions. "Hall Spreads" are periodic meetings put on by the R.A.'s to relay important information and create community.

For questions about housing, please contact Residential Education and Housing Services at resed@oxy.edu.

MEALS

<https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/campus-dining/meal-plans/pick-your-plan>

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ:

Housing During Breaks (Summer & Winter)

- During the winter vacation (Mid-December to Mid-January) and the summer vacation (Mid-May to late August) **all residence halls will be closed.**
- You must plan to return home or visit friends during this time. Since there will be nowhere for you to stay on campus during that time, it is important that you make plans in advance for where you will go.
- Some international students take the opportunity to travel around the U.S, while some choose to return home.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

We advise you to choose Meal Plan B or C. Many international students find A and even B provide way too much food and there are no refunds for unused funds. Start with a lower plan ~ you can add more funds later, if you need.

Each student living on campus must purchase a “meal plan.” There are limited cooking facilities in the residence halls, so most meals are purchased in one of two main dining facilities on campus. All meal plans at Oxy function as debit accounts. Menu items are priced individually and deducted from your account balance with each purchase. Oxy offers four meal plans.

HEALTH & INSURANCE

MEDICAL CARE

www.oxy.edu/emmons-wellness-center

- Occidental’s on-campus health and wellness center, Emmons, is centrally located on campus and stocks many basic medications.
- Medical visits: low cost or free of charge to all currently enrolled Occidental College students. E
- Psychological Service: Emmons also offers psychological services, including up to **10 free psychological counseling sessions** for students per year.
- Other service: Charges are generated for certain medications, laboratory tests, and physical exams, and can be paid by cash, check or charged to your student account. You will be provided a receipt so you can submit these charges to your insurance carrier. Emmons will refer students with more serious health-related problems to off-campus health care providers, if necessary.

SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

www.oxy.edu/emmons-wellness-center/student-health-insurance

- There is no national healthcare system in the United States.
- Medical care in the U.S. can be very expensive. This is why Oxy **requires all international students to purchase the college insurance plan.**
- The policy covers the basic costs for visits to the Emmons Health and Counseling Center on campus, or other medical care as needed. See the website above for more information.

DENTAL CARE

There is no Oxy dental insurance plan and, like medical care, dental care can be very expensive. For example, a basic dental cleaning and exam typically costs \$75 - \$150. Considering this, you may wish to have a thorough dental exam, and any requisite treatments, completed prior to your arrival in the U.S.

YOUR CONTACT INFO AT OXY

MAILING ADDRESS

Where to ship your belongings before arrival	Your Last Name, First Name Occidental College, Facilities Management 1600 Campus Road, Los Angeles, CA 90041 U.S.A.
Your mail address at Oxy	Your Last Name, First Name Occidental College, Box # 1600 Campus Road, Los Angeles, CA 90041 U.S.A.

- **Activate Your E-mail** E-mail is Occidental official form of communication. The [new student website](#) will contain information on how to activate your email account. As soon as you can, please start using your Oxy e-mail. **All college correspondence will be sent to you via your official Oxy email account which you should check daily.**
- **Internet Access** is provided by the College on campus and is free of charge. In addition to personal use, campus news and activities information will be sent through a campus-wide email system: The Oxy Student Digest.
- **Computers** You will need a personal computer/laptop for your schoolwork. There are computer labs in many dormitories and in the library.
- **Cell Phone** Please begin to research mobile phone plans before arrival. Many plans offer free domestic long distance rates. The most popular cell phone carriers in the US are T-Mobile, AT&T, Verizon and

Sprint. In the interim, IPO can offer a USA unlimited mobile phone plan that you can purchase on a monthly basis for some or all of your time at Oxy.

COLLEGE LIFE AT OXY

ACADEMICS

THE OCCIDENTAL DEGREE

Oxy grants its students a Bachelor of Arts Degree (B.A.) after completing normal studies in four years. In order to do this, degree-seeking students take the required courses of a major, all core educational requirements, and have a minimum of 128 units. For reference:

- 1 class=3 hours classes per week + 9 hours of outside of classroom studying=4 units
- 1 semester = 4 classes = 16 units
- 1 year=2 semesters=8 classes=32 units
- 4 years = 128 units

If you take four classes per semester, you can easily reach 128 units by the end of your senior year. Some extra-curricular activities carry units as well. Examples are: the Glee Club (the school choir) and Tai' Chi class. If you want to have a lighter load in a semester, you can choose to take less than 16 units and make it up later.

NOTE: International students are required by the College policy and the United States Federal Law to enroll a minimum of 12 units each semester.

DECLARING YOUR MAJOR

You do not have to decide or declare your major, i.e., your primary course of study, until the end of your sophomore year. A list of available majors and minors is included in the College catalog. Some students, even American students, have difficulty figuring out the system. As a result, they take classes over their four years that do not fulfill graduation requirements and then they need to take summer school classes to graduate on time. For this reason, it is highly recommended for you start reading on requirements for your potential major, [available here](#).

Consult with your academic advisor early.

In addition, the schedule of classes is posted on the [Course Counts](#) website.

GRADES & GRADE POINT AVERAGE

At Occidental, and in most schools in the U.S., the method used to evaluate a student's performance in class is by calculating the grade point average (GPA). The GPA is the average of all grades you receive from all your classes. It ranges from 0 to 4.0. See the following example:

A student took four classes in his fall semester and received two A's, a B, and a C. Since an A equals 4.0, a B equals 3.0 and a C equals 2.0 on a GPA scale, therefore, the student's final GPA will be $(4+4+3+2)/4$, equals 3.25.

Grades you receive for classes are usually converted from number grades to letter grades. The scale most professors use is as follows:

95-100%	A
90-94%	A-
86-89%	B+
84-8%	B
80-83%	B-
70s earn	C-, C, C+ as above
60s earn	Ds as above.
59 and below	is an F, failing, for which no credit toward graduation is earned.

Note that some faculty grade on a curve.

Syllabus & Grading : You will receive a syllabus on the first day of class outlining what percentage of your grade will be determined by what type of work. Some professors do not give much weight to homework, while others prefer papers to exams. Some might even offer "extra credit" opportunities so that students can boost their grades.

Assignments: Most classes include lectures, homework, such as sets of problems and/or papers, quizzes, midterm exams, group and individual projects and final exams. It is common for professors to give a grade for class participation as well.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- **Programs & Majors:** <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/areas-study>
- **Registration:** <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/registrars-office/registration>
- **Occidental College Catalog:** oxy.smartcatalogiq.com/ (select the appropriate year/term for the most recent information)
- [Course Counts](#)

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Tip #1 Please consider taking 3 academic classes (instead of 4) **in your first semester at Oxy**, while you become accustomed to new academic and social cultures. You can make up the additional class at home during the summer!

Tip #2 You will register for your freshman seminar class (FYS) over the summer. Most FYS courses are single classes. However, *Immigration Semester* is comprised of 4 courses – none of which can be dropped.

We advise against enrolling in a multi course FYS, in the event you encounter difficulties with the new academic system.

FYS's are VERY writing and reading intensive. Best to have a range of courses as you get used to a new academic system – your required FYS, a science or math class and a studio art course, for instance.

Teaching & Learning. In some classes the professors rely on a traditional lecture method of instruction with little involvement by students. However, the majority of professors encourage more active ways of teaching, for instance group discussions and interactive exercises are encouraged. Students are expected to come to class prepared; having completed the assigned reading, pay attention in class, take good notes, and actively engage in class discussions.

Professors: Some professors are more formal than others. It is not uncommon for professors to dress informally in class – in blue jeans or even shorts! Some professors wish to be called by their first name, rather than Professor. Don't mistake informality for lack of expertise. You may find that US culture in general tends to be more informal.

Textbooks: There are many options for purchasing textbooks. The Occidental Bookstore sells all textbooks for the current semester. Various providers online also sell textbooks, and sometimes for cheaper prices. Some students also use Amazon Prime, a 2-day free shipping service for college students only.

COMMON TERMS USED IN CLASS

- Quizzes - short tests given based on assigned material, usually easy
- Pop quizzes - unannounced quizzes (given when the professors want to verify if the students are keeping up with their reading assignments or following the lecture)
- Midterms - exams based on several chapters of materials lectured in class, usually given after every 4 weeks of class

- Final exams - comprehensive exam given on the last day of the semester which can cover materials from the entirety of the class
- Homework - can be in forms of reading assignments, papers, problem sets, and research
- Plagiarism - To steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as your own. In other words, use of another's work without crediting the source. Plagiarism is severely punished at Oxy, as is all cheating.

FACULTY ACADEMIC ADVISORS

You will be assigned an academic advisor. This will be a faculty member who will meet with you before you register each semester.

- **Once you declare your major, you may request an advisor who is a faculty member in your major department.**
- Academic advising is important since this professor will help you make sure you are on track to finish your major, complete your core requirements, and graduate on time. Exchange and visiting students will be assigned an advisor in your major.
- Although the once-a-semester meeting at registration time is the only time the college mandates that you meet with your advisor, it is highly recommended that you see this faculty member as a resource for questions and concerns on an ongoing basis. All faculty have office hours and most make themselves available by appointment, as well.
- **Advice from any faculty member** can also be sought. Visiting a professor is not a shameful thing to do. As a matter of fact, many professors like students to come during their office hours to discuss homework or discussion topics. This can help you to do better in the class, and is also conducive to building good relationships with your mentors.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

One advantage to a small school like Oxy is that students can work closely with professors on academic advancement. It is not uncommon for professors and students to conduct research together.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Talk to professors early in your first and second years to let them know of your interest in research. They may also be able to refer you to other faculty members with particular research in your area of interest.

This is especially valuable for science majors, who can gain experiences from first-hand experiments. Many students who work with professors may get paid or receive grants.

ACADEMICS INTEGRITY

oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics

The concept of academic honesty and integrity is culturally based. All academic institutions around the world have academic honesty policies ~ but what exactly that means varies depending upon the cultural norms in the country. Is it “sharing” or “cheating”? This is a serious issue at Occidental and as an Oxy student, you are expected to know and understand the policy.

In the US American system, in which individual work and achievement is valued, the policies are strict. If you have any doubt, please ask the professor or consult with a specialist in the CAE.

All students are expected to respect the scholarship and “intellectual property” of others. Therefore, if students are thought to have cheated or plagiarized work, they will be subject to judicial review and possible grade penalties. If you have any questions about academic integrity issues and consequences of infractions, ask your professors.

The policy appears below in full.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Shared commitment to ethical principles is essential to the educational purposes and fairness of the academic enterprise. Occidental College assumes that students and faculty will embrace Academic Ethics

Students are responsible for knowing the following:

Shared commitment to ethical principles is essential to the educational purposes and fairness of the academic enterprise. Occidental College assumes that students and faculty will embrace a high ethical standard for academic work. Fundamental to academic ethics is a spirit of honor. A spirit of honor thrives when students challenge each other to attain the highest levels of scholarship, civility, and responsibility. In all work, students shall behave conscientiously, taking and giving credit where credit is due, avoiding even an appearance of impropriety, and when in doubt, consulting the instructor or other knowledgeable persons as to whether particular conduct, collaboration, and/or acknowledgment of sources is appropriate. Students also shall report suspected misconduct and participate in an academic disciplinary hearing if required.

Academic misconduct occurs when a student misrepresents others' work as her/his own or otherwise behaves so as to unfairly advantage her/himself or another student academically. Examples of misconduct include cheating and plagiarism and failure to report suspected academic misconduct. If misconduct occurs to any extent in connection with any academic work, it will be subject to disciplinary action.

CHEATING DEFINED

Cheating occurs when a student attempts to complete or take credit for work by any dishonest means or assists another in doing so. Some examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, lying to obtain an academic advantage; copying from another's exam or assignment or collaborating on an exam or assignment, unless specifically allowed by the instructor; submitting the same work in more than one course without instructor permission; falsifying data collected in research or la-

PRACTICAL ADVICE

If you have **any questions** about whether or how to cite, it is your responsibility to ask!

laboratory courses; taking or receiving copies of an exam without the permission of the instructor; and using notes or other information devices inappropriate to the test conditions.

PLAGIARISM DEFINED

Plagiarism occurs when the ideas, organization, or language of another are incorporated into one's work without properly crediting the original source with a citation or other disclosure. It includes re-writing or re-formatting material without acknowledging the original source of the ideas. Even if the language and organization are in the student's own words, any ideas or information that are not common knowledge must be acknowledged in a reference.

Students are responsible for knowing and using the correct procedures for acknowledging and identifying sources of borrowed material. Failure to properly credit sources in all or part of work presented in draft or final form to anyone is plagiarism, regardless of whether it occurs as a result of dishonest intent or carelessness and regardless of the course credit attached to it. As a student scholar, if you:

- Quote directly from a source: you must enclose the quoted material, even if it is no more than a phrase or a single distinctive word (such as a neologism), within quotation marks, and provide a reference.
- Paraphrase, i.e., restate the material in your own words: (a) the paraphrasing must represent a substantial change from the original, not just the changing of occasional words and phrases, and (b) you must provide a reference.
- Present material that is common knowledge, but borrow someone else's organizational pattern: you must acknowledge that borrowing in a reference.

Penalties for academic misconduct are severe (see "Academic Misconduct"), and ignorance of the principles and policies concerning cheating and plagiarism is not a defense. Students with any doubts at all about whether an action or piece of academic work involves academic misconduct should consult their instructors before committing the action or submitting the work.

From the on line Student Handbook found at: oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-ethics

Discussion

First, it is the student's responsibility to know the rules. While in most cases these rules will be discussed in class, if you don't understand any aspects, it is your responsibility to do what is necessary to properly understand and use them – ask the professor for clarification, check your understanding with a classmate, talk to your academic advisor, or consult the Writing Center.

Cheating and plagiarism are defined in the policy. In the US, demonstrating your learning means the ability to discuss the material in your own words. While some academic systems value rote memorization, the US liberal arts tradition asks you to think critically about the material and make connections across curriculum, independently.

Finally, you will note that students may be accused of academic misconduct whether it was intentional or not. If you are in doubt about whether to cite a source, use quotations or another kind of citation, ask the professor.

Your CSP professor should outline exactly how to know what and when to cite. Additionally, the CSP syllabus should also outline these rules. Sample syllabus to follow.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- **Indiana University Bloomington School of Education:** <https://www.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/item1.html>
- **Cornell University College of Arts and Sciences:** <https://guides.library.cornell.edu/c.php?g=309305&p=2064867>
- **Purdue University On Line Writing Lab (OWL):** <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>

COLLEGE IS MORE THAN STUDYING

<https://www.oxy.edu/student-life>

ASOC

<https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/clubs-organizations/asoc>

Every organization has a hierarchy. The highest authority of student organizations at Oxy is the Associated Students of Occidental College (ASOC) or student government. Directly under the ASOC are several departments that provide student services, for example, Oxy's radio station (KOXY) and the Bengal Bus (student transportation).

ASOC has a senate, which consists of a president, three vice presidents specialized in different fields, representatives from each dormitory and fraternity and sorority houses, and the managers of the organizations under ASOC.

Student clubs and organizations

<https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/clubs-organizations>

More than 100 clubs and organizations are registered each year with the ASOC. Many students become members of clubs and organizations during their four years at Oxy.

Clubs and organizations form around shared interests including cultural interests, language, sports and social issues. Some include Dance Production, Muslim Student Association, Hiking Club, Queer Straight Alliance, Asian Pacific Americans for Liberation (APAL), ArtLab, and Ultimate Frisbee Club.

Sports

<https://www.oxyathletics.com/landing/index>

Oxy maintains many intercollegiate teams, which compete in Division III. If you have any questions regarding these rules please contact the Oxy Athletic Department.

In addition, Oxy offers club sports which are approved by the Athletics Department. There are

also intramural sports in which on-campus dormitories and clubs, compete with each other.

Greek Life: Sororities & Fraternities

<https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/clubs-organizations/greek-life>

Greek organizations are an important part of college life in many U.S. colleges and universities. Greek refers to Greek-letter fraternities and sororities. Members of these organizations swear brotherhood or sisterhood among themselves. At some schools more than seventy percent of the student population are members of the Greek system. At Oxy, Greek organizations are not so popular, but they still play an important role in organizing activities and doing community service.

Not finding what you need? Start your own organization!

Get some other students together who are willing to help you get this new group started (minimum required is two current, full-time Oxy students - one to be the president and one to be the treasurer). Then find an advisor (must be a full-time Oxy faculty or staff member) who you have a relationship with or who might know something about the topic of your group. See the above website to see how you can start a new student organization.

SOCIAL LIFE IN US CULTURE

Social Life in America

- Prepare yourself to make the effort to establish friendships outside your “comfortable” circle. Speaking English, actively talking to other students, spending first semester focused not only on academics, but also socializing.
- **First semester is the best time to make American friends, according to students.** Your extra effort will not make you forget or forsake the cultural values you grew up with, but will make you a more aware individual, with friendly contacts in the U.S. that could last a lifetime!

Greetings & Conversations

- Americans like to greet each other every time they meet, even if they have met several times already in the same day.
- One American custom that can be confusing to some international students is that acting **friendly through smiling, hugging, making light conversation and extending invitations is valued as a social custom, but may not suggest a depth of feeling.** Observe the situation and try to judge what the person really means.
- It is always considered polite to call on the telephone before you visit someone's room or home.

Alcohol & Smoking

- California and federal law state that it is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase or consume alcoholic beverages. Laws regarding alcohol vary from state to state. **In California, it is illegal to walk or drive along the street with an open container of alcohol.**
- The legal age to purchase cigarettes in California is 18. Americans generally don't smoke with non-smokers around. All indoor areas are smoke-free areas.
- Some restaurants have smoking patios. **Please be aware that Oxy itself also has policies restricting smoking and drinking on campus.**

Gender & Sexual Orientation

- Equality is an important cultural value in the U.S. where men and women are equal in social, academic and work environments.
- Overall, relations between males and females in the U.S. are open and informal. At Oxy men and women interact regularly, even living next door to each other in the same residence hall.
- Occidental's commitment to an open, safe and diverse environment extends to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) members of the community. Therefore, many LGBT students, professors and administrators are open about their sexual orientation.
- For some international students this openness and closeness of interaction between people of the opposite sex and with LGBT students is new and challenging. **Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated on campus.**

Relationships and Dating

- Dates can take place in any form. Most couples go out for dinners, movies or to parties in groups or alone.
- Americans are quite open about their sexuality. As a matter of fact at Oxy, Hall Coordinators and Resident Advisors may supply free condoms to students; you do not have to take them unless you want to. Making sure students are safe when they have sex is the purpose of this action.
- A relationship that becomes physical does not necessarily imply further relations. If your date appears interested in a sexual relationship but you are not, it is very important that you say so clearly. If someone seems to be saying “no” to you, you must listen and respect their feelings.
- Unwanted sexual attention is a very serious matter in the United States. Charges range from sexual harassment to rape; it is a crime. Do not interpret the acceptance of a date as anything more than an agreement to meet and spend some time together.
- If you are in doubt about the correct behavior, talk with American friends, your Resident Advisor or IPO.

LIFE IN LOS ANGELES

<https://www.oxy.edu/about-oxy/los-angeles>

What/Where is Los Angeles?

You should be aware that “L.A.” can refer to Los Angeles city, county, or the Greater Los Angeles area, which comprises several cities and counties. Usually, when you hear “L.A.” you should assume someone is referring to the Greater Los Angeles area unless they specify the city of Los Angeles.

Did you know these about Eagle Rock?

- *Eagle Rock is located on the site of one of the earliest Spanish land-grant ranchos in California, granted to Jose Verdugo in 1784.*
- *In 1874, the Eagle Rock caves were reportedly used by Tiburcio Vasquez and his gang to hide their loot. Legend has it that some of the treasure is still buried there.*
- *Officers of the Chinese revolutionary army that overthrew the Manchu dynasty in 1911 trained in the hills of Eagle Rock under the direction of Homer Lea, Class of 1900.*
- *Briefly an independent city (the old city hall still stands on Colorado Boulevard), Eagle Rock was annexed to Los Angeles in 1923 to ensure an adequate water supply.*
- *Novelist John Steinbeck lived in a \$15-a-month house in Eagle Rock while working on his second novel, To An Unknown God, in 1930 – a rental he found with the help of his friend, Occidental English Professor Carlton Sheffield.*

Eagle Rock Although located in the city of Los Angeles just eight miles northeast of downtown, **Eagle Rock** has a suburban feel. Described by the *Los Angeles Times* as the “the latest ‘it’ neighborhood,” Eagle Rock is being transformed by a wave of new coffee houses, hip restaurants, art galleries and stores.

Los Angeles At Occidental, you are just minutes away from the theaters, museums and restaurants of downtown Los Angeles (www.experientela.com), including the new Disney Hall (musiccenter.org).

Pasadena cityofpasadena.net Home to the Rose Bowl, the Norton Simon Museum (www.nortonsimon.org) and the Huntington Library (www.huntington.org), Pasadena is just a short drive or bus ride from campus. The city has numerous museums, art galleries, and entertainment and shopping districts, including Old Pasadena (www.oldpasadena.org).

Special Offers

Check out the Oxy [Student Activity Center \(SAC\)](#) page for special discounts

GETTING AROUND

Walking Occidental is within walking distance of restaurants, burger joints, coffee houses, grocery stores, clothing stores, and a bowling alley with the best karaoke in LA.

Driving Parking on campus is free, but a permit is required. In order to drive in California, you must pass a driving test and a written test. **ZipCar** is also available: www.zipcar.com/universities/occidental-college

Shuttle Bus oxy.edu/bengal-bus A free “Bengal Bus” shuttle service is available to you as a student. It is run by the Oxy ASOC. Every weekend the Bengal Bus takes students to the shopping areas in Pasadena and Glendale.

Bike Share <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/areas-study/urban-environmental-policy/our-projects/bike-share-program>

Students can borrow bikes for free through the bike share program at Oxy.

Public Transportation The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) www.mta.net operates metro rail lines and bus lines. The **Metro Gold Line** runs to both Pasadena and Union Station in downtown Los Angeles. The Highland Park Gold Line station can be reached using either the city’s DASH Shuttle service (www.ladottransit.com/dash) or an MTA (catch the eastbound **Route #83** on York Boulevard).

LIFE IN LOS ANGELES

<https://www.oxy.edu/about-oxy/los-angeles>

USEFUL WEBSITES

Oxy

- Oxy in Los Angeles: www.oxy.edu/los-angeles
- Oxy Student Activity Center: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/student-services>

Eagle Rock, Highland Park & Pasadena

- Places to go in Eagle Rock: <https://www.discoverlosangeles.com/visit/hidden-gems-of-eagle-rock>
- Top 10 things to do in Pasadena: https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g32859-Activities-Pasadena_California.html
- Insider's Guide to Highland Park: www.vogue.com/article/highland-park-la-los-angeles-guide-figueroa-street

Los Angeles

- L.A. Walking Tour: www.laconservancy.org/tours
- Downtown Los Angeles Walking Tour: www.dtlawalkingtours.com/
- Los Angeles Official City Guide: www.discoverlosangeles.com
- Bonappetit.com: www.bonappetit.com/city-guides/package/los-angeles
- Eater's Guide: <https://la.eater.com/>

Transportation

- L.A. Metro Maps & Timetables: www.metro.net/riding/maps/
- L.A. Metro Goldline Map: www.metro.net/riding/paid_parking/gold-line/
- L.A. Dash: www.ladottransit.com/dash/

CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Cultural adjustment is a normal part of the experience of living in another culture. Typically, students may experience feelings of euphoria, followed by frustration or irritation during their time abroad in the U.S. Understand that this is a normal process and that nearly every international student goes through it.

The more you understand the cultural differences that frustrate you, the easier it will be for you to adjust.

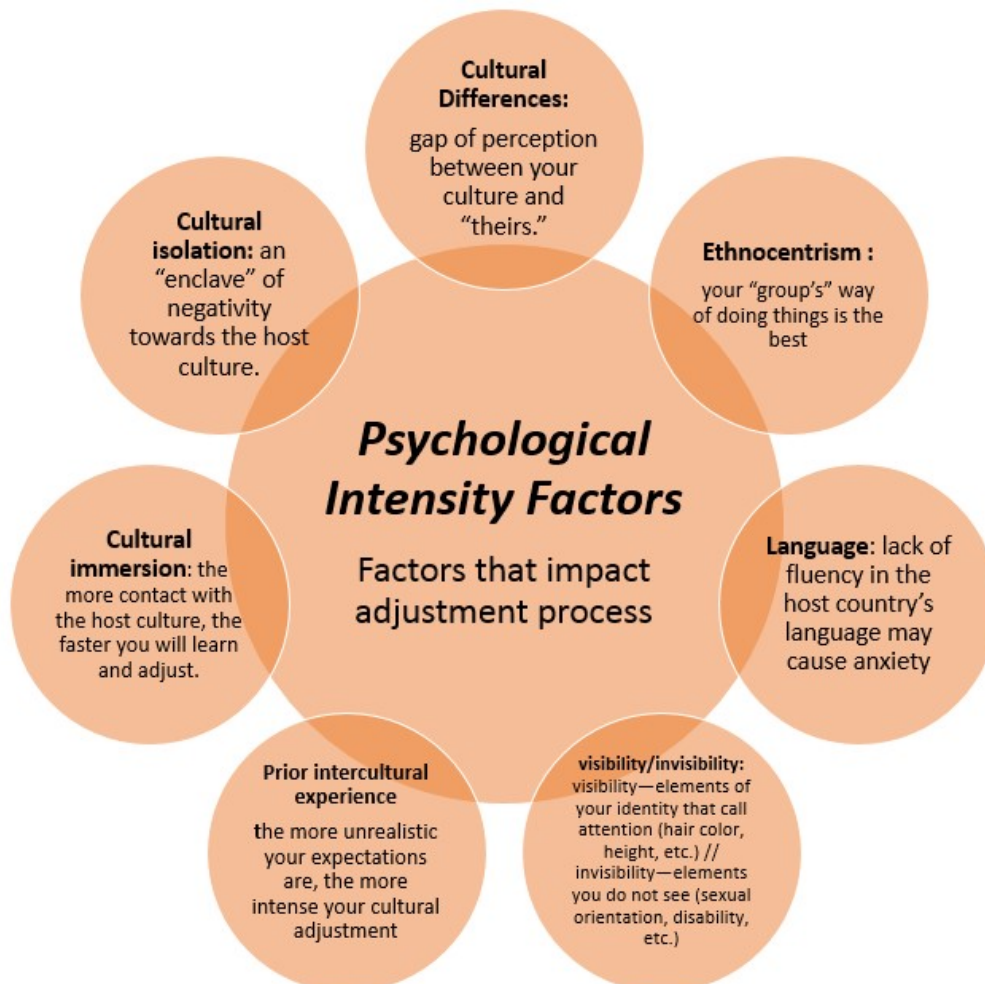
EVERYONE EXPERIENCES IT: CULTURE SHOCK

Living in a new culture for an extended time requires a period of adjustment. This is sometimes referred to as culture shock, but this term seems too severe, as symptoms of adjustment aren't always blatantly recognizable. Most times, individuals are not aware they are going through adjustment until they reflect back on their experiences. If you're thinking it won't happen to you –don't be fooled!

Some of the symptoms of Culture Shock

- ◆ Homesickness
- ◆ Desire to avoid social settings
- ◆ Physical fatigue and difficulty sleeping
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Difficulty concentrating
- ◆ Boredom
- ◆ Irritability and hostility toward host culture

PSYCHOLOGICAL INTENSITY FACTORS



HOW DO I ADJUST?

Patience and active engagement in the Oxy community are the best cures for culture shock. As time goes by, you will start to better understand Americans and feel more at home. You can speed up the process by actually searching for appropriate explanations and responses.

When you encounter a problem that might be due to a cultural difference, try the following:

OBSERVE how others act in the same situation.

DESCRIBE the situation, what it meant to you, and your response to it.

PLAN how you might act in the future if a similar situation happens again.

TEST your new behavior and evaluate how well it worked.

DECIDE how you can apply what you have learned next time you find yourself in a similar situation.

ASK an American student how they would have handled the situation and what it means within the American culture.

STAY ACTIVE in campus activities. The more actively you engage in campus life, the more quickly you will learn the nuances of U.S. culture and the more rapidly you will feel competent in negotiating cultural differences.

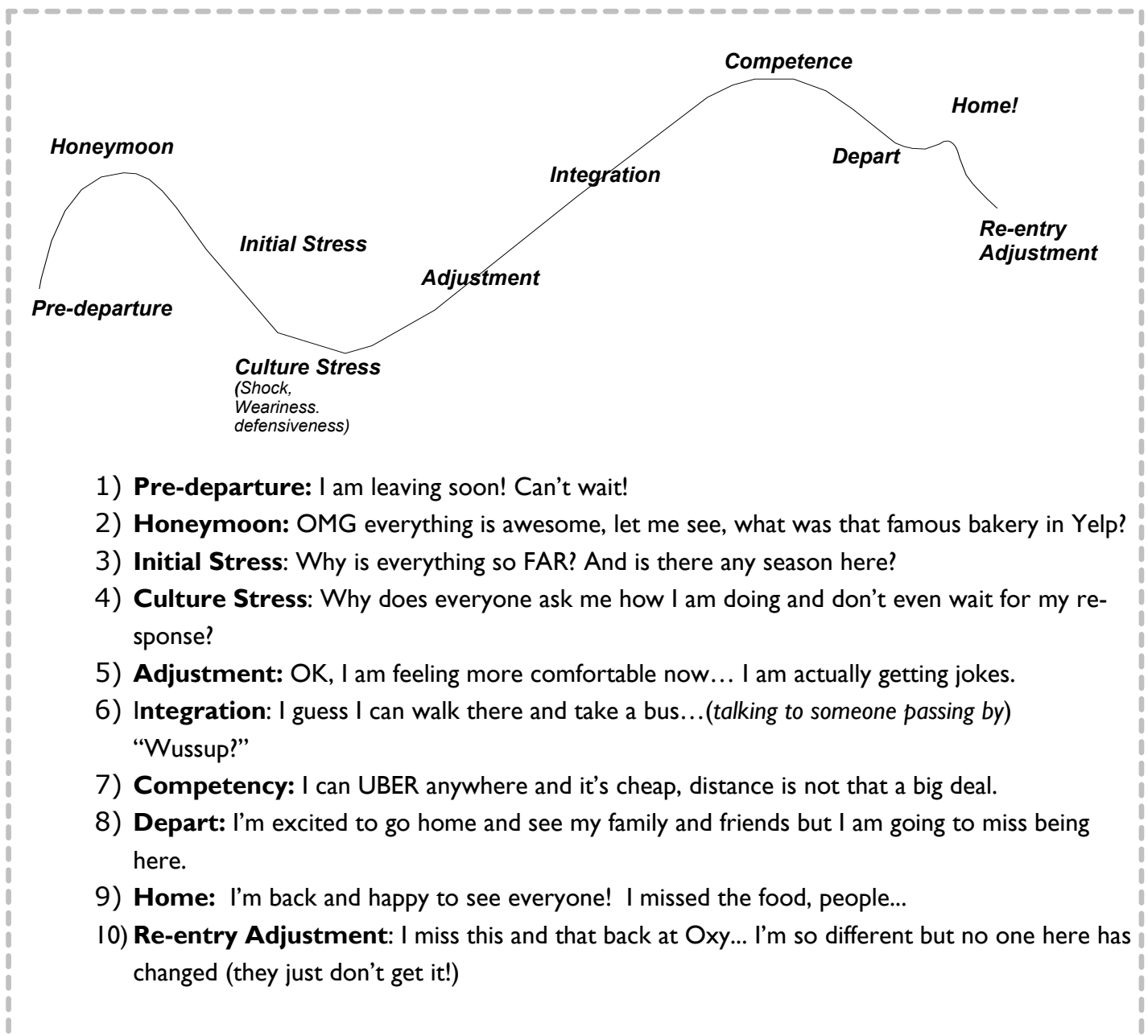
WILL I FORGET MY OWN CULTURE?

- Sometimes students worry about “*forgetting their culture*” if they become too well adapted to American culture. Don't worry, it is practically impossible to forget or lose the culture in which you were raised.
- On the contrary, learning about a new culture often **increases your appreciation of your own culture**. You will soon be in the powerful position of getting to actively choose aspects of American culture you would like to adopt and aspects of your own you would like to preserve.
- You will be happy to see that you might become a bi-cultural person, and are able to function competently in two cultural environments. Some international students are amazed at how quickly they feel comfortable and at ease every time they return home, as if they never left. Some struggle to fit in because they have changed and developed during their time at Oxy not only culturally, but intellectually and emotionally. College years are full of change and development no matter where you study.

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

Cultural adjustment is experienced by individuals in many different ways. The following graph depicts typical psychological ups and downs that occur during adjustment. As you can see, even re-entry home will come with its own fluctuation of feelings! Almost everyone experiences “culture shock” to some degree when abroad. In fact, it can happen each time even a well-traveled person goes abroad.

The vertical axis is emotion, and the horizontal axis is time. While everyone experiences culture stress (also known as culture shock) in some form, it will manifest itself differently based on your personality and coping mechanisms. See the following discussion.



From Robert Kohls' *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*, (Intercultural Press, Yarmouth, ME, 1996).
Adapted from Seattle University's *Education Abroad Student Handbook*.

SOME SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE STRESS

Overall Symptoms	Withdrawal Symptoms	Aggressive Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety • Homesickness • Feelings of helplessness • Boredom • Depression • Fatigue • Confusion • Self-doubt • Feelings of inadequacy • Unexplained fits of weeping • Paranoia • Physical ailments and psychosomatic illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and/or psychological withdrawal • Spending excessive amounts of time reading • Need for excessive amounts of sleep • Only seeing other Americans or Westerners • Avoiding contact with host nationals • Short attention span • Diminished productivity • Loss of ability to work or study effectively • Quitting and returning to your home country early 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsive eating • Compulsive drinking • Exaggerated cleanliness • Irritability • Family tensions • Marital stress • Excessive chauvinism • Stereotyping • Hostility toward host nationals • Verbal aggressiveness • Physical aggressiveness • Deciding to stay but permanently hating the country and its people

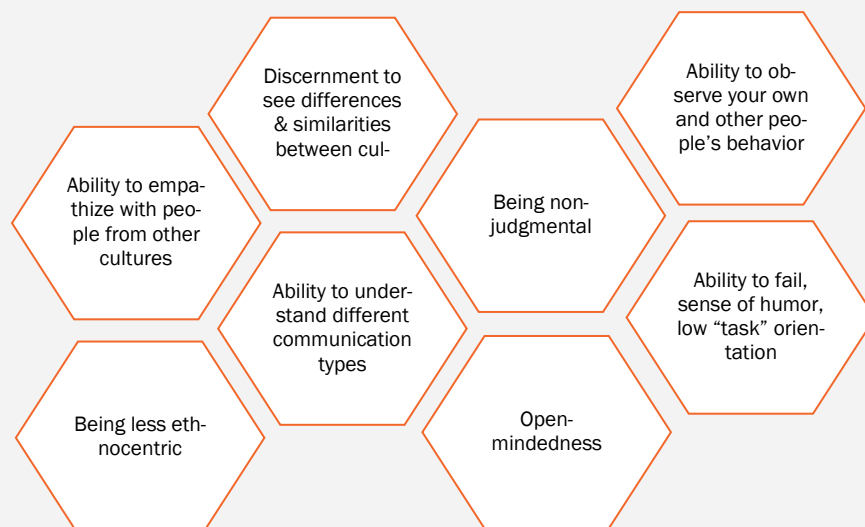
REFLECTIONS ON THE LEARNING PROCESS OF CULTURE STRESS

- **REMEMBER:**
 - ⇒ Culture stress is virtually inevitable in some degree and there are NO magic charms to escape it altogether.
 - ⇒ Culture stress describes the more pronounced reactions to the psychological disorientation most people experience when they move for an extended period of time into a culture markedly different from their own.
- **REALIZE THAT**
 - ... *everyone gets it to some degree;*
 - ... *it is NATURAL and not a sign that you are deficient or strange;*
 - ... *you'll live through it!*
 - ... *it is not a bad thing! No culture shock = no growth!*
- **BE READY FOR THE LESSON THAT CULTURE SHOCK TEACHES:**
 - ⇒ Culture is a survival mechanism which tells its members that their ways of doing things are right and superior.
 - ⇒ Culture shock stems from an in-depth encounter with another culture in which you learn to the contrary that there are different ways of doing things that are neither wrong nor inferior. It teaches a lesson that cannot be learned as effectively by any other means -- that one's own culture does not possess the single right, best or even better way of providing for human needs and enjoyments. Believing it does is a kind of imprisonment - from which the experience of culture shock, as painful as it may be, can liberate you!
- **DEVELOP A STRUCTURED PLAN** for maximum contact with host country nationals that allows you to answer in greater depth your questions. Informed participation is richer, more meaningful and more satisfying.
- **BEGIN TO CONSCIOUSLY LOOK FOR LOGICAL REASONS** behind everything in the host culture which seems strange, difficult, confusing, or threatening. Take every aspect of your experience and look at it from "their" perspective. Search for patterns and interrelationships.
- **TRY TO DISCOVER** the cultural value underlying "strange" or troublesome behavior.
- **LIST ALL THE POSITIVE THINGS** you can identify about your present situation. Post it in a prominent place.

- **TRY NOT TO SPEND TOO MUCH TIME WRITING E-MAILS HOME** if you might be avoiding interacting with the host culture.
- **AVOID OTHER INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WHO ARE IN A PERMANENT STATE OF CULTURE SHOCK** and who spend their days seeking fellow complainers. They ultimately will **INCREASE** your culture shock, even though a “gripe session” might feel good at the time. Recognize the difference between a complaining session and a dynamic, intellectual, analytical discussion with a supportive friend.
- **DON'T SUCCUMB TO THE TEMPTATION** to disparage the host culture yourself.
- **KEEP YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR** as long as it is not “dumb native” jokes! Laugh at yourself, not them.
- **TALK TO ANOTHER INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WHO HAS BEEN HERE LONGER AND SUCCESSFULLY OVERCAME CULTURE SHOCK** to help you get some perspective.
- **MAKE FRIENDS WITH HOST NATIONALS -- THAT'S WHY YOU CAME, RIGHT?** Hanging out with Americans will help you adjust to the host country, and produce deep, meaningful interaction.
- **CULTIVATE A “CULTURAL INFORMANT,”** a host national friend to whom you can ask questions about cultural values, behaviors, attitudes. But, do take care to ask questions in an open, non-critical way.
- When you seek advice, **FOCUS ON WHAT YOU ARE FEELING INSIDE** rather than what you consider the causes of your problems.
- **DON'T WORRY ABOUT LOSING YOUR OWN VALUES.** Your values are MUCH deeper and more permanent than you may think. To act according to the customs of your host country (when appropriate) does not make you less a member of your own culture, just a more sensitive one!
- **KEEP BUSY;** keep active; keep your mind occupied. Don't sit around and feel sorry for yourself.
- During the deepest plunges, **TAKE A TRIP TO A SCENIC SPOT.** When you return, be open to having good “coming back home” feelings.
- **SHARE YOUR CULTURE WITH YOUR HOSTS.** You'll become an unofficial ambassador whose mission is to correct any misconceptions of your country/culture.
- **HAVE FAITH THAT YOU WILL WORK THROUGH IT!** Cross-cultural effectiveness has a way of sneaking up on you.
- **GET HELP** from the Resident Assistant, your favorite faculty member, Emmons Health and Counseling Center, or from the Oxy International Programs staff.

Adapted from Robert Kohls' Survival Kit for Overseas Living, (Intercultural Press, Yarmouth, ME, 1996)

CORE SKILLS & ATTITUDES FOR CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT



Hammer, M. and Gudykunst, W. (1983). A Basic Training Design: Approaches to Intercultural Training & D. Landis and R.W. Brislin (Eds.), Handbook of Intercultural Training. New York: Pergamon.

STUMBLING BLOCKS IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

ASSUMING SIMILARITY INSTEAD OF DIFFERENCE

Both the foreigner and the host can easily fall into this trap. Especially when people dress appropriately and speak some of the language, it is easy to believe that they basically have similar ways of communicating nonverbally and similar thoughts and feelings.

LANGUAGE

This seems obvious, but language refers not only to vocabulary, grammar, idioms, slang, etc., but also to understanding the meanings that are intended and implied by the words people say. For example, in some languages and cultures it is common to use sarcasm, irony or plays on words, while in others it is not.

NONVERBAL MISINTERPRETATIONS

People from different cultures live in different “sensory realities” that is, they only see, hear, feel and smell things that have meaning or are important to them. Some nonverbal signs and symbols - gestures, posture and body movements--are relatively easy to observe, and with effort, understand. Less obvious cultural meanings, values or significance can be found, for example, in the use of time and space. These cultural differences are much harder to notice.

EXISTING PRECONCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES

Stereotypes interfere with looking at things objectively: in other words, once stereotypes or preconceived ideas are formed, we are less likely to look for clues to help us understand someone else’s “reality.”

TENDENCY TO JUDGE OR EVALUATE

Tendency to approve or disapprove of the words, actions, ability of the other person instead of trying to understand the feelings and thoughts that are being expressed by the other person and trying to find the ways to look at the world from the other person’s perspective.

HIGH ANXIETY

These blocks are based on the fact that people in intercultural situations are often anxious. Anxiety makes all of the other stumbling blocks worse. It is common to be tense or anxious in cross-cultural experiences because they are full of uncertainties, and this makes it necessary to constantly be alert.

The skills that typically describe people who want to be able to communicate effectively in intercultural situations are:

- open-minded
- non-judgmental
- flexible
- curious
- tolerant of differences and ambiguity
- sense of humor
- low “goal/task” orientation
- able to risk failure

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Be an anthropologist! It can be hard to maintain curiosity and openness with the strong emotions that may accompany cultural adjustment. Ask for help, if you need. Be patient with yourself ~ with time, you will adjust!

AMERICAN CULTURAL PATTERNS

<i>Common Assumptions Often Encountered on U.S. Campuses</i>	<i>Cultural Variations</i>
All people are different individuals	All people are integrally related
Personal change and growth are valuable and desirable	Conforming to time-tested ways of behavior is desirable
Individuals have control over life's circumstances	Circumstances are dictated by external forces
Common Assumptions Often Encountered on U.S. Campuses	Cultural Variations
Personal problems can be solved	Problems are fated to occur
Professional counselors are genuinely interested in the welfare of strangers	Only close friends and family members may be trusted
People are (more or less) equal	There is a hierarchical ranking of people in society
Decisions are best made by focusing on what is practical and feasible	Decisions made based on aesthetic and/or emotional factors
Conflicts are best settled through a forth-right discussion	Conflicts may be avoided to prevent personal embarrassment (saving face)
Respect is accorded as a result of personal achievement	Pride in the family name can be just as important as accomplishments (or more so)
Individuality and privacy are important	The overall welfare of the group can be just as important (or more so)

Adapted from: Stewart, E.C. (1972). American cultural patterns: A cross-cultural perspective. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press

CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS

<i>"I" Cultures</i>	<i>"We" Cultures</i>
· Independent	· Interdependent
· Low Context; Direct; Precise	· High Context; Indirect; Metaphorical
· Individual Goals	· Group Goals
· Linear Logic	· Spiral Logic
· Self-Face Saving	· Mutual Face Saving
· "Say what you mean"	· "Read between the lines!"

THE VALUES (OR MYTHS) AMERICANS LIVE BY

1. **Personal Control Over the Environment** ~

Americans believe that every person should have control over his or her own environment. Thus, problems are not seen as a result of bad luck, but of laziness or incompetence. It is considered normal for everyone to look out for his or her own interests first and foremost.

2. **Self-Help Concept** ~ In the U.S., a person can only take credit for what he or she has accomplished by him or herself. Americans take pride in having been born poor and then succeeding through sacrifice and hard work. The American social system has made it relatively easy to move up the social ladder. The “self-made man/woman” is still very much an ideal in present day American society.

3. **Individual/Privacy** ~ In the U.S., every individual is seen as unique and therefore special. Americans resist being thought of as representatives of any homogeneous group. They tend to join many groups but to view themselves as a little different from the other members of the group. They tend to leave groups as easily as they join them. They tend to have a great variety of opinions.

4. **Equality/Egalitarianism** ~ Equality is one of the most cherished values for Americans. It has even been given a religious basis: that all people have been “created equal.” Everyone is seen as having an equal opportunity to succeed in life.

5. **Competition and Free Enterprise** ~ Americans believe that competition brings out the best in any person. They are trained to be competitive beginning from childhood. The U.S. has also devised an economic system to promote competition: free enterprise. Americans feel very strongly that the society that fosters competition will progress most rapidly.

6. **Action/Work Orientation** ~ Americans view any action as superior to inaction. They tend to plan and schedule an extremely active day. Americans believe that leisure activities should make up a relatively small portion of one's total life. This has created many “workaholics.”

7. **Practicality and Efficiency** ~ Americans have a reputation for being extremely practical and efficient people. The practical consideration is likely to be given the highest priority in making any important decision.

8. **Materialism** ~ Americans view material objects as the natural benefits which result from hard work and serious intent.

9. **Change** ~ In the American mind, change is definitely seen as a positive condition. Change is strongly linked to development, improvement, progress and growth.

10. **Time and Its Control** ~ For the average American, time is of the utmost importance. Americans may seem to be most concerned with getting things accomplished on time, according to a predetermined schedule.

11. **Future Orientation** ~ Americans value the future and the improvements it may bring, which means that they tend to devalue the past and to be unconscious of the present. Almost all energy is directed towards obtaining that better future.

12. **Informality** ~ Americans are among the most informal and casual people in the world, even when compared to their near relative, the Western European.

13. **Directness, Openness and Honesty** ~ Americans have always preferred the direct approach. They consider anything other than the most direct and open approach to be dishonest. They quickly lose confidence in and trust for anyone who hints at what is intended, rather than saying it straight out.

(adapted from L. Robert Kohls)

RETURNING HOME

Going home after spending several months or years in the U.S. might feel awkward. After adapting to American culture, language, and habits, you will face a sudden shift when you return. Your new cultural perspective might leave you feeling somewhat ambivalent about being back home; while happy to see family and friends, it may sometimes seem that you were strangely more at home abroad. Such sentiments, often referred to as **reverse culture shock** or **re-entry shock**, are common.

(Adapted from: Kohls, Robert. (2001). *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. Yarmouth, ME: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.)

STAGE 1: “Disengagement”

Disengagement may happen before you leave your host country and often times occurs because of the pace of finals, goodbye dinners. As a result, you begin to distance yourself from friends and host country nationals.

STAGE 2: Initial “Euphoria”

Initial Euphoria may also occur as a result of leaving the U.S. and returning home. This is where you may have formed idealistic views of home, and what will happen upon your return. You are happy to be home! This feeling of euphoria may last a few weeks, but may inevitably give way to feelings of loneliness.

STAGE 3: Irritability & Hostility

Irritability and hostility, which is the realization that life at home went on without you, and as you were learning new things and making subtle changes, they were too. You may feel that friends and family don't understand or want to hear what you experienced abroad.

STAGE 4: Readjustment & Adaptation

You may see the world through a different lens now, but are quick to find that the cultural differences you once thought so great are, in reality, infinitesimal. You have learned to incorporate the changes you've made within yourself, into new goals and ideas that don't negate your own culture's norms and values. You have attained a balance between both cultures.

CHALLENGES

- Boredom
- Restlessness
- People at home do not appear to think beyond the home country
- You can't fully articulate your experience
- Relationships have changed
- Homesickness for your host country
- People misunderstand
- Feelings of alienation
- People don't want to hear... (Ibid, Kohls.)

MANAGING STAGE THREE: IRRITABILITY AND HOSTILITY

- **Stay connected** with U.S. nationals you befriended as well as the home country students you shared this experience with.
- **Share your experience** with other home institution students who were abroad at the same time.
- Like you may have done while you were in the U.S., **continue to write in a journal** about the new journey you are on at home.
- **Try to be patient** with friends and family who may appear uninterested or who want to talk about what happened to them while you were in the U.S.
- **Volunteer** to help your home institution study abroad office during orientation or at information meetings.
- **Join** an international or intercultural club on campus.

(Adapted from the VT & SFSU website)

IMMIGRATION

IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS & WORKING ON-CAMPUS

As an international student, you are responsible for understanding and abiding by US immigration regulations. **Your signature on your I-20 document indicates your acceptance of these regulations.**

Some important issues that you must keep in mind are covered in this section, please read them carefully and contact the IPO if you have questions or concerns. Violating these regulations can jeopardize your legal status in the U.S., your access to F-1 visa benefits, and any future work or study in the U.S.

*Remember – international students attending Occidental are required to complete an **Immigration Check In** online within 10 days of the beginning of each and every semester of attendance. Failure to do so may cause you to be in the US illegally.*

MAINTAINING STUDENT STATUS

In order to maintain your lawful status as an F-1 student visa holder, you must abide by the following regulations:

- Remain enrolled as a full-time student carrying at least 12 credit hours per semester at Oxy
- Hold a current, valid I-20
- Maintain a passport that is valid for six months into the future.
- Have appropriate authorization for any work on campus and not work more than 15 hours per week while classes are in session. You may work fulltime on campus during breaks.
- Never participate in any employment or paid internship off-campus without official IPO/USCIS approval.
- Complete Occidental's "Clearance" process, including an Immigration Check-In with IPO, at the beginning of every semester, within two weeks of the start of classes.

Discuss with IPO any of the following circumstances BEFORE they occur:

- Dropping below a full-load (point 1, above) for any reason including medical problems
- Change of address
- Change or declaration of major
- Traveling outside the US for any reason
- Change in graduation date
- Transfer to another institution
- Taking a leave of absence

TRAVEL

- If your visa is a multiple entry visa, you may travel outside the U.S. during breaks.
- Your I-20 document should be signed by an Oxy DSO prior to leaving the country.
- You must take along your valid passport, all of your I-20 documents (current and old, if applicable), and your Occidental student ID. This will reiterate to the point of entry officials that you are maintaining your student status.
- If your visa is a single entry only, you will need to apply for a new F-1 visa prior to re-entry. Your I-20 must have a DSO signature within the last six months.

ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

Immigration regulations state **international students attending Oxy on an F1 visa may work ONLY on the college campus where they attend classes.** International students at Oxy are allowed to work part time (**up to eight hours a week**) during academic terms and full time during winter and summer breaks **ON CAMPUS ONLY.** Job openings are posted at: www.oxy.edu/human-resources/working-oxy

Some examples are: the Career Center, Campus Dining, the Library and the Language Departments. Qualifications and salaries for different jobs vary. Once you begin work, you will need to obtain a social security number, see section below.

GOT A JOB OFFER? NEXT STEPS

Once you have a job offer from an on campus employer, please follow the instruction on this link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8teWCfb15iVR3JxSGdpRTlaeDg/view>

(Also see Appendix iv on page 39)

- A Designated School Official in IPO will write a letter to the Social Security Administration verifying that you are in valid status. Both the DSO and the job supervisor must sign the letter.
- You must appear at the Social Security Administration Office in person with your immigration documents to apply. You must visit the office within 2 weeks of starting on campus work.
- The Human Resources Office is required to keep your social security number on file in order to pay you.
- Keep your Social Security Card with your other important documents. This will be your number for life. If that number is stolen, it can be the basis of identity theft. Keep it secure.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

There are two options for off campus employment: *Optional Practical Training (OPT)* and *Curricular Practical Training (CPT)*.

- Both OPT and CPT require that you be in valid F-1 status for at least 9 months. Each provides permission for paid work related to your field of study for a specific period of time. Either may be part-time during the school year or full-time during vacation periods. **Information on post completion practical training will be reviewed during the Spring semester.**
- International Programs recommends that you seek approval for CPT during your academic program. One full year of full time CPT, combined, renders you ineligible for post completion OPT. Most students will never reach 12 months of full time CPT as a student at Oxy, making post completion optional practical training a possibility after graduation.
- Off-campus employment without permission from International Programs and immigration au-

thorities is illegal. See an IPO advisor for further information.

INTERNSHIPS

American companies and employers place a lot of weight on internships when evaluating their applicants. Internships are available on and off campus; please contact the Hameetman Career Center (careers@oxy.edu) for more information. You cannot be compensated in any way for your internship without it being considered employment. Contact IPO with any questions or concerns.

AFTER GRADUATION:

OPT & GRADUATE SCHOOL

- As an F-1 degree-seeking student who has maintained valid status for the entirety of your program, you have the opportunity to work for pay in the U.S. for twelve months during your program or after completion of studies in work related to the major. This is called Optional Practical Training (OPT).
- If you have not used up your 12-month quota of OPT before graduation, and you have been enrolled full-time at Oxy for a minimum of one academic year, you may use the full year after graduation to work. There will be an **OPT workshop during the Spring semester** of your senior year to discuss the procedures.
- If you plan to go to graduate school after graduation from Oxy, please contact IPO before graduation to properly transfer your SEVIS record to your new institution.
- If you plan to return home after completing your program, you must do so within 60 days after the

USEFUL WEBSITES

- **Working on Campus:** <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/global-engagement/international-programs/international-students/current-students/work>
- **OPT & Graduation:** <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/global-engagement/international-programs/international-students/current-students/opt>
- **Hameetman Career Center:** [oxy.edu/hameetman-career-center](https://www.oxy.edu/hameetman-career-center)
- **USCIS Web about OPT:** www.uscis.gov/eir/visa-guide/f-1-opt-optional-practical-training/f-1-optional-practical-training-opt

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Make an appointment with an IPO advisor before accepting any work off campus. Special permission is required!

TAXES

All individuals must report income earned in the US to the federal government on a yearly basis. Current tax codes require residents and non-residents of the U.S to file income tax return forms. **All F-1 students, even those with no income from U.S sources, are expected to file tax returns** by April 15 every year. It may be a violation of your visa status if you do not file tax forms.

SOURCES OF U.S. INCOME

Sources of U.S. income include, but are not limited to

- salary/wages earned in campus employment, some scholarships/fellowships, assistantships, practical or academic training, and any compensation received for labor.
- Additionally, some portions of scholarships/fellowships, study grants, stipends, living allowance/per diem, and prizes and awards.
- Scholarships applied to your tuition are not counted as income. Portions of scholarships or fellowships applied to meals and housing may be taxed, depending on the tax treaty between the US and your home country.

will apply any tax treaty items, estimate taxes, and prepare the forms.

- Students must print the forms, sign and date them, and send them to the Internal Revenue Service. Glacier does not assist with state income tax.

Contact the International Student Tax Specialist, Shirley Wang, in the Business Office at (323) 259-2953 or swang@oxy.edu with any tax questions.

DEDUCTION FROM YOUR PAY

International students will not have Social Security taxes or Medicaid taxes (known as FICA) deducted from their pay. **However, state and federal taxes may be deducted.**

OBLIGATION AS AN OXY STUDENT

All international students receive directions for enrolling in a computerized system called “Glacier” that ensures that proper taxes are withheld from any wages/scholarships earned. This system also assists international students in reporting income properly.

- In January of every year, the Business Office of Occidental College will issue two forms for you.
- The **W-2 form** will show how much you earned in wages and will indicate any federal and state taxes withheld.
- The **1042-S** will indicate any scholarships or fellowships which are taxable. Information from these two forms will be used to calculate the amount of taxes owed to the federal government through the tax system.
- Glacier assists with the process of filing annual federal tax returns. Depending on how the student answers a series of questions, the system

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH & SAFETY: 10 FACTS

FACT #1: YOU have primary responsibility for your own well being at Oxy.

- **Awareness:** be aware of local hotspots and events— read local newspapers and magazines.
- **Communication:** Keep in contact with family at home either by email or phone.
- **Cultural Common Sense:** Recognize that cultures are different even if they appear similar.

FACT #2: You are subject to our rules and laws without necessarily enjoying the same rights as US citizens. The Code of Student Conduct, Oxy academic policies, CA State and Federal laws apply to you during your stay.

FACT #3: Health issues that are under control at home can flair-up while abroad.

- If you have a pre-existing condition, visit Emmons before you experience a flair-up.
- Keep your immunizations and hepatitis protection up to CA regulations.
- Learn how to use the Oxy health insurance coverage before you get sick!

FACT #4: You need to continue taking all prescription medications that you take at home while you are abroad. Bring your medications with you in original containers along with the prescription to the pharmacy to renew.

FACT #5: Petty theft is the most commonly reported “threat” (not terrorism!) to students.

- Carry your Oxy ID, but store your passport and I-20 in a safe place.
- Never leave computers, backpacks or personal belongings unattended.
- Do not walk off campus alone at night. Use the Campus Safety escorts or walk with a group.
- Don’t carry much cash.

FACT #6: There are precautions you can take to stay safe while abroad.

- Avoid political demonstrations as you will not know whether the crowd or police will become violent.
- Do not do risky things abroad that you would not do at home such as get in cars with strangers, going to apartments of people you just met, or swallowing something given to you by a stranger.

FACT #7: Alcohol is the leading cause of mishaps and accidents that befall students.

- In most cultures, binge drinking and public drunkenness carry very negative stigmas.
- It’s hard to make sound decisions when you’ve compromised yourself due to drunkenness.

FACT #8: Your own country’s attitudes and laws about narcotics do not matter here. Both California and U.S. Federal laws apply.

- If arrested, your government cannot do anything to get you out of jail when convicted of a drug offense.
- Oxy campus follows Federal narcotics laws: they are illegal.
- California law provides penalties of up to 6 months in jail and/or \$500 fines for the possession of marijuana.

FACT #9: Navigating the dating scene in your own culture is complex enough, but that increases ten-fold while abroad due to different norms, expectations, gender roles and health risks.

Sexual Assault Occidental does not tolerate sexual misconduct. Learn how to prevent, report, get help or support a victim on the Oxy Sexual Assault website. “No” means “no,” not “maybe,” not “later,” not “yes.”

Differing Gender Roles

- US gender roles are much more flexible and casual than in many other countries. Both men and women engage behaviors such as handshakes, smiles, hugs, direct communication or initiating conversation. These do not necessarily imply sexual or romantic overture.
- Both men and women are take responsibility to protect themselves and others from HIV/AIDs and other sexually transmitted diseases. Condoms are free at Emmons.

Women

- Put your safety first, observe what sorts of behavior provoke unwanted attention.
- Many cultures have the impression that U.S. women are sexually promiscuous. While some college students are active sexually and more open about it, many are not.
- Don’t assume that you understand US dating norms from the stereotypes perpetuated by US movies and television.

FACT #10: It’s up to you to make the most out of your experience abroad!

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

**Call Campus Safety 24 hours at 011-323-259-2511
ASK FOR THE "DEAN ON DUTY."**

- **Purpose** - To ensure that in urgent or serious situations students receive prompt, appropriate and thorough care, intervention or referral from both program staff and Occidental College officers.
- **Situations** - Any situation or condition which jeopardizes the student(s)' physical, or mental health, safety, well-being or program participation and/or requires the intervention of program staff. Such events or occurrences may include, but not be limited to: civil disturbances, natural disaster, assault of any kind, severe or prolonged illness or injury requiring hospitalization, disciplinary action, emotional or behavioral disorders, illegal actions (i.e. drug use), absence from the program site, academic probation, etc.

To assist program directors and staff in addressing or resolving an urgent or emergency situation, it is vital that an Occidental official be promptly notified

Campus Safety will contact the crisis response team including:

Robin Craggs, *Executive Director, International Programs*
Office: 323-259-2728
email: rcraggs@oxy.edu

Rob Flot, *Dean of Students*
Office: 323-259-2661
email: onealhoward@oxy.edu

When you are making a phone call, please be prepared the following information:

- Student(s) name(s)
- Date & time of occurrence/condition
- Description of occurrence/condition
- Action taken by program staff
- Return contact information
- Action requested of Occidental officer (if appropriate)

Other Campus Offices

Emmons Student Wellness Center
(323) 259-2657 or x2657

Environmental Health & Safety
(323) 259-2933 or x2933

Facilities Management
(323) 259-2651 or x2651

Occidental College International Student ~ Personal Crisis Management Plan

KNOW	Know where and how to get to: 1. Campus Safety 2. Clinic/Hospital & pharmacies that carry the meds you need 3. Police Station		
CARRY	1. Addresses of above. 2. Insurance card. 3. In-country crisis point-person contact info <u>on paper</u> . 4. Coins to call from a public phone. 5. Your cell phone fully charged at all times with point-person info saved. 6. Student ID.		
COMMUNICATE	1. Contact your in-country crisis point-person immediately to report any incident and/or your status and needs. 2. Summons police. A report is frequently required for insurance claims or legal proceedings. 3. As soon as possible, report status to IPO and your family. Call Campus Safety collect 323-259-2511 or dial "5" from any campus phone. 4. 911 is the emergency number you can call from any location if you are located off-campus in case of an emergency.		
Condition	Avoid & Plan	React	A real risk to me & my plan
Natural Disaster (Earthquake, fire, high winds etc.)	1. Know the common threats specific to your location. 2. Plan your reaction and evacuation route from residence and program site. 3. Plan a back-up 'safe place' in case your evacuation site is compromised.	1. Move away, stay away. Monitor local media. 2. Follow your reaction/evacuation route from residence and program site. 3. Stay where you are if instructed to do so or if conditions make it more dangerous to travel.	
Crime & Assault (theft, pick-pocket, ATM, violence, fighting, rape, injury, etc.)	1. Pay attention! Observe! 2. Learn where dangerous areas are and stay away. 3. Learn how the time of day or certain events (athletic events, festivals?) can change a "safe" place to a dangerous one.	1. Report to/summons police. 2. Get medical attention. 3. Report to IPO. 4. In case of serious crimes, contact Embassy or consulate and IPO.	
Injury & Illness (requiring hospitalization or extended absence from classes)	1. Visit the Emmons Health Center 2. Carry insurance card. 3. Know the local names of medicines you are allergic to. Wear allergy alerts at all times. 4. Know host country vocabulary for your chronic conditions.	1. Get medical attention. 2. Present insurance card. 3. Contact IPO, and family for medical oversight and insurance support.	

Appendix I. An Example of Syllabus

This is a condensed version of the original syllabus. To see the full syllabus, [please visit this link](#).

UEP 101 Environment and Society Spring 2016 Syllabus, Tu & Th, 10:05 to 11:30

Professor Mark Vallianatos
Classroom: Fowler 210
Office: UEP Building
Office Hrs: by apt.
mvalli@oxy.edu

Professor Karna Wong
Classroom: Fowler 207
Office: UEP Building
Office Hours: Tu, 11:45-12:45 or by apt.
kwongucla@ucla.edu

Course Background and Conceptual Themes

UEP 101 is an introductory course on the urban environment with a focus on the intersection of urban and environmental systems, policies and politics. You will be asked to think about the urban environment as a combination of the natural world; the built environment; the people that inhabit these places; and the political, economic, and infrastructural systems and processes that shape our cities. The class introduces students to a broad range of urban and environmental issues through readings, discussions, presentations, on-the-ground investigations, and individual and group assignments.

NOTE

The course description and goals are clearly outlined here.

The course will also introduce students to policy analysis and to social change. We will consider how policies and social movements influence the ways that we live and the places that we live in. Students will become familiar with the basics of policy--what it is, what it does, how to read it, and how to change it. Students will write their own policies individually and in groups. Throughout the course we will consider how views of urban places and environmental goals have changed over time and how power disparities (i.e., race, class, gender) influence urban and environmental issues.

The class is designed for students with an interest in environmental and urban topics who might want to pursue further coursework and research through the Urban & Environmental Policy major, as well as for those interested in these topics, even though they may be pursuing another major.

The course will be organized around six broad topics and conceptual themes:

1. **Right to the City:** how can we understand and change the places we live in?
2. **Resources:** how do we use energy, water and materials; how does this impact the climate and emit waste; how can we transform this urban metabolism?
3. **People and Places:** how do the places people are born in, live in, and migrate to shape their lives and generate inequality; and how can people improve communities?
4. **Urban Spaces:** how does planning influence land use, housing, transportation and access to food and open space?
5. **Environmental Justice:** why are some types of people more burdened by pollution, toxins and resulting health challenges and how are communities organize for environmental justice?
6. **Consumption and Production:** where does the 'stuff' we buy and consume come from and what are impacts of moving products across the globe?

Students will explore these themes through class readings and discussions but also in groups focused on specific neighborhoods in Los Angeles. These assigned groups will analyze class topics using their assigned neighborhood as a real world example. Groups will also develop policy proposals to enhance neighborhoods. At the end of the class, all students will vote on which of these policy ideas should be implemented citywide to improve L.A. Each student will also research and write their own in-depth policy paper/proposal on a subject of their choosing.

Grading - The class is a 4 credit, graded course. Grades will be calculated as follows:

- 20% Individual short essays (4 x 5% each)
- 20% Individual final paper/ordinance
- 20% group neighborhood memos (4 x 5% each)
- 15% final group memo
- 5% final group presentation
- 10% Participation in-class
- 10% out-of-class activities (2 x 5%)

Detailed instructions for essays, memos, papers and presentations can be found in the appendix to this syllabus.

Attendance Policy - Because participation is central to this class students are expected to attend all classes.

2 unexcused absences will result in a grade no higher than a B+

3 unexcused absences will result in a grade no higher than a B-
4 or more unexcused absences will result in a grade no higher than a C

5 or more unexcused absences will result in an F

Please inform the professor of any upcoming absences (or past absences if an emergency arises). Ask the professor to check what absences count as excused.

NOTE

Specific course requirements and assignments and how much weight these activities will carry are described. Note that class participation is a required component and also graded!

Computers in Class - We encourage students to bring laptops or tablets to class for in-class group activities or note taking. These technologies are for class use not for social media, work on assignments for other courses etc. Instructor may restrict use at any time and may be more likely to call on students sitting in back of class and/or buried in their phone/ computer.

Plagiarism Policy - Plagiarism consists of any form of passing off, or attempting to pass off, the knowledge or work of others as your own. It is a form of cheating. Examples of plagiarism include: unattributed quotations from a book, magazine or article; copying from the notes or essays of others; the submission of work actually written or dictated by others;

and unattributed use of other peoples' ideas. Remember, plagiarism includes information from books, newspapers, journals and the Internet. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course and possible expulsion from the college. Students should consult Occidental's student handbook for information on academic misconduct policy at the college: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-misconduct>

NOTE

Expected classroom behavior is outlined on the syllabus. In the US, being "on time" means arriving several minutes before the assigned time, so that the class is ready to begin at the exact appointed time.

Academic Accommodation - Any student eligible for and needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with the professor no later than the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential.

Section 1: The Right to the City

Who has a right to the city and what does that mean? What are the qualities of a good city and how do different conceptual frameworks understand and visualize urban environmental issues? What are tools for seeing and investigating the places we live in and the forces that shape our daily lives? How does knowledge turn into action? What are strategies for change, including policies? Who has the power to influence these decisions and shape cities and our urban environments?

Thurs Jan 21- going for a walk

Introduction to class themes and methods through a walk on campus and in Highland Park.

instructions: meet at the UEP garden prepared for a group walk (wear comfortable shoes, bring water, etc.)

Please register for the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count (for one count location of your choice on one evening) <http://www.theycountwillyou.org/register>

Tues Jan 26- changing views of the environment and cities

instructions: meet in classroom, start work on individual short essay #1; attend homeless count on your assigned evening (Jan 26, 27 or 28) and be prepared to write short reflection on the activity, due Feb 4.

read:

Cronan, William; "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature" http://www.williamcronan.net/writing/Trouble_with_Wilderness_Main.html

Gottlieb, Forcing the Spring, pgs 52-57, 83-92, 121-127, 313-327

Brentin Mock, "Are there two different versions of environmentalism, one "white," one "black"?" <http://grist.org/climate-energy/are-there-two-different-versions-of-environmentalism-one-white-one-black/>

Glaeser, Triumph of the City, pgs 3-15

Kunstler, "Back to the Future: a road map for tomorrow's cities" <http://www.orion-magazine.org/index.php/articles/article/6336>

(... skipped for the appendix ... To see the full syllabus, please visit [this link](#))

Thurs Apr 21 - student presentations

instructions: turn in final group neighborhood report

NOTE

Required and/or recommended texts are listed and in some instances, where they may be obtained.

group presentations day 1; see assignment prompt for instructions

Tues Apr 26 - student presentations

instructions: turn in individual short essay #4 on class reflections group presentations day 2

Thurs Apr 28 - voting and reflections

instructions: voting on group policy proposals and reflections on class

Thurs May 5 - final individual policy paper and ordinance due

Appendix: Assignment Prompts

Group Neighborhood Memo #1 - : Due Feb 4

5% of grade; 2-4 pages of text (excludes graphics), single space, 12 point font, 1 inch margins At least, 2 citations from different course readings must be incorporated

Due before class in Moodle course website and bring a hard copy to class

In class, we will create teams of 4-5 students for the neighborhood group project. Neighborhoods for Mark's section:

Chinatown, Cypress Park, Downtown, Boyle Heights or Silverlake

Neighborhoods for Karna's section:

Historic South Central, Koreatown, Pacoima, Santa Monica, and Watts

Describe the geography and history of your neighborhood:

where is it situated within Los Angeles

what are the boundaries of the neighborhood

provide a map

historically and currently, what is this area known for

what are some landmarks in the neighborhood

describe the typical land uses in the neighborhood

describe the presence or absence of nature, parks, and green space

From your research and/or site visit describe:

whether and how the neighborhood is changing

observations about the built environment and socioeconomic indicators

Resources: <http://maps.latimes.com/neighborhoods/> <http://zimas.lacity.org/> www.socialexplorer.com
<https://www.lacity.org/for-businesses/planning-and-zoning/gis-maps-and-statistics>

(... skipped for the appendix ... To see the full syllabus, [please visit this link](#))

Individual Policy Paper & Ordinance: Due May 5

20% of grade; 8-10 pages of text (excludes graphics), single space, 12 point font, 1 inch margins

At least, 5 citations from different course readings must be incorporated

Write about a policy issue that affects Los Angeles socially, spatially, and/or environmentally. Discuss the history of this issue, various perspectives on the issue, and how it affects the city/ county (include some data or statistics, if available). Propose some policy solutions and recommend one solution to become an ordinance. As part of this paper, draft an ordinance for the City of Los Angeles. [A template for an ordinance will be discussed/ shared in class]

NOTE

In this section, the activities for each class session is outlined along with expected preparation, and due dates for assignments. The class will rarely vary from the syllabus.

Appendix II. Occidental and Harvard's Guide to Making the Most of College

Harvard University published* the results of its ten-year study of steps that students can take to make the most of their college years. We at Occidental not only subscribe heartily to these steps, we have over the years developed a variety of curricular and co-curricular programs that present many opportunities for students to take advantage of Harvard's advice. Listed below are each of Harvard's guidelines with an indication of Oxy's opportunities.

1. Meet the faculty. The Harvard study advises students to get to know well at least one faculty member per semester. At Occidental, all first-years have at least one small seminar of 15 or 16 students in each semester in which there is ample opportunity to develop a close relationship with faculty. In later years, many major program courses also have similarly small enrollments. Even in larger classes, most faculty have enough office hours so that with little initiative, students can still get to know their profs. In addition, there are opportunities for students to work on research and publication with faculty and to assist faculty as student mentors, for example, at the Center for Teaching and Learning.

2. Take a mix of courses. That is, don't simply load up in the first two years on courses that satisfy the general education program. At Occidental, students are advised in the first two years to make progress with Core Program requirements, but also to begin courses in their major program or to take courses in departments where they might eventually major. This usually leaves room for an elective or two in both the first and second years, and almost always means that "mix" of courses Harvard found to be important.

3. Study in groups. Many courses at Occidental require students to work in small groups, an activity which Harvard found to increase understanding of and engagement with the course material. And when not a required activity, courses are often structured so as to encourage small group activity.

4. Write, write, write. Occidental has long prided itself on its "writing across the curriculum" strategy. Not only is writing stressed in freshman Core Program courses, each department is expected to continue the development of writing skills in each course taught. Indeed, each department is required by the College to maintain a Junior Writing Requirement aimed at assuring effective writing skills of each of its majors. The Center for Academic Excellence, located in the Academic Commons is a helpful service where students can come have their writing reviewed by qualified student advisors and writing faculty.

5. Speak another language. The Core Program at Oxy requires college-level foreign language proficiency, and many students study language beyond this requirement, especially if they intend to take advantage of the many opportunities Oxy offers for study abroad. If your native language is other than English, you may test out of the Oxy requirement.

6. Time Management. The Harvard study concluded, and we agree, that careful time management contributes significantly to student success. Many academic advisors and instructors at Oxy stress this as well, and stand ready to help their advisees and students develop effective time management strategies. Also, the Center for Academic Excellence helps students manage their time.

7. Hold the drum. Harvard found that engagement in co-curricular activities is an important contributor to student success, even if it's only holding the drum for the marching band drummer. At Oxy, opportunities to "hold the drum" abound. Student government, residence hall management, a dozen or more of student clubs, intercollegiate and intramural sports, community volunteerism, and many more co-curricular opportunities make it easy for our students to find a niche or two outside the academic curriculum.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

If your native language is not English, prepare over the summer by reading books, watching movies and writing in English. This will help you acclimate to a second language inside and outside the classroom!

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Academic help can be found in many places. International students report that attending professor office hours to discuss concepts and ideas from class is very helpful. Writing help can be found in the Writing Center.

**Making the Most of College*, Harvard University Press, 2001. The description presented here draws heavily on Kate Zernike, "The Harvard Guide to Happiness," *New York Times* Books, April 8, 2001

Appendix III. Sample Immigration Documents

Sample I-20: FRONT

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID:

SAMPLE I-20 DOCUMENT		CLASS
		F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL NAME Occidental College Occidental College	SCHOOL ADDRESS 1600 Campus Road, Los Angeles, CA 90041
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Marisa Mofford Assistant Director, International Programs	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE LOS214F00315000 06 AUGUST 2016

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL BACHELOR'S	MAJOR 1 Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, Other 24.0199	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH 48 Months	PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient
PROGRAM START DATE 30 AUGUST 2016	PROGRAM END DATE 17 MAY 2020	

FINANCIALS

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 10 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 10 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 53,170	Personal Funds	\$ 276,993
Living Expenses	\$ 14,460	Funds From This School	\$
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$ 0	Funds From Another Source	\$
Books and personal	\$ 2,300	On-Campus Employment	\$
TOTAL	\$ 69,930	TOTAL	\$ 276,993

REMARKS

Mandatory health insurance included in fees.

SCHOOL ATTESTATION

I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.

SIGNATURE OF: Marisa Mofford, Assistant Director, International Programs	DATE ISSUED 09 May 2016	PLACE ISSUED Los Angeles, CA
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Important: a valid signature from International Programs Office

STUDENT ATTESTATION

I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.

SIGNATURE OF: [Redacted]	DATE
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN	DATE
SIGNATURE	ADDRESS (city/state or province/country)
DATE	DATE

Sample I-20: BACK

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: [REDACTED]

NAME: [REDACTED]

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

[REDACTED]

CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION

[REDACTED]

AUTHORIZED REDUCED COURSE LOAD

[REDACTED]

CURRENT SESSION DATES

CURRENT SESSION START DATE	CURRENT SESSION END DATE
30 AUGUST 2016	16 DECEMBER 2016

TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT

This page, when properly endorsed, may be used for re-entry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each endorsement is valid for one year.

Designated School Official	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
		X		
		X		
		X		
		X		

Sample VISA

Be sure the visa type is "F1" or "J-1"

Visa expiration date: you may remain in the U.S. on an expired F visa as long as your I-20/DS-2019 is valid. If you leave the U.S. and your visa stamp is expired, you will need to renew the visa stamp.

VISA UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Issuing Post Name: [REDACTED] Control Number: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Given Name: [REDACTED] **E1 Visa** Visa Type/Class: **R - F1**

Passport Number: [REDACTED] Sex: **F** Birth Date: [REDACTED] Nationality: [REDACTED]

Entire: [REDACTED] Issue Date: **19 JUL 2016** Expiration Date: **14 JUL 2021** 1011

Annotation: [REDACTED]

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE L0255141

[REDACTED]

Appendix IV. Got a job on campus? Next Steps

Also available on IPO website:

<https://www.oxy.edu/academics/global-engagement/international-programs/international-students/current-students/work>

STEP 1. Complete, Print and Bring the following documents to Oxy Human Resources.

- ◇ **I-9 form.**
- ◇ Log into the **GLACIER link** that was emailed to you and complete.
Once you are done, print the form. ****NOTE:** If you cannot find the email, contact Shirley Wang at swang@oxy.edu and request for a new link.
- ◇ I-20
- ◇ passport with visa stamp
- ◇ I-94 Arrival/Departure Record

Oxy Human Resources
www.oxy.edu/human-resources
Phone:
(323) 259-2613
Email: studentemployment@oxy.edu

STEP 2. Apply for your Social Security Card within the TWO weeks of your start date.

- ◇ **Request for Social Security Letter** from IPO **here.** If you do not hear within next 5 business days, please email us again.
- ◇ After you pick up the letter, get it signed by your work supervisor.
- ◇ Complete the **Social Security Card Application.** ***SUGGESTED:** complete this while you are waiting for IPO letter.
- ◇ Now you are ready to apply! Print and take the following documents with you to the SSN Office (*direction on the right*)

- ◇ Letter you picked up from IPO
- ◇ Your complete social security card application
- ◇ Passport
- ◇ I-20
- ◇ I-94 Arrival/Departure Record

SSN office Information & Direction

Glendale	Pasadena
Suite 600, 225 W BROADWAY GLENDALE, CA 91204	104 N MENTOR AVENUE PASADENA, CA 91106
BUS DIRECTION HERE	BUS DIRECTION HERE
<u>OPEN DAYS & HOURS</u> 9AM-4PM on M, T, Th & Fr. 9AM-12PM on W Closed on weekends	<u>OPEN DAYS & HOURS</u> 9AM-4PM on M, T, Th & Fr. 9AM-12PM on W Closed on weekends

STEP 3. When you are finished with your visit, SSN office will give you a letter. Submit the letter to Oxy Human Resources.

STEP 4. Your SSN Card will arrive within next 6 weeks. Present the card to the Oxy Human Resources. ****NOTE:** HR does NOT keep this card, they only require you to present the card to comply with the regulation).

STEP 5. Safeguard your SSN card along with your other important documents, such as passport, I-20, etc.

ADVICE FROM CURRENT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT OXY

We sent a survey to the current international students at Oxy. Below are some of their responses.

Q. What kind of academic supports were most beneficial to you in your first semester or year (Writing Center? Prof. Office hours? Other?)? Has this changed over your time at Oxy?

"The Writing Center is my go-to for writing but I like to go to office hours if I want to ask specific questions about the class or my graded work."

"Office hours with my professors, because they were not only helpful academically but supportive in real-life situations."

"The Writing Center was definitely of major help in my first year by providing the resources for writing skills. Advisor hours were also critical throughout college career. CDC and IPO were particularly useful when considering employment opportunities in Junior and Senior year."

Q. Now that you have attended Oxy for a while, what words of advice would you give to new international students?

"I would say that the most important thing to take on within the first year is to break down any stereotypical barriers that might be in the way of making new friends. Assume that most if not all people on campus are friendly and definitely take advantage of the close knitted, smaller size population in school. While focusing on creating an active social life, also don't forget that you are here primarily as a student and it is your duty to fulfill it. Be active in community service and student clubs and maintain good grades because your resume in four years will speak a lot for you in the real world."

"Being alone is not necessarily scary. But in life there will always be that unavoidable, initial pain."

Do not hesitate to ask help from IPO, they are really helpful."

"Get out there; take the bus; spend time at the beach; spend time alone and getting to know yourself better."

"Try to make as many friends as you can. Don't be afraid to explore L.A., even if you have to use public transport."

"Take advantage of resources provided - peer advising, office hours, career center. Join clubs, and enjoy your experience."

"Be actively integrate to American culture. It is your college and you belong to here. And don't be shy to ask for help if u need."

"Allow time to settle in"

"Mix out of your comfort zone - comes by emailing people from class to work together, dorm interactions"

"Don't be afraid to make non- international friends"

"It always takes time for things to get comfortable."

"Talk more"

"Don't be shy"

"Join a club/clubs! Integrate with Americans."

"Be more active in extra-curricular activities"

"Be open"

"Go to writing conference before you submit essays or papers."



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Academic Commons / Clapp Library*	5	Center for Gender Equity (Stewart-Oleand Hall Lower Lounge).....	31	Johnson Hall/Mckinnon Family Center for Politics & Global Affairs* 2	16
Admission Office (Collins House)*	19	Central Chiller Plant.....	88	Johnson Student Center and Freeman College Union*	15
Admission and Visitor Parking (1850 Campus Road)	43	Central Quadrangle*	126	Keck Theater	45
Anderson Field	104	Chilcott Hall	25	Kemp Stadium / Patterson Field / Henry Track*	101
Annenberg Presidents House (1852 Campus Road)*	23	Child Development Center (1824 Campus Road)	20	Mckinnon Tennis Center (North - Upper Level)	107
Arthur G. Coors Administrative Center*	1	Community Library Center (Thorne 9 - at rear)	13	Moore Laboratory of Zoology	30
Athletics / Alumni Gym Fitness Center*	9	Culley Athletic Facility	41	Mullin Family Studio and Art Gallery	46
Bell Field	103	Emmons Health & Counseling Center*	27	Newcomb Hall	18
Bell-Young Hall	34	Edman Hall*	24	North Hall North & South	28
Berkus House (1601 Campus Road)	53	Fowler Hall*	34	North Hall of Chemistry (Mosher Lecture Hall)	4
Bioscience Building	44	Gilman Fountain	50	Palley Hall	33
Bird Hillside Theater	22	Haines Hall*	26	Psychology Laboratory	38
Booth Music and Speed Center*	14	Hannemann Science Center	39	Rangerview Hall	100
Braun Hall	29	Herrick Memorial Chapel / Interfaith Center	6	Rush Gymnasium	8
Campus Safety / Facilities Management (Lower Level).....	12	Interdisciplinary Community Center (1501 Campus Road)	48	Samuelson Alumni Center	37A
				Samuelson Campus Pavilion / Tiger Cooler*	16
				Soccer Fields (lower and upper)	105-106
				Spencer Field House	32
				Stearns Hall	40
				Stewart-Oleand Hall	31
				Swan Hall / Dunke Commons*	7
				Sycamore Glen	121
				Taylor Pool / Field Building*	10
				Thorne Hall*	13
				Upper Campus Parking Lot	109
				Upward Bound (1737 Campus Road)	96
				Urban and Environmental Policy Institute (1882 Campus Road)*	21
				Wiegant Center for the Liberal Arts*	17
				Wylie Hall*	35