Andrea: Hello Everyone. welcome back to another episode from our webinar series for the international students starting their program at the University of Iowa In the fall 2019 semester. Welcome! Today's topic is going to be addressing some orientation expectations, responsibilities and placement tests, specifically for graduate students. If you have not attended one of our webinars before, a little bit about the series. This is an optional webinar series that is provided to Incoming International students before they arrive in Iowa city. The objective for the webinars is for international students, to help them arrange plans for travel to and living in Iowa City. To understand orientation expectations and responsibilities as well as to transition to student life and academics at the University of Iowa. All our webinars are recorded and posted on our webinar website which you should be familiar with, but if not the web link is provided on this slide.

During the webinar if you encounter any technical difficulties please let us know in the chat function, And if you have any questions related to today’s topic we encourage you to please post those questions in the Q&A function of the zoom webinar software. We will answer these questions live at the end of the webinar, we have set aside some time and then we will answer as many questions as time will permit. If you have not received your I-20 or DS-2019 form, please know that you must pay eShipGlobal shipping fee for us to mail your document. This document is the one most important in order for you to apply for a visa. This information is also contained in our pre-arrival checklist in iHawk, which you should be familiar with by now, and the web address is provided on the slide. And if you have still any questions or concerns in regard to any of these documents or pre-arrival, please contact the ISSS orientation team at the email provided here on this slide.

Let's review quickly some important days. Especially about the mandatory orientation. This is scheduled in August. For graduate students, the orientation is August 13 through 16 and for undergraduate students, August 19 through 23. August 21st is when the new graduate student orientation is scheduled and we will cover this in more detail today. And then on August 26th starts our Fall 2019 semester. Let’s do some introductions.

Anne: I am Anne Sparks and I'm the academic services coordinator for the graduate college, and I coordinate Grad orientation for all students.

Michael: I am Michael Bortscheller, the assistant director in International Students Scholar Services.

Maureen: I’m Maureen Burke and I’m the director of English as a Second Language Programs here.

Andrea: And my name is Andrea Siebenmann, I’m one of the ISSS advisers and webinar coordinator and moderator. Let’s begin with our presentation for today.

Anne: Hi, This is Anne Sparks, I'm going to talk about the orientation event that happens on August 21, and it's for all grad students, international and domestic. And because we serve all grad students at this orientation, it is somewhat general. We get to the nuts and bolts of some funding, things like that. But
your departments, as well as ISSS will have more specific orientations that can answer questions about your status as an international student as well as your status within a certain department. So orientation is going to start in two different locations. It will start at 1:30, and master students will go to the Pomerantz center. And it’ll be in C20. that’s the room. Doctoral students will be in the Pappajohn Business Building in room W10, and that’s where they'll start out. So in the very beginning of orientation students will be in two different locations based on their degree that they want to obtain. So this will help us narrow the content just a little bit. So that way It's directed toward yourself as a master’s student or a doctoral student. Later in the day, our last two events will happen at the Iowa Memorial Union, which we call the IMU, in the main lounge. And that will be where there is an info fair, and that’s where different organizations will set up a table so you going to ask them questions And learn more about resources on campus. And then there will also be a reception with food, which I will talk about in a second here. So this is the overview of the schedule. you'll see that the location is different in the beginning due to those two start places. That’s where check-in happens. And then we have the welcome, we have a few keynote speakers and we will have a student panel where you can get a chance to ask current students questions. Again, all of these events are for both international and domestic students so we'll be answering questions for both groups.

And then this is where we go to the IMU for the information fair. We have a few different categories for the types of resources that you might find, so we have some tables that are based on entertainment, Things you can do in Iowa City. We have some for medical and wellness questions. We have cultural groups. Religious groups. Campus needs and resources, different offices on campus. We have a few booths for places you can volunteer while you're a student here if you wish to. And then lastly we also have a photo booth space. And what is, is It is a chance for students to have a professional photo taken if they wish to. oftentimes students use these professional photos for applications like LinkedIn or anywhere that they need to have their image appear in a professional capacity. If you do decide to do the photo booth, you'll want to think ahead about what you might want to wear to orientation. So your photo reflects you the way you want it to. And then lastly is the reception. that's where you get the free food. So that’s very popular. It also gives you a chance to talk with new students, other new students, and professors often come as well as campus leadership. the president of the University of Iowa usually makes an appearance there as well. The nice thing about the reception is we group you kind of by general fields of study. So you get a chance to meet students who may not be studying exactly what you are but something similar. And it’s nice to hear from your peers and what they're doing. And you also hear a note from the dean of the grad college.

So setting aside orientation I wanted to leave you with a few websites that can be helpful as you are preparing to come to the U.S. one of those websites is the UI Grad Guide. This was created by grad students. So it does a fairly good job of addressing the questions that students often have when they come to Iowa City. Again, I always recommend any of the resources that ISSS provides you, because those are tailored to international students. this website would be for just a general grad audience, but it is something to investigate and you can look at that anytime you come before hand or after you arrive. The other website I'll mention is the site for our orientation event. We have a link to RSVP to our event, that way we know how much food to have. And then some resources and links. One thing that will be adding to this site is a link to an icon course. and icon is where the University of Iowa hosts online spaces for courses or you can turn in assignments and chat with classmates in that function. We’ll have
an icon course, it's not really a course, but it's a space where you will be able to access information even after orientation happens. Sometimes you're best able to listen to a funding resource at two in the morning, and that is fine. And you will be able to do that on the icon site. So there will be a link to that on this website.

Michael: OK. now we'll talk about the international student orientation. This is a bigger orientation, or it's a longer orientation than just the graduate student orientation. The graduate student orientation happens after our international student orientation, but we do talk about it during international student orientation. Of course, the international student orientation is from August 13 until August 16, and it is mandatory. You must attend this orientation because it's absolutely essential to your success as a student here at the University of Iowa. So, the goals of this orientation are to support your transition to student an academic life at the University of Iowa, and for some of you in the United States at all. We want to highlight some of the cultural adjustment issues and many immigration regulation issues that will be necessary for you to maintain your F or J status. And finally we want you to meet new students. We want you to start friendships at orientation that will last throughout your time in the University of Iowa, and hopefully help support you throughout your program. So just a general overview of the schedule, you should arrive in Iowa City by Monday August 12. now if you haven't made your arrangements yet, that's what you need to be here for. if you have already made your arrangements and they don't fit that, you should change them. because you really are going to need to be in Iowa City On Monday August 12, So that you can get started immediately with orientation when it starts on Tuesday the 13rd and runs through Friday the 16th. And we have a lot of sessions that we are going to cover during those days.

We have a welcome ceremony where we'll introduce ourselves to you and give you some general information about the University of Iowa. We're going to have a U.S. culture and U.S. cultural adjustment session. We're going to give you a campus tour, we're going to talk about the immigration regulations that will affect you here while you're in the United States, as well as information about some laws that exist here that might be different than laws in your home country. We're going to do an immigration check in where we look at all of your immigration documents and make sure that everything is in order so that you don't run into trouble later. We're going to talk to you about health insurance and what the health insurance requirements are, what health insurance is since it's a little bit of an unusual thing for many people. and what your choices are with those policies. Maureen will talk about this more in a little bit, but we'll also have your English proficiency evaluation scheduled during your orientation. We won't give you a time or place for your English speaking proficiency assessment, the ESAP, or the ELPT, but you may have to take that during orientation week, and Maureen will give more details about that later. We'll have health care services and immunization sessions, so health care services we'll just talk about what options are available to you on campus if you become sick. where you can go to get treatment. and the immunization clinic is where the nurses at health care services will examine the medical documentation that you've either submitted already, or that you bring with you, and determine if you need to have more immunizations. We'll have a session from student legal services that will talk about what your rights as a student in the United States are. And that's not all! we're also going to have sessions from University Counseling Services. Now, this is really important, because when you're in a new country studying for a long period of time, it's very normal for people to go through a period of adjustment where they get frustrated or they don't feel like they have anyone to talk to. and
University Counseling Services is a service that is essentially free for students. You've paid for it with your student fees, but they provide an opportunity to talk about how you are feeling to help you process the things you're going through, and if you weren't a student it would cost hundreds of dollars. It's a really great resource for students. Especially international students who have to adjust to so many new things. We'll have a session on forming healthy relationships while you're here in the United States, we'll have a sessions where we introduce people from the wider Iowa City community, or other campus offices that will advertise their services to you. We'll help you schedule when you can get your University of Iowa ID card known as the Iowa one card. And finally after orientation or at some point during it, you'll have a tuberculosis screening just to make sure that you didn't become infected while you were traveling to the United States. This is just to make sure that everybody's got a clean bill of health before we start.

Now if you want to know where you will eventually find your orientation schedule, you'll be able to find it in iHawk. Now I'm sure you guys have learned about iHawk before since we send you so many emails telling you to complete your pre-arrival checklist. But once the orientation schedules are ready, and that will be approximately one month before orientation, you'll be able to log into iHawk and click on the orientation tab of your pre-arrival checklist. As long as you've completed everything else, let me remind you please complete all items on your pre-arrival checklist. So anyway, once this is available you'll be able to click on the orientation tab and click where it says International student orientation schedule. You can also find it by on the left hand menu clicking on orientation, and then clicking orientation schedule. Let me say it again, these schedules are not available yet, but they will be available approximately 30 days before orientation begins.

What does successful participation in orientation look like? Well first, it's essential that you follow your own personal orientation schedule and attend each session. You may have noticed that earlier I didn't say what times the various events were. That's because many sessions will be happening multiple times throughout the week, and your session might be different from a friend's session. So make sure you pay attention to your schedule and the time that you have been assigned. If you have any scheduling conflicts with any of the English tests, the EPE, the ESPA or the ELPT, those tests take priority. Those tests will determine what kind of classes you're allowed to take and whether you're going to be able to be a teaching assistant. And so if there is any scheduling conflict where you have a session for our orientation, but an English test at the same time, take the English test. We'll help you connect with the presenters so you can find out what information you may have missed and then once your test is done you'll be able to come back and return to the session. Successful orientation participation also involves introducing yourself to others. It's important to us that you make new friends and develop a social network that helps you thrive here at the University of Iowa. And finally, successful participation involves paying attention and asking questions throughout the presentation. Don't just sit in the back row and look at your phone to look at funny videos. It's important that you listen to the information being given and that you interact with it by thinking of questions and asking questions of the presenters who have come to give you this information.

Now, if you have any questions, we'd love you to ask us by emailing issso-orientation@uiowa.edu. This is where you can ask any questions about you know, how do I get into town or what should I do or where can I go, things like that? And if you have any disability accommodations or mobility accommodations that you're going to need, let us know, we can help make those arrangements for you.
Finally, we have one page that collects all of our information for new students. Our pre-arrival resources page. That is https://international.uiowa.edu/new-students. If you go to that page we have a collection of all the information for our website that’s dedicated to new international students. So this is a great resource when you have quick questions and you want to get an answer to it right away. You can probably go to this website and find everything you need right there. And now I'm going to pass it off to Maureen.

Maureen: Hello everybody, and congratulations on your admission. And we look forward to seeing you in August. The congratulations is because you've also come close to meeting and may meet all of the English proficiency requirements of the University of Iowa. And I'm going to start first of all with why there is a requirement. and basically, it is to assure that students know English well enough to study and be successful. All of you have strong English, otherwise, you would not be admitted as a post baccalaureate candidate. But even students with strong English language proficiency will face language challenges in the classroom. you are Learning in a very different environment, and the English that you know and know well may be different from what you find when you actually enter the classroom. So. What is the requirement? The requirement that allows you to be totally free of any English tests or English courses is a total of 100 on the IBT or 600 on the Paper Based TOEFL test. And you'll notice that it's only TOEFL and IELTS is not there, and I'll talk a little bit about that later in why it's just TOEFL. Students can begin their degree work with scores below 100 or 600. they can begin degree work, that would be you, if you have an 81 internet base score or a 550 paper based score on the TOEFL. Or if you have a 7.0 IELTS score with no sub score below 6.5. The condition, However, is that unless you have that 100 or 600, you must take the on-campus English proficiency evaluation. and you will hear that called the EPE. And then test needs to be taken prior to your first registration. That's why it's part of your international orientation when you arrive on campus. If the evaluation shows that you need courses, You must enroll in these courses. These courses are However for credit. And students must also enroll in one course each semester, and must complete ESL before graduation. The reason for that is, when you first get here is when you need the English support the most. Trying to avoid the English classes may only result in your not having great success and then what do I do, I haven't taken these classes. So the idea is that you take them right away when they can be of the most help to you.

So what does the EPE look like? It has three parts to it. It has a 40 minute 40 item reading comprehension and vocabulary test, a 30 minute writing sample, and there you would choose from two prompts, and then a 10 minute oral interview. So we’re looking at your reading comprehension, your writing ability, and your ability to communicate orally. What does the reading test look like? It's similar to the TOEFL or the IELTS test. its multiple choice, the focus is on comprehension skills in on academic vocabulary and vocabulary from context. The writing sample, as I've mentioned before, you will receive two prompts, you choose one. The emphasis in the writing sample is on academic writing. So because of that you will be evaluated on your content, what you say about the topic, how you develop those ideas your organization, Your grammar and language use, and your vocabulary, range of vocabulary, and how precise your vocabulary is. The oral interview. the goal of the oral interview is to determine your communicative competence. OK, are you able to understand fast conversation. Questions that could be somewhat complex. are you able to explain and be understood by the interviewers? we know that you will have an accent, we know that there will be some errors. but we don't want you to be misunderstood. So we're not looking for perfection, but we're making sure that you understand and can
be understood. And finally, are you able to answer questions or narrate with little hesitation? So to tell a story using precise and mostly accurate word choice, and using appropriate transitions to show when you’re moving from one idea to the next. On the slide here is a link to information about the EPE and about the ESL credit classes.

Possible EPE results. So what happens - you've taken the test, now what? Well, you will be the happiest if you have no further work in ESL to take. That means you just do your degree work and you don't have to worry about any more ESL classes. You might need to enroll in one or more ESL classes for credit. And possibly, but very rarely, your test results may indicate that you need to enroll in some lower level noncredit English courses. As I said, this is very rare, especially for graduate students, but occasionally it does happen. And then moving on from those afterwards. So the credit courses. There are four of them. And there's a course in reading, a course in academic writing, and its specific for graduate students, there is a course of grammar, and a course in oral skills. So depending on the results of your EPE, The result of each individual segment of the EPE, you will be given requirements for courses that you have to take. So. If you need these ESL courses when do you take them? You take them along with your academic courses. So you may add the ESL course onto your full 9 hours of graduate work. Maybe you reduce your graduate work. you and your advisor work that out but you can take them, the ESL courses, concurrently with your academic courses. These ESL courses will provide support for you during your first year. It will be a place for you to even get help with your English as it applies to your other classes. These classes will allow you to adjust to studying in English especially, if you're coming to the United states for the first time, and they will also help ensure your success.

Now if you are somebody who has been awarded a teaching assistantship, this section will be extremely important for you. if you have not been awarded a teaching assistantship, You can listen but you don't have to pay really close attention. However, if a teaching assistantship is something you'd like to apply for later, having this information is useful. So the first thing have you received an offer of a teaching assistantship from your department? you would have received an offer letter with lots of information if you had. So the policy is that, and this is a policy that is not just the University of Iowa policy, but a policy required by the state of Iowa that any person not just a TA but any person who is not a first language speaker of English must be tested and certified as ready to teach in a UI classroom. And for TA’S that requires testing and taking two tests. the testing ensures that the overall language effectiveness in the classroom is on the part of the person who is providing that instruction, that you are effective because you have enough language to explain the content of the course. What does the testing look like? as I said before there are two tests. One is called the ESPA, or the English spoken proficiency assessment. And this is a test that Looks at your oral proficiency. It is administered in a language lab and then it is rated independently by two ESL instructors, and those two scores are averaged. Students who present an official and valid TOEFL, meaning the TOEFL comes from each ETS has been received by the University from The educational testing service and is valid meaning that it is Within the two year time frame for a valid TOEFL, and has a sub score of 26 in speaking and 25 and listening. anybody who presents that can be exempted from the ESPA. But you must take the second test. So if you have a TOEFL score that is valid within two years, you didn't take it longer than two years ago, and it's official the University has it or your department has it, Your department may ask that you be exempted from the ESPA. and we're happy to do that. If you want information about the ESPA, there is a video at our website, and it explains it and gives you an idea of what the test is. So if you pass the ESPA, now you
have, because you did a good job, you get to take another test. And that's called the English Language Performance Test. The ELPT. Students come to get their results and they are given instructions about making a 10 minute presentation to an audience on a topic from their discipline. So if you are in biology, you would prepare a presentation that would be for an introductory biology class. The audience will ask you questions during and after your presentation, they will interrupt you to ask you questions. And then after the presentation, Two ESL faculty rate the presentation and assign a level of certification. Only your language is evaluated. We do not evaluate your ability to teach, but rather your language. Can you organize things in the way English language Speakers organize things? What your pronunciation like? your fluency, your grammar, your ability to answer questions. All of those things that interact with the audience. And students who score 60 on the ESPA, So when you get your test results you will know this, then you are exempt from taking the ELPT because your English is extremely strong. You cannot get higher score than 60. and then you are fully certified.

What do we mean by certification or certified? There are several levels of certification, and these levels of certification reflect the duties the TA’S have at the university of Iowa. So very often departments award teaching assistantships and they want the TA to help with grading. Maybe they want the student to hold office hours. The most common duty is discussion sections leader, and that responsibility would be, you would be the person mainly in the classroom, but you would have a faculty supervisor. And then if you have full certification, It means that you had can have full responsibility to teach any course that your department might want you to teach. That means that you don't have a supervisor, except your chair, but it’s your course, top to bottom. For those who don't pass the test, if you don't pass the ESPA, there is work that has a focus on just language and then you are re-tested at the end of the course. If you don't do well enough on the ELPT to be able to go into the classroom and present information there is a course in presentations skills, but that's only after passing the ESPA. The other two classes are one that focuses on fluency and another one that focuses on pronunciation. All of these three classes have an emphasis on English for teaching. English in the classroom. And finally, the other components of the TAPE program, And that's teaching assistant preparation in English, and that's the one for TA’s, is an orientation program. And it’s two evenings or two late afternoons in which the first semester that you teach where you are actually presenting information, So a discussion section lab Instructor, or teaching your own course. And the orientation is to help you and acquaint you with some of the cross-cultural issues that you might face in the classroom, different from what you might cover in an orientation program in your department and then the final thing is a follow up program. So the first semester that you're teaching and again, as a discussion leader, a lab or your own class, somebody from ESL programs will come into your classroom, will arrange this ahead of time with you, to come in and observe your class. Not to evaluate you, not to report to your department, but to provide you with support. answer any questions. You have make suggestions and give you ideas on Ways that you might address any language issues that you still have, or any other kinds of issues. That is just for you, your department is not part of that. It’s between you and the person who comes in to your class to observe. So anyway. There’s another link there for you. So in the end, I think all of us here want to help you be successful and have a good educational experience. For questions that you might have about ESL and about any of the testing, there is the website there and there are various other places that there is information about that. So, and we are right across from the ISSS office. So thank you. And I look forward to seeing you in August.
Andrea: Thank you so much to our presenters for covering the important topics for our graduate students in preparation for their arrival. And now we have entered into our Q&A question and answer portion of the webinar. We still have some time to answer questions. So you're welcome to post them in the Q&A function while we are addressing the questions that we have received so far. Let's begin with a few questions that were related to the first couple of topics in regard to orientation. So one of the questions was asking whether the students will receive the graduate orientation information in advance. And how far in advance?

Anne: So for the large group up Grad Orientation event that takes place on August 21, All students, incoming grad students, will receive an invite to this event that usually comes at the end of June, beginning of July, and in it is a link to the website as well as the RSVP form. And then from the website, you could also get to hopefully the icon site but all students will have an invitation email that they receive.

Andrea: Another question is asking whether students can meet with their professor or advisor before the graduate orientation.

Anne: That's a good question. That would depend a lot on your program and your program's faculty availability. Faculty are sometimes here all summer working on things and sometimes they don't come in to campus until right before classes start. So it might be something that you would want to communicate with your advisor ahead of time. And if they're available, that would be perfectly reasonable to set up a meeting with them if they're open to that.

Andrea: Another question is in regard to the, it looks like international orientation student. And they have already flight tickets to arrive to Chicago a day after you suggested Michael, and can they still join the orientation because they seem to have certain personal reasons.

Michael: The good news is that it's still two months before orientation. So you have plenty of time to change your flight. It is absolutely essential that you attend the international student orientation. And if you miss that first day, you might miss out on some important information that allows you to take an English test. For example, or something that missing that could cause delays in getting some of these requirements done, Which could cause delays in registration and it could completely derail your program. So it is absolutely essential that you change your flight. So that you get here in time for international student orientation.

Andrea: Thank you so much. I appreciate that. The next question would be regarding the testing and the preparation for the English tests. There are quite a few different questions here, so let's start with one. Knowing that I have a TOEFL score of 107 on the internet-based test, do I need to take any further tests to be able to apply for TA? Teaching Assistantship?

Maureen: Yeah, the TOEFL of 107 would mean that you don't need to take the English proficiency evaluation unless your department had a specific reason for your doing that. However, that is separate from the testing for teaching assistants. If you look at your TOEFL and you look at the speaking score and
that's a 26 or higher, and your listening score is a 25 or higher, then you should contact your department to ask them to request an exemption from the first test which is the ESPA. but there would be no exemption for the second test.

Andrea: OK. Well, let's hope that this provided some clarification on which test needs to be taken. Thank you. The other question was a regarding, is taking EPE mandatory to all students? Even though they may have done pretty well in TOEFL or IELTS?

Maureen: Unless you submit a TOEFL score of 100 on the IBT or a 600 on the paper-based test, you will be required, in other words it is mandatory to take the EPE. Now a question that you, that one might ask is why is it OK to be exempt from the TOEFL but not the IELTS? and the reason for that is that the TOEFL and IELTS are different kinds of tests. They're both language proficiency tests. But the TOEFL is a much more academic emphasis, and because of that, the TOEFL tests the kinds of things that a student needs to do to be successful in an English speaking environment. So, for example, on the TOEFL you will have a reading, you will have some questions, But then you will also have some listening on the same topic with a few questions. And then you will be asked perhaps to write something in response, or say something in response. That is much closer to what you need to do than What you would find on the IELTS, which is less academic and in the speaking section does not have any kind of summary or discourse. But only an interview. And so the University's view is that the TOEFL is a place where somebody could be exempted if they have the certain score, But the IELTS is slightly different and doesn't have those same kinds of activities that are more academic.

Andrea: Thank you so much, I'm sure that this is very helpful to many other students that may have been wondering about the difference between TOEFL and IELTS. Thank you. The next question would be I couldn't find the example questions relating to EPE. where can I find questions to study the exam or Is there any other way I can prepare for it?

Maureen: The best way to prepare for the EPA, right now you have good language skills. If you have good language skills, you will do OK on the EPE. The best way to practice if you want to is to make sure that you've been doing some reading in English, listen to some English speakers on the internet, find some lectures or something like that. Get back into familiarizing yourself with English. Write a summary of something you read, read something academic. just get yourself in the habit of using and thinking in English and you should do OK.

Andrea: Perfect. Thank you. We hope that that helps answer the question. And this is a question about orientation. And again, someone is asking that they're are graduate dental student that they have an orientation towards the end of June. so how can I make sure of the exact date, time, and any other further details on their orientation? Is that going to be on iHawk, or how will they learn about this?

Michael: So dental students are a little bit different. they have their own orientation that's done by the dental college. The dental college has their own orientation that they'll tell you about. Now, you are free to also attend the international student orientation for grad students that happens in the fall. And if you ask us we’ll just provide you with the times of those sessions after you've arrived in the U.S. and checked in. part of your dental orientation will involve coming to ISSS's office with your immigration documents so that we can make copies of everything for you. And so, you will also do an English test at that same time, or around that same time. And so when you do that, you can ask us for the times of the
orientation sessions in the fall, and if you want to, you can attend those sessions as well. That's for the international student orientation. Do dental students usually attend the grad student specific orientation?

**Anne:** Dental students certainly can attend, but it wouldn't be required, and to be honest a lot of the content would probably be repeated from what they experienced in June.

**Andrea:** Perfect. Thank you so much. and moving on to the next questions. There are students who will have a relative that will be coming with them probably to United States, and they were asking whether they can have this relative attend their orientation with them.

**Michael:** So for the international student orientation it would be fine if you had a close relative with you during almost all of the sessions. The sessions that I can specifically think of where that would definitely not be OK are the English tests. those are going to be private things, you can't have extra people just sitting around in the room when everybody else is taking a test. but if you wanted to have a friend or if you wanted to Have your relative come during some of your informational sessions just so that they're kind of comfortable with the new environment where you are, that's absolutely fine for the international student orientation. for the graduate orientation, Anne?

**Anne:** For the graduate orientation you are more than welcome. If you have some family members attending that is just fine, I can't think of any portion of it that they wouldn't be welcome to attend as well.

**Andrea:** There is a question about the ESL classes. specifically she is asking if she can enroll in ESL class even after passing EPE.

**Maureen:** Okay well, Yes, perhaps. You could certainly come, and we could have a conversation and we could look at your test results and we could see if even though you were not required to take a class you might benefit from taking one. And then make the best determination for you based on that. If you would not benefit from a class, then we could look at other options that are available to help you feel more confident and more comfortable with your English.

**Andrea:** Wonderful. Thank you, and we hope that this helped address the question. A quick question was here. So what is the highest score for ESPA test? Because there was

**Maureen:** 60.

**Andrea:** 60, that’s the highest. There are couple of questions perhaps for Michael from students who are listening, and one of the students is currently an F-2 visa, but they are applying for a change of status and they expect that by the time of the orientation they may still be in F-2 status. Do they need to attend the orientation?

**Michael:** So you will need to attend the orientation at some point. But it depends on when you plan to change to F-1 status. Now, even if you don't attend, so if you don't think you're going to change to F-1 status until the next spring session for example, because changing your status from inside the U.S. does take a lot of time, even if you're not going to change your status until spring, there are some parts of the orientation that are probably going to be beneficial to you. And so we would encourage you to attend as much of the orientation as possible. And some things may be required, like the English test even if you're not in F-1 status you may still need to take an English test depending on your circumstances.
And so I would encourage you to attend as much of the orientation as possible. The one session that really wouldn't apply to you yet would be the F-1 immigration regulation session. But then we would want you to take that once you have changed your status. So we'd still encourage you to attend as much of the orientation as possible. But the F-1 immigration regulations May be able to wait until you actually change your status to F-1.

**Andrea:** Wonderful. Thank you Michael. And I hope that this helps address the question from the student. And actually we have a very similar question from another student who has B-1 B-2 visa, that is valid up until 2022. And they are asking, can I come to the United States and change my status over there? Or I must have to do so in my home country? The reason for this question is because my I-20 was just mailed to me and I am yet to receive it and the student is most likely concerned that they may not receive their visas in time.

**Michael:** I understand that concern but, unfortunately if you are going to enroll in coursework at the University of Iowa, You cannot do that using B status. That’s a violation of the B status and it could result in the U.S. government forbidding you from ever coming back to the country. So we do not want that to happen. And so even though I know visas might be taking a little bit longer, consulate appointments are starting to fill up, your only option is going to be to get that I-20, apply for the F-1 visa and come using that. now if there are delays in getting your visa, contact isss-orientation@uiowa.edu. let us know, let your program know. sometimes if the worst thing possible happens and your visa is just not issued on time. Sometimes departments can work with students that they can arrive just a little bit late. So let us know if that’s happening to you. But the part about the B visa, you can not begin your program using B status.

**Andrea:** Thank you. Michael. Thank you so much and we hope that that helped clarify the rules and requirements for those students. And one of the final questions, and students can still send them, but one of the questions is that, I still don't have my housing arranged, and I don't know where I can stay during the orientation. I am very new to your area, so can you help me, how should I go about this?

**Michael:** Certainly. If you go to the new student page that I mentioned earlier, So just go to the ISSS website and search for new students, We have links to a number of temporary housing options. There are a number of hotels in the area that have decent rates. there is also what we call bed and breakfasts, those are places where you can stay for a short time and get food as well as lodging. And so we have a link to many of those that are in the Iowa City area that will give you an option for where to live during orientation. if you haven't been able to secure housing at all, one option that I know is available to graduate students is the university apartments, which are at some place called Aspire At West Campus. It's Not on campus housing, but it is near campus housing. and those are some nice apartment buildings that have dog parks and things like that, that are dedicated to graduate students.

**Andrea:** Thank you very much Michael again, and I believe that this is, we’re reaching the end of our webinar session and I would like to ask everyone to please go ahead and fill out a very brief survey for the webinar, and I have just sent it in the chat function. So you will be able to access that link from there. And then also we have a link to the survey on our website where the webinar information is provided and it's shown here on the slide. So we appreciate any feedback that you can give us on today's webinar, it will help us tailor our presentations to your needs and suggestions. next I would like to give you some reminders that if you have any questions about the pre-arrival checklist or other issues
before your arrival, please contact us at the ISSS orientation email that Michael mentioned before, and the email address is provided here again. And then we repeat again, the resource, the wonderful resource for new students that we have on our website for new students. And again, it was referenced earlier, and the Web link is on the slide for your reference. And finally, I would like to invite you to still attend one of our additional webinars on international student employment. This is going to be relevant for both graduate and undergraduate students. And this webinar is going to take place on June 28, so we encourage you to please register for it. It’s going to have some very good information about the types of employment that international students can engage in while they’re here at school or after they graduate. and with that, Thank you so very much for attending our webinar and we look forward to having you join us next time and then also during our orientation in August. Bye bye.