Spring 2021 Pre-arrival Webinar Series:
Getting Started and Travel Tips  (AM)

Andrea: Hello, hello everyone. This is our first in the pre-arrival webinar series, conducted by the University of Iowa International Student and Scholar Services office. Welcome and today's topic is going to be Getting started and travel tips.

Andrea: Before we begin, let's hear a welcoming message from our Assistant Provost of International Programs, Mr. Douglas Lee.

Douglas: Hello, my name is Douglas Lee and I'm the Assistant Provost for International Programs. I look forward to seeing you in Iowa City soon. I'd like to introduce our webinar to you today. The webinar is on our pre-arrival checklist and making travel arrangements.

Andrea: All right, thank you very much. And if you have not attended webinars before and this is our first in the series, so I would like to mention briefly that this series is optional for the incoming international students and it is provided to you before you arrive in Iowa City. The objective of the series to help you to arrange plans for travel to and living in Iowa City, to understand orientation expectations and responsibilities and to transition to student life and academics at the University of Iowa. Please know that all webinars are recorded and will be posted on the website provided here, which is the international.uiowa.edu/prearrival-webinar. This is the website where you also registered for today's webinar.

Andrea: During the webinar, if you encounter any technical difficulties, please let us know in the chat function. And then, if you have any questions related to today's topic, please post those questions in a Q&A function and we will answer them live at the end of the webinar, as time permits.

Andrea: Okay, so if you have not received your I-20 or DS-2019 immigration document, please note that currently we are able to send the I-20 documents only electronically, which means you can receive them in a digital format. However, they still need to be printed in hard copy. The DS-2019 forms, however, still require a payment of eShipGlobal shipping fee in order to receive the document abroad or here in United States. Once document is received, only then you can apply for respective, either F-1 or J-1 visa. Information on this is also contained in the pre-arrival checklist in iHawk which is ihawk.uiowa.edu. If you have any questions whatsoever on these documents, please contact our orientation team at isss-orientation@uiowa.edu.

Andrea: Let's review some important dates. On November 15th is the deadline for accepting undergraduate admission. December 19, 2020 is the earliest day to arrive to United States while January 18, 2021 is the latest day to arrive to Iowa City and this is because we have mandatory online orientation starting on January 19th through 22nd. And on January 25th starts the spring 2021 semester.

Andrea: Let's do some presenter introductions.
Michael: Hi, my name is Michael Bortscheller. I'm the Associate Director of International Student and Scholar Services.

Andrea: And my name is Andrea Siebenmann and I am ISSS senior advisor and also webinar coordinator.

Andrea: Let's review quickly today's goals. First of all, we will hear about MyUI and specifically the admissions profile and Michael will lead you through that information. Then, I will speak about iHawk system for international students, as well as review the pre-arrival checklist in iHawk. And then finally, we will talk about a little bit of travel and transportation tips, as was mentioned earlier, we will have a live question and answer section of this webinar and we will try to answer your questions at that time. Michael?

Michael: Alright, so I'm gonna get started by going over the MyUI admissions profile and just some other things that you're going to use in MyUI as you get ready to hopefully come here in the spring semester. And I will just mention very briefly, of course, we're in unusual times. Normally, we know that everybody would be coming to us physically in person in Iowa City, but it's possible this spring that you will not come here physically. That you either are not able to get a visa or that you don't want to come to the US right now, but that you'll want to start your program online and that's fine. You can do all of this stuff even if you're only going to be attending online in the spring. So, let's get started.

Michael: So, when you first log in to MyUI and in this website, which I'll mention again later, which is myui.uiowa.edu, you're going to see a number of different tiles that are available to you and in all of these are important but we're going to focus on just a few of them for right now. The first one that I want to highlight is this little tile with a house picture called address change. Now it's important that you update a US address if you're going to be inside the United States because we need a US address for you if you're going to have your immigration record registered. The next thing is the admissions profile. We'll talk more about the admissions profile in a little bit but you can access it from this tile here. The third thing is your name pronunciation. This is fantastic because many students are going to be coming from all over the world and there will be many Americans and many people on campus who won't be familiar with names in your home country, and so you can actually record yourself saying your own name so that anyone on campus will know how to pronounce your name when they're meeting you for the first time. It's really neat. The fourth thing I want to talk about is your preferred name and pronouns. So, if you have a nickname that you like to go by you can indicate it here. You should know though, that we and ISSS we are required to use passport names and so, when we call you we'll probably refer to you by your passport name. You can also indicate your pronouns. So, if you go by he/him/his, she/her/hers or anything else you can indicate what pronouns you'd like people to use when they refer to you. And the final thing I want to point out is that when you're logging in to MyUI you're going to do so by clicking the blue HawkID login button. Your HawkID and password are something that you're going to use throughout your time at the University of Iowa.

Michael: And along those lines, you should continue to check your profile throughout the time before you start your studies. After the University of Iowa gets your application, you'll receive a HawkID and password from the Office of Admissions. That allows you to access the University's online student
services portal. It also allows you to access iHawk, which Andrea is going to talk about later. You can find the status of your application online through your admissions profile. You can find your admissions profile under the Quick Links, you can also click on that tab, that tile, that I highlighted just the slide to go.

**Michael:** So, when you click on your admissions profile, it's going to look like this. And there's a number of good things to talk about and we'll go through them but the first thing I want to highlight is the helpful links section. So, if you look here, you've got a little section for helpful links and there's a lot of student information. There's a lot of information here that you can access you can find out information about transferring credit. You can find out information about setting up a guest account, information about finding the University of Iowa on Facebook or the University’s newspaper. Anything you really want or not anything, but many things that you will want are available right there.

**Michael:** So, moving on in the admissions profile or rather, talking about what you can do in the admissions profile, you can accept the offer of admission and pay your acceptance fee to attend the University of Iowa. You’re also able to submit your housing application. And we do recommend that you do this as soon as possible. We’re going to have another webinar on housing November 6th, so if you want to know more about on-campus housing, please attend that webinar on November 6th to get that information. You can also set up your free University of Iowa email account in your admissions profile and this is important because this is the official method of communication that the University will have with you. You really need to learn to check your university email once per day, at least once per day. You'll be able to connect to your required placement tests. For example, international students will typically need to take a mathematics placement test and a chemistry placement test. If you speak any language other than English, you won't need a world language placement test. You can also download a medical history form. When Andrea talks about the pre-arrival checklist in iHawk, she'll talk a little bit more about this.

**Michael:** Now, continuing on in your admissions profile, you can find information about your test results that you’ve submitted to the University of Iowa and also the things that still need to be done. As you see here, we have this little red bar indicating that there are still items that are needed. In particular, in this case, there is an acceptance fee that needs to be paid and final high school transcripts need to be submitted. So, this is how you can tell in your admissions profile what still needs to be done.

**Michael:** And if you continue scrolling down in your admissions profile, you'll see your next steps to complete. And the steps that we have highlighted here are the immigration documents. This is what Andrea is going to talk about when she talks about the pre-arrival checklist in iHawk. She actually mentioned it earlier. This is your I-20, if you're going to be an F-1 student, or your DS-2019, if you’re going to be a J-1 student. As Andrea mentioned because of the COVID-19 pandemic we are able to send I-20’s electronically, so you can actually get that emailed to you. But DS-2019's do still need to be sent in the mail. The next step that we're going to highlight is that you can accept the offer of admission. So, as you see here this gives you the opportunity to accept the offer of admission and pay the acceptance fee by credit card. Those are the things I wanted to highlight in the MyUI admissions profile. Now, I'm going to hand it off to Andrea so that she can talk about the pre-arrival checklist in iHawk.
Andrea: We will be talking, as Michael said, I will be talking about the iHawk and pre-arrival checklist in the next few slides. So please, bear with me. We will be going through all of this process and I am pretty sure that many of you who are listening now are already familiar with our iHawk login. But just in case, this is the address where you will find the iHawk login page, it’s ihawk.uiowa.edu. And then when you enter that webpage, this is what you will see. The most important piece of information here is going to be the blue login button where you will enter your login credentials that you should have received through your admissions correspondence.

Andrea: So, basically you will enter your username, your password that you received and then, you will be able to enter the pre-arrival checklist. And here, I would like to mention a quick tip to please bookmark the iHawk link in your internet browser that you’re using because I’m pretty sure if you’re going to be the student at the University of Iowa, you will be using this quite a bit as an international student, so it might come in handy.

Andrea: All right, the next step would be, as I mentioned, the pre-arrival checklist itself. So, if you have not started on your pre-arrival checklist yet, this is how it looks. It actually consists of about five tabs or pages where you will see different links to be completed. We will go through those independently. The first checklist tab is the welcome tab, the next one is arrival information and information collection, online exams and courses, and then finally the orientation tab. Now, we will go through all of those in a little bit of a detail.

Andrea: Let’s start with the welcome tab. On the welcome tab, you have a couple of links that are going to be important for you to complete and the first one of those is passport and financial guarantee information. So, this is really after program admission is confirmed with you, so that’s something you need to do and then is also very much required to issue the initial I-20 form for you. In terms of passport information, we are looking for the photo page and sometimes students are experiencing little issues if there are trying to upload perhaps a file that is too big. But there are instructions on this link as to what the size and format of that picture of your passport should be. If you do encounter any issues with this, please email at ISSS orientation and someone will get back to you and assist you with this. Also, you will need to enter passport data because this is going to be important for your check-in as a new international student and we need to have that information in our system. And as a quick reminder here, please remember that the password validity must be six months or more after your arrival date to United States. And then finally, it would be the financial documentation that you need to also attach here and also details on that what is required are provided here.

Andrea: Next link, is the pay eShip global mailing fee. In the times when we were, we had to actually mail the I-20 in hard copy to students, this is what students have to absolutely complete in order for them to receive their I-20. As was mentioned earlier by myself and also Michael, this function is currently, temporarily disabled because we are still able to deliver the I-20 documents electronically and this is because the government has permitted us to do so during the COVID-19 pandemic. But we thought we would be helpful for you to know that this is something if and when things may change in the near future, and the government makes up their mind, and they start requesting that students have
to receive their I-20s in hard copy, then this is what you will have to be using. And of course, this function is still required for the students who need to receive DS-2019 documents.

**Andrea:** Next tab, is the arrival information tab. Again, we have several links here on this page that need to be completed and we are highlighting couple of those here. First one is the pre-arrival contact information. This is something where you would provide either parent or your guardian’s information. Please do not provide information for an agent from the agency that recruited you for the University of Iowa. That is not an acceptable information. The next link that we would like to highlight is the booking flight to the Eastern Iowa airport with the code CID. We will be talking about this a few times later, or I will review this information in more detail later, but basically on this link and page you will see some reminders about when and how soon you can arrive to United States, which is 30 days or less and that's why we were giving you those dates when you can arrive earliest or latest. And then, also there are some reminders about transportation to Iowa City. Again, we will cover this in detail later.

**Andrea:** The next links here on the arrival information tab are about housing. So, as Michael mentioned we will have a very detailed webinar on housing on November 6th. If you would like to attend and learn more about both on-campus and off-campus housing, we would strongly encourage you to please register for that webinar as you will find it very helpful. Then, next link is about paying your SEVIS fee. This is something that is required by the government, especially if the student needs to apply for brand new visa. The receipt for payment of the SEVIS fee is required when you are in your visa interview. So, it's absolutely necessary that you do this. Especially before you apply for your visa. And there is a website, which is fmjfee.com. And finally, on this tab you will see a new student orientation link and webpage, where again there will be a reminder about your orientation. Just in case, I'm mentioning it again, it's online this year, it's an online orientation. It's mandatory, and it's going to take place January 19th through 22nd.

**Andrea:** Next tab is going to be your information collection tab. And here I would like to start with highlighting the first couple of links. First one is of course, if you are brand new international student coming to the University, you need to apply for US Visa, either F-1 or J-1 visa, depending on which category of the student you will be. And this is absolutely necessary for you to have in order to be permitted to enter United States. You will apply for the US visa at your local US embassy or consulate. And we would like to remind you that because of this unusual year of the COVID-19 pandemic, please apply early because there have been some delays already because of the closures of the embassies and consulates around the world. So it is important, especially if you would like to and you are able to arrive to Iowa City in person in January next year, then it's important that you schedule your interview as soon as possible, especially after you get your I-20 or DS-2019. There is a reminder about the documentation required for your visa and more information and details you can find for your new student arrival webpage, we will highlight it later on, but there is a special information on visa and immigration. The next link here is a biographical information, which is very simple where you enter your date of birth, which country you were born, citizenship and so forth. And make sure to provide your full name as it appears on your passport.
Andrea: Again, in the information collection tab, as Michael mentioned earlier, there is this link where we are asking you to please read a text that is rather long but is very important for you to understand what kind of documents are required for health and immunization information that the University must collect from you. These documents can be submitted to the email address provided here, which is internationalforms@healthcare.uiowa.edu. Please make sure, and we are providing this reminder again here, that to remember to please do not get TB skin or blood test or BCG vaccine before you travel to United States. Otherwise they become invalidated and you would have to work with our health, student health services on this. Again, if you may be a student 18 years and younger, you have to fill out a minor consent form on this page.

Andrea: And finally, on the information collection tab, there are these last three links, important links. First of all, if you were a high school student coming to United States to start your program here, you need to provide your high school transcripts. We accept originals only by mail or bring it in person. I’m sure you can now mail them also electronically, you can check with the admissions or they will let you know. If you do not provide your transcripts though, there may be an issue with your registration the following semester. Please make sure to take care of this as soon as possible. Then, we have an arrival information tab or link rather, where there is another reminder about your travel and where you should be arriving. And again, I’ll cover this in a moment. And then finally, if you did receive your new visa, please upload them here. Again, this is going to be important for your check in with us, if and when you become a new international student at the University. Again, just a quick reminder, if you do not have your visa by the time you travel to United States, unfortunately there may not be or will not be any entry permitted to you, to enter the country.

Andrea: The second to the last tab on the pre-arrival checklist is about online exams and courses. Michael touched up on this a little bit but basically this tab is reminding you to please complete your placement exams. This is important because your academic advisor will need to see the results of these tests because that will help them to help you to tailor your academic program and the classes, registration for classes, even in the very first semester that you’re here, so that’s why those are important. So, please complete those exams if you are required. And then there is also an English placement test. This is indicated by a blue letter or other documentation that you may receive from us along with your I-20 or DS-2019. And technically this is going to be actually discussed in much greater detail in our webinar that will take place on December 4th. That’s where we will have a director of the English as a Second Language programs who will talk about the English placement tests in detail and it will help you understand what to expect from that test. And finally, there is a link about the required course for the new students, and this is primarily for undergraduates students. This is called a Success at Iowa and the course will be starting this time on December 1st and again, we will be mentioning this course in our webinar on December 4th. So, if you are an undergraduate student starting your program in the spring, it might be helpful for you to hear this information on December 4th from our panelists at that time.

Andrea: And finally, we have the orientation tab, yay! You are coming to the final preparation to receive the information about your orientation schedule. This tab is not going to appear for you until you created and finalized all of the previous tabs and provided all of the previous information. So, please
make sure to complete everything as soon as you can. Our orientation team will follow up with you and will prepare your unique schedule. So, please follow your own schedule very carefully. If you do have any conflicts on your schedule for some, any reason, please do contact our orientation team to work with them on helping you. But you need to first of all and foremost follow the schedule. And then we do have a link to useful links and resources here and this is the link.

**Andrea:** This is primarily taking you to the new student website that provides a host of very important and useful information for you as a new international student. You will find different sections here on pre-arrival information, there is a separate section for exchange and sponsored students, so make sure to please go into this website and look at all of the information. I am pretty sure you will find a lot of answers here to many questions you may have. I know it could be, it sounds like a lot but trust me, we are thinking a lot about what the new students can need or require and this is going to be very helpful for you.

**Andrea:** And we are going into our travel arrangements. All right, so if you recall in the information collection tab, I was mentioning the arrival information link. So, that's a separate e-form actually where it's going to be providing you with reminders about the airport location that we strongly recommend. And this is the Eastern Iowa airport with the code CID, that's the international airport code. And this is located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Again, I will mention briefly more about this in the next slides but again this is just a reminder to please make sure that you book your tickets to this airport. This is the closest airport to Iowa City where our university is located, and will be the easiest way for you to transition and transport yourself to Iowa City. If you may arrive to other airport locations, for example in Chicago, that's going to be your final airport, or if you go to Des Moines, which is another major airport in Iowa, there are some reminders here on this page as to what you need to expect - mostly that the transportation that you will need to arrange for yourself to Iowa City from either of these airports, okay?

**Andrea:** Well. This year, as we were mentioning earlier, is anything but normal and standard year for students to prepare for their travel to Iowa. So, we would like to provide you with some measures and information, especially information resources that you can find related to COVID-19. Please note that in the United States, we have a centers for disease control agency. It's a government agency that provides a lot of important guidelines as to the corona virus measures and so please make sure that you familiarize yourself with this information as well. They provide also information and travel and so this website cdc.gov/coronavirus is something that we strongly recommend for you to be aware of. Next, please note that the University of Iowa is taking COVID-19 measures very seriously. We have done a lot, a lot of work to accommodate students to ensure to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 on campus and in the community. And so, University’s measures related to COVID-19 can be found on its separate website which is coronavirus.uiowa.edu. And again, this is something that you can browse freely for any updates that the university has in relation to any important information for students, staff or faculty working at the University. And next, I would like to highlight that ISSS has its own website where we have important information related specifically to travel and/or other concerns related to our international student community. And so, this is a long website but you will find this information helpful as well. I would like to say that on this webpage, you will find also the country specific restrictions on travel that are still in place for some of the countries including China, Brazil, Iran and then also, there are
some restrictions still on Europe, even though there have been some waivers to that ban before students were coming to the school in fall. However, for these countries, and students from these countries, if they're coming directly to United States, unfortunately, you are not able to come to United States directly. You would have to spend 14 days in quarantine in another third country that is not on the banned list, and from which you would be then allowed to enter United States. So please, make sure to follow information very carefully and be sure that you understand these requirements very well and make arrangements accordingly.

Then, we would like to remind you to please make sure that you understand the security and health screening protocols at your departure airport in your home country, as well as the protocols at connecting or transfer airports abroad or in United States. But also the United States airports where you arrive as the first port of entry because all of these airports may have their own COVID-19 protocols. And they do. And so here in United States, depending on which state the airport is located in, they have different requirements for health screening, temperature checks, post-arrival quarantine. So again, please, we would advise that you please check with your airline carrier’s website because they would provide you with information related to your travel as well. Again, as I was mentioning the protocols may vary by state and county in the US where you arrive to United States. And for example, state of Iowa and the Johnson County. I’m sorry, there is a typo. Johnson County, where Iowa City’s located, as well as City of Iowa City, they all have their own health department requirements related to COVID-19 and they're all taking very close measures to make sure to minimize the spread of this pandemic.

Andrea: The next information that may be helpful for you when you're packing your luggage is that there are different requirements and allowances for your check-in luggage and then also for your carry-on luggage. We recommend to please follow the airline specifications. Make sure that you understand how heavy the luggage can be, how much you can pack in there so that you don't have the extra size or weight fees unnecessarily. Then, the carry-on luggage has certain restrictions as well, especially when you travel to United States and within the United States. Again, this is a requirement that has been in place for several years, especially after 9/11. So, make sure you understand all of this before you pack your luggage. Also, we would like to remind you that because of the travel can be so unpredictable to please be flexible and be prepared for maybe a longer layover, flight delays, missed connection or even secondary inspection at the airport which could cause a little bit of a delay. So, make sure that you carry at least a small amount of US currency in cash in case you may need to purchase a meal or two, and hopefully not have to stay in a hotel somewhere in United States before you travel to the US. But, since we’re talking about the winter travel in January, in most of the Midwest where our Iowa City is located, there could be some winter weather that could cause some delays or technical issues with the planes, so please be prepared especially if you travel through United States in the winter.

Andrea: So, speaking of packing, we do have a recommendation to go to the University of Iowa Housing Department’s website where they have a useful link called “What to bring”. And in addition to the important documents such as passport, visa, University of Iowa immigration documents, either I-20 or DS-2019, admissions letter and your financial documentation that you used to receive your immigration document and your visa, this might be something you might find helpful. And then also we just would list very quick essentials that you, students may think about before they arrive to United States, especially if you have any prescriptions and need different electronics and maybe clothing. Again, this is
something that we would remind you that you're traveling to United States in deep, deep of winter in January, so make sure that you prepare accordingly. Students can sometimes underestimate how cold it can get here in Iowa, so we would be happy to provide any details if necessary, but again that information is actually provided on our website for new students if you need to. And there are stores here in the United States and in Iowa, where you can purchase your clothing and in different and discount stores as well.

**Andrea:** After you arrive to United States, this is what you could expect here and we are just going through this very briefly. So, you will go through the US customs preparation, or declaration filling. That could be on paper or apparently some big airports have e-kiosks. Then, you would go through the customs and border protection check, and this is also called an immigration check, where you will present your immigration documents, or could be ask for secondary inspection if there may be something missing in your documentation. Where you will also answer any questions that you may be asked about your purpose of traveling to United States. Here you will also retrieve your luggage, go through the agricultural and customs check and then catch your connecting flight, if it's applicable to you. So, we would recommend to read your departure flight boards for any updates, especially if you're catching a connecting flight here.

**Andrea:** Okay, a little bit about Iowa and Eastern Iowa Airport. So, this is where Iowa is in relation to the United States of America. So, we are again in a part, or region called Midwest. And this is a map of Iowa and I have just put a little star across next to Cedar Rapids. This is the city, second largest city in Iowa, where you would be flying into, we would recommend strongly be flying to. And then this is Iowa City. Okay, so that's why we're recommending to fly to Cedar Rapids Eastern Iowa Airport because that's the closest airport to Iowa City.

**Andrea:** And this is how the airport looks after renovations that were completed last year and early this year. So, you will find it very nice and small regional airport. It's nothing compared to Chicago or LAX or other major airports, but it's very functional and you will find it very easy to navigate.

**Andrea:** And final reminder about the airport is transportation to Iowa City area. We are providing here a link to the Eastern Iowa airport website, which is flycid.com, and here you will find some suggestions for ground transportation. This is something that you are going to be responsible for and hence we are recommending this airport for you because that's the easiest way for you to get to Iowa City. The distance between the cities is only like 30 miles, which is about 40, 40 plus kilometers, so it's about 35 minute ride or 45 depending on where you will be going in Iowa City. In that respect, we would really like to remind you to please use only taxi service that originated in Iowa City. So, you will have to ask the taxi driver or see on their car to say that they're from Iowa City. If you were to use the taxi from Cedar Rapids, you may be paying a very hefty fee. Please note that University does not provide airport transportation to Iowa City area and that there could be a University student government transportation provided, but that needs to be announced independently and we would let you know. And also finally, please note that International Student and Scholar Services staff cannot pick you up at the airport. We do not have the means to do that. So, we apologize but then again this is something that students will lead to arrange individually and independently from us.
Q&A

Andrea: And I believe that that's the end of my presentation and Michael, I will let you go through the Q&A, or question and answers section, of the webinar.

Michael: All right, so we've got some great questions submitted but there's still time if you'd like to submit your own question. To submit it using the Q&A function in zoom.

Michael: All right, so the first question we have is someone wants to know if they need to submit their passport if they're not going to travel to the United States. And the answer to that is no, if you are not planning on coming to the US in the spring, you don't absolutely need to submit your passport. However, if you want to get an I-20 that will allow you to come to the US next fall, you would need to submit your passport at that time. So, even though you don't need to submit your passport right away, you're probably going to have to do it eventually. And so, it's probably going to be easiest to just submit it right now.

Michael: The next question, if this is an online orientation, can I attend it at home and then come to Iowa City after orientation? The answer to this is that it would be possible to do that but we don't recommend it and let me explain why. There is no mandatory period of quarantine in Iowa City right now for when you're traveling internationally. But of course, we all know that COVID-19 is unpredictable and when you're traveling internationally, when you're in these airports and in planes, there is a small chance that you could be exposed, there's a risk. And so the safest thing is to make sure you give yourself plenty of time so that if you become exposed and then that I don't mean that if you catch COVID-19, I mean, if you become exposed to it, then you can self-isolate for a period of 14 days, so that you will know that you're not giving that to anyone else. For that reason, it's better to come early than it is to come late. So, if you plan on coming to the United States, we would recommend that you come before the online orientation begins.

Michael: Oh, so another question, can we attend the online orientation being in the United States itself? Yes, if you're already in the US and you want to attend the orientation online that is perfectly fine. Even if you're in Iowa City, the orientation will still be conducted online. And that's really useful for you because what that means is the orientation sessions will not only be presented live, where you'll have that opportunity to ask questions, but they'll exist online afterwards. That means you're going to be able to review all of the information that's presented, even after the orientation itself. So, if you're really tired one morning and you're not doing a good job of understanding things because you're so tired, you'll be able to go back after you've had a nap and you'll be able to understand everything that was presented. And that actually plays into the very next question.

Michael: The next question is somebody wants to know if the orientation will be recorded because there's a time difference between their home country and the time in the US. Again, these orientation sessions will be recorded. Yes, and so you'll be able to attend them afterwards, but I do want to emphasize it is great to attend these sessions live because you'll be able to ask questions just like you're asking now. Just like these questions in the Q&A. You'll be able to get immediate answers to your
questions from the presenters. Now, if you can't, that's okay. You can attend them or you can view them after the fact and you can email to get answers to questions as well. It's just often more convenient for you to get the questions answered right away.

Michael: We have two questions that are essentially the same thing. People want to know if they have to quarantine after reaching Iowa City. So, Andrea mentioned this before that in the United States, we have a number of different health organizations. Here in Johnson County, in the state of Iowa, we are following guidance that ultimately comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And their recommendation is that you do not need to quarantine after you travel to Iowa City unless you know that you've been exposed. So, if you're just traveling and you have no reason to believe you've been exposed to COVID-19, you do not need to quarantine once you arrive in Iowa City. However, again, we all know what this disease is like and so it's always a good idea to be cautious. If you feel like you have symptoms, if you are worried that you might have been exposed, once you arrive in Iowa City you can contact student health at the University of Iowa and you'll find out more about student health when you go through your pre-arrival checklist and talk about the immunizations and things like that, but you can contact them over the phone, you can describe your concerns and the nurses will help direct you if they believe you need to get tested, they'll help you do that. If they think you're fine, they'll let you know.

Michael: Okay, the next question, how cold will it be in January and what type of clothes should I bring. Iowa has famously unpredictable weather. It can be fairly warm in January sometimes. It's not always snowy, but for most of our international students, it will feel extremely cold and occasionally we can have things that are called blizzards where it is just snow everywhere and freezing cold. So you definitely are going to want to bring a coat with you and you will want to do what we call you'll “dress in layers” and dressing in layers means you'll have some light clothing with more light clothing on top of it. So, a shirt with a jacket and then a coat on top of that. That way, no matter where you are, you can maybe take off a bigger coat or you can take off the lighter coat if it's hot but you can put them back on and keep you as warm as possible if you need to be.

Michael: Oh, this is a great question, someone wants to know if they're going to be able to meet people if the orientation is online. And we are going to do our best to help you form a sense of community, even if your attending these things online. We'll have small group sessions where you'll be in a meeting with other students in your small group and a small group leader and you'll be able to see everybody and meet it that way and talk to each other individually. So, you will be able to meet people even though so much of this stuff is going to be happening from computer screens. Once again, this is a great reason to be attending these sessions live instead of just after the fact once they're recorded.

Michael: Another question is about quarantining, if necessary. Does the University arrange for any place to stay or for self-quarantine? Does the university provide or is there any other accommodation or do students need to do that for themselves? If you are planning to live in the University residence halls, the University will help you find a place to isolate or to quarantine if necessary. However, if you live off-campus, you're going to have to figure that out for yourselves. Now, for most people living off campus means you have a room that's your own and maybe you have a roommate but they have their own
room. And so you can stay in your room for the most part. Your roommate can maybe help you get things from any common area that you need to but for the most part you'll be able to stay isolated from anyone else. If you live in on-campus housing, if you live in the University housing, the University will provide space for you.

**Michael:** And the last question which is somewhat related to that, is there anyone who I can contact for some advice regarding good neighborhoods to find off-campus housing. Iowa City is generally quite safe. You know all college towns have some issues in them in the United States, but for the average place, the average city in the US Iowa City is quite safe. So there isn't really a huge distinction in different neighborhoods that I would say. There are some good landlords and bad landlords and things like that and honestly your best bet is just to talk to other students, to ask people online. The one thing I will say is that the University has a wonderful resource for finding different apartment listings. That resource is offcampushousing.uiowa.edu and so you can type that in, it's offcampushousing, all one word, .uiowa.edu.

**Michael:** And it looks like we got one more question in. Is there a way that I can get connected to current students to ask for advice? Depending on what you want to do, there is, yeah. So, there are some organizations on campus that are student organizations and you can actually reach out to those student organizations and find out if there's anybody who can give advice to an incoming student. So, as an example, you could reach out to somebody from your cultural background or something like that. If you go to the University of Iowa home page and just search for student organizations, you can find that. Additionally, if you email us at ISSS-orientation and let us know that you have questions or let us know that you want to speak to somebody, we can try to reach out to current students and see if anybody is able to help you out. Please understand many students are very busy with their own studies, so it's not always certain that somebody will be available to help you. And we can't give you anyone's information because of privacy laws in the US. So, what we would have to do is get the permission of the other student before we could connect you. And with that, we've reached the end of our questions and so I will let Andrea take it off from here.

**Andrea:** Thank you, Michael. This is just a reminder and I just sent a quick message in the chat to please help provide your feedback to this webinar. We always appreciate your observations and suggestions on whether there is anything that we need to mention yet for you and other students in this presentation. Thank you so much and the link again is in the chat function and also, you can find it on the website for the webinars where you registered and it’s the item number eight.

**Andrea:** So again, a quick reminder about contact information, we have mentioned this email address quite a bit during the webinar today, but again, I'll mention it again. If you have any questions whatsoever, about the pre-arrival checklist or other issues that you may have or concerns, please contact isss-orientation@uiowa.edu and we will get back to you as soon as possible. And then also we mentioned the website for new international students with additional wonderful resources. Again, this is international.uiowa.edu/new-students.

**Andrea:** And finally, this is a reminder about our webinar schedule. Again, thank you very much for
attending today's webinar and the next one is going to take place on October 23rd. We will be discussing money matters. This is a very important topic where we will have representatives from the University Billing department as well as benefits office and they will be talking about the billing options as well as the health insurance coverage, so please join us for that presentation as well on October 23rd and then we have two or three more actually webinars after that. So, thank you again for attending we will have you attend, we look forward to having you attend our next webinar. Take care, bye-bye.

**Michael:** Thanks everyone bye.