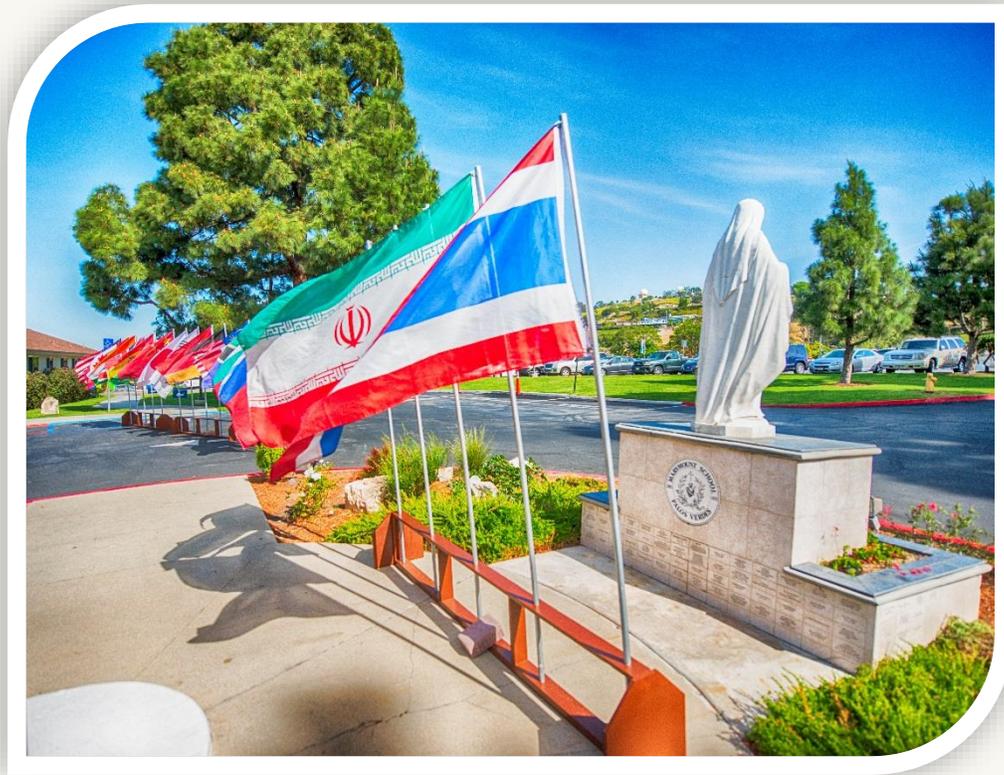


Marymount California University



International Student Pre-Arrival Information Packet

Your Travel/Arrival Guide &
What to Expect In the First Days



Pre-Arrival Information for MCU International Students

The following information highlights the important programs and processes encountered by all international students attending MCU.

This information is provided to help you prepare for your arrival to the U.S. and Marymount!

Immigration Information for International Students: In order to enter the United States to engage in a program of study, citizens of foreign countries must apply for the F-1 student visa. A Form I-20 Certificate of Eligibility issued by MCU must be presented to the U.S. Consulate / Embassy in your home country when you apply for the F-1 Student Visa. This form will be mailed to you when all the necessary documentation has been received by MCU. Be sure to review the *Preparing for Study in the U.S.* document which contains important information regarding U.S. immigration policies. You can also learn more about becoming an F-1 student by visiting the [Study in the States](#) site, a division of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

F-1 student visa holders may enter the United States up to 30 days prior to the program start date indicated on their Form I-20. This 30 days takes into account New Student Orientation and Housing Move-In dates.

Immunizations and Health Insurance: International students are automatically enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan designed for MCU by Summit America Insurance Services Inc. an Ascension Company. This policy ensures that the international students' medical coverage is in compliance with health care coverage mandates of the U.S., and ensure that adequate coverage is available to international students away from their home countries. The cost of this policy is included in your tuition bill and is itemized as such.

For specific information on the MCU Student Health Insurance Plan or to print a temporary I.D. and insurance claim forms, visit www.4studenthealth.com/marymount.

Living On Campus: [Residential Life](#) is an integral part of the Marymount experience. The social and interpersonal experiences of residential life play a vital role in student development. All new first and second year students are required to live in residence, on campus. To apply for residence and for instruction on how to pay the MCU Housing Deposit, log-in to the MCU [Student Portal](#).

Local Transportation: MCU has an excellent shuttle service to transport you between all our L.A. county campuses - Oceanview, Waterfront, and MCU at the Villas, our on-campus housing. Read more about our transportation services [here](#).

MCU E-Mail: You will receive information about your MCU e-mail to your personal email. E-mail is the primary means by which MCU communicates information to students. If you have any questions about your MCU e-mail account, please e-mail generalsupport@marymountcalifornia.edu

myMarymount: myMarymount (<https://my.marymountcalifornia.edu>) is the University's intranet. You will important academic announcements, campus updates and other information on myMarymount. You will receive a username and password for myMarymount via an email communication to your personal email address on file.

Advising & Mentoring: Academic advising for students is provided by a team of advisors who are dedicated to helping you meet your academic goals and needs. [The Center for Real World Learning](#) is one of your best resources on campus when you're debating your next academic move!

Initial Course Registration: Most first-year students will have a schedule created for you for your first semester at MCU. When you arrive for New Student Orientation (details below) you will sit for various placement tests that may alter your schedule. If you are a transfer student, your schedules will be based on coursework you brought in to MCU. It is important for transfer students to submit all previous transcripts and course descriptions to the institution so appropriate transfer credit can be given. You will work with your academic advisor to plan your schedules for all subsequent semesters.

Credit and Evaluations: Academic credit is awarded on the American Letter Grading System, on a course-by-course basis. Letters of A, B, C, D and F with Plus (+) and Minus (-) varying degrees make up the system; A, being the highest grade (awarding all credit), and F, being the lowest grade (awarding no credit). Beyond regular coursework, most all courses have midterm and final examinations. Each course has a syllabus given to you by your professor at the first class meeting, explaining how full credit can be earned.

The Anchor - Student Handbook: For more information about policies and resources at the MCU, please refer to [The Anchor - Student Handbook](#).

TRAVEL INFORMATION

What to Pack

It is best to travel light. Many things you will need can be purchased when you arrive in the United States. You will have an opportunity to visit various shopping centers during New Student Orientation to buy many of the things you need. You will want to bring clothes, money (cash, ATM card, bank checks in U.S. dollars), any prescription drugs/copies of prescriptions or other items that you use every day, and may not have access to in the U.S. Some students find it helpful to bring along a small item from home that may be comforting during periods of home sickness.

On the Airplane

Carry the following documents on your person. Do not check them with baggage as you will need these documents when you get off the plane:

- Valid passport with F-1 visa
- I-20 Form
- Proof of financial support
- Letter of acceptance from Marymount California University

At the U.S. Airport ([Los Angeles International Airport](#))

When you enter the country as a non-immigrant, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent examines your passport and visa and then gives you a stamp in your passport, validating your entry into the United States. Previously, a form called the I-94 document (a small white sheet of paper stapled into your passport) was issued. This has been replaced by just a stamp and an electronic record which can be accessed [here](#), only after your arrival into the U.S. This stamp indicates how long you are allowed to stay in the U.S. and proves that you arrived in the country legally. Upon leaving the country again, the USCIS will electronically record the date of your departure for future reference. Any time you return to the U.S. you will receive a new I-94 stamp and electronic record for that particular stay.

On most every occasion, F-1 students will be granted a stay of “D/S” or Duration of Status. This means that you are able to stay in the U.S. as long as you maintain your visa status and do not exceed any grace periods granted at the end of a program or employment authorization associated with the F-1 visa.

Although denial is rare, please remember that a visa and accompanying documentation does not guarantee entry into the United States. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CPB) has the authority to deny admission. It is important that you have all your supporting documents with you when you enter the U.S.

After U.S. Custom and Border Protection Check Point:

Make your way to Baggage Claim and pick up your bags. You'll give your declaration sheet to the Customs Agent before leaving the secure area then, follow the airport signs that lead to "Ground Transportation."

Taxi: Taxi companies such as LA Checker Cab, Independent Taxi and United Checker Cab offer service from Los Angeles Airport. Only authorized taxis with an official seal issued by City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation on each vehicle are permitted in the airport. It is illegal for any transportation services to solicit fares, and travelers using such services do so at their own risk.

Uber: A typical UberX fare from the Los Angeles International Airport area to Marymount California University will cost between \$30.00 and \$40.00, and UberXL would be approximately \$55.00 - \$70.00. Other Uber services in the L.A. area are quite a bit more expensive.

Special MCU Orientation Shuttle: MCU's Office of New Student Orientation offers a shuttle from LAX Airport to MCU on Move-In Day. This is a great, hassle-free option to consider, making your arrival to MCU that much easier! If you are interested in learning more about the FREE shuttle and how to sign up, please contact orientation@marymountcalifornia.edu.

Move-In to MCU Housing

In the weeks preceding your arrival to MCU, you will receive information on your housing assignment. (You will receive this information only after applying for housing via the [Student Portal](#). Generally, your travel to the U.S. should coincide with the move-in dates for housing. Remember, you may not travel to the U.S. until 30 days prior to your program start date listed on your I-20. As a rule, the program start date is the first day of classes. Once you arrive to the Villas, the Residence Life staff will be there to greet you and help you get settled in. At Housing Move-In, you will also be asked to meet with the Office of International Services to participate in "International Student Check-In" which is required of each student in F-1 status.

<u>On Campus Housing at MCU</u>
The Villas 1600 Palos Verdes Drive North San Pedro, California 90732 (Best GPS Address for Taxi or Uber)

If you have been approved to live off campus, or are a graduate student living off campus, you may arrive up to 30 days prior to your program start date listed on your I-20. It is advisable to come to the Villas to meet with the Office of International Services on Move-In day to do the mandatory international student check in.

New Student Orientation

[New Student Orientation](#) is a program designed to get you accustomed to your new surroundings and oriented the MCU campus and community! When you arrive at MCU for new student orientation, you will attend many informational sessions and be asked to attend a session specifically designed for international students. At this session you will receive information about issues that pertain specifically to your status as an international student. You will also have an opportunity to meet the MCU Director of International Services and other new international students.

Helpful Web Sites

For more information on U.S. visas and application procedures visit the DHS website:

[Study in the States](#)

Edupass.org and Foreignborn.com are web sites for foreign-born individuals entering or living in the United States. These sites have lots of helpful immigration information for students as well as information about life in the United States.

www.edupass.org

www.foreignborn.com

Web sites about Los Angeles:

www.lacity.org

<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles>