LIVING IN OKLAHOMA CITY

Oklahoma City is the state capital and the largest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the state. With all the amenities of a large city, low traffic congestion, excellent ground transportation system, and an affordable cost of living, you can devote more time and energy to things you care about. The metro area encompasses Canadian, Cleveland, McClain, Oklahoma, and Pottawatomie Counties.

Climate
The average January temperature in Oklahoma City is 36˚F with a July temperature average of 81.5˚F. The area receives an average of 32 inches of rain annually and 6 inches of snow. The average number of flying days is 350. The temperature frequently drops to -7˚C (20˚F) during the winter and rises to as high as 38˚C (100˚F) during the summer. Every year Oklahoma thunderstorms, normally during the months of May and April, give rise to a reasonably predictable tornado season.

Housing
Oklahoma City has 310,000 dwellings; 67.3% are owner occupied. Rental housing is readily available. The University Village Apartments located on the Health Sciences Center campus, is a great opportunity to become involved in campus life. Contact the OU Housing and Food Services at 405.325.2511 or visit their web site at http://housing.ou.edu/.

Road System
Three major interstate highways intersect within Oklahoma City. These are I-35 (N/S), I-40 (E/W) and I-44 (N/E/W). Many major U.S. & State highways also pass through the city.

Rail and Bus Availability
Embarc OKC runs 19 bus routes throughout the metro area. Amtrak provides passenger service to Fort Worth with connecting service to Chicago and Los Angeles. Visit embarcokc.com for more information.

Attractions
Oklahoma City is home to major league and minor league franchises in basketball, baseball and hockey. It also has numerous museums, including the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Center and the National Softball Hall of Fame. The Kirkpatrick Planetarium is one of the most visited science museums in the U.S. Past-mutual thoroughbred & quarter horse racing is available at Remington Park, one of the finest racing facilities in the country. Oklahoma City Zoological Park/Aquaticus is rated one of the ten best in the U.S.

Other Community Information
Oklahoma City is the nation’s 29th largest city and ranked by Forbes as the 6th most livable city in America. Capital of the New Century is an image campaign that has been successful in significant downtown business development accompanied with the renovation of convention, cultural and educational sites.

LIFE AND CUSTOMS IN THE UNITED STATES

Americans, like all people, have unique social customs. A few are discussed below, but it is impossible to list them all. By observing Americans and asking questions, you can learn about others.

Introduction and Greeting
It is proper to shake hands with everyone to whom you are introduced, both men and women. If you want to introduce yourself to someone or if you are being introduced by someone, extend your hand for a handshake and say, “Hello, I am...” You may see some Americans hug each other upon meeting. This is usually reserved for people who are close acquaintances. It would be improper to hug someone you have just met.

Gifts and Thank you
As a rule, gifts are given to relatives and close friends. They are sometimes given to people with whom one has a casual but friendly relationship, such as a host or hostess, but it is not necessary or even common for gifts to be given to such people. Gifts are not usually given to teachers or others who hold official positions. The offering of gifts in these situations is sometimes interpreted as a possibly improper effort to gain favorable treatment from that person. It is not necessary to bring a gift when you are invited to dinner. However, a small item you brought from home can be a pleasant surprise to hosts.

Scheduled Appointments
Most Americans consider it impolite to arrive unannounced. In a professional environment you are expected to make an appointment with a professional - such as a host or hostess, but it is not necessary or even customary to make an appointment with a friend. Arriving unannounced may interrupt another person’s scheduled appointment or result in a delay in receiving services.

These are just a few social customs of Americans. Make friendships with Americans, they can explain what you do not understand. Listen to others and ask questions. Develop friendships with other international students; they can share their own experiences.

IMPORTANT LINKS

- U.S. Department of State
  Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation
  ECA/ECEDC - SA-44, Room 734
  330 4th Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20527
  Ofc: 202-401-9818
  Email: jvisas@state.gov

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services:
  http://uscis.gov

- U.S. Department of State – USAINFO Facts
  http://usinfo.state.gov/USAINFO

- U.S. Department of State – Education & Cultural Affairs:
  http://exchanges.state.gov

Information included on this website will enhance your experience with the Exchange Visitor Programs.

- The Official Site of Oklahoma Web Site:
  http://www.ok.gov

- Reporting Abuse or Exploitation:
  J-1 Visa Emergency Hotline 1-866-283-9090—A Department of State representative is available 24 hours a day.

- Regular Communications or Questions:
  Email: jvisas@state.gov

University of Oklahoma HSC
Nima Zecavati, Assistant Director & ARO
Serena Prammanasudh-Greenwell, ARO
Human Resources – International Faculty & Staff Services
Nuclear Engineering Laboratory, Room 205
905 Asp Avenue, Norman, OK 73019
Ofc: 405.325.4010
Fax: 405.325.7354
nima-zecavati@ouhsc.edu
serena-greenwell@ouhsc.edu

University of Oklahoma—Norman
Isabel Chu, Immigration Advisor & ARO
Adrin Telfer, ARO
University of Oklahoma HSC
Human Resources – International Faculty & Staff Services
1100 N. Lindsay SCB 119
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
Ofc: 405.271.2189
Fax: 405.271.3925
isabelchu@ou.edu
adam.r.telfer@ou.edu

University of Oklahoma
Health Science Center
1100 N. Lindsay SCB 119
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
Ofc: 405.271.2189
Fax: 405.271.3925
nima-zecavati@ouhsc.edu
serena-greenwell@ouhsc.edu

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Hello,

You must provide the following information to your program officer before your entry into the U.S.

1. Address change
2. Employment change
3. Travel outside the U.S.
4. Health care coverage
5. Change in immigration status
6. Return home
7. Program completion
8. Program transfer
9. Program withdrawal

The Exchange Visitor Program is administered by the U.S. Department of State. Program sponsors are responsible for monitoring the welfare of their grantees and ensuring compliance with program regulations. Program sponsors are also responsible for managing the social security number procedures for their grantees.

International students and visiting scholars worldwide are required to maintain active insurance coverage. Program participants may not be covered by the program's insurance. Program participants are responsible for ensuring that they have adequate insurance to cover their medical expenses.

Access to the full text is available upon request.