Fall 2019 Pre-arrival Webinar:
Off Campus Living and Support

Andrea: Hello everyone! Welcome to our number five webinar in the series of pre-arrival webinars for new students coming to the University of Iowa and starting their program in the fall of 2019. Today's topic is “Off campus living and support.” A little bit about the webinar series. The pre-arrival webinars are an optional webinar series provided to incoming International students before they arrive in Iowa City. The objective of this series is to help new international students arrange plans for travel to and living in Iowa City, to understand orientation expectations and responsibilities, and then transition to student life and academics at the University of Iowa. We would like to remind you that all webinars are recorded and then will be posted on the website shown here on the slide, and it will take typically about two to three weeks to post. 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 use the Q and A function to post your questions. We will answer them live at the end of the webinar as time permits. If you have not received your I-20 or DS-2019 form, please pay the eShipGlobal shipping fee so that ISSS can mail you your document. Once you have this document, then you can apply for your visa. This information is also contained in the pre-arrival checklist in iHawk, the website link provided on the slide. And then if you have any questions about your forms please do not hesitate to contact ISSS orientation team at the email provided on the slide. Isss-orientation@uiowa.edu.

Let's talk about some important dates. May 1 has already gone, this was an undergraduate admission acceptance deadline. And then we would like to remind you about orientation for international students, which is mandatory. For graduate students, orientation will take place August 13 through 16. For undergraduate students August 19 through 23. And then finally August 26 is going to be the first day of fall semester. Let's have some introductions. We would like to correct the presenter's name, it was supposed to be Christopher but today we are joined by Amanda from the same office. Amanda?

Amanda: Hey everyone. My name is Amanda Elkins. I'm one of the attorneys at student legal services at the University of Iowa.

Andrea: And my name is Andrea Siebenmann and I'm one of the ISSS advisers, and I will be also the webinar moderator for today. The goals of today's presentation is for our participants to learn about the advantages and disadvantages of living in privately owned housing located off campus. Also to learn the best practices for obtaining off-campus housing, things to consider before signing a rental agreement and ways to avoid potential pitfalls in the process. And again, we will have time for live question and answer time. You're welcome to post your questions during the webinar as they come through.

Amanda: Alright. So let's talk about the advantages of living off campus as opposed to University Residence Halls or other living arrangements. First off there are more options for types of housing. So, for example, if you are bringing your family with you or you're living with a large number of other students, you have the ability to live in a house or a larger apartment complex than perhaps what the university could provide. You're also going to have more options for privacy. So meaning more options for a private room, then also not as tight of living quarters as perhaps you'd have in the residence halls. There's also the potential to save money. That really just depends on the type of unit that you're living in and the type of amenities that it provides, but there are some costs that you wouldn't know about
necessarily until you actually get here. Another advantage of living off campus would be the increased availability of parking. There are a lot of private apartments and homes that would include your own parking spot or that you could pay to have your own parking spot, because parking on campus can be challenging. And then as I mentioned, a better situation for a family, more likely to have a backyard, space for a pet and then just a larger home especially for families.

But there are some disadvantages to living off campus. There is a risk of low quality housing. Depending on the property owner they may be kind of run-down I guess I would say housing options where maintenance is likely better when you’re living on campus. And so lack of responsive maintenance. So they may be not as quick to make necessary repairs. As I mentioned in the last slide there is some uncertainty with respect to costs. There may be additional charges so, for example, if you are late pay your rent, if you cause damages, if you are having multiple people sleep in the same bedroom some landlords charge additional fees for that. And so there are some variables, they’re not set in stone, these fees. There's also a cost of utilities that you wouldn't be paying in the residence halls. So for that we're talking about water, electric, gas, the Internet, television, those types of things. Also transportation difficulties, as I mentioned parking can be difficult. Really on or off campus especially if you're having to park on the street. But then also if you are living farther from the downtown campus you will probably be able to get a nicer or bigger apartment, but then you have to think about parking, bus schedules that kind of thing. And then lastly roommate problems. Here if you do have, if you're living off campus and you have a problem with your roommate, it's not usually the type of thing where you can just move to a different unit. Whereas if you're living on campus and you’re having problems with the person that you’re living with, the university is perhaps more flexible in changing you to a different place either to live by yourself or to live with someone else.

So tips for obtaining an apartment, first off consider the hidden costs of renting, and I've touched on some of them. You would have a monthly rent payment, you are likely going to have to pay security deposit, which is Money that the landlord holds on to you while you're living there and then could perhaps try to take from you at the end of your lease if you owe the landlord money or you've caused damage to the unit. There's also utility fees, perhaps a pet fee if you want to have a pet, there's fees if you want to sublease your apartment. So that often happens at the end of the school year if you are not planning to stay until the end of your lease. Because most leases in Iowa City do start in August and end in July. So if you're planning to go home for the summer you are still required to pay your rent unless you actually have someone who is willing to live there in pay your rent for you. You can find another, there's a lot of ways to find an apartment. There is an off campus housing website that is hosted on the University's website, that there is a website called Craigslist. But we do caution you there that there are scams. So people trying to offering you an apartment that they don't actually have, so be cautious if you're looking at an outside, if you're looking at a website like that. there is also a lot of times on social media people who are looking for apartments. Websites for our local newspapers such as the Daily Iowan or the Press-Citizen. So we do want you to read the entire lease before you sign it and make sure that you understand it. if you don't you should ask questions. We do have a rental guide on our website. I believe the website will be at the end of the presentation. And so a lot of your questions can be get answered there as well. We do recommend that you look at the actual unit before you sign, and I know that can be difficult for international students. So it may be helpful to find temporary housing here in Iowa City for a couple of days when you arrive, so that you can actually look at the apartment before
you move into the apartment. If you have friends that are already in Iowa City or who are moving in before you are, they could also perhaps go to the apartment to look at it to take pictures to take video to have a perhaps have a video chat with them so that you can look at the apartment.

Once you have a lease, or if you’re thinking about signing a lease, you’re here but you haven’t signed it yet, you can schedule an appointment with our office and one of our lawyers will review the lease with you and talk to you about any questions you may have. We also recommend that you talk to the people who are currently living in your apartment. So these are people that are moving out at the end of July before you arrive in August. A lot of times the landlord will provide their phone number or their email address so that you could ask questions. And then lastly you can check the rental permit. I think the website for the Iowa City Housing Inspector is currently down, we hope to have that up soon. And that’s where you can check any safety violations that the landlord has had. And you can you confirm that the landlord is actually allowed to rent this unit. Property managers in this area are required to have a rental permit that’s approved by the city, whether that’s Iowa City or Coralville, which is right next to Iowa City, very close, similar bus systems. There are also a few other smaller towns in the area. They’re a little further away, but they would also likely require rental permits.

So when you’re signing a lease, a lease is a written document. It’s an agreement between you and the property manager. Remember that once you sign this lease it is legally binding, and that means it’s not something that you can easily change your mind about once you signed. There are likely financial consequences for changing the lease or canceling the lease. You should sign the lease at the same time as your roommates if you’re going to have roommates. You should get a copy of the signed lease for your records. So that if you have questions about the lease while you’re living there, you’ll have a copy to review and also a copy to give to our office if you’d like us to answer questions. We do have quite a few students who have difficulties with their roommates, and oftentimes it’s because their roommate is not paying their fair share of the rent payment. Or they just have a personality difference with the roommate. So that's why we tell all students to consider living alone, because there are quite a few apartments in Iowa City, that are just for one person, and then that way you can avoid some of those problems. And then lastly, never sign an incomplete lease. So that means if the landlord says oh, there’s some changes and we can just add those changes in later. No, you want all of the - if there are changes they should be in the lease at the very beginning. So, for example, let’s say the landlord says that they’re going to make a repair before you move in. we want that in writing. Let’s say that the landlord says that there is an addendum or an attachment, and that just means that there are additional documents attached to the lease. You want to be able to see all of those, review all of those before you sign the lease. Before you move in, we highly recommend that you purchase renter’s insurance. It’s very affordable, but renters insurance would, it’s similar to car insurance. So that would cover situations where maybe you cause damage to your apartment, or if somebody else causes damage to your apartment, but your property is damaged. you can get renters insurance from a car insurance company whether you have a car from that company or not. And I would expect to pay maybe 10 or 12 dollars a month, which is very affordable considering that if you have severe property damage that the insurance is going to cover that cost. We strongly recommend that you complete a move in checklist, and that is basically where you document the condition of your unit, whether it's a house or an apartment. If your landlord does not provide a move in checklist, we have one on our website that you are welcome to print off and use. If you see any damage to the apartment or something is not clean, you should write
that down. So, for example, let's say that it's there is a large tear in the carpet. We want you to write that down and take pictures and video of it because we don't want the landlord of the property manager to blame you for it if it was already there, if you didn't cause the damage.

Lastly is to set up your utilities. So you should read your lease to see which utilities, if any, you're responsible for. Some property managers will include the utilities as part of your rent, but some don't. And so if you need to set up your water, that would be through the city that you're living in. If you need to connect the power, electricity, that would be through a company called Mid-American. And we have contact information for those on our website. And then if you'd like to have a cable TV and an Internet connection and your property company doesn't provide it, there are more options there. Two that come to mind would be Mediacom, another one is called Century Link. And then if you live in North Liberty Iowa, which is about 10 minutes from Iowa City, they have a separate company. So let's say you're now living in your apartment. It's important to clean regularly. It's your responsibility to keep it in good condition. Basically, it's your job when you leave at the end of your lease to put the apartment back in the condition that you found it in. Obviously it's not going to be exactly the same because you've been living there for a year, but really that should be your goal. You need to pay your rent on time, it is almost always going to be due on the first of the month, unless you've made a separate arrangement with your landlord. It's due on the first even if it's a holiday, or a Sunday, which here in the United States some businesses are closed on Sundays, but you are still expected to pay your rent on the first of the month. If something breaks or if you have a pipe leaking you need to tell your landlord right away. It's up to you how you want to communicate with your landlord. I don't really have a preference, as long as you can document and prove that you made a request. So if you have an email, that's great. If you are leaving them a voice message, I would recommend recording the voice message, which is allowed in Iowa. If you are submitting an online maintenance request, I recommend taking a screenshot of your request. So in case your landlord tries to say, well, you didn't tell me about this problem, you would have documentation to prove that you did.

The last point on the slide is very important that in the winter in Iowa, you should never turn your heat all the way off. You are going to be gone or if it's a nice day out, you can certainly turn it down to maybe 55 or 60 degrees, but you cannot turn the heat off. Because what happens is every winter we tend to get some very very cold days. And what happens is the pipes freeze, the water pipes freeze and they explode. And that can cause a very, very serious damage costing tens of thousands of dollars. So we strongly, it's just not possible to turn your heat all the way off during that cold period. So now you're moving out. Most leases end right around the end of July. If you are planning to stay at your apartment for another year, you don't have to move out or anything like that. But I do want to caution you that a lot of landlords in maybe October or November, they will ask you if you want to stay for another year, and I strongly recommend that you do not re-sign your lease unless you are 100 percent sure that you want to stay that extra year. Sometimes people decide to go to different university, or they're graduating or they don't like their apartment and want to find something nicer or more affordable. so don't re-sign your lease unless you are absolutely sure that you want to stay. So now when you move out, it's very important to clean your apartment. Put it back into the condition that you found it in. if you don't like cleaning, I don't blame you. I don't either, but you could certainly hire a company to clean for you. We recommend that whether you clean or someone else cleans, to take pictures of the condition that you left your apartment in. or house. I know I keep saying apartment, but these are applied houses,
townhouses, any rental unit. When you leave we want you to leave a forwarding address. So basically what that means is the landlord, the apartment manager, they need a way to send your security deposit back to you. So that's usually money, one to two months of rent that they will hold on to for you. And then they can keep the money at the end of the lease if you have caused damage, if you owe them money. But if you haven't done those things they need to send that money back to you. It doesn't, especially if you’re leaving the country, it could be a friend’s address, someone you trust. It doesn't have to be an address in Iowa. If you're going to California they can send that to you.

So this presentation, we try to just hit the high points and address the most common issues that students have. So there is a lot more information on our website, which is listed here. We also are on social media. So Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and snapchat. And we also regularly post updates or friendly reminders, especially if we're seeing a lot of students come into our office with the same issue. We let students know. And I do want to mention too that if someone comes into our office to ask us questions, what they tell us is confidential. It's called Attorney client privilege. So things that you say to an attorney are confidential, and that applies to any issue that you have that you speak to an attorney about. So, for example, even though we’re talking about housing today, student legal services also provides assistance in a lot of areas of law. Family law, immigration, criminal law including traffic tickets. And I think, I know, that when you come to Iowa in August, you'll be meeting me again, you'll see me in person or my coworker Chris. We will be talking about additional legal issues that students may have.

Amanda: So I think we're about ready for questions. Even though what you tell me is confidential when you're in my office, questions that you may have of a personal nature, if you want to send us questions just make them, we're not going to include your name or anything like that. But you're welcome to ask questions about moving in, living in an apartment, and then people from ISSS are here as well, so if there's a question I don't know the answer to, they will be here to answer them.

Q&A

Michael: All right. We’ve already got some good questions. But please keep on asking them, you can ask your questions using the Q and A function and we’ll answer them live. But we’re going to start off with a pretty subjective question that might be tricky to answer. What is the best neighborhood to live as a student in Iowa City? How do you know if you will live with other students or on your own, or with a landlady?

Amanda: That’s an excellent question. There’s a lot of parts to that question, so I might have to have you repeat some of it. Really as far as best neighborhoods, Iowa City and Iowa are generally safe places, and so we don’t have any major concerns that way. There are pros and cons to living, let’s start with downtown. So downtown is where you're going to find a lot of your academic buildings and your classes. It's where you're going to find the most restaurants, stores, but at the same time it can be very expensive to live downtown, or more expensive to live downtown. It can also a sometimes be noisy if you are living above a business. So we do caution you there. The farther out you go from downtown Iowa City, you’re likely to get kind of a better apartment for a more affordable price. So personally I live in Coralville Iowa, which is about five minutes away. And it's quieter. It's quieter, it’s more cost effective, but you do have to consider you know if I was a student, I would have to likely take a bus, ride a bike,
take a car. So we do have a pretty good bus system considering the size of
our town. a lot of people bike or purchased mopeds. So there are, there are
good things about living. There’s pros and cons that really are just what's
best for you. As far as roommates, most apartments, you get to pick your
roommates because you all sign the same written document. Those are your roommates. That being
said, there are some places in town that offer single rooms, but you share them with people that you
may not necessarily know. For example, there is a property company called Hawks Ridge. And that's
how they do their leases. I also believe that there is a place called the quarters that does something very
similar. As far as living with your landlord, that's rare, but sometimes that would come up in a situation
where it's a house but the bedrooms are all separate, but you share common areas. Like a kitchen, for
example. For the most part of the landlords do not live in the apartments. There are a few exceptions to
the rule. That's a question that you would want to ask the property manager.

Michael: OK. So our next question is from somebody who is a graduate student, and they just want to
confirm as a graduate student their only option is off campus living.

Andrea: As a graduate Student, Yes, that's correct because the University offers on-campus living only to
undergraduate students. So the graduate students are typically required if they want to, as Amanda
mentioned if they want to live either in Iowa City or in the area around Iowa City, they will have to
definitely look for off campus housing. There are no options for grad students to live on campus.

Michael: Ok. Our next question is, what role should a student play, a PhD student, in securing their
housing and or room?

Amanda: That’s up to the student. The University does provide an off-campus housing website, which is
a way to connect students to property managers. The University doesn't set that up, or doesn't assign
you housing. Off-campus housing website is just a place that landlords and tenants can reach out to
each other. But the university does not play a role in them.

Michael: And I think that that website is awesome. And I am going to share that website in the chat right
now, its offcampushousing@uiowa.edu. So you should be able to find that in the chat right now.

Andrea: And speaking to you is...

Michael: I'm Michael Bortscheller. I'm behind the scenes just doing the question and answers here. Our
next question is from a transfer student, and at their current university they have apartments that are
just for graduate students. Does Iowa have this option?

Amanda: There is one option is called Aspire at West Campus. It’s just for graduate students at this time.
it is a little far - it's not downtown. It's actually on the border of Iowa City and Coralville. But the bus
system does go out there. It’s a fairly new building. One of the big perks of aspire is that it has a dog
park. It allows pets. It’s not very common that pets would be allowed in apartment in Iowa City. It has to
be approved by a landlord. And so that is nice. There are certainly some areas that tend to have more
grad students. Certain areas of Coralville, also certain areas near, on the west side of campus, which is
where the law school, the medical school, the dental school are. So there are certain areas that grad
students tend to live, but they’re not strictly for graduate students. for example, I went to law school at
the University of Iowa. I lived on the west side of campus, and my building was almost all graduate and
professional students.
Michael: OK, we have a really good question here, and it's complicated. So I'm going to ask it in parts. This student wants, tried to arrange at lease but the landlord wants a reference. And he wants to know who he can use since he's not in the U.S. and doesn't know anyone in the U.S. to provide a reference.

Amanda: Right. It doesn't necessarily have to be someone in the United States, it could be someone, if you've ever lived with someone before, like a roommate. That would probably be a good option. If you've ever had a job and someone who could talk about kind of your level of responsibility, whether someone is going to say, basically they want to know if you’re neat, if you pay your bills on time. It's typically not a family member, but if you don't have any other options, I would suggest a family member and explain to the landlord that you are an international student and so that this might be an additional challenge.

Michael: And the second part of the question is that the application, the lease, says that it requires a social security number. But the student of course doesn't have one.

Amanda: Right. So I have seen that in the past. It's a question to ask the landlord because they could certainly waive that. And sometimes what I've seen, if you don't have a social security number, what they would do is charge basically an additional security deposit which is money that you would be able to get back at the end of the lease. So there are ways, a landlord can certainly waive that requirement. If they don't, there are still plenty of apartments in Iowa City, but I do know that most, a landlord cannot say ‘we don't rent international students.’ That's not allowed.

Michael: This person plans to arrive in Iowa City a little bit before their lease begins. They want to know how they can manage for those few days before their lease actually begins.

Amanda: Yeah. So a couple of options: one, you could possibly see if your landlord would let you move in early. They would charge you an additional fee, but they may be willing to do that, especially if there's no one currently, if the other person is already moved out. I would suggest, a hotel could be expensive. But that would be an option. There is also a website that I haven't personally used, but it's called Airbnb. And that is basically people in the community who are willing to let you stay at their house for a couple of days for a fee. So it's Airbnb.com. So I think that would be another option, especially as far as the hotels go if you are in touch with other international students who may be in a similar situation, that would help with costs.

Michael: We had another question. They want us to write down the name for the university apartments for graduate students. And before I send that in the chat I just want to do confirm it is Aspire at West Campus.

Amanda: Yeah Aspire, I think you'll find it.

Michael: And so I have shared that in the chat just now. The next question is what's the best way to search for potential roommates to share an apartment with?

Amanda: good question. Actually on that off campus housing website, I believe there is also a way to see, there's a roommate tab that you can look at. Also some landlords will also post that if they know of people, so that would probably require, if you've seen an apartment you like or an apartment company
you like, sometimes on their individual websites they will also have a roommate search. I also know sometimes people use social media to find roommates that way as well.

**Michael:** Here's a question I genuinely do not know the answer to. Is there a designated parking area for employed or doctoral students?

**Amanda:** That is specific to the department, and something you would have to discuss with your department. If there isn't, it is possible to get parking passes, but sometimes the available parking lots are not near your office building. But there is a bus system that would go from parking lots to your building. But generally speaking it depends on your position, but parking can be very difficult here, it can be expensive. And that's why a lot of people choose buses, bikes, walking, etc. So that's something you have to talk to your individual department about.

**Andrea:** And I would like to remind the participants that we still have some time, and if you have any more questions regarding today's topic, please feel free to post them still in the Q&A function of zoom and Amanda will be happy to respond to them.

**Michael:** Here's another good question. If I have a teaching assistantship with my department, are they going to arrange my housing or room off-campus?

**Amanda:** No they won't. That's not something I have heard of. You have to assume that they will not. If they haven't told you about it, the answer would be no. That would be part of some sort of agreement that would have already been agreed to. I would not, that would be very unusual. So that's going to be something that you'll need to work on.

**Andrea:** There could be a connectivity on suggestion from the department, they may connect you to other international students that they have already. There are graduate students, and they may put you in touch with those students who are currently here, living here. So you could ask them if they would have that kind of suggestion, but other than that like Amanda said, please do not expect the department to directly help you with that housing.

**Michael:** If somebody wanted to make an appointment with you at student legal services Amanda, do they need to make the appointment ahead of time or can they just walk in?

**Amanda:** Make an appointment. August is a very busy time at student legal services. But we are usually able to get people in fairly quickly. We only have two attorneys, so it's not likely that we would do a walk in appointment. There are quite a few ways to schedule appointments, and I can have Michael include that information. I can give you our phone number which is 319-335-3276. But you could also, I think back a slide was our website. There is a way to request an appointment that way. It literally says appointments, and then you enter your information and we will contact you to schedule an appointment. If you are at the Memorial Union, the IMU, you can stop by our office. Its G115 IMU to schedule, I think will be probably be able to get you in. You could also email our office to schedule an appointment, and that is student-legal@uiowa.edu.

**Michael:** And all of that, the phone number, the website and the email should appear in the chat function right now. Another question that came in asked what happens if a roommate leaves in the landlord says you're responsible?
Amanda: Oftentimes, that is the case, and that is true. So it is what it depends on is what your lease says. So if your lease is two names, both you and your roommate, that means that you are agreeing to be financially responsible for the other person. If that person doesn't pay their rent or leaves, you are responsible for paying. Now that being said, you have some options. so that the best option would be to find a new roommate who is willing to move in and pay rent, if your landlord knows of someone they may be able to put you in contact with them to have a new roommate. If the roommate leaves, they are still responsible. So even if they're not living there, they need to pay the rent or they need to find someone to take their place. And so that's why we often recommend that students have individual leases, so they are the only person on the lease. So there are some apartments where you live together, but you have separate written documents meaning that you share a kitchen, or you share a restroom, but you're not financially responsible for the other person. and I think that's really important because that does happen.

Michael: So speaking of responsibility, on the off-campus housing website, what kind of responsibility does the university have, and is there any guarantee that there are no scams there, somebody's asking a question about if there might be false listings or something like that.

Amanda: It's my understanding that, my office does not control that website. My understanding is that the university does not at this time, it's something I would like to work on, does not screen or make sure that those are not scams. So you still have to make sure that this is a real landlord, that's why you might want to check with the city housing inspector. They'll be able to provide you information about who the real landlord is. So, yes, the university which again is not my office, is really just there to host the website, and it's a space that everyone can use but the university is not involved.

Michael: I have a question about, if you have any suggestion where to find furniture in Iowa City.

Amanda: Great question. So there are, probably the easiest, there are a lot of consignment stores or what we call a second-hand stores if you're interested in used furniture. A couple of places, there's a place called Stuff that is in Coralville and Iowa City, there are some pretty decent places called Goodwill, there's a place called The Salvation Army which is has nothing to do with the military, there is a place called Crowded Closet. I think I'll have to check, this is something we might want to include on our website. I'm not sure it's there yet. I'm more familiar with the used furniture stores personally and I am with the new stores, also whenever there's people, and this is going to sound kind of strange but whenever there is a change in apartments, sometimes people will just leave furniture by the side of the road. And that is for the taking. If it's left by the side of the road, those are people who just don't have the ability to get rid of their furniture, and they would rather just have you come get it. So I know that seems kind of strange, but that is a very common occurrence here when people move out of an apartment. I'm not saying that's a good idea, because if you leave furniture and no one comes to get it and the landlord has to get rid of it, they could charge you for it. But when you're moving in it is a way to find furniture.

Michael: OK, we have a bit of an unusual question. But it certainly comes up later on in a student's career. They want to know how to do subleases. How does that work?

Amanda: So a sublease, your lease will probably have a sublease provision in it. most of the time with the sublease, It would be a situation where you have found a person on that is willing to take over your
lease for you. There is usually paperwork that the landlord needs you to sign, and then usually there’s a cost. And that depends on the landlord. I would expect it to be maybe a couple hundred dollars. We also, I’m not sure if it’s on our website, it might be, otherwise we have it in our office - a sublease agreement, and that’s between you and the new person. But I do want to caution you that a sublease does not erase you from the lease. So if the sublease moves in but doesn’t pay their rent, the landlord could still tell you that you have to pay. So subleasing can be tricky. It’s easiest if you have somebody in mind, because if you have a friend or coworker to meet that way. So it you should read your lease first, but there will likely be paperwork and a fee.

**Michael:** And do you have any advice if people are looking for a sublease if they’re only going to be here for a short time, for example, during the summer?

**Amanda:** Sure. Same thing, some landlords will have a sublease page on their website to let other people know. The other thing is you should talk to your landlord - most landlords do not allow short term leases less than one year. But that’s something you could certainly ask the landlord about. But they again will probably ask for some money in exchange for making that change for you.

**Michael:** And what would happen in the very worst case scenario, what if somebody thinks that they arranged an apartment but they arrive in Iowa City and find out that it was a scam? I don’t know how common that is, but what would they be able to do?

**Amanda:** It doesn’t happen very often. In that situation, there’s a potential financial - I mean there are times where we’ve had to get the police involved, because of someone who’s been scammed. Fortunately there is a lot of housing available, so if your initial plan doesn’t work out, you should be able to find another place fairly quickly. If you do end up in a situation like that another office that I would recommend is student care and assistance, and they can help with emergency housing in those situations if you need something temporarily.

**Michael:** I just want to confirm, that office was called student care and assistance?

**Amanda:** Yes. It is in the IMU, 135 is the room number.

**Michael:** I am putting that into the chat right now for anybody who wanted to get that confirmation. And we have I think one final question here. And this might be best for Andrea. But both of you could probably try and answer. What’s the best way to connect with other students and create a social life? Living on or off campus?

**Amanda:** I can talk about that a little bit. There are literally 500 plus student organizations on campus. If you, don’t quote me on this, but there is CSIL, Center for student involvement in leadership. If you go to their website, and I’ll have Michael find that post that, it will give you a list of the organizations on campus and we do have a student organization fair in I want to say that the last week of August, where you can come in just meet all of the different groups. I strongly believe that you will find a group there for you. And I believe that there are some specific organizations that are catered to international students. So we have, for example, a Chinese student association, a Pakistani student association. We have sports clubs we have, If you name it, we probably have it. And if we don’t we can help you in your friends start one. there is also a think when you’re at orientation, you’re going to be with your new students for a couple of days, that’s a really good time to say, you know, we have a break - maybe we
could go get a cup of coffee. or maybe we could go have lunch. And so I do find that introducing yourself during orientation and then attending the student organizations fair. And then if you find a student organization you're interested in, I believe the contact information for the president of the club is also on that website or we can get that for you.

Andrea: And I would like to add that, great reminder about the orientation and the fair, but also ISSS’s website for new students has a lot of resources for you as new students to come in, when you are coming in. And so I would like to reference that website its iss.uiowa.edu. And follow the link to new students, and then that opens up a new web page where you can see different sections related to different parts of your preparation to come here. But one of them is also resources. Both are undergrads and graduate students, and it does list the making connections, that’s one of the first links that they show there, so I would strongly recommend to also go there before you even come to campus to look at some options for connecting with other students.

Michael: And I'm posting the ISSS website in the chat as well.

Andrea: Thank you Michael. Do we have any other questions?

Michael: That is all our questions.

Andrea: Excellent timing. And just a few reminders, thank you so much Amanda for your presentation and for answering all of the good questions that we have from the participants today. And we hope that we have addressed the off campus housing topic for you. if you have any follow-up questions Please do not hesitate to contact us at isss@uiowa.edu And we will be happy to follow up with you. Just a reminder that if you have any questions regarding your pre-arrival checklist or your documents the immigration documents please do not hesitate to contact the ISSS orientation team at the email, isss-orientation@uiowa.edu. And then also i was referencing this website just a moment ago and here is the link and Michael sent it to you on the chat as well. So we strongly recommend that you take a look at that website as well. And then there is another reminder about the upcoming webinars - the next one is going to take place on May 31st. We will be discussing university billing and health insurance, and there are four more webinars after that. You’re welcome to register and attend these webinars as well. And thank you so much again for your participation today. And please do remember to complete the survey. Michael send you a link to the survey, so we would really appreciate your feedback on today's webinar. And we look forward to hearing from you.