Fall 2018 Pre-arrival Webinar — Getting Started

Shuhui Lin: Thank you for participating the getting started webinar. For those of you who are with us for the first time, let’s talk about little bit about webinar series. This webinar series is a series providing to incoming international students, hopefully you have prepared and arranged arrival plans for traveling to and living in Iowa City, understand orientation expectations and responsibilities. And transition to student life and academics at the University of Iowa.

Lin: All the webinars will be recorded and posted on our website once we have Transcribed. So if you miss some part of the webinar or if you want to listen to it again afterwards, you can always go back to our website to look at our recording. Our first webinar for Graduate students Professionalization support is already ready, so if you want to listen to the webinar again, you can feel free to visit the ISSS website.

Lin: During the webinar, if you encounter any technical difficulties, please let us know in the chat function. If you have any questions related to today’s topic, please use the Q&A function to post your questions. We will answer them live at the end.

Michael Bortscheller: Okay. So have you received you I-20 or your DS 2019 yet? I know that many people have we’ve issued a few hundred immigration documents already. If you have not yet received your I-20 or your DS 2019, the way to get that is by completing the pre-arrival checklist which we’re going to talk about later, specifically we need you to complete the passport and financial guarantee form, which lets us know that you have enough money to pay for a year of school and to get the information from your passport that we need to create your document and lastly, we would need you to pay the e-Ship-Global mailing fee. This will allow us to mail I-20 or DS 2019 to you wherever you are in the world. Once you have this document that is when you can apply for your visa and your visa something you need to enter the U.S.A to study. As I said, we’re going to talk about this later in the presentation when Andrea Talks about the pre arrival checklist in iHawk, hopefully you've all seen this already, but if you haven’t now’s the time to do it.

Michael: And we've got some important dates. In fact, one of our important dates has already passed. May 1 is the undergraduate admission acceptance deadline that means you have to pay the $250 admission fee or the acceptance fee you should have seen. Now if you haven’t done this yet. If you forgot to do this they will continue to accept payments until May 15, so you still have some time to do it but hurry up and do not delay. Coming up in a few months from August 7 to August 10 we have the international graduate student orientation and from August 12 to August 19 we have the international undergraduate student orientation. These orientations are required. You will have to be there. If you aren’t able to attend, you might not be able to register for classes.

Michael: And now I suppose I should introduce myself. My name is Michael Bortscheller and I am the assistant director with international student and scholar services and I’m going to talk today about my UI and your admissions profile in my UI.
Andrea Siebenmann: And I'm Andrea Siebenmann. And I am international students and scholar advisor and I will cover the topic of iHawk system. And also the pre-arrival checklist.

Shuhui Lin: My name is Shuhui Lin, you can call me by my last name Lin. I’m the coordinator for international students and engagement also with ISSS and I will be mostly manage in the chat function and Q&A, so if you do have any questions. Please post up.

Michael Bortscheller: Okay. So our goals today. The first thing we're going to do is to introduce you to MyUI and your admissions profile in MyUI. After that Andrea is going to introduce you to the iHawk system and reviewed pre-arrival checklist that you should complete before you come for orientation and then at the end we’ll have some time for live question and answer. And so as Lin already mentioned if you have any questions during this presentation type them up using the Q&A function. That's how we're going to answer questions at the end of the presentation.

Michael: Before we get started we have some important terms that we need to define for everyone. We’re going to use these terms throughout this presentation.

Michael: So the first one is your Hawk ID. Your Hawk ID is a login username for any University of Iowa service. If you haven't got one yet, you should be getting one very soon everyone at the University of Iowa has a hawk ID and a password to use the online services here. The next thing is ICON which stands for Iowa Courses Online. It's a course management system at the University of Iowa, and it's especially important for us today because the course success at Iowa is an online course that you will find in icon. You're Iowa one card and your student ID number or your university ID number everyone at the University of Iowa has an Iowa one card, which is there one University of Iowa identification in addition on that card you'll see an 8 digit number. And that's your university ID number. That's a number of that if you call any Office on campus or if you email you can give them that number and they'll be able to pull up your specific information and help you individual.

Michael: ISSS is international student and scholar services, that's our office we're the people who can answer any immigration questions that you have while you're in the United States, and we also help you adjust to living in Iowa. MyUI is a gateway student system. So, it's the way students can access a variety of university information online. It will let you register for classes. It will let you update your address. We're going to talk about some of those features during this presentation, but it's something you'll get to know very, well during your time here in Iowa.

Michael: And finally your office 365 email. This is how you're going to access your University of Iowa email account. Now, even if you haven't started to use it yet all of you do have a University of Iowa email account. And this is the account that we are going to use in ISSS when we have information for you. So once you become a student. It's very important that you check this every day.

Michael: Alright. So let’s get into the MyUI and your admissions profile in MyUI. This is what MyUI looks like it's at the website myui.uiowa.edu. And when you log in you'll see all of these little tiles which can give you take you to a section where you can update certain pieces of information. Now all of these will be important when you’re here as a student, but we’re going to highlight few that are especially important before you arrive on campus.
**Michael:** So the first one is your address change once you know where you are going to live in Iowa. It’s important for you to update that by clicking on address change and entering that address. When you're a student, it's also important for you to update your address anytime that you move that’s not just for the university. It's also because it's one of the requirements of your immigration status here.

**Michael:** Your admissions profile is something that I will talk about in detail in just a few minutes your admissions profile allows you to find out information about your application and about the program that you’re going to enter soon it also let you accept admission to the University of Iowa.

**Michael:** Name pronunciation many students and scholars have names that are not very common in the United States and everybody here would like to do their best at greeting you and talking to you but sometimes worse honestly just unfamiliar with the name. And so if you have a name that you don't think most Americans would be familiar with and you can click on this and actually record yourself saying your name. And that way whenever you go into an office at the University of Iowa campus they can get your name correct.

**Michael:** And finally you have your preferred name in pronouns. This is where you can go to enter in how you would like people to address you if you don't like using your official name. For example, if you have a preferred name besides that you can enter that. Now, when you come to ISSS we will use the name that’s on your passport most often but it’s still nice if you want your professors to call you by a nickname. Now whenever you’re trying to go into MyUI, the way you make sure that you're updating your information is by clicking that blue box for your Hawk ID login. Once you’re in there, you'll type in your Hawk ID and your password, and that's how you will update your information both before you arrive on campus and once you're a student here.

**Michael:** Now continue to check your profile even if you've already accepted in mission you should keep checking your admissions profile in the lead up to orientation. In fact, you're going to want to continue to check these things after you're already a student.

**Michael:** Now we're going to talk about your admissions profile next. When you go into myUI, scroll down to the very bottom of the page and you'll find a section for quick links. One of those quick links will be your admissions profile and once you click that it will look this. So this is your admissions profile. It has a nice little welcome message, and it shows personal information about you, of course, this is a sample. And so it's blank, but when you're doing this, you'll see a lot of things here.

**Michael:** one of the things we want to highlight are these helpful links on the right hand side. These give you links to a variety of university resources that will be helpful for you both before you get on campus and even after now we're going to get into more detail with your admissions profile here. So let’s start.

**Michael:** In missions profile allows you to accept our offer of admission and pay the acceptance fee and come to the University of Iowa. Now we’ve mentioned at a couple of times for undergraduate students your deadline to accept admission was on May 1 but you can continue to submit payment up until May 15 so it's very important that you do that if you haven't already done so.

**Michael:** Your admissions profile allows you to submit your housing application. And it's important for you to do this as early as possible. I just heard from housing yesterday and they said that they've received more applications from international students than they usually get at this time of year.
Because of that it’s important for you to submit your application early to ensure that we will have space for you.

Michael: Your admissions profile allows you to set up your free University of Iowa email account which remember you’ll need to check every day once you’re a student here.

Michael: It allows you to connect to the required placement tests. Now all students should submit at least a math placement test and chemistry diagnostic test before they come here. I should say all undergraduate students if you’re a graduate student, you don’t need to do this.

Michael: It also allows you to download our medical history form. One of the things Andrea is going to talk about during the presentation are some requirements for an immunization clinic that we will have during orientation and one of the things you’ll need to submit is this medical history.

Michael: Now, when you’re looking at some parts of your admissions profile this part shows things that you have submitted with your application, and it also importantly shows some things that are still needed. So when you go to your admissions profile if you see this little red note. Right here. That tells you that we still need your acceptance fee and your official transcript. Andrea is going to talk about the transcripts later in the presentation, and I’ve already talked about the acceptance fee a couple of times now. But if you see this note in your admissions profile. It’s important to follow the instructions there that tell you where to send the information to.

Michael: Continuing in your admissions profile. We have some information about your next steps in what you need to do. One of the things that we want to highlight are your immigration documents. This is telling you that you need to complete information in iHawk in order to get those immigration documents. Now if you are a F1 student that’s an i-20 and if you’re a J1 student that DS 2019. Also important is that you have to accept your admission and it’s so important that you do this as soon as possible. If you have not already done so. That’s all for me with my UI and the admissions profile. Now I’m going to hand it off to Andrea. So that she can talk about iHawk and the pre-arrival checkbooks.

Andrea Siebenmann: Thank you. Michael. And I am sure that you have found the webinars have very helpful, so far. So let me continue with the iHawk system.

Andrea: I will also talk about the pre-arrival checklist, which is hosted on this system, and I would to say that the pre arrival checklist has been designed to help you prepare for your arrival to the University of Iowa and experience as smooth or as smooth as possible transition to your new home here in the United States. So let’s get started.

Andrea: I would like to mention that the iHawk is a portal used by the international students and scholars services department as well as by faculty staff, but most importantly it needs to be used by you, our international students. We hope that most of you are participating in this webinar have already access this portal. But if not let me show you how to get started.

Andrea: After entering the web link or URL that you see on this slide, you will be taken to the iHawk homepage. Here please click on the blue login button which will take you to the following page where you will be asked for your University of Iowa username and password. As Michael mentioned earlier you should have your login credentials by now, but basically the user name is your HawkID and the password
were sent to you in the admissions letter if you have not by any chance received your login information yet. Please contact the ISSS orientation team at iss-orientation@uowa.edu, and someone will assist you with this.

Andrea: We would also like to encourage you to bookmark the iHwak Homepage Weblink in your internet browser. You will find it very useful during your time at the University because it can help you with different events related to your immigration status.

Andrea: So after you have successfully logged into your iHwak profile, you stepped into the pre-arrival checklist homepage. There are five tabs or steps on this homepage. And that you will be asked to complete before you arrived to the University.

Andrea: So those tabs are welcome tab, arrival information tab, information collection tab, online exams in courses, and finally orientation.

Andrea: Let’s move to the welcome tab where you will be asked to provide some basic information that also was already mentioned by Michael, but I would like to just mention that when you are asked for passport information and to upload the passport file please pay attention to the fact that you the file needs to meet certain criteria of the format and also sizes if you’re having issues uploading the passport file that means that either it is too big, which means it maybe over 10 megabytes or else. There are some other issues with it. Please let us know immediately if you are experiencing any issues with this, and we will be happy to assist you. Again, you’re welcome to email to ISSS orientation team about this.

Andrea: Sometimes also the upload looks like it’s not completed or the upload boxes not checked. However, we have already received the file. So please do not do multiple uploads, but instead contact us again at the email shown here on the slide.

Andrea: Also we would you to enter basic passport data in this e-form as it will help us to keep track of your passport during the time that you’re here at the University and one other reminder regarding passport is that the validity of this document needs to be 6 months and more after your arrival day to the University.

Andrea: The other item that is being asked here for is a financial guarantee what we mean by that is a document that needs to show an evidence of how you will be funding your studies. The accepted evidence includes bank statements or graduate assistantship offer letters or athletic scholarship offer letters and so on.

Andrea: Again, if you are not sure if the documents that you would like to use our meeting our requirements feel free to contact us. Also on this form please follow the link to the current estimated cost for your program to learn how much funding you need to submit.

Andrea: Next item, in the welcome tab is pay eShipGlobal mailing fee. What this means and it was already mentioned earlier this is a very important item to be completed especially if you need to receive your I-20 or DS 2019 form in time for you to apply for a visa. So what you will need to do here is to basically submit an online payment for your shipping. So that we can expect directly ship the form one or the other form to you.
Andrea: Here you are also taken to each of global website. And if and when you maybe experiencing any difficulties with registering or paying your mailing fee. Please use the help link in this side for instructions and for any troubleshooting.

Andrea: Also if you are already in United States and want to pick up your i-20 instead in person please do not submit this form and rather contact our ISSS orientation team. And we will take care of this step for you. This completes the first welcome tab.

Andrea: Next you will be able to move on to the arrival information tab, where you are asked as a first step to activate your University of Iowa email. As mentioned by Michael earlier it is really critical for you to activate your Email because this is typically used by the University Staff Faculty or other employees and who would like to contact you when you are here at the University and we all do that by using your University of Iowa email.

Andrea: Three arrival contact information is something that we would like you to complete as well with the information about your parent or guardian. Please do not submit information or contact information for the agency that you may be working with, so please keep that in mind.

Andrea: Next item that I would like to highlight is book flight to the Eastern Iowa airport. This airport is located in Cedar Rapids Iowa and the international code for this airport is CID. When you are ready to book your tickets please use this international airport code and because this airport is relatively small size by is in very convenient distance to Iowa City area. It’s only within 25 miles or 40 kilometers from Iowa City. And so we strongly recommend that you please book your flight to the airport, there are several options for transportation from this airport to Iowa City area. And we will talk about this at a later Part of this webinar but also we will talk about it at the different webinar too.

Andrea: All international students are allowed to arrive to the United States within 30 days or less of their orientations start date. So for your group the earliest arrival date for graduate students would be July 9 and for undergraduate students to July 14 and the latest arrival date would be that in August 6 of graduates and then August 11 of undergraduates.

Andrea: One other thing I would like to mention at this point is that ISSS is coordinating the airport welcome program for all our new students, and what this means is that we will have a current students who will volunteer to welcome you when you arrive to the Eastern Iowa airport and they will be happy to help you and guide you to your luggage and help you with the find the shuttle services or answer any other questions that you may have upon arrival.

Andrea: The next item. And I have a slide here that will show you at least that will give you an idea where IOWA is within United States, and then also the Cedar Rapids as a city where the eastern Iowa airport is located.

Andrea: On our arrival information tab. We still have a couple of other items left to complete here and one of them is arrange housing. As Michael mentioned earlier it is important that you take care of your housing as soon as possible, especially if there is a high demand for the housing and we will actually develop a separate webinar to this topic, and we will talk about the housing for undergraduates on the webinar on May 25 and then on June 1 we will cover information about off campus housing.
Andrea: Very important item is to pay SEVIS fee because this is a requirement before you can apply for your visa. See this thing is actually a one-time charge assessed by the USA department of homeland security to supplement federal government expenses that are involved in the maintenance and administration of what is called a Serves system or student exchange visitor information system. You will hear our staff, ISSS staff referring to see this quite a bit while you're here at the University of Iowa. So please be aware that this is what that fee represents. So the fee is required again of to be paid before you apply for Visa and please reference the website that's shown here to access it for an online payment, you will need the receipt printed receipt from this payment and. You can bring in you should bring it to your visa interview.

Andrea: And finally we would like you to be aware of the fact that as a new student you are required to attend on a week-long orientation program. That is administration and organized by ISSS because the orientation is weeklong you should plan to arrive in Iowa and on campus minimum one and preferably more than one day before the orientation begins.

Andrea: As mentioned previously, the arrival should be scheduled for the latest on August 6 or August 11 for graduate and undergraduate students. So we encourage you to arrive early now. So you have time to acclimate to the new environment here at the University and Iowa City area and please be aware that you are responsible for paying for your living expenses during the orientation program.

Andrea: If in this specific e-form on orientation confirmation you enter as your arrival date a date after the orientation starts the system will automatically ask you to adjust your arrival accordingly. So please be aware of that and make sure you make arrangements as mentioned.

Andrea: Again, the orientation is not only mandatory but extremely helpful for you to make smoother transition to your life at the University. And here are the dates for graduate student orientation, which is August 7 through August 10, and then for undergraduate students is August 12 to 17 this completes the arrival information tab.

Andrea: Let’s move on to the next step which is information collection. As the title of this tab indicates we are we would like to collect some additional important information from you.

Andrea: The first step which shows apply for US Visa pretty self-explanatory you need to do this at the USA's embassy or consulate, which is located nearest your residence if you’re not sure where this embassy or consulate is located please do a search on the internet and you should be able to do so.

Andrea: Also please keep in mind that the Visa process may take different time at different embassies USA embassies across the world. So please check with your particular consulate, not only for the documentation that is required for the Visa application. But also ask them or inquire how long it may take for them to issue the visa for you.

Andrea: Also please know that ISSS and the University of Iowa do not assist with the Visa process. And I would like to also mention at this point that if you do not if you're not successful in Receiving F1 or J1 student visa, unfortunately, you will not be able to enter the United States and start your classes at the University as planned. If this would be the case for you please contact ISSS orientation team as soon as you know that there might be an issue with you not being able to arrive for the start of the fall semester.
Andrea: Next item on this tab is biographical information. It’s a very brief form with about four fields. So it’s very short one to complete please do that as soon as you can.

Andrea: Let’s talk about arrival information. This is slightly connected to the previous tab where we were talking about the booking your flight to the eastern Iowa airport. In this particular e-form we’re asking for more details about your travel and specifically we’re asking you where you are planning to arrive and when and also we would like to know if you need assistance with local transportation. The reason why we’re asking is so that we can help you arrange and book the Airport Shuttle Services we only would help you with booking this service but not pay for it.

Andrea: However, ISSS has a range is made a special arrangement with the shuttle services company, and if you book ahead. And if you arrive about three to four days before the orientation start date you may be eligible for discounted travel discounted rate for the shuttle. We will be also having a separate webinar about making travel arrangements. And I will come you to attend this webinar on June 8.

Andrea: Let’s discuss are the health and immunization information e-form. Michael indicated a little bit about this form earlier. This form has a lot of information a lot of text in it which was actually provided by the student health and wellness services, which is full service campus health clinic. This information is very critical to review, and if you do have already your immunization documents. Please submit them to the email, that's shown here and also there are some more instructions in the e-form itself.

Andrea: One thing that I would like to highlight is that please do not get the TB skin or a blood test or BCG Vaccine before traveling to the US. This must be done after you arrive on campus and the health and wellness services staff will work with you and arrange for all these tests when you’re here. Also please know that once you register as a full time student, you won’t be assessed a student health and wellness fee. And this two year tuition costs. And so this will entitle you for the services of this center at no cost. If you are a student of 18 years and younger you will be also asked to fill out the minor consent form.

Andrea: The next item on the information collection tab that I would like to mention and that you need to please complete is the information about your high school transcript. University of Iowa accept only originals and these can be either mailed or they can be brought in person if you have enough time before your arrival to mail these documents it’s fine to do that. And there is a content information where you can do so and then if you do not have enough time to do that you can bring them with you to the orientation session but please be aware of the fact that if you do not submit your transcripts during the first semester at the university, your registration for the following semester maybe put on hold.

Andrea: And finally the information collection of is completed by your uploading the new F1 or J1 Visa stamp please do that as that will help expedite the processing of your immigration documents during the check in process when you arrive to the University.

Andrea: Let’s move on to the next or fourth tab, which is about online exams and courses. In regard to the online exams or courses, I would like to mention that all students will be asked to complete one or the other exams depending on their academic requirements. But basically if there is a check box in your checklist next to the complete placement exams. That means that you will need to go ahead and complete those. This was also mentioned by Michael Earlier. So there is a connection between our
system, and then also how we chose in MyUI for you. So please pay very close attention to this requirement also because when you complete this exams their results will be very helpful to your academic advisor. So that they can give you the most appropriate advice regarding and depending on what your academic needs are.

**Andrea:** One of the tests, there are going to be required is the English placement exam or EPE, and you will know whether you need to do this exam is if you receive a blue letter along with your I-20 or DS 2019. These tests are typically scheduled at the very beginning of the orientation session. So please make sure there is another reason why we’re saying that please arrive to the orientation at least a day before or more, so that you can attend these tests. There are very important again, for you being able to register for classes during this orientation week.

**Andrea:** What about the requirements as new students for you will be to complete a success at Iowa Online course, this is a very specific course that will be closely discussed and explain during the webinar on July 28 but just so you know this will open discourse will open on July 1 and again you will be given more information at a later date.

**Andrea:** And we’re at the final and fifth tab that you need to complete and that is an orientation tab. Here if you’re ready you can submit the form to receive your orientation schedule. Please be aware that the schedules are very personalized and you need to your particular situation. So please make sure that you do not follow your friends to the appointments or vice visa, none of the two schedules are the same and it may not be appropriate to be along with someone else at their appointment. Plus it’s most likely that you will miss your own appointment because you may be scheduled somewhere else to meet somebody else at the same time.

**Andrea:** Everything is really very tightly scheduled during the orientation week because we have many students many different schedules and many different staff and faculty who need to meet with you. So please be courteous and follow your own schedule also please bring your intention schedule with you to the orientations that schedule a session and it will be it could be either a printed format or you can bring it in the digital format on your phone or your computer.

**Andrea:** On this tab you will see that there is a link addressed or titled as useful links and resources this is a web page hosted by ISSS, which is dedicated specifically to new students at the University and as you will see on this slide. This is a very wonderful page full of helpful information including that about the past and future webinars as well as additional information about orientation, also academic and cultural resources also information about the Iowa city area. This website will be extremely helpful and please do visit and come back to this website as many times you need before your arrival or even after you come to the campus. During the orientation session.

**Andrea:** Finally. I would like to share with you some samples of the other web pages that ISSS orientation is hosting for our new students. Again this is a sample of a page about pre-departure resources. And then we have some additional pages. And this is a sample of the page for pre-arrival webinar series, so again, I would like to encourage you to take advantage of all the information the wealth of information that is contained on all of our websites for new International student.