

SEP Cheat Sheet

USA



As shared by your seniors 2020

ACADEMICS

module & timetable planning



Seek out faculty advisors for international students in your host university for additional module information



Prepare a list of backup modules; in some universities, international students have the lowest priority for module enrolment



Look out for unofficial student websites similar to NUSMods documenting historical enrolment and grades for modules. For University of California, Berkeley try berkeleytime.com

LIVING OVERSEAS

housing & accommodation



Airbnb listings might offer long-term leases even if the option is not stated; check directly with the landlord



Do your due diligence; international students may not be given priority for on-campus housing



On-campus housing is generally more secure than off-campus housing but might include a meal plan subscription which can be costly



Depending on the location of your host university, off-campus housing options may be limited, e.g. in college towns

PRE-TRIP

packing & planning



Pack only essential items; most clothing can be bought in the US where American brands are sold at a cheaper price



The primary mode of payment is by card; having a debit or credit card which stores foreign currencies will offer convenience. Seniors recommended: YouTrip, Revolut



Begin your visa application early; the J1 visa requires multiple documents and an appointment at the embassy



Health insurance is mandatory; refer to your university/state requirement for the insurance coverage needed

GENERAL TIPS

Make the most of your exchange



Secure your belongings; on-campus petty crime like snatch thieves and pickpockets are common in certain locations



Avoid travelling alone at night; pepper spray can be bought by persons of 18 years and above



Attend international student activities organised by the university to meet fellow exchangers



Immerse yourself in your host university's academic culture and take the opportunity to network with your professors

***Pro tip: Download the International SOS app for the latest updates on safety and travel in your host country. For more useful tips, refer to the [SEP General Cheat Sheet](#).**



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