

LSUA[®]

LSU *of* ALEXANDRIA



International Student Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	1
University Contacts	1
Pre-Departure	2
Student Housing	3
Meal Plan	3
Travel Tips	4
Arrival	5
Responsibilities Of F1/J1 Students	6
Student Employment	7
Mandatory Medical Health Insurance Requirements	8
Medical Health Insurance Requirement	8
Tuition Fee Payment Options	9
Living In LSUA	10
Setting Up Mobile Service	10
Local Transportation	11
Shopping For Supplies	11
Groceries and Restaurants in Alexandria	12
Student Life	13
Tradition Activities	13
U.S. Culture And Practices	15
Understand The U.S. Classroom Culture	16
Counseling Center	16



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK 2021-2022

Welcome to Louisiana State University at Alexandria!

You are now officially a member of Louisiana State University at Alexandria (LSUA). Congratulations and welcome! In anticipation of your arrival, we created this handbook to help you prepare for the transition to your new home and new campus experience at LSUA. Please read this handbook thoroughly, as it covers essential topics and many useful information to guide you through the transition process.

Attending college in the United States is both exciting and challenging times for international students. Some of you may be familiar with American culture while others may be completely new to the United States. It is important to know that you are not alone! We are here to assist you to have an enjoyable and successful academic experience. If you have questions or concerns that are not addressed in this handbook, do not hesitate to contact the Coordinator of International Programs.

Your presence enriches the diversity of our university and community. We are delighted that you chose LSUA to share your culture and thrilled that you will be joining us soon! We look forward to meeting you at LSUA!

Office of International Programs: Mulder Hall, Room 368

Nina Cox, Coordinator of International Programs, and Designated School Official (DSO)

Phone: 318-473-6552, email ncox@lsua.edu

University Contacts:

Academic Affairs:	318-473-6446
Admissions:	318-473-6417
Accounting:	318-473-6407
Student Success:	318-767-2604
Registrar:	318-473-6424

Other Emergency contacts:

Campus Medical Emergency	318-5555 or 911
University Police	318-473-6427, 5555, or 911
Rapides Regional Medical Center	318-473-3000
St. Francis Cabrini Hospital	318-448-6750

PRE-DEPARTURE

HAVE YOU DONE THE TASKS BELOW?

1. Notify the Office of International Programs of your arrival schedule at ncox@lsua.edu. The Office of International Programs located at 8100 Highway, 71 South, Alexandria, LA. Phone: 318-473-6552 **ALL** international students required to check in the Office of International Programs in Mulder Hall, room 368 upon arrival.

2. Make sure you have importance documents below:

- ✓ Valid Passport and F-1/ J-1 Student VISA
- ✓ Original I-20/DS-2019 Form (Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigration Student Status)
- ✓ I-94 Arrival/ Departure History Report
- ✓ Acceptance letter and all official letters mailed to you by the Office of Admissions
- ✓ Receipt for the payment of SEVIS I-901 fee (required by SEVIS)
- ✓ Visa or MasterCard Prepaid Cards or Traveler's Checks/Cash in U.S. dollars is recommended.
- ✓ Copy of Immunizations/Health Forms with English Translation
- ✓ Family contact information

3. Contact Academic Advising

The Advising & Retention Specialists advise first-year students. Each international student is assigned an advisor who understands the needs of those acclimating to a new university and a new country at the same time. Our advisors strive to make the academic advising process as easy as possible for the students while fully explaining the courses needed and required to pursue their majors of choice. During an advising session, students can discuss their majors, program requirements, course selections, extracurricular activities, study skills, and more.

Please go to <https://www.lsua.edu/campus-life/dose/css/advising> for schedule and advising session.

4. Housing Arrangement: On-Campus Housing and Meal Plan

LSUA offers an environment where students get the benefits of a larger institution with the friendly and supportive culture of a small scale university. LSUA is committed to ensuring students to have a wonderful on campus living experience, and find a home away from home.

LSUA housing application: <https://www.lsua.edu/campus-life/housing/housing-application>

STUDENT HOUSING (THE OAKS)

First-year students are expected to live on-campus, so student can enjoy the convenience on-campus experience and more opportunities to become part of the LSUA community.

Amenities:

- High-Speed Internet Access, cable TV, all Utilities (electric, water, sewer, trash, etc.) included
- Free Laundry Facilities On-Site, Full Kitchen, Appliance Package and High Quality Furnishings
- On-Site Swimming Pool and Game Room

All first-time freshmen are required to submit either a Housing Application or Housing Exemption form.

For more information please contact the Oaks Residence Hall: **8223 Acorn Drive, Alexandria, LA 71302.**

Phone: 318-473-652, or go to <https://www.lsua.edu/campus-life/housing>.

MEAL PLAN

Dining Services in LSUA provides several meal plan options to accommodate students and their busy schedules. **Each residential student is required to have a meal plan while living on-campus.** Eating well and spending less is easy with an LSUA meal plan.

5. Packing Luggage

International airline companies usually limit to two suitcases and one carry-on bag for each traveler. Check with the airline for bag and weight limitations. Make a checklist in order of priority before you start packing since you may not be able to fit everything that you would like to bring on your trip.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS

The weather in Alexandria is hot and humid for most of the year. You will experience all four seasons. Temperatures can reach as high as 93 °F / 34 °C or higher during the summer. The weather during the winter could drop down to 25F/-3.8C. There is a lot of rains in Alexandria, an umbrella and waterproof shoes are recommended.

It's a good idea to bring a semi-formal dress, business attire and traditional clothing or cultural artifacts from your country. Also remember to bring an extra pair of glasses and/or contact lenses along with a copy of your prescription.

You will need an adaptor if you are bringing any electronic items from home. Many overseas appliances are designed to operate only within the 220-250 volt range. The standard electrical outlet in the US is between 110 and 120 volts.

6. Flight Arrangement

The nearest airport to LSUA campus is **Alexandria International Airport (AEX)**. There are no direct flights from international countries to Alexandria, Louisiana. You need to travel to the U.S port of entry in a larger city and take a connecting flight to Alexandria Airport. Please give yourself lots of time (at least 3-4 hours, between your arriving and connecting flight to Alexandria, to go through the U.S. Custom at the U.S port of entry.

U.S. Immigration rules allow you to enter the U.S. up to 30 days before the program start date listed on your I-20/DS-2019. You must arrive in LSUA no later than the program start date that is noted on your I-20 or DS-2019. If you anticipate delays and expect to arrive later than the program start date, please notify the Coordinator of International Programs by email: ncox@lsua.edu

The U.S.A. Department of Homeland Security will not admit anyone who does not have a VISA, a valid passport, an original I-20 into the U.S.A.

For more information about Alexandria International Airport (AEX), please go to <https://flyaex.org/>

TRAVEL TIPS

We want your trip to the U.S.A to be safe and pleasant. Please observe the following travel tips:

- Hand-carry your passport, I-20 or DS-2019, the letter from LSUA Admissions, bank or funding verification, original transcripts or diplomas and any other official documents.
- Reconfirm your flight at least three days before departure.
- Never carry a large amount of cash. You should have cash to cover initial expenses such as taxi or bus fare, meals, and initial housing.
- Never leave your luggage unattended.
- To reduce jet lag, drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids on the plane, and get some rest. Refrain from eating a lot of food that contains a significant amount of salt and sugar.
- You should declare any food that you have brought to the U.S. in your checked luggage and carry-on items, certain items brought into the United States from foreign countries are restricted. For more guidelines, go to https://help.cbp.gov/s/?language=en_US

Note: TIME CHANGE

Louisiana State University at Alexandria is located in the state of Louisiana, U.S.A which is in the “Central Standard” time zone. Please adjust your watch to local time before landing (at each lay over or transit). The U.S.A. uses a 12 hour clock. Information on time zones can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/> or <http://www.worldtimezone.com/index24.php>

ARRIVAL

PORT OF ENTRY

The first airport in the United States where you arrive is called a Port of Entry (POE), and you will have to go through the **U.S. Customs and Border Protection** (CBP) before you can go to your connecting flight to Alexandria.

You must present your passport and your I-20 or DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility to the border officer at your port of entry. The officer may ask you a few questions while processing your papers. After going through CBP inspections, you can pick up your luggage and proceed to a U.S. Customs official who will take your Customs Declaration form. After going through Customs, you are now officially in the United States! You will find ticket counters or kiosks where you can check-in for your connecting flight to Alexandria.

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION

LSUA does not have a service to pick up students from the airport or the Greyhound bus station. However, there are taxi services which can take students from the airport upon arrival.

Louisiana State University at Alexandria's residence hall is located at **8223 Acorn Drive, Alexandria, LA 71302**
Phone: (318) 767-2616, **Email:** reslife@lsua.edu

The taxi cost from the airport to LSUA is approximately \$30-\$40. The following are the taxi companies that you can make transportation arrangements once you are in Alexandria:

- **Designated Driver Cab Service:** www.aexcabservice.com 1713 Shirley Ave. Alexandria, LA 71303. Phone: +1(318) 290-1180 Email: cliff42013@gmail.com
- **A-Town Transportation:** 2804 horseshoe Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301. Phone: +1(800) 261-8260
- **Magic City Taxi:** 5200 Donahue Ferry Rd, Pineville, LA 71360. Phone: +1(318) 4640-2768
- **Uber** www.uber.com: https://auth.uber.com/login/?uber_client_name=riderSignUp

INTERNATIOANL CHECK IN

Once you have arrived to LSUA campus and move in to your dorm, please do the following procedure;

1. Check in with the Office of International Programs located at Mulder Hall room 368.
2. Visit the Advising office or schedule an appointment online to review your schedule with an advisor The Advising office is located at Student Center which is directly above the campus bookstore.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF F1/J1 STUDENTS

MAINTAIN F-1/ J-1 STATUS

Full-Time Enrollment

It is very important for international students (F-1 and J-1) to maintain their full-time enrollment to stay in lawful immigration status in the U.S.A.

F-1/ J-1 students are required to be enrolled "**Full-time**", means **12 credit hours**, no less than 9 credit hours in physical presence courses (LSUA courses ending with X, J and K) and can select 3 credit hours in distance learning course (LSUA courses ending with I) to count toward full-time enrollment per semester.

The exception to the full-time enrollment requirement is a case of a student in his/her final semester of enrollment at LSUA who needs less than full course load to complete his/her degree requirement. In such a case the student must officially file for graduation prior to enrolling part-time. If you are considering part-time enrollment for any other reason, please contact Coordinator of International Programs.

F-1/ J-1 students **may not drop below a full course of study** without prior advising from a professional advisor, and a Coordinator of International Programs. If you fall out of lawful immigration status, you may have serious problems with U.S. Immigration. As a result you may have problems obtaining any U.S. visas or entering the U. S. in the future. While you are in the U.S., falling out of status means that you will no longer be eligible for any F-1/ J-1 benefits, including employment authorization. In some cases being out of status may result in you being put in removal procedures (*deportation*).

Extend I-20/ DS-2019 As Needed

If your program will require more time than originally granted, you will need to notify the office of International Programs at least 30 days prior to the end date of your Form I-20, in order to allow enough time to obtain the necessary documentation to maintain your F-1 visa.

Keep Your Passport Valid

F-1/ J-1 students have to maintain a valid passport at all times. (Renewing your passport 6 months prior to expiration is recommended.) Passports can be renewed by your home country's consulate or embassy. You will be required to provide the U.S address in order to keep your SEVIS records up-to-date. If you change your address at any time during your stay, you will need to notify the Office of International Programs to update SEVIS record.

Travel Outside of the United States

Prior to travel outside of the United States, **students must have their I-20/ DS-2019 signed by a designated school official (DSO)**. This includes travel to Mexico for vacation or any short holidays. Failure to do so may result in a student being denied re-entry to the United States.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

F-1 students may work on-campus up to 20 hours per week while school is in session and up to 40 hours per week during University breaks and holidays. After the first academic year, F-1 students may engage in two type off-campus employment:

1. Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
2. Optional Practical Training (OPT) (pre-completion, post-completion, or Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM))

Students are NOT allowed to work in the United States without prior authorization. Working off-campus without permission is a serious violation of your F-1 visa regulations and could result in your deportation.

Student Worker on Campus

Application process

1. Find job by word-of-mouth and visit each individual office or view job opportunities at www.lsua.edu/about-us/job-opportunities
2. Complete application form www.lsua.edu/docs/default-source/human-resources/studentapptrequest.pdf?sfvrsn=428fcc23_5
3. Wait for approval from Human Resources before beginning work.

For more information, please go to the following link:

<https://www.lsua.edu/fas/human-resources/employment-resources/student-worker>

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a program that temporarily allows international students with an F-1 visa to gain practical experience directly related to their major through employment, paid or unpaid internships, or cooperative (co-op) education. CPT can be part-time (20 hours or less a week) or full time (20 hours or more a week). Although, if you work full-time for 12 months in CPT, you will lose your eligibility for OPT.

CPT must be part of an established curriculum and be completed before graduating.

Optional Practical Training (Opt)

OPT is an employment benefit granted by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) authorizing eligible F-1 students to work anywhere in the U.S.

Requirement for OPT

- OPT must relate directly to student's major of study. This must be documented in LSUA records and SEVIS in detail.
- Student does not have to secure training before applying for OPT.
- Student remains on current student visa with updated I-20 for up to **12 months**.
- OPT for STEM graduates can be awarded for 24 months
- Authorization comes in the form of an EAD card (Employment Authorization Document) with official dates when the student is allowed to work.
- While applying for OPT it is not recommended that you leave the US until approval is granted.

MANDATORY MEDICAL HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All international participants in F-1 and J-1 visa are required to have medical health insurance while they are enrolled at LSUA and stay in the U.S. LSUA offers medical health insurance plan for all international students, visiting scholars, and to their spouses/dependents.

All international participants on F-1 and J-1 visas must either enroll with the university's default health insurance plan or request a waiver of the requirement by providing evidence of purchased an alternate health insurance plan that meets the university requirement listed. The waiver form must be submitted by the published deadline at the beginning of each and every semester of enrollment. There are no exceptions to the health-insurance requirement.

Important Note:

1. Students who do not meet the waiver deadline will automatically be enrolled in university default plan, and the charge placed on the student's account.
2. The cost of the university default plan is based on the age of the insured.

Please note that this insurance requirements will continue, so please make plans for this additional charge to your account each semester.

LSUA HEALTH CENTER

The LSUA Health Center is located on the first floor of Coughlin Hall next to Human Resources. Students currently enrolled at LSUA can receive treatment; health insurance is not required at the Health Center.

Hours of Operation:

Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Closed 12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. for lunch
(P): 318.427.0110, No appointment necessary.

Students can receive medical attention for non-life threatening illnesses such as:

- Sore throat
- Sinus and ear infections
- Flu symptoms
- Nausea and vomiting
- Minor cuts
- Urinary tract infections
- Cough and cold
- Health education materials

For life threatening medical emergencies, call 911 or proceed to the nearest hospital or emergency medical center.

TUITION FEE PAYMENT OPTIONS

Students can verify their billing statement online through Self-Service or contact Accounting Services at 318-473-6407. For more information on payment options, please access:

<http://www.lsua.edu/fas/accounting/payment-dates-options>

1. To Pay in Person:

Payments may be made weekdays at Accounting Services (Abrams Hall) from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. LSUA accepts Cash, Check, Money Order, VISA, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express.

2. International Wire Transfers:

International students and their parents may contact Accounting Services at 318-473-6407 or accounting@lsua.edu for banking information in order to complete international wire money transfers.

3. To Pay by Mail:

Enclose the bottom portion of the Student Account Statement with payments made by check or money order. Make checks and money orders payable to LSUA. Include the student's name and student ID number on checks and send payment to:

Accounting Services, LSU - Alexandria
8100 Highway 71 South, Alexandria, LA 71302-9121

4. To Pay Online:

Pay online with Automatic Bank Payment (ACH) or credit card through FACTS Tuition Management.

- \$40 enrollment fee per semester (ACH & credit card)
- \$2 enrollment fee for an immediate full payment

- a. Automatic Bank Payments (ACH)** - ACH Payments are those payments you have authorized FACTS to process directly with your financial institution. Payments are processed on the 5th of each month and will continue until the balance is paid in full.

NOTE: All down and full payments are processed immediately.

- b. Credit Card Option** - Payers have the option of charging their tuition payment to their credit card. Payments will be charged on the 5th of each month until the balance is paid in full. The following cards are accepted: VISA, MasterCard, Discover and American Express.

NOTE: 2.75% service fee if a credit/debit card is used.

Failure to pay in a timely manner may result in a \$75 late fee.

LIVING IN LSUA

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

Contact a bank representative about your banking needs and they will assist you in selecting the best bank account option for you. Always read the documents you are signing and ask for clarification for anything that you don't understand.

Document requirements for opening a bank account in the U.S.A usually are as follow;

- Passport, I-20 and I-94
- Your physical address: If you live on campus, you will need a letter from the Oaks Residence Hall to confirm that you are a current student at LSUA and a resident of the Oaks.
- \$25 - \$50 U.S dollar for opening an account.

Nationwide and most common State Banks near the campus:

Chase Bank: www.chase.com

3820 Jackson St., Alexandria, LA 71303.

Phone: (318) 443-1383

Capital One Bank: www.capitalone.com

3701 Jackson St., Alexandria, LA 71301.

Phone: (318) 487-2120

Red River Bank: www.redriverbank.net

1412 Centre Ct #101, Alexandria, LA 71301.

Phone: (318) 561-4000

Southern Heritage: www.shbnet.com

2227 5211 Jackson St., Alexandria, LA 71303. Phone

(318) 561-2227

Evangeline State: www.therealbank.com

3907 Parliament Dr., Alexandria, LA 71303. Phone

(318) 443-3700

CenLA Federal Credit Union

708 Jackson Street

Alexandria, LA 71301

(318) 445-7388

SETTING UP MOBILE SERVICES

Obtaining a cell phone is a process that involves comparing costs between cell phone providers and deciding on a plan that includes the services you need. The best way to find a company that fits your cell phone needs is to compare cell phone companies' options and plans.

Most cell phone providers will ask for a cash deposit for new clients that do not have credit history in the U.S. Most cell phone contracts are for two years. However, some cell phone providers have pre-paid sim cards or month by month plans where you pay up-front each month.

Mobile services Providers more popular in the area:

AT&T: www.att.com

1800 MacArthur Dr. Alexandria, LA (318)

448-3438

Verizon Wireless: www.verizonwireless.com 3601

North Blvd. Alexandria, LA

(318) 445-2065

Boost Mobile Wireless: www.boostmobile.com 1263

MacArthur Dr., Alexandria LA, 71303

(318) 445-1240

Sprint: www.sprint.com

4617 Jackson St. Alexandria, LA (318)

445-9517

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

1. City Bus Service (ATRANS)

The City of Alexandria operates a bus service within city limits Monday through Friday. For route information, please call 441-6087.

Time of Service:

On weekdays, the city bus picks up at two locations on the LSUA Campus: at the library and the Student Center.

- 10.30 a.m. - pick-up at LSUA and go to Downtown Alexandria
- 4:00 p.m. - leave Downtown Alexandria and return to LSUA

Fare Structure: Please have correct change when riding (The cost are subject to change)

\$.75 - Regular Adult Fare

\$.35 - Children (1-13 years)

<https://www.cityofalexandriala.com/bus-transit-atrans>

2. Local Taxis Services

Local taxis are available for transportation to destinations not covered by the City Bus Service. Some commonly used taxi companies are listed below:

Taxi

- Designated Driver Cab Service: (318) 290-1180 - 1714 Shirley Ave Alexandria, LA 71303
- A-TOWN TRANSPORTATION (318) 314-5038: 2804 Horsesehoe Dr., Alexandria, LA 71301
- Groundwork's Taxi (318) 787-7285 -5735: Lawson Dr, Alexandria, LA 71302
- 1st Alexandria City Taxi (318) 445-0904: 3101 Lee St, Alexandria, LA 71301
- Uber www.uber.com: https://auth.uber.com/login/?uber_client_name=riderSignUp

3. Car Rental Services

- Hertz Rent a Car (318) 561-0032 : Alexandria, LA
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car (318) 445-0099: Alexandria, LA
- Hertz(318) 561-0032 : Alexandria, LA
- Avis Car Rental (318) 487-1553: Alexandria, LA

SHOPPING FOR SUPPLIES AND BUYING GROCERIES

1. Campus Market (OCM)

Our Campus Market (OCM) is the premier website for college students and families. OCM provides university-approved merchandise for campus living, gifting and special campus occasions including move-in, graduation and more. http://www.ocm.com/about_us/

2. Alexandria Mall

Alexandria Mall has many familiar and unique shops and restaurants. These include Dillard's, JCPenney, Sears, Burlington Coat Factory, Stage, Bed Bath & Beyond, Bath & Body Works, Justice, Versona Accessories, ULTA Beauty, plus an array of specialty retailers and much more! Alexandria Mall locates at 3437 Masonic Dr., Alexandria, LA 71301. Phone: 318-448-0227.

3. Grocery Stores

Walmart

2050 N Mall Dr. Alexandria, LA
(318) 445-2300

Dollar Tree

2071 N Mall Dr St 101, Alexandria, LA
(318) 619-8556

Target

2206 Memorial Dr. Alexandria, LA
(318) 448-4351

Kroger

1422 MacArthur Dr, Alexandria, LA 71301
(318) 442-1851

Dollar General

1800 MacArthur Dr # A, Alexandria, LA 71301
(318) 561-2932

Family Dollar

232 Bolton Ave., Alexandria, LA 71301
(318) 487-4024

RESTAURANTS IN ALEXANDRIA:

American Restaurant:

Applebee's

1500 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 449-9991

Chili's Bar and Grill

2291 North MacArthur Dr., Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 442-3222

Cracker Barrel

6108 W. Calhoun Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) (318) 767-0500

Golden Corral

501 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71303
Tel: (318) 442-3075

Spirits Food and Friends

1200 Texas Avenue, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 445-4491

Diamond Grill

924 3rd Street, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 448-8989

IHOP

2715 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 767-1666

Bistro on the Bayou

1321 Chappie James Ave., Alexandria, LA 71303
Tel: (318) 445-7574

Italian:

Johnny Carino's

3209 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 767-5942

Cajun:

Quebedeaux's Boudin & Cracklins
3710 S MacArthur Dr, Alexandria, LA 71302
Tel: (318) 528-8788

Mexican:

Mi Tierra

1460 MacArthur Dr, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 625-7234

Moe's Southwest Grill

1800 MacArthur Dr, Alexandria, LA
Tel: (318) 704-6010

Sombreros

1730 Metro Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 487-0001

Oriental:

Pho U Vietnamese Cuisine

4722 Jackson St, Alexandria, LA 71303
Tel: (318) 625-7002

Viet Thai Bistro

1473 Dorchester Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 448-7190

Oriental Wok

6 N. Bolton Avenue, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 448-8247

Mandarin Chinese & Sushi

3150 N MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71303
Tel: (318) 448-8007

Panda Express

2810 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 767-8596

Lebanese:

Apollo Greek and Lebanese Café

3425 Jackson Street, Alexandria, LA 71301
Tel: (318) 448-0455

Fast Food near campus:

Sonic	Pizza Hut
McDonald's	Canes
Popeye's	Chick-fil-A
Burger King	KFC

STUDENT LIFE

Student Life at LSUA is your ticket to become involved in organizations and events outside the classroom. We work to coordinate student activities and work hand-in-hand with student led organizations to enhance the college experience.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Accounting Club
- Art League
- Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana (A+PEL)
- Baptist Collegiate Ministries
- Biological Science Organization (BSO)
- Black Organization for Leadership and Development (BOLD)
- Catholic Student Organization (CSO)
- Chemistry Club
- Clio Society
- Collegiate 4-H
- Computer Science Club
- Criminal Justice Association
- Empty Space Players
- International Student Association (ISA)
- Latin American Student Organization (LASO)
- Link at LSUA
- LSUA Ambassadors
- LSUA Business Society
- LSUA Kinesiology Club
- Marketing Club
- Math Club
- Muslim Organization for Leadership and Development
- National Society of Leadership and Success
- Psi Chi International Honor Society
- Psychology Club
- Rotaract
- Sigma Beta Delta - International Business Honor Society
- Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society
- Sports Media
- Student Government Association (SGA)
- Student Nurses Association
- Zeta Phi Beta Sorority

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION (ISA)

ISA is the largest cultural organization and is omnipresent on campus. The organization's mission is to support and foster the international community on the LSUA campus. ISA is open to all students.

For more information contact us at: <https://www.facebook.com/LSUA-ISA-International-Student-Association-703356063109670/>

TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Each semester LSUA kicks off the first week of school with "Week of Welcome", (WOW). Student Life and many student organizations have planned several activities that will be held throughout the first week of school. Most of these activities will be held on the "Quad." The quad is located behind the water fountains in front of the Student Center. If you see activities going on in this area, wander on over, they are there for all students. Below are some traditional activities for each months.

January

We start off January with another "Welcome Week." Again the Welcome Tents will be on campus up front to assist students in finding their classes and getting general information; and this time, maybe hot chocolate.

February

Mardi Gras in February comes alive with deciding on a float theme, float building, and decorating, the purchases of mass quantities of beads and candy, costume designing, and general secrecy about what the floats will look like. Hundreds came for one of the safest and best run Mardi Gras Parades in Cenla.

March

March is the time when LSUA provides students with the opportunity to network with the business community. In mid-March is the annual “Job Fair.” If you are a freshman, you may be asking, “Why do I need to go to a Job Fair?” Learn who has what jobs, find part-time work as well as full-time. Business representatives give away trinkets representing their business.

April

Each April, LSUA holds the Ms. LSUA Pageant. This pageant is designed to find the best person to represent LSUA at various functions and activities throughout the year. The winner receives a one thousand dollar scholarship and the first runner-up receives a five hundred dollar scholarship.

Also in April is the Annual Student Government Crawfish Boil. The campus gets together to eat crawfish, corn, and potatoes. There is usually music, lots of students, faculty, staff, and guests to eat their fill of the “Mud Bugs.” Be sure and get your ticket early. This one you don’t want to miss.

May

May is the time when the spring semester ends. The big one for May is Graduation. Each year, LSUA graduates more students providing well qualified employees to fill the many positions awaiting them in the world-of-work. Even if you are not graduating, we invite you to attend. It might be just the spark you need to continue to progress toward your graduation.

September

Student Activities sponsors an “Organization Fair” in early September. This is your chance to shop the various student organizations to find the best one to join. Perhaps you might even what to join more than one. Be sure and check out the quad for this one.

October

A couple of the traditional October traditions are our annual Pumpkin Carving Contest, and Costume Judging Contest. Perhaps the largest and most exciting traditional October event is the “Trick-or-Treat Street.” On the night of the traditional trick-or-treat activities, the campus square is closed to traffic, organizations set-up booths along the streets, and children and their parents come by the droves to participate in a safe and fun Trick-or Treat Street.

November

Each year the campus celebrates a time of thanksgiving by holding a Harvest Feast for the entire campus. We get together on the Wednesday a week before Thanksgiving to enjoy the LSUA family.

December

Since the fall semester ends early in December, our traditions are limited. However, most of the academic departments decorate their offices in the spirit of Christmas. Students are invited to participate in the decorating and drink hot chocolate, sing carols, and have a good time decorating the tree.

Since finals week occurs in early December, Student Government often plans goodies, free coffee, etc. for students during the week.

U.S. CULTURE AND PRACTICES

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture Shock

Living in a new country and environment is an exciting experience. It is an opportunity to learn new skills, meet new friends, taste new cuisines, and become independent. The details of living arrangements, social interactions, intercultural interactions and immigration requirements to follow and the many choices and decisions to make, can be mind boggling. Anyone exposed to a new culture, different environment, and separated from the important people in life, such as family and friends, will experience some degree of culture shock.

Students often suffer from “culture shock,” and the excitement of the first few days may turn into feelings of loneliness and unhappiness. Some students may feel that they do not have any "down-time" to adjust, and reflect. Some common symptoms in this phase include: frustration, irritability, boredom, criticism, Changes in mood, depression, feeling vulnerable, and the feeling of being lost or overlooked.

International students may also become aware that the real America is so different than what has been portrayed by the media and pop culture. Although Americans are friendly and welcoming to international students, sometimes their "openness can be overwhelming". Americans often see themselves as individuals and are goal and action oriented. Emphasis is placed on “doing your own thing” and having the freedom to make individual decisions. Personal freedom is respected and highly valued.

How to prepare

“Culture shock” is a natural response and can be difficult to handle. The best advice is to keep an open mind. Going into the experience as an international student with an open mind will help students see the similarities and differences between their home country and the U.S. without judging them. Try to observe and to understand others. The more you know about American culture, politics, and economics, the more you can prepare yourself for what to expect when you arrive in the U.S.A.

People are operating in accordance with their own set of values and history. Try not to judge them by the standards and expectations of your own country. Learn about unspoken rules and expectations, social manners and current affairs. Also eat, sleep and exercise to stay both physically and mentally healthy. This will help you sustain a positive attitude while adjusting and adapting to a new culture. While at times it may be an unpleasant experience to go through, adapting to a new culture provides great opportunities for personal growth and development.

Connecting with students from your country can be very helpful when you first arrive, but as time goes on, try to find an American (or a few!) who is understanding to your situation, with whom you can share your feelings of confusion.

UNDERSTAND THE U.S CLASSROOM CULTURE

1. Classroom participation:

International students find connection with professors and dynamics in the classroom interesting. Students tend to be less formal in the US than in most other countries. Student and teacher relationships tend to be more equal in the United States. Students in American classrooms speak freely and lectures are much more like discussions than the lectures. International students may not be accustomed to a professor openly criticizing or complimenting them. Some of these can be regarded as differences in communication styles and values, expectations of professors and students, teaching and learning, or simply culture.

2. Self-achievement:

Americans tend to be competitive, achievement-oriented, and direct in interactions. Emphasis is often placed on the individual rather than the group. Recognition of such cultural trends can ease the discomfort you may feel when you experience differences in interactions.

3. Helpful sources:

In the US, there are many sources available if you need help. Please talk with your professors, faculty advisers, counselors, or seek tutoring from the Tutoring Centers on campus for any problems that you may have with the courses or personal issues. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness.

4. Time and Appointments

Americans are highly conscious of the value of time and use it quite efficiently. American attitude toward appointments replicate this idea. Most of Americans' daily activities are well planned and it is normal to make appointments to meet with faculty (some faculty may have open office hours when you may drop by). Students should always be on time for lectures, classes, and meetings with academic and administrative staff. If students fails to keep an appointment or are late for it, it is extremely important for students to call and give advance notice.

5. Returning Phone Calls and Messages

If you receive a phone call or a message with a name and/or a telephone number, you are expected to return the phone call as soon as possible. When you have called a person who is not there, you are expected to leave your name and/or message so that person will be able to return your phone call.

COUNSELING CENTER

If you're struggling with the stress of cultural adjustment and would like to learn strategies for coping more effectively with your transition, please reach out to the Counseling Center. Many international students find that counseling can help them learn new coping skills, generate ideas about how to get connected, and receive support for the many transitions they are experiencing.

All counseling services are free and confidential. To schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor, call (318) 767-2604 or email csandoval@lsua.edu or ctilley@lsua.edu.