INTERNATIONAL PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION
Please copy this document, read it carefully, and bring it with you.

We are delighted that you have decided to study at Bradley University and congratulate you on your acceptance.

In order to assist you as you make preparations for your departure from your country, we have provided some information we hope you find helpful. We also welcome your suggestions after you arrive so that we can pass it on to other new students!

A. Obtaining a Student Visa

Once you have received your Certificate of Eligibility Form I-20 and acceptance letter, we recommend that you contact the nearest American Embassy/Consulate to inquire about the procedures required to apply for an F-1 student visa. There are three US government websites you can visit:

2. The specific website for your region/country: http://usembassy.state.gov/ (Click on your region and Embassy or Consulate applicable to your residence.)

When you receive the I-20 Form from the Graduate School, there will be an instruction sheet with detailed recommendations for documents you should prepare for your visa application. Be sure you are well prepared before submitting your application for a visa.

Note: A student visa cannot be granted more than 90 days prior to the designated registration date indicated as the “program start date” on the I-20. You are encouraged to apply for a visa as soon as possible. Since the preferred method of applying (by mail, drop-box or interview) may vary from Consulate to Consulate, consult the website or contact the appropriate office nearest you. The Department of Homeland Security regulation indicates that students should not enter the US more than 30 days in advance of the program start date indicated on the Form I-20. Please consider this date when making your travel plans.

All applicants for an F-1 student visa must provide the following:

1. PASSPORT (valid at least six months beyond the intended duration of stay)
2. SEVIS Fee Receipt (or other proof of payment) for U.S. $200 SEVIS fee submitted with Form I-901, “Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, M Non-immigrants” For details and link to the form: http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm
4. I-20 (Original document, 3-pages)
5. TOEFL, GRE or GMAT Score Report if required by your program (Official)
6. Academic Documentation (Transcripts, Marksheets and Degree Certificate/s)
7. Sponsor’s bank statement, reflecting funds for at least the first year’s expenses
8. Sponsor’s affidavit of support, indicating intent and ability to fund for two years
9. Photographs (Passport size, 50 mm x 50 mm or 2” x 2” or current requirements)

In addition, visa applicants should be prepared to provide:

- Financial evidence showing that the person/s sponsoring you has/have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period of your intended study. For example, if your sponsor is a salaried employee, please bring income tax documents and original bankbooks and/or statements.
- Proof of ties to your home country. Bring any documents that show that you plan to return to your home country after your studies. Examples include: job offers, land ownership, and family businesses.
You must attend the university whose I-20 was used to obtain an F-1 visa and whose I-20 is presented at the port of entry. If you want to attend another institution that has also issued you an I-20, you should request another visa for the preferred institution. Otherwise, you must contact the International Student Advisor at the institution that issued the I-20 is mentioned on your visa to request their procedures for transferring out.

B. Health Insurance

Health Insurance is mandatory for all F-1 International Students. This notice explains the options available to you for meeting this requirement.

You are required to have health insurance coverage at a level described as “major medical”. Note: a “basic” level of coverage, sometimes referred to as “silver” is NOT sufficient. You want to purchase major medical coverage which will be referred to as the "gold" or "platinum" level. As a requirement for course enrollment (registration) at Bradley, after you arrive, you will need to provide written documentation that you have health insurance coverage. A copy of your policy and your paid receipt showing dates of coverage will suffice.

Option 1: Obtain health insurance on your own prior to leaving your country. In this case, you must present proof of your insurance coverage when you report to the Graduate School. For example, those from India might consider the policy offered by ISOA.org (Mandatory “Compass Gold” plan) among others. Reminder: the coverage must include “major medical” and should be for no less than one year, renewable.

Option 2: Purchase insurance through Bradley University. For those international students who do not have insurance through a U.S.-based insurance carrier, the Gallagher Student International Students & Scholars Plan (ISS) is available on a voluntary basis. You may be covered under this plan if you are a non-United States citizen with a current passport or visa traveling outside your home country to the United States to engage in full time international educational activities. Please note that International Students are NOT automatically enrolled in this Plan as they have been in previous years.

Plan Highlights Include:

- After a $100 per injury or sickness deductible, the first $5,000 Covered Expenses paid at 80%; thereafter, 100% of Covered Expenses to the $250,000 Aggregate Maximum;
- Freedom in Choice of Providers - Services can be received from any doctor, specialist or hospital;
- Accidental Death & Dismemberment Coverage;
- Worldwide Assistance Services - Offers 24-hour emergency travel assistance services including Medical Evacuation and Repatriation of Remains;
- Dependent Coverage - Spouse and/or children (under the age of 25)
- Monthly Payment Option - Enroll for a minimum of one month or for multiple months. If you choose to enroll on a monthly basis, it is your responsibility to make timely renewal payments as reminder notices are not sent.
- Monthly rate of $173 per person

Please refer to the Plan brochure under ‘Benefits & Plan Information’ for complete details of coverage, exclusions & limitations.

The enrollment process for the ISS Plans is entirely online and will begin June 1, 2014. Students wishing to learn more or enroll should visit www.gallagherstudent.com/ISS. Payment can be made by credit card or e-check through Gallagher Student’s website. Also see the Insurance Information webpage.
C. What to Bring

Bradley University is located in a region of the United States where we experience all four seasons (fall, winter, spring, and summer) each year. It will be very hot and very cold so keep this in mind when planning what to bring.

TEXTBOOKS
You cannot buy your textbooks until you arrive and register. The list of required books will be provided by your instructors and are subject to change.

CLOTHING
Bradley students dress casually for classes. Attire worn to class can range from slacks and a shirt with a warm coat, hat, gloves and scarf during the winter, to shorts and a tee shirt during the summer. There are likely to be special occasions when more formal attire will be appropriate, such as when you give classroom presentations, attend special social functions, job interviews, departmental events, and the like. We also suggest that you bring at least one outfit of your national dress, as there may be several opportunities to wear it during the year.

PERSONAL CARE
- Toiletries
- Umbrella
- Book bag, backpack or daypack
- Towels
- Bedding: sheets, blankets, pillows

MEDICINE AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS
If you must take medicines on a regular basis, it is strongly recommended that you bring the doctor’s prescription and a medical history that states your condition, diagnosis, treatment and prognosis. Please note that the University’s medical insurance plan will not provide benefits for pre-existing conditions as defined, except where mandated by law. Consequently, if you need regular treatment for a medical condition, it is recommended that you obtain supplemental insurance coverage that includes pre-existing conditions as travel insurance prior to leaving your country. This will be in addition to the International Health Insurance Program mandated by the University for all international students and exchange visitors.

MISCELLANEOUS items to bring:
- Dictionary which translates from English to your language and the reverse
- Personal Computer
- Internationally accepted credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, etc.), if you have or can obtain one.
- Phone card. You can buy phone cards in the airport (US port of entry), or using a credit card on-line at these websites: www.9278.com and www.reliablecom.com. Be aware that some phone cards purchases outside the US do not work inside the US.

D. Money and Banking
You will be required to pay for your first semester of tuition after you arrive and register. To cover your first semester tuition and six months of expenses, we advise you to bring at least half of your annual estimated expenses (which are indicated in Section 7 on your I-20). Half your annual expense will be approximately US$13,500. Please understand that you will probably spend more money at the beginning of your first semester than after you get settled. The tuition, plus any other fees, may be paid by cash, check, bank draft, MasterCard, Visa, or Discover. We discourage you from considering the “cash” option, since traveling with large sums of cash is dangerous.
We recommend:

1. Bank check or demand draft payable to Bradley University for your first semester’s tuition in the approximate amount of US $7,290 (subject to change without notice).

   We cannot tell you exactly what your bill will be until after you register. If your bank check or DD is more than your bill, the university will send a refund check to you for the difference approximately two weeks later. Your tuition payment is not required prior to your arrival or before you register.

2. Traveler’s checks (Thomas Cook or American Express) in US dollars for other expenses to cover you for approximately six months. We recommend approximately UD$6,000 in traveler’s checks.

3. Cash in the amount of several hundred dollars ($300-$500) in US currency. Once you are in a US airport, purchase some small item to break your paper money so you will have “change”, i.e., smaller bills and coins. We strongly advise you to keep your money on your person and NOT in your baggage, book bag or attaché. Keep in mind that you do not want any clever thief to know how much cash you have on you, so do not let anyone see your wallet or you holding a lot of money.

   After you arrive, you are encouraged to open a bank account as soon as possible. During the Graduate School and Multicultural Student Services orientation programs, there will be representatives from several local banks available to assist you with opening a bank account. There are a number of banks near the University campus. The closest one is the Heritage Bank.

E. Travel Arrangements and Process

1. Book your ticket as soon as possible. Plan your arrival at Bradley for approximately 10 days -2 weeks before classes begin (the exact date is listed in your admission letter).

2. Book your destination as Chicago IL O’Hare International Airport.

3. Schedule your flight to arrive on a weekday (Monday through Friday during office hours (8AM – 5PM), if possible, taking into account that after you arrive in Chicago, you will need 4-5 additional hours from O’Hare before you arrive in Peoria.

4. Chicago is at least three hours travel time from Peoria, regrettably, no one from Bradley can meet you at the airport.

5. Know when your plane is scheduled to land according to US Central Daylight Savings Time, so you can determine which departing Peoria Charter Coach (bus) you can expect to catch.

6. You will process through Immigration in Chicago, if Chicago is your first landing on US soil. Plan on immigration processing taking 30-60 minutes, depending upon the number of international flights arriving at the same time as yours.

7. Claim your luggage. Follow the “Baggage” signs. Your flight number will be identified with a particular baggage carousel in your airline baggage pickup area.

8. Go to the Peoria Charter Coach (bus) loading area which is in the Bus/Shuttle Center at O’Hare Airport. Tickets are purchased from the bus driver; no reservation is required. Be prepared to pay in US dollars. Arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled departure time. The bus will take you to the Bradley Student Center. Visit their Web Site for departure/arrival schedules: http://www.peoriacharter.com.

9. Arrival assistance. You should make arrangements for someone to meet you at the Bradley Student Center. If you should arrive and need assistance, contact BU Switchboard at 309-6767611 or University Police at 309-677-2000.

10. If you fly into Peoria Airport, you should expect to take a taxi cab to Bradley or to a hotel. Please go to our website www.bradley.edu/grad, click on Prospective Students, then click on Visit Campus to view information about coming to the Bradley campus. Make a reservation before you leave your country.
F. Document Checklist

Keep these documents together in a folder and carry them with you while traveling. Do not pack these items in your luggage. You will need easy access to **items** when you process through immigration in the airport.

1. **Passport.**

2. I-20 **(3-pages).** Read all pages so that you understand the content of this document; read and understand page 2 which details the rights and responsibilities of F-1 students and is the basis for you signing the bottom of page one at the port of entry.


4. Attested marksheets, transcripts and degree certificate/s. Read your acceptance letter and determine if your admission is contingent upon receipt of final or official documents. If yes, bring the needed documents with you in a sealed, signed official envelope; do **not open** this envelope.

5. Financial certification.

6. **Health or travel Insurance policy.** See Health Insurance Blue Flyer in your admissions packet and PDF version.

7. Bradley University Student Health Form and X-rays from Tuberculosis testing, if you have been tested.

8. Money, credit card, travelers check, medicine, jewelry, valuables.

9. Pre-Arrival email attachments sent to you when you were admitted.

G. Arrival Assistance and Contacts with other International Student Groups

Take Peoria Charter to campus from Mid-way or O'Hare Airports Peoria Charter contact information is located at the end of this document.

International Student Organizations often assist new students in many ways. One of the most crucial and vital services these organizations provide to new students is arrival assistance once you reach Peoria. If you need arrival assistance, be sure to write to a student organization and give your complete name, the exact day, date, airline, flight number, and scheduled time of arrival. If you cannot find a student association that meets your needs, you may contact by e-mail the Multicultural Student Services office, attention: Frances Jones at fjc@fsmail.bradley.edu

While there are numerous student organizations at Bradley University, the following are active in assisting new students:

**Arab Students, Organization of (OAS)**  
Website: [http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/oas/index.htm](http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/oas/index.htm)

**Muslim Students Association (MSA)**  
Website: [http://www.bradleymsa.blogspot.com/](http://www.bradleymsa.blogspot.com/)

**Indian Students Association (ISA)**  
Email: isa.bradley@gmail.com Website: [http://www.bradley.edu/stuorgs/isa](http://www.bradley.edu/stuorgs/isa)

For a full list of student organizations visit: [http://www.bradley.edu/sao/orglist.html](http://www.bradley.edu/sao/orglist.html)

If you arrive at the Peoria airport and have no transportation to Bradley University, we recommend that you take a taxi directly from the airport (distance to BU is 8 miles, approximate cost $10.00) to the campus.

In case of other emergency assistance, please contact the Bradley University Police Office by calling (309) 677-2000.
H. Tuition and Fees and other expenses

1. Tuition and fees are assessed on a semester basis. The current fee is USD 810/credit hour. The normal credit load for a fulltime international student is 9 hours per semester. You will also be required to pay a health center fee of $87. Payment is not required until you arrive and physically register. You cannot register until you attend the Graduate School International Student Orientation. You should be prepared to pay your tuition bill soon after registration.

2. The annual tuition and fee rate is found in several places: Section 7A on your I-20 gives the total annual tuition (2-semesters, fulltime); the backside of the BU Financial Information and Certification Form gives an annual estimate of various fees and expenses;

3. Do not underestimate the amount of money you should bring with you. Do not plan on working to supplement your income. Jobs are difficult to find for your first semester because you will be arriving relatively late. Work is not recommended your first semester.

I. Housing

1. Graduate students usually live with other students in apartments or houses near the university.

2. Students may contact the Indian Student Association for arrival and temporary housing assistance.

3. If you arrive on campus outside of normal office hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM), you may contact the university switchboard and request that University Police meet you.

4. If you make no prior arrangements, you should plan to stay temporarily in a nearby hotel.

J. Orientation

There are two required Orientation Programs for International students.

1. The first Orientation Program is arranged by the Graduate School and the Multicultural Student Services office. You will be notified by email about the details of this meeting and are required to report to the Graduate School upon arrival for preliminary registration information.

2. The second Orientation is the Graduate School Orientation Program for all new graduate domestic and international students and is distinctly different from the first orientation. Details will be provided to you upon arrival.

3. Department and program orientations: the schedule for departmental meetings will be available upon arrival.

4. You are expected to report to the Graduate School approximately one week to ten days before the “Program Start Date” on your I-20 (item #5). The first day of the semester is your I-20 Program Start Date.

K. Other advice

1. Functioning in American English will be your biggest challenge. Before you arrive, learn as much as you can about American culture. Expose yourself to as much American English as you can: watch American movies, listen to books on tape, listen to radio programs, and read magazines, newspapers and American internet sights.

2. We highly recommend that you review a website http://www.china-nafsa.aief-usa.org entitled “Pre-Departure Orientation for Chinese Students. This is applicable to all international students so if you are not from China simply substitute your country and keep reading. The information is provided through a grant from NAFSA: Association of International Educators.
Other useful websites:
1. Bradley University:  www.bradley.edu
2. The Graduate School:  www.bradley.edu/grad
3. ISA (Indian Student Association):  http://www.bradley.edu/stuorgs/isa
4. Multicultural Student Services:  www.bradley.edu/multicultural
5. PAFIS (Peoria Area Friends of International Students)  http://pafis.bradley.edu
7. Pre-Departure Cultural Orientation:  http://www.china-nafsa.aief-usa.org

Important Phone Numbers and Contact Information

Bradley University 24-Hour, Emergency, Campus Police (309) 677-2000

Peoria Charter Coach: (Bus from Chicago Midway Airport and O'Hare Airport) Toll Free: (800) 448-0572 or (309) 688-9523
Visit their Web Site for departure/arrival schedules:  http://www.peoriacharter.com

Multicultural Student Services: (309) 677-2646

Graduate School: (309) 677-2375