

Education Abroad and International Student Services

The University of Oklahoma

PARTNER UNIVERSITY ADVISOR'S MANUAL

Dear Colleague,

In an effort to provide the best possible experience for our exchange students, we ask for your cooperation with our official application process. Important issues are outlined below.

We value the relationships we have with our partner universities and we invite you to contact our office with questions and concerns about the topics in this manual. We look forward to continuing a productive exchange with your university and to welcoming your students for years to come.

Dr. Millie Audas – Director, Education Abroad and International Student Services
Karen L. Elmore – Assistant Director for Education Abroad

Mailing Address

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Nominations

To ensure a balance in the number of exchange participants, we need information on the nominees by the due dates listed in the “Deadlines” section below. Nominations can be sent by fax, letter, or e-mail and should include each student’s **1) name, 2) area of study, 3) email address and 4) semester(s) for which they are applying**. The Nomination Form is at the end of this document.

Nominations received past the dates listed below may be considered, but will not receive priority and may be subject to denial. Furthermore, late applicants may be ineligible for campus housing and preferred courses.

Once the EAISS office has confirmed conditional placement of your nominated students, they will be required to complete the following forms:

1. The University of Oklahoma application. This form is available at: <http://admissions.ou.edu/FRNUG-4PG.pdf>
Exchange students should complete the 1st two pages only. No application fee is required.
2. Recommendation Form
3. Statement of Purpose Form
4. Course Preferences Form (also found at the end of this manual)
5. Agreement of Understanding

6. Medical Information Form (optional)
7. Current university transcript and form
8. J-1 Visa Information Sheet
9. Current bank statement showing \$5000 for one semester or \$10,000 for two semesters of exchange

Visa Process

Nominees who are accepted will receive an email from our office. The email will contain a questionnaire that students must complete immediately and print for return, with two items attached: 1) a copy of the main passport page and 2) proof of financial support for the period of stay in the United States. This proof of support must be:

- a) a bank statement, translated into English and converted into U.S. dollar amounts
- b) current within 90 days of the date it is sent

If the bank statements show a parent as the account holder's name, the student must also submit a signed letter from that parent, stating the following: "I, _____, will be supporting _____, my son/daughter, during his/her stay at the University of Oklahoma for the time period of _____ to _____."

Students who do not yet have a passport must send a copy of their national identification card, if they have one. If neither is available, please contact our office for advice.

The questionnaire and supporting documents may be faxed to us at 405-325-7387 or scanned to the appropriate advisor's email listed at the end of this manual.

Deadlines

Nominations and application materials must be sent to our office by the following dates to ensure placement and processing.

April 1st – Nomination of students for the fall semester (August) or academic year

April 30th – Completed application packets of confirmed participants for the fall semester or academic year

October 1st – Nomination of students for the spring semester (January)

October 30th – Completed application packets of confirmed participants for the spring semester

Note: We understand that our partners' application and selection calendar may make the above deadlines difficult to meet. If circumstances require your office to submit late nominations, please inform us before the due date so we can try to accommodate your students.

Extensions

Requests for program extensions can only be approved under exceptional circumstances. Please advise your students of this policy and ensure that the correct length of program (number of semesters) is indicated on your nomination form. Any requests for program extension must include an explanation of circumstances and approval from your office.

Insurance

Beginning with the August 2007, there was an important change in the rules on student insurance. The University of Oklahoma will accept non-OU student insurance **only** if it meets the conditions stated in our insurance letter. This letter is part of the packet received by each exchange student. Please do not advise your students to get insurance policies until they have read the insurance letter.

To summarize the changes, students will be allowed to waive the OU insurance only if 1) they have insurance backed by their home country government or 2) they are covered as a dependent through a parent or guardian and that insurance is from the parent's or guardian's employer. In all cases the insurance must still meet the U.S. Department of State insurance requirements for all students on J-1 exchange visitor visas. Those requirements are listed in the insurance letter.

Fees

Students participating on a reciprocal exchange program between their home university and the University of Oklahoma will have all tuition and standard academic fees waived for the duration of their stay. However, there are a few fees that will be assessed to exchange students by the University of Oklahoma.

\$50 International Student Fee, billed once per semester for the management of the immigration process

\$20 Exchange Student Fee, billed only once during their stay

\$15 to purchase their "Student Identification Cards" when they arrive.

These fees do not include application fees and deposits for housing costs. **The \$35 housing application fee and the deposit for an apartment, will be paid directly to the Housing Office upon arrival. The deposit varies depending on each student's housing placement.**

Employment

Exchange students are not permitted to hold jobs on or off campus. This policy gives degree-seeking students who pay full tuition and fees a better chance to find employment. Only in exceptional situations will an exchange student be allowed to work. In those cases, the student's financial situation must have changed AFTER arrival.

Enrollment

Exchange students receive a waiver of all tuition and academic fees at The University of Oklahoma. This waiver covers 12 hours of undergraduate level credit, 9 hours of graduate level credit or 10 hours of credit for law students. These levels are the standard "full-time" enrollment for each type of student. Most of OU's courses are worth three credits each. This designation means that a course lasts one semester (16 weeks), meeting for three hours each week. For each hour of lecture, students are expected to spend two hours of time outside of class working on assignments and readings.

Students should make every effort to select courses that match the appropriate number of credit hours. Only under exceptional circumstances will students be allowed to take more than 12 hours. Exchange students must consult with our office if at any point their credit hours exceed this total.

Exchange students may select courses from any department on the Norman campus, provided they have the necessary background for each course. Eligibility for courses will ultimately be determined by the respective department, academic advisor, or course instructor. Many upper level (3000 and 4000) courses require prior completion of a lower level course called a *prerequisite*. The requirement to take that exact course may not apply to exchange students, but they should select courses only if they have some background in the subject.

Demand for courses at OU is extremely high, particularly in the areas of business, economics and engineering. Every effort will be made to ensure that exchange students receive the courses they want, but the availability of space for a specific course is outside of our office's control and *cannot be guaranteed*. Students should make it clear on their Course Preference Forms if their home university requires a particular course. Advisors abroad should stress to students that they must be able to select alternate courses if their first choices are unavailable.

More information about enrollment is listed in the **Enrollment Guide** that is a part of the course preference sheet that all exchange students must complete.

OU's course catalog and class schedule are available online at <http://enroll.ou.edu>. It is very important for students to consult this schedule and select courses that are offered during the correct semester. Looking only at the University of Oklahoma course catalog does not tell a student which semester the courses will be offered.

Note: Courses through the Center for English as a Second Language, Health Sciences Center, College of Continuing Education and Aviation courses are not covered under the terms of the reciprocal exchange agreement. For that reason, exchange students may not take courses in these areas.

Housing

Exchange students are strongly encouraged to use OU student housing and are promised a placement in a university apartment complex. Beginning with August 2008, We are expecting the rent for exchange students to be the same as the other occupants of each apartment complex. Unfortunately the popularity of the on-campus apartments no longer allows discounted rent for our exchange students. While there are numerous private apartments in Norman, because of the length of contract, the deposits required and additional monthly expenses, these apartments are more problematic. Students not wishing to be in university housing must notify our office.

The University of Oklahoma provides two main types of student housing: apartments and dormitories. The primary difference between them is the student "meal plan", which provides prepared meals to dormitory residents because most dormitories do not have full kitchens.

No alcoholic beverages are allowed in the dormitories, even for students over 21 years old -- the legal drinking age in the United States.

All university housing requires occupants in the same room or apartment be of the same sex. Males and females are only allowed to share a unit if they are married. University housing includes basic amenities, including beds, tables, couches, chairs, and desks. Linens, pots and pans and dishes are not provided. All of the amenities in any university apartments may be found on the housing web site listed below.

More information about housing policies, options, and rates may be found online at <http://www.housing.ou.edu/>. Exchange students should not send any money to the housing office in advance. The first month's rent for either August or January will be for a partial month, pro-rated to the day the student picks up the key for the apartment.

Student will pay the housing application fee, deposit and first month's partial rent when they sign their housing contracts.

Academic Progress

Our office encourages students to make the most of their stay in Oklahoma. While OU and the surrounding community offer many social activities, the focus for all students should be academics. The majority of exchange students find the academic requirements of U.S. institutions more rigorous than their home universities. Most courses require a number of papers, projects, books, and exams. Work begins during the first week of each semester. Advisors are encouraged to recommend or select candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to their courses at the home university.

Language Requirements

The University of Oklahoma does not require a TOEFL score from exchange students, although students who have taken the exam are welcome to submit their results. Advisors should assess as accurately as possible the applicants' English language ability and only nominate those who have demonstrated a high level in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students who arrive without adequate ability in English will not be able to pass their classes and will have difficulty integrating themselves into the campus community. Courses at OU's Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) are not included in the terms of our exchange agreements. Students accepted for reciprocal exchange programs may not take these courses and should not request to do so.

Transcripts

U.S. Federal law prohibits our office from requesting student transcripts/marks. Only students may request their official transcripts showing their grades. Exchange students will be informed and reminded of this. They will be advised how to get transcripts sent to their home universities and their home addresses before departing Oklahoma. Despite reminders, many students leave the university without requesting a transcript. If exchange students do not arrange this before leaving Oklahoma, they must make a request for a transcript through this link: <http://admissions.ou.edu/transcripts.html>

Note: Students who have an outstanding balance on their university account will not have transcripts released to them until the balance is paid.

Student Information

Students accepted to participate on a reciprocal exchange program will be sent additional information prior to their arrival in the U.S. This includes an official acceptance letter and the DS2019 form required for the J-1 visa application. Students are invited to contact the appropriate advisor with questions they have about any aspect of their program. Complete staff contact information is listed below. The Exchange Student handbook is available on our web page.

Airport Pick-up Service

Although our office has arranged volunteers to pick students up from the airport in the past, this is no longer allowed. For that reason, we encourage students to use the ground transportation of taxis or airport express shuttle vans to make the short trip from the airport to Norman. Information is available on www.flyokc.com.

Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to read the information above. Please contact us if you have questions that are not answered in this manual. The handbook for exchange students addresses the issues above and more. It is available on our web page.

The EAISS staff would also like to invite you and your staff to visit us in Norman, Oklahoma, should you be able to do so.

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