



UH MANOA EXCHANGE & VISITING STUDENT

WELCOME GUIDE



Aloha and E komo mai! (Welcome!)

Congratulations on your acceptance to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM)! The materials enclosed in this Welcome Guide will assist you in preparing to come to UHM as an exchange or visiting student. I look forward to meeting you soon!

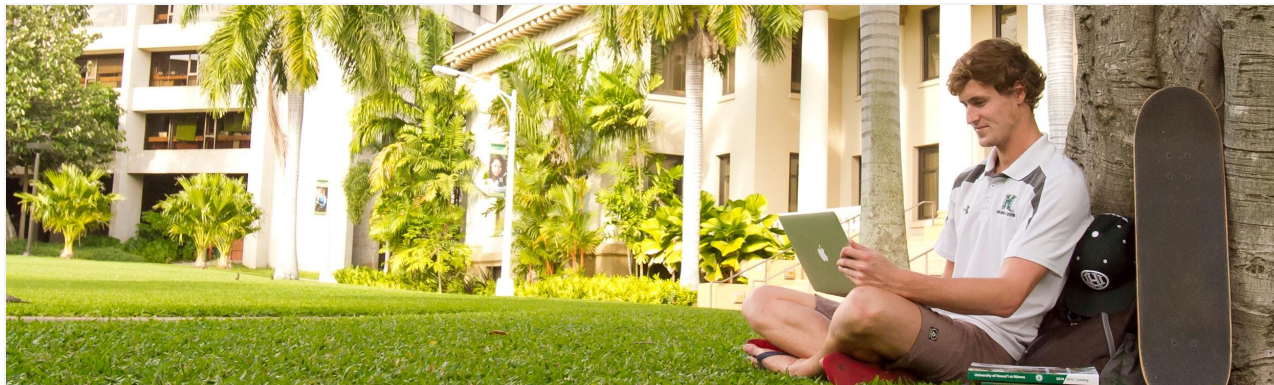
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Important Dates & Deadlines



Please make sure to review the [Academic Calendar](#) for UHM, which includes many important dates and deadlines for all students. However, incoming exchange and visiting students have some additional dates and deadlines to be aware of. Please see below for more details. We have also included a Pre-Departure Checklist for you to refer to at the end of this guide.

Important deadlines

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Immediately | Set up your UH account once you receive your acceptance email. |
| Immediately | Begin the application process for your student visa once you receive your I-20. |

Important dates

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| January 1, 2023 | We recommend arriving by this date to give yourself enough time to get settled, clear registration holds, attend welcome events, etc. You will need to arrange your own temporary housing if you arrive before your scheduled move-in date. |
| January 8 | Spring Semester (2024) Classes Start |
| May 1 | Spring Semester (2024) Classes End |
| May 6 -10 | Spring Semester (2024) Examination Period |
| August 26 | Fall Semester (2024) Classes Start |
| December 12 | Fall Semester (2024) Classes End |
| December 16-20 | Fall Semester (2024) Examination Period |

Contacts

Mānoa International Exchange (MIX)

The Mānoa International Exchange (MIX) Office oversees international student exchange programs at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

- **Phone:** +1-808-956-4728
- **Location:** Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services (QLC), Room 206 (same as ISS Office)
- **Website:** <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/mix/>



Vinnie Burns
Director

inbound@hawaii.edu

*Primary contact for INCOMING exchange
and visiting students to UHM*



Kathy Tran
Outbound Exchange Specialist

outbound@hawaii.edu

*Primary contact for OUTGOING exchange and
visiting students from UHM*

International Student Services (ISS)

The Office of International Student Services (ISS) supports international student success through the following endeavors: advising students on immigration regulations that affect their status in the U.S.; providing programs that help promote cross-cultural adjustment; serving as a resource to the campus and international student communities; and advocating for international students and international education.

- **Phone:** +1-808-956-8613
- **Fax:** +1-808-956-5076
- **Location:** Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services (QLC), Room 206 (same as MIX Office)
- **Website:** <https://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/>

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Karen Michael Mikel Director & F-1, J-1 Advisor | Viet Ngo F-1, J-1 Advisor | Stephanie Cleland F-1, J-1 Advisor |
| Lisa S. Houghtailing F-1, J-1 Advisor | Kendyll Doi IT Specialist | |

Other useful contacts

| | |
|---|--|
| Office of the Registrar <i>You can order transcripts and request enrollment verification from this office.</i> | Location: QLC Room 010 Email: uhmanoa.records@hawaii.edu Website , Order Transcript |
| Cashier's Office <i>Contact if you have questions about billing, payments, and/or refunds for student tuition.</i> | Location: QLC Room 105 Phone: 808-956-7554 |
| Counseling and Student Development Center <i>Serves the mental health needs of students, faculty, and staff at UHM. Offers psychological services, psychiatry, consultation, and more.</i> | Location: QLC Room 312 Phone: 1-808-956-7927 Hours: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm (tentative), Website |
| KOKUA Program (Disability Services) <i>Serves students with learning, physical, psychiatric and other documented disabilities. Can offer assistance and accommodations.</i> | Location: QLC Room 013 Email: kokua@hawaii.edu Phone: 808-956-7511 or 808-956-7612 Hours: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm, Website , Appointments |
| The Women's Center <i>Provides personal and academic support for the success of women and LGBT students. Resources for partner violence, sexual assault, legal aid, and other emergency needs.</i> | Location: QLC Room 211 Email: uhmwomen@hawaii.edu Phone: (808) 956-8059, Website |
| LGBTQ+ Center <i>The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer+ (LGBTQ+) Center strives to maintain a safe and inclusive campus environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Offers daily services, advocacy, and a study lounge.</i> | Location: QLC Room 211 Email: lgbtq@hawaii.edu Phone: (808) 956-9250 Hours: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Website |
| Student Parents at Mānoa (SPAM) <i>Provides support services and community referrals to help students with children (both Dads and Moms) succeed in their educational goals.</i> | Location: QLC Room 211 Phone: (808) 956-8059 Email: gotkids@hawaii.edu , Website |

Emergency information

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Police/fire/ambulance emergencies | 9-1-1 |
| Department of Public Safety | Phone: (808) 956-6911 Security Escort Service: (808) 956-SAFE (7233) |
| University Health Services | (808) 956-8965 |
| Mental Health Resources | Therapy Route International Help Center International Suicide Hotlines |

General Information

About Hawai'i & Honolulu

Hawai'i, the 50th state of the United States, is situated approximately 2,000 miles from the U.S. mainland. It stands as the sole state outside North America, entirely comprising islands and residing within the tropics. Hawai'i boasts a unique history, once existing as an independent nation. Honolulu, the capital and largest city of Hawai'i, can be found on the island of Oahu. It has served as the capital of the Hawaiian Islands since 1845. Honolulu is renowned for its cultural diversity, blending various Asian, Western, and Pacific influences into its demographics, cuisine, and traditions. The city is a global tourist hotspot, thanks to its favorable tropical climate, stunning natural landscapes, and extensive beaches. It consistently ranks high in international livability assessments and is regarded as one of the safest cities in the United States.

Weather & climate

Oahu enjoys warm weather year-round. The coolest months are January–February (around 81°F or 27°C), while the hottest are July–September (around 88°F or 31°C). Evenings typically stay above 65°F (18.3°C), even in winter. Hawai'i experiences a rainy season from October to early April, with rain mostly in the evening and more frequent near the mountains. Hurricane season runs from June to November, though landfalling hurricanes are rare in Hawai'i's history, with only two recorded instances. That being said, it is still important to prepare for hurricanes. Here is some information on [how to prepare](#).

About UH Mānoa

Established in 1907, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is the largest and oldest of the 10 UH campuses. UHM offers hundreds of undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees; a strong, vital research program; and nationally ranked NCAA Division I athletics. UH Mānoa is a research university of international standings. It has widely recognized strengths in tropical agriculture, tropical medicine, oceanography, astronomy, electrical engineering, volcanology, evolutionary biology, comparative philosophy, comparative religion, Hawaiian studies, Pacific Islands studies, Asian studies and Pacific and Asian regional public health.



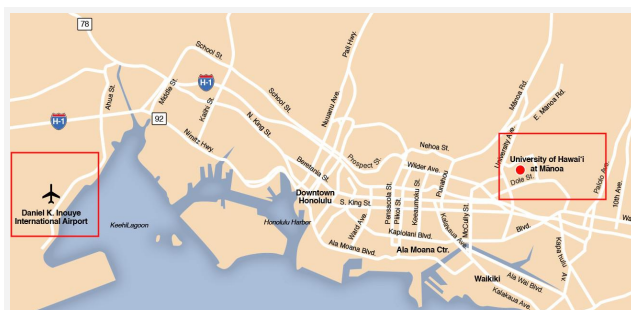
Travel arrangements

Please aim to arrive in Hawai'i as early as needed to clear all entry requirements. Arriving early will also allow you more time to settle in and clear any remaining registration holds you may have.

Exchange and visiting students are not permitted to arrive after the first day of class without permission from MIX. Please contact us as soon as possible if you have any concerns about your ability to arrive on time.

How to get to UH Manoa

Daniel K. Inouye International Airport is around 8 miles from UHM. For airport transportation, you can choose rideshares (Lyft, Uber), taxis, or hotel shuttles if applicable. Keep in mind that TheBus, while great for island travel, has strict baggage rules (bags must fit under seats and be under 22" x 14" x 9").



Temporary accommodation

The dorms and other student housing providers may not allow you to move in until a specific date, often only a few days before the start of the semester. It will be your responsibility to arrange temporary housing if you arrive in Hawai'i before then. See the MIX [Housing & Meals](#) page for more details. There are many hotels and hostels located in and around Waikiki, which is not too far from campus. However, lodging in Waikiki can be expensive, so it is best to begin planning as early as possible to secure suitable accommodation for your situation rather than waiting until just before you arrive.

Settling-in costs

You may be able to use your home country's debit or credit card for payments and ATM withdrawals in the U.S., reducing the need for cash, but it's crucial to check for any restrictions or fees with your bank. It's also wise to carry some U.S. dollars in smaller denominations (\$1 - \$20) to help cover your expenses for the first few days or weeks, in case you encounter any issues with your credit or debit card. If you have or open a U.S. bank account, you can transfer money from your overseas account, though it may take some time and involve fees. Additionally, if you plan to live off-campus, be prepared for upfront costs like the first month's rent and a deposit.

Living in Hawaii: advantages and challenges

Hawai'i offers several advantages for those considering living there. The consistently warm temperatures mean you can pack lightly, leaving behind bulky winter clothing. Outdoor enthusiasts will thrive in Hawaii, where activities like hiking, snorkeling, kayaking, surfing, and paddle-boarding are popular and widely accessible. Moreover, the local culture is known for its friendliness and hospitality, with most residents willing to lend a helping hand when needed. However, there are some challenges to living in Hawaii. The relatively high humidity in Honolulu can often make it feel muggy, though this is less noticeable when trade winds are present. The location of Hawai'i also makes shipping goods more expensive, leading to higher prices for certain items like milk and limited availability of others. And like other tropical areas, pests (such as cockroaches) can be common.

What to pack

The following list is a good starting point for what to pack. However, keep in mind that many essentials can be purchased in Honolulu quite easily. If you plan to live on campus, you may also want to look at the on-campus housing [suggested packing list](#) to get some ideas on what to bring.

Clothes: Lightweight clothes, flip-flops ("slippers"), swimsuit, light jacket/hoodie.

Electronics: Laptop, phone, chargers, and plug adapter, if needed.

Documents: Original Certificate of Eligibility (e.g. I-20); Copy of important medical documents, e.g. medical & dental records, immunization record, prescriptions, etc.; Home university transcript (digital or hard copy); Flight, accommodation information.

Toiletries (enough for ~2-3 weeks): Shampoo, soap, face wash; lotion/cream; toothpaste and toothbrush; shaving cream and razor; deodorant; contact lens solution; etc.

Other: Passport; Some cash in US dollars in small denominations (\$1, \$5, \$10, \$20); Credit/debit card with chip (Visa & Mastercard widely accepted); Any required medication in clearly labeled packaging; Extra glasses and/or contact lens

Pack thoughtfully and consider your airline's baggage size and weight limits to avoid over-packing. Leave room for souvenirs and items acquired during your stay in Hawaii. Keep in mind that certain fruits, vegetables, and meat are prohibited due to the risk of spreading diseases or pests to local agriculture, and these items may be confiscated. Be cautious with non-compatible electronics, as the U.S. generally operates on 120V, and some smaller devices from your home country may not work properly. Leave irreplaceable valuables behind to avoid potential loss or theft. As for crucial items like medication and money, carry them in your carry-on in case your checked suitcase is delayed or lost during your journey to the U.S.

Immigration



Certificate of Eligibility

Students that require a visa to study in the U.S. will be issued a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) via email, which can be used to apply for a student visa. Please review your COE upon receipt to ensure that the information is correct and complete (see guidelines below). If information needs to be changed or added, please contact us at inbound@hawaii.edu.

Check the following information in your COE:

- Personal information, i.e. name, country of birth, country of citizenship, and date of birth, should match what is in your passport.
- Start date (note: you may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to this date).

F-1 Student Visa:

All incoming exchange and visiting students, with a few exceptions, are expected to apply for an [F-1 Student Visa](#). After you have been admitted to UHM, a "Certificate of F-1 Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status," more commonly known as an [I-20](#), will be sent to you. Once you receive this document, you can begin your visa application. Please begin the process immediately to ensure that you receive your visa before you depart.

Exceptions:

- **Hawai'i English Language Program (HELP) students:** you will be issued a new I-20 form by the ISS Office. As soon as HELP and ISS are able to determine your exact transfer date, your new I-20 form will be created, and you will be able to pick it up from the ISS Office.
- **Transfer students:** Your situation will determine whether you are issued an I-20 or Form DS-2019. Our office will contact you directly with more details.

Dependents

A dependent is a spouse or child who will accompany you to the U.S. If you have dependents who will be coming with you, each of those dependents should have their own COE. Please contact the MIX Office immediately if you need a COE for a dependent who will accompany you. You will be required to show that you have an additional \$6,000 USD to financially support each dependent. More information [here](#).

U.S. Student Visa

After you check that the information on your COE is correct, make an appointment with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate to apply for your student visa. In some countries, it may take several months to receive a decision on

your student visa application, so you should begin this application process as soon as possible. Though you may apply for your visa at any time, F-1 visas may not be issued earlier than four months prior to your program start date. You should apply at the U.S. embassy or consulate with jurisdiction over your place of permanent residence. Although you may apply at any U.S. consular office, it may be more difficult to qualify for the visa outside of your country of permanent residence. For a list of U.S. embassies and consulates, go to usembassy.gov. Please note that the visa application process may vary by country. [Visa appointment wait times](#) may also vary by city. Contact your U.S. embassy or consulate for specific instructions on applying for a visa.

Canadian citizens do not need a visa but must present their COE, along with their passport and SEVIS fee receipt, upon arrival to be admitted to the United States.

Required documentation

Visit the website of the embassy/consulate where you will be applying to get a list of required documents for student visa applicants. You must pay a nonrefundable fee and may need to submit the following:

- Online application form DS-160 (some applicants will also be required to submit form DS-157). All forms must be completed and signed, and can be found at eforms.state.gov. A separate form is needed for children, even if they are included in a parent's passport. Blank forms are available without charge at all U.S. consular offices and on the visa services website listed above.
- Passport valid for travel to the U.S. and with a validity date of at least six months beyond your date of admission to the United States. *Note: This rule may be different for citizens of some countries.*
- One 2x2 inch photograph for each applicant, showing your full face against a light background.
- Your COE (i.e. I-20).
- Receipts showing payment of visa application and SEVIS fee.
- Evidence of sufficient funding to cover your period of intended study.

Other documentation

You must establish to the satisfaction of the consular office that you have binding ties to a residence in a foreign country, which you have no intention of abandoning, and that you will depart the U.S. when you have completed your program. It is impossible to specify the exact form of evidence that is needed because applicants' circumstances may vary. You are also advised to think about how your chosen program of study in the U.S. fits into your academic and career plans in your home country.

SEVIS fee

In addition to a visa processing fee, you will be charged a SEVIS fee. SEVIS stands for "Student Exchange Visitor Information System" and is the database that creates and houses your student visa record. Each record created requires a fee. For more information about the SEVIS fee, go to ice.gov/sevis/i901.

- **New students:** It is recommended that you pay this fee at least 3 business days before applying for a visa. Dependents do not pay a SEVIS fee.
- **Transfer students:** You do not need to pay the SEVIS fee again if keeping the same SEVIS ID# used at your previous school.

Department of State information

The U.S. Department of State has a great website with a lot of useful information for international students. Go to educationusa.state.gov to find out more about: applying for the student visa; definitions and helpful terms; and living in the U.S. (social customs and more).

United States entry procedures

F visa holders may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the program start date listed on their I-20. All students must arrive prior to the start of class. Please notify the MIX Office (inbound@hawaii.edu) as soon as possible if you will not be able to enter the U.S. in time to attend because of visa processing delays. When you arrive in the U.S., a Customs and Border Protection officer will review your documents at the port of entry before you are admitted to the country. Please have the following documents ready for the CBP officer to review:

- **Passport:** It is important that you make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond your admission to the U.S. *Note: this rule may be different for citizens of some countries.*
- **COE (your I-20):** The CBP officer will stamp and make a notation on this document.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection has the authority to deny admission into the U.S. If you have difficulties entering, please call the International Student Services (ISS) Office and ask to speak to an advisor.

- **Email:** issmanoa@hawaii.edu
- **Phone:** +1-808-956-8613 (available to take calls from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday)

I-94

Your I-94 is your arrival and departure record, which tracks when you enter and leave the United States. If you entered or re-entered the U.S. after May 2013, your I-94 will be saved as an electronic record. This record can be accessed at cbp.gov/i94. This record proves your current immigration status as well as your legal entry into the United States. It should say F-1 or J-1, depending on your student status. For both F-1 and J-1 students, the record will also say D/S, which stands for duration of status. This means that you are permitted to remain in the U.S. until you complete your program as long as you are legally maintaining your status. Every time you exit and re-enter the U.S. in F-1 or J-1 status, you will receive a new I-94 record. For more information about what to expect, go to cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors.

Travel during your program

- **Within the United States:** Travel within the U.S. (domestic travel between States) does not require immigration documentation. However, a form of government ID is required to board airlines. A valid passport would qualify as such a document.
- **Outside the United States:** In general, to re-enter the U.S. to resume studies after a temporary absence, you would need a valid passport, visa, and COE endorsed for travel by the International Student Services (ISS) Office. **You must have your COE endorsed before you leave the U.S.** You can set up an appointment with the ISS Office [here](#).

Completion of studies

Upon completion of studies, F-1 visa holders have up to 60 days to leave the United States. J-1 visa holders have up to 30 days to leave the United States.

Getting Started

Admission letter

If you are an **undergraduate applicant**, your “admission letter” will be emailed to you by the UHM Office of Admissions (manoa.admissions@hawaii.edu). This email will include your student information (i.e. Student ID#, term of study, etc.). It will also include information about your expected residency status, tuition, and additional expenses. If you do not receive this email, please contact MIX at inbound@hawaii.edu. *You may also need to check your spam/junk folder.* MIX will also send you a separate email that provides guidance on the next steps.

If you are a **postgraduate applicant**, your admission letter will be emailed to you by MIX along with guidance on the next steps.

Setting up your UH username and email address

Use your 8-digit Student ID# to set up your UH username and email address at: <https://www.hawaii.edu/username>. You will need to provide your full name as listed on your acceptance letter. If you have a middle name, for example, John (first name) Brian Phillip (middle name) Smith (last name), and you receive an error message when entering your name, try entering your first and middle name(s) together, e.g. “John Brian Phillip”, in the first name section and leaving the middle name section blank. That should fix the error.



Once you have obtained your UH Username, please send an email to inbound@hawaii.edu from your new UH email account to confirm that your account has been set up. If you already have a UH Username (i.e. students that were previously accepted into UH or transferred from the HELP program), please continue to use your existing UH Username and ID.

Explore MyUH

Once you have obtained your username (see above) you will be able to access [MyUH](#). Students use this online system for many aspects of student life, such as course registration, paying fees, and more.

Automated emails from the Office of Admissions

You might get automated emails from Admissions requesting documents and forms, but please disregard them if you're an Exchange/Visiting student. Your requirements are specified in the [undergraduate](#) and [postgraduate](#) application guidelines on the MIX website, and we'll contact you directly for anything else needed.

Holds

Holds explained

Holds, which often prevent registration (i.e. adding or dropping classes) are generally placed on students' accounts due to financial obligations, outstanding documents, etc. To check for holds on your account, log in to [STAR GPS](#), then click on "View Holds" on the Academic Essentials page. It is your responsibility to clear these holds (see: [HOLDS in under 60 seconds and how to clear them](#)). If you have questions, contact the office responsible for placing the hold. They may also be able to temporarily lift the hold or give you an extension if needed. The most common holds for Exchange/Visiting students are the following holds:

- Health Insurance Hold
- ELI Hold
- Balance Due Hold

Please read through the next sections carefully for more information on each of these registration holds and the actions needed to clear these holds.

ELI Hold

This hold is linked to the English Language Institute Placement Test (ELIPT). You are required to take this test if the [English language proficiency test score](#) you provided with your application does not meet the minimum requirements to waive this test. To register for the test, visit the [ELI website](#). Failure to register for the test, if required, will result in a hold placed on your course registration. The ELIPT generally includes five separate tests (one writing test, two listening tests, and two reading tests) designed to measure your academic English ability. If you have questions or feel that the hold has been incorrectly placed on your account, please email the English Language Institute at uhmeli@hawaii.edu or call them at (808) 956-8479.

Depending on your ELIPT results, you may be required to take between 1-3 ELI courses per semester. Please take this into consideration when planning your registration.

Health Insurance Hold

The University of Hawai'i (UH) requires all international students to have adequate health insurance to help cover medical expenses that may arise throughout their programs of study. International students must either enroll in a UH pre-approved student health insurance plan or furnish proof of enrollment in a health insurance plan that provides the required minimum coverage. More details can be found on the MIX [Health Insurance](#) page. Questions? Email the Student Health Insurance Office at shio@hawaii.edu or give them a call at (808) 956-5361.

Balance Due Hold

This hold means that you have a balance due on your student account, such as unpaid fees related to tuition, housing, meal plans, course fees, IDAP digital course materials, etc. If you have questions, please contact the Cashier's Office at billpayment-l@lists.hawaii.edu or visit their office, which is located at QLC Room 105.

Visa & Health Clearance

Visa Clearance

[Visa Clearance](#) is a process required for international students who are starting their program and have received their Certificate of Eligibility (i.e. I-20) from UHM. The process introduces you to the general rules of your visa status and allows UHM to verify your immigration documents upon arrival in the United States. Visa Clearance is also necessary to register your SEVIS record, which allows you to stay in the U.S. for your academic program. If you have questions, contact jssmanoa@hawaii.edu. Students should aim to complete the visa clearance process before the start of the semester.

Health Clearance

Hawai'i requires all students to meet the immunization requirements before they attend any post-secondary school in the state. All students must have received the following immunizations:

- Tuberculosis (TB)
- Measles Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap)
- Varicella

Note: Students living in on-campus housing will also be required to receive the Meningococcal Conjugate (MCV) vaccine.

If you are a new F-1 or J-1 international student, you are permitted to register for in-person classes while you work on meeting the health clearance requirements. However, if you are not in the process of obtaining the applicable clearances by the first day of class, you will be dropped from all of your in-person and hybrid classes

If you have specific questions about the health clearance process, please send a secure message to University Health Services Mānoa or book an appointment with a nurse using the [Patient Access Portal](#). I've also provided some useful tips below.

Tuberculosis (TB) Health Clearance:

- **Option #1:** Most students take their TB skin test at University Health Services Mānoa (UHSM), which is the campus clinic. UHSM is open Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM (Note: TB tests are not administered on Thursdays). If UHSM determines that you require a TB test, you must visit the clinic twice. At the first visit, the TB skin test is administered. Then, 48-72 hours later, you must visit again to have your skin checked for results. After the second visit, your TB clearance will be completed if your results are negative.
- **Option #2:** Students can have a TB blood test ([IGRA](#)) done in their home country. The results, which must include reference ranges as well as the lab name and address, can be submitted directly to UHSM.

Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (only required of students living in on-campus housing):

- This shot can be received at UHSM (for ~\$120) in August before classes begin. Appointments are preferred and can be scheduled [online](#) (Patient Access Portal).
- If you have proof of receiving the Meningitis ACWY vaccine, this can fulfill the requirement as long as you were age 16 or older when it was administered. Once you have received the vaccine, or have provided proof of the Meningitis ACWY vaccine, you should be able to move into on-campus housing immediately.

Course Registration

Host department

Exchange and visiting students do not have an official major or department while studying at UHM. For this reason, you will be assigned a "host department" to assist you with academic matters (advising, course registration, invitation to department-associated events, etc.). That being said, please keep the following in mind:

- You are not restricted to taking classes solely from your host department. In fact, you're encouraged to take classes across a variety of subjects! However, some courses/subjects are restricted. See our [Academics](#) page for more details.
- Similarly, being placed with a particular host department does not guarantee you will be able to take classes from that department, as you still need to meet all prerequisites for the classes you plan to take.
- Lastly, access to specific courses cannot be guaranteed. Thus, you should maintain a flexible study plan with several alternate course selections in mind in case first-choice courses are unavailable.

We will do our best to assign you to one of your two preferred host departments. However, we cannot make any guarantees, as the departments have the final decision on the students they choose to "host". If neither of your host department selections are possible, we will reach out to you to see if there are other host departments you would like to consider.

Minimum enrollment

Exchange and visiting students must be enrolled full-time while studying at UHM. Undergraduates must register for a minimum of 12 credits per semester; postgraduates must register for a minimum of 8 credits per semester.

Online Courses: F-1 students may only apply 3 online credit hours to meet the minimum full-time enrollment requirement. After the minimum full-time enrollment requirement has been met (9 credits/semester for undergraduate students, 5 credits/semester for postgraduate students), you may enroll in 3 or more online credits to meet the minimum enrollment requirement.

Exploring course options

Before your registration period begins, you can browse the courses available on the [UHM Class Availability](#) page. "Extension" refers to special courses offered by the Outreach College at UH Mānoa. We do not advise taking these courses as the tuition waiver/discount cannot be utilized. To identify if a course is at the undergraduate or post-baccalaureate level, you can look at the course numbering:

Undergraduate courses (1-499): Courses that are numbered 1-99 are courses that are not applicable for credit towards a bachelor's degree. 100-199 are considered initial or introductory courses. 200-299 are 2nd-year courses in a sequence or development in a field of study. 300-499 are 3rd- and 4th-year courses in a sequence of courses or first courses in professional curricula.

Post-Baccalaureate courses (500-800): Courses that are numbered 500 are directed study courses. 500-599 are courses applicable toward first professional degrees (law and medicine) and in-service training programs in education. 600-699 are considered graduate courses and 700-799 are advanced graduate courses. 800 are courses involving dissertation research.

Various course formats are offered: in-person, online asynchronous and synchronous, and hybrid. The format for each course can be found on the [Class Availability](#) page, under "GenEd/Focus/Special Des".

Registration period

Exchange and visiting students should register for courses online before arriving in Hawai'i using [STAR GPS](#). Check your registration start time on STAR GPS, and while you can register anytime on or after your assigned time, it's advisable to register for your preferred and backup courses early to secure your spot, as popular courses fill up quickly. You can adjust your course selection later if needed. Keep in mind that starting your registration on the first day of class will incur a one-time \$30 [late registration fee](#). However, if you've already registered for at least one course, this fee won't apply if you add more courses after the first day of class.

Registration process

In [STAR GPS](#), after logging in, you can begin adding courses by selecting 'Register - Add/Drop Courses.' On the subsequent screen, you'll find instructional videos that are highly recommended to watch as they provide guidance on using the registration system effectively. Keep in mind that you may need to choose "Add Personal Choice" for each course you wish to add since you are not pursuing a degree at UHM and do not have a degree plan. Additionally, if a course displays "NOT IN PLAN," you can ignore it, as this message is intended for degree-seeking students at UHM. After selecting your courses in STAR, ensure you submit your registration to complete the enrollment process; failing to do so will result in not being enrolled in the selected classes.

Waitlist

If a course is full, you may be able to join the [waitlist](#). Then, if space becomes available in that course, an email will be sent to your UH email address notifying you. Make sure to check your email a few times per day, as you must register for the course [within 24 hours](#) of being notified. The waitlist ends the night before the semester begins. Because it is not guaranteed that you will be able to register for a waitlisted course, we recommend enrolling in other courses while you wait for seats to open in waitlisted courses.

Requesting course overrides

Overrides are required for any course with prerequisites and can be requested before your registration period begins. Prerequisites show that you have completed foundational coursework and you are prepared to take a higher-level course. You can view prerequisites for a particular course by searching in the [Class Availability](#) page.

For College of Business courses, do not email instructors. Undergraduates should email business@hawaii.edu and postgraduates should email skwcmark@hawaii.edu. They can assist you with overrides for the following departments: Accounting (ACC); Business (BUS); Business Law (BLAW); Finance (FIN); Human Resource Management (HRM); Information Technology Management (ITM); Insurance (INS); Management (MGT); Marketing (MKT); and Real Estate (RE).

For Travel Industry Management (TIM) courses, do not email instructors. Instead, please fill out the TIM override request form. If you have any questions, you can email Carissa Gusman, who is an Academic Advisor at TIM, at ckgusman@hawaii.edu.

All other courses:

If an override is needed, contact the course instructor directly. It's recommended to initiate this process before the official course registration period begins. You can find the instructor's email by clicking on the course CRN (Course Reference Number) on the [Class Availability](#) page, which will lead you to a page displaying the instructor's name and email address. If you encounter difficulties reaching the instructor or if the course instructor has not been announced yet, you can consider reaching out to the department responsible for the course. If that doesn't work, please contact us at inbound@hawaii.edu for further assistance.

How to submit a course override request via email:

1. Identify the appropriate person and obtain their UHM email address (see above).

2. Prepare your email message. Specify which course you need an override for. Make sure to include the CRN, course number and section, and course name. You can find this information on the [Class Availability](#) page.
3. Briefly, explain that overrides are needed for exchange and visiting students because the registration system has no record of your major and prior course work.
4. Attach your home university transcript (official or unofficial). Include in-progress or recently completed courses if these are missing from your transcript.
5. After obtaining an override, promptly register into that course (or join the waitlist) via [STAR GPS](#).

Sample email template for course override requests

Modify the template with your own information in the [highlighted sections] below. Make sure to send this email from your hawaii.edu email address. Don't forget to attach a copy of your home university transcript with the email.

Subject: MIX student override, [Your Name], [UH ID Number]

Dear [Name of Instructor/Academic Advisor],

I am a visiting student from [Home University] of [City, Country] and my major is [major]. My UH ID is [-----]. I will attend UHM during [Semester(s) - Year(s)]. I would like to enroll in [your desired course(s) - include CRN, course number and section, and course name] during the [semester and year] and I believe I have taken courses equivalent to the prerequisites at my home university [list course prerequisites for which you have taken equivalents at your home university]. Since Admissions does not input our home university course records into Banner, there is no UHM record of my major and prior course work, therefore I need overrides to register into courses with prerequisites and other restrictions. Attached is my [Home University] transcript for the most recent academic term. This year I am studying (or have recently completed) these courses: [List courses currently in progress, or just completed]. If you determine I am eligible, would you please put in any override required for me to register for or join the waitlist for the course(s) above? Should you have any questions regarding my academic status at UHM, you can contact the MIX Office at inbound@hawaii.edu.

Sincerely,

[your name]

[your UH email address]

Class attendance

Regular attendance in all your courses is crucial, especially if you're in the U.S. on a visa. Failure to attend classes without a valid reason can be viewed as a violation of your visa status and may lead to visa termination, potentially impacting future visits to the U.S. For details on maintaining your visa status while studying at UHM, refer to the ISS [Enrollment Requirements](#) page.

Reduced course load

ISS and MIX may approve a reduced course load in specific situations, including: (1) Academic factors, such as difficulty with the English language, reading requirements, or unfamiliarity with the US system (this cannot be your reason if you have yet to begin your courses); (2) It's your last semester before graduation; (3) Medical condition/illness. Contact inbound@hawaii.edu if you have any questions. Additional documentation from your home university or your physician may be required to approve a reduced course load.

Payment of Tuition, Fees, and More

Payment deposit and deadlines

Exchange and Visiting Students are not required to pay a tuition deposit. [Payment deadlines](#) for tuition and fees at UHM vary based on your registration period, with the first deadline typically applying to those who register during the initial registration period and the second deadline for late registrants. Failing to meet these deadlines results in a financial obligation hold on your account.

Tuition waivers and discounts

Exchange Students receive a waiver of tuition and fees. This tuition waiver will be applied to your account just before the initial registration period. Please note that it may take at least 24 hours for the tuition waiver to be processed following each course that you register for. **Hoakipa Visiting Students** will receive a tuition discount that will reduce their tuition to 150% of the UHM resident tuition rate.

Additional course-related expenses: course fees, IDAP, and textbooks

[Course Fees](#), which are associated with specific courses and cover additional expenses are not covered by the tuition waiver/discount. The same is true for textbooks and the Interactive Digital Access Program ([IDAP](#)). Students are required to cover these costs on their own or find courses that do not include these fees.

Paying tuition and fees

UHM partners with Flywire for streamlined international tuition payments. Visit hawaii.flywire.com to create or log into your account. Payments can be made from anywhere using various currencies, often with favorable exchange rates. Flywire also simplifies the refund process. Payments must be processed by the bank at least five business days before the deadline, and you'll receive an email confirmation upon payment receipt. For more payment details, including Flywire instructions, refer to the [How to Pay](#) section.



Transcripts

Your official transcript from UHM will show all the courses you took during your Exchange/Visiting program, how many credits you completed, and what your final grades were (see: [Transcript Key](#)). Credits are transferred according to the policies of each student's home institution.

As of Fall 2023: Exchange and visiting students will be required to request their own electronic transcripts (eTranscripts) via the [Office of the Registrar website](#) after grades have been posted. Currently, the fee to order a transcript is \$8.50. Please keep the following in mind when completing your request:

- Transcripts can be sent to any email address. Please check with your home university exchange office to determine which email address the transcript should be sent to.
- Choose the option "Send After Grades are Posted" to have your transcript sent once grades are posted.
- Upon completing your order, you will receive an order number to check on the status of your transcript. eTranscripts are available to be resent electronically within 30 days of being released if your home university was unable to retrieve the transcript for whatever reason. If you need to resend your transcript, please contact the Registrar's Office for more details.
- If you have any financial holds, you will receive an automated message with information on how to clear this hold. Transcripts may not be sent until all applicable holds have been cleared.

Housing

Temporary housing (upon arrival)

Some student housing providers may not allow you to move in until a certain date (often a few days before the start of the semester). It will be your responsibility to arrange temporary housing if you arrive in Hawai'i early. See the MIX [Housing & Meals](#) page for more details.

On-campus housing (during program)

On-campus housing is a good option for students who want to experience dormitory life and be close to classes and on-campus facilities. Students can apply for on-campus housing via UHM's [Student Housing Services](#) website. There is a non-refundable application fee to apply and two housing applications: "Academic Year" and "Spring Only". The Academic Year application opens in January and has a priority deadline of **May 1**. The application for Spring Only housing opens in November and does not have a set deadline.

On-campus housing is extremely limited and is not guaranteed for exchange and visiting students. Currently, only about 6-12% of applicants will receive an on-campus housing placement. Thus, you are strongly recommended to consider off-campus housing options as well.

If you intend to study at UHM for fall semester only: Apply for the Academic Year as there is not a "Fall Only" option. In November, all students will receive an email about Spring Charges and Early Contract Termination. At this point you can indicate that you are a "MIX Exchange/Visiting Student" who will only be here for Fall Semester. You will then be allowed to check out in December and will not be charged a cancellation penalty or rent for Spring Semester. This is the only way to shorten your housing contract to Fall Semester only.

If your application is successful: A housing contract will be sent to your MyUH email account with details on deposit payment, type of room, and the name of your residential hall. If you do not send the housing deposit by the deadline indicated on your contract, Student Housing will cancel your contract and assign your space to another student, so check your UH email account often!

Residential dining

A [meal plan](#) is required for students living on-campus and optional for students living off-campus. The meal plans give you access to various meal options each week during the semester, plus a predetermined amount of retail meal points.

Off-campus housing

Living off-campus has become a popular option amongst international exchange students. You can secure off-campus housing earlier than on-campus housing and living off-campus gives you the chance to choose the neighborhood you wish to live in. Most neighborhoods around Honolulu are well connected by the city bus system, [TheBus](#), which students can ride for free after obtaining their student ID card. A list of off-campus options can be found on the MIX [Housing & Meals](#) page. Leases are normally for one year, although it may be possible to arrange a lease for a shorter period, especially with housing providers that specialize in providing housing for students. Beware of rental [scams](#)! Don't pay for anything before seeing the place in-person, if possible. Landlords may ask for the first/last month's rent when you sign a lease. Some will also require a security deposit, usually equal to one month's rent. Utilities (e.g. electricity, gas, water, internet) may or may not be included in your monthly rent.

Health & Safety

COVID-19 in Hawai'i

For the latest updates, please review the State of Hawaii's [COVID-19 News](#) page, the [UH COVID-19 website](#), and the ISS Office's [COVID-19 Updates](#) page.

Campus health resources

- [University Health Services Mānoa](#) - A wide range of medical services and programs are offered to students, including general medical care by appointment or walk-in basis. Women's health, sports medicine, psychiatry, dermatology, and nutrition clinics offered by appointment.
- [Counseling & Student Development Center](#) - Confidential counseling services. Individual, couple, and group counseling services are free of charge for Mānoa students.
- [LGBTQ Center](#) - Offers daily direct services, advocacy, and a study lounge, M-F, 9:00am - 5:00pm.
- [Women's Center](#) - Provides personal/academic support for the success of women, LGBT students.
- [KOKUA Program](#) - Serves students with learning, physical, psychiatric, and other documented disabilities.

Campus safety

Safety is a top priority at UH Mānoa. [Department of Public Safety](#) (DPS) officers patrol campus 24 hours/day (the [Mānoa Guardian app](#) is designed to allow users quick and easy access to DPS officers) and [Safety Escorts](#) are available after dark. In addition, [Emergency Call Boxes](#) are located throughout campus and can be identified by blue light mounted above the box.



General safety tips:

To ensure your safety, get acquainted with the [Emergency Call Boxes](#) and their locations on campus. Steer clear of potentially unsafe situations, especially walking alone after dark, and if using headphones, keep one earbud out to stay vigilant. When attending social gatherings, make it a practice to arrive and depart with friends. Exercise caution regarding scams, such as suspicious emails or calls requesting money; if you have any concerns or questions, don't hesitate to reach out to MIX or UHM DPS for guidance.



Protecting your property:

To safeguard your belongings, avoid leaving valuables unattended, even for a brief absence. Maintain a record of serial numbers for your valuable items, as it facilitates their return in case of loss. Additionally, ensure the security of your bicycle or moped by always locking them, and if you possess one, consider registering your bike/moped for added protection.

Home & Residence Hall safety:

To enhance your safety, avoid labeling your student housing key card with personal information like your name, address, or building name. Be diligent in securing your living space by regularly locking windows and doors. Exercise caution and prevent unfamiliar individuals from entering your residence hall or apartment complex by not allowing them to follow you inside. In the event of a lost on-campus housing key card, promptly report it to ensure its deactivation and prevent unauthorized access.

To report an emergency:

- Dial 911 for the Honolulu Police Department

- Dial 808-956-6911 for the Department of Public Safety
- Pick up one of the on-campus Emergency Call Boxes to talk to a dispatcher.

UH Alert

The UH Alert emergency notification system provides notifications in case of an emergency. This alert will be sent to your UH email address. It can also be sent to you via text if you [sign up](#) for UH Alert. You can also check the [Emergency Information](#) webpage for up-to-date emergency information.

U.S. laws to keep in mind

- The legal age for drinking alcohol in the U.S. is 21.
- It is illegal to have an open container of alcohol in any public place.
- Marijuana use is illegal at the federal level, regardless of how states within the U.S. interpret legality of marijuana use. Even if you're in a state where it may seem fine, you're still putting yourself at risk regarding your current and future visa, work, and immigration options.
- Sex/gender harassment, discrimination, and misconduct is taken very seriously (see: [Title IX](#))
- Overstaying your visa is illegal and it may result in being barred from re-entry to the U.S.

State of Hawai'i laws to keep in mind

- In 2015, Hawai'i became the first state in the U.S. to ban the distribution of single-use plastic bags. Make it a habit to carry a light, reusable tote when shopping.
- In Hawaii, it is illegal to touch, pick up, disturb, kill, or harm any type of sea turtle thanks to its status as an endangered species. Harming a sea turtle can result in a fine of up to \$25,000 and time in prison. Other animals, such as monk seals, are also protected.
- In 2017, Hawai'i became the first state to make it illegal to text/look down at your phone while crossing the street, even in a crosswalk. The minimum fine is \$15.

Additional advice:

- Stay on established hiking trails in Hawaii. Some hikes can be challenging, and inexperienced hikers may require rescue if they go beyond their abilities. Always research hikes beforehand and go with someone familiar with the area or the hike itself. For additional guidance, visit the State of Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife [Trail Safety](#) page.
- During winter, North Shore waves get larger and riskier. Consult lifeguards for safety tips, as they possess valuable ocean knowledge. Visit [HI Ocean Safety](#) for additional guidance. Avoid standing on wet rocks and always face the ocean – large waves can approach unexpectedly!
- Wear sunscreen, preferably sunscreen that is [safe for coral reefs](#). Hawai'i is one of the most dangerous places in the world when it comes to sunburns due to its proximity to the equator.
- Respect the *Aina* (land). Take care of it as you would your own home. Hawai'i is a fragile ecosystem. Don't litter, and try to use refillable canisters instead of single-use containers.
- If you visit Hawai'i Volcano National Park on the Big Island, be aware that taking the lava rocks, black sand, or any natural resource out of the park is a federal offense. It is also considered bad luck!

After Arrival



Clear holds, health clearance, and visa clearance

Don't forget to clear your [holds](#) and to complete the [health clearance and visa clearance processes](#) before the semester starts. Failure to do so may result in some significant penalties.

Pay your bills

Check your student account on [MyUH](#). If you have any outstanding charges (e.g. tuition and fees, course fees, housing/meals; etc.) make sure to pay for these. Students who have not met their financial obligations to the satisfaction of UH Mānoa may be denied a variety of enrollment services, including not being able to receive their transcript. To review how to pay your bills, click [here](#).

Move into accommodation

- **On-campus accommodation:** You can find the move-in dates [here](#). You will not be able to move in until the week before classes begin, so you should also have temporary accommodation booked if you arrive early. Make sure to clear the health clearance process before your expected move-in date. Students that have not cleared the health clearance process may not be allowed to move into on-campus housing. You may also want to review the [check-in procedures](#) in advance to familiarize yourself with the process
- **Off-campus accommodation:** Make sure to check with your off-campus housing provider when their move-in date is and what is required before/after move-in.

Pick up your UH MānoaOne Card

Learn about how to pick up your UH MānoaOne Card [here](#). Requirements: All tuition and fees paid (or enrollment in a payment plan) and all holds cleared. Your MānoaOne Card includes a variety of benefits. You can: ride [TheBus](#)* and [Rainbow Shuttle](#) for free; check out books from the [libraries](#); use the [Warrior Rec Center](#) (gym); attend UHM sporting events; utilize [Printing](#) services; and [more](#)!

** Note: you may not be able to ride TheBus for free until after 5:00 pm on the day your ID is created.*



Visit the Mānoa Bookstore

The [Mānoa Bookstore](#) sells/provides: textbooks (new and used); school supplies; computers and accessories; UHM apparel; drinks and snacks; and printing/copying services.

Student Recreation Services

Student Recreation Service (SRS) is committed to providing a spectrum of involvement opportunities and learning experiences for students through innovative recreational activities and services.

- [Outdoor Classes offered by SRS](#) - Classes and excursions for surfing, hiking, kayaking, etc.
- [Intramural Sports](#) - Sign up to play organized team sports with other students.



Pictured above: Warrior Recreation Center, the campus gym

Mobile phone

International students often choose one of the following options:

- Bringing an unlocked cell phone and purchasing a SIM card here (e.g. from Walmart, Target, or phone provider stores - [Verizon](#), [AT&T](#), [T-Mobile](#)).
- Buying a new cell phone and setting up a pre-paid plan (SSN/credit check not required).
- Buying a new cell phone and setting up a contract plan (SSN/credit check required).

Wifi internet

[Wifi](#) is accessible across campus. Set up [Wireless Passthrough](#) to access wifi without needing to login each time. Some shops and restaurants may also offer free wifi to customers.

Getting documents signed

Need a document from your home university to be signed? Email the form to the MIX Office (inbound@hawaii.edu). In most cases, we can sign your document and email it back to you.

International Student Welcome Week

Presented by the International Student Services (ISS) Office, the Welcome Week for new international students is the ISS version of orientation. It occurs the week before the start of the semester, and consists of information sessions and social opportunities, leading up to a "The Welcome Orientation and Reception." All events are optional, but you are highly encouraged to participate and get the chance to gain important information and meet other international students and the ISS staff before school starts. More information can be found on the [ISS Welcome Events](#) page.

Campus Map

Before you arrive, try to familiarize yourself with the campus by looking through the [Campus Map](#). You should be able to answer the following questions by the time you arrive:

Where is the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services (QLC) Building?

This is where most student support service offices are located, including the MIX and ISS offices, and will likely be one of the first buildings you visit on campus.

Where is [University Health Services Manoa](#)?

This is the health center for the campus that is open to all students. Most students have their TB skin test administered here shortly after arriving in Hawaii.

Where is the "Campus Center"?

This is where you will find the recreation center, where you can work out; the ticket and ID window, where you can obtain your ID card and buy tickets to movies and events; the bookstore, where you can buy textbooks, supplies, and apparel; food options and more!

Where are your classrooms located?

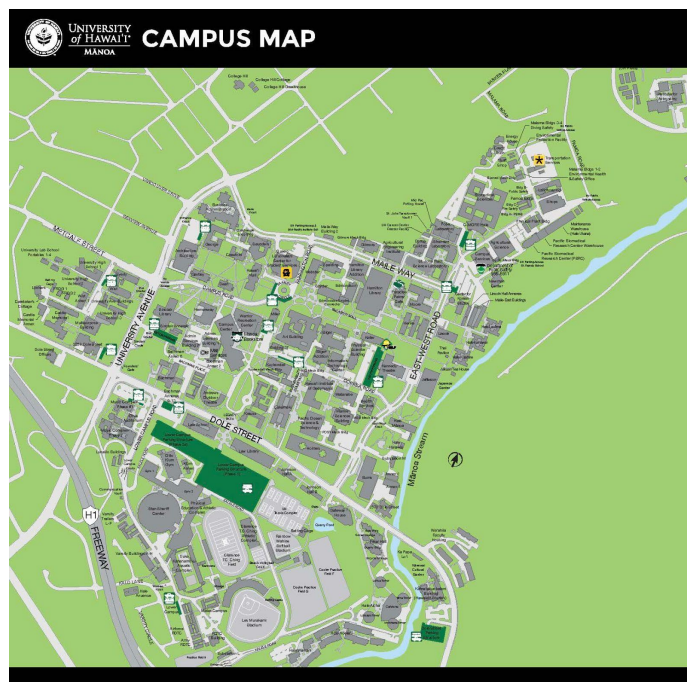
You can start to get an idea of where your courses will be held by looking at the [Class Availability](#) page. Some classrooms are quite far away from each other, so it's important to determine how much time it might take you to get from one classroom to the next.

Where are the Hamilton and Sinclair Libraries?

You can borrow books, use computers, and print documents at these libraries. They are also nice places to study as they are quiet and air-conditioned!

Where does [TheBus](#) stop around campus?

Students can ride [TheBus](#) for free after they obtain their ID card. It is helpful to know where the bus stops if your classrooms are far apart or if you are traveling on or off campus.



Customs & Culture

Academic culture in the U.S.

- U.S. News & World Report: [How International Students Can Adjust to U.S. College Classes](#)
- Education USA: [The Experience of Studying in the USA](#)

American culture

The U.S. is a large and diverse country with a vast array of cultural differences from coast to coast. It's not unusual for people to be extremely proud of their home state and still have strong ties to where they grew up, even if they haven't lived there in years. Many Americans are also very proud of their heritage. Below are some cultural insights that can help you to understand Americans better.



Individualism and privacy

Americans highly value individualism and independence from childhood.

Privacy is integral, often starting early with children having separate bedrooms. Despite being welcoming, Americans usually expect friends to call or message before visiting, making unannounced visits less frequent than in some cultures.

Informality

The idea of equality leads Americans to be fairly informal in their behavior and in their relationships with others. You will see such informality in dress, language (e.g. use of first names and slang), posture, and classroom activities like eating in class, asking many questions and making comments.

Directness and assertiveness

Americans tend to be upfront when addressing issues, often labeling it as "constructive criticism." They usually don't feel the need to hide their emotions, and facial expressions can be telling even if words aren't explicit. Assertiveness in sharing opinions and making requests is encouraged, bearing in mind the value of individualism, but excessive pushiness or aggression is discouraged. Recognizing the subtle distinction between the two can be a challenge, even for Americans.

Cultural customs in Hawaii

The culture of Hawai'i can be characterized as a mix of different cultures. Each of these cultures exists side-by-side in Hawaii, maintaining their individual culture, but often adopting parts of other cultures.

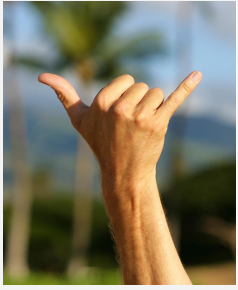
Giving and receiving leis

In Hawaii, leis are often given to welcome or give thanks to someone. There are etiquette rules to follow when accepting a lei: it's impolite to decline one, you should bow slightly to allow the giver to place it around your neck, prominently display it on your chest, and avoid removing it in their presence, treating it as a cherished gift.



Aloha

'Aloha' is more than a word of greeting or farewell. 'Aloha' means mutual regard and affection. It extends warmth in caring with no obligation in return. 'Aloha' is the essence of relationships in which each person is important to every other person for collective existence.



Shaka

Curl your pointer, middle, and ring fingers into your palm while extending your pinky and thumb. That is how you make a shaka sign with your hand. It can mean any of the following: “thank you”, “hang loose”, “rad”, “take it easy” and “right on”. It’s a universal symbol of appreciation in Hawaii.

Taking your shoes off at the door

If you’re invited to a local’s home, don’t forget to take off your shoes at the door. This is a way to show respect to your host (and to keep their floors clean!).

Wearing flip-flops

Flip-flops are known as slippers in Hawaii. Locals wear them all the time: to beaches, restaurants, bars, and even to work. Generally speaking, there is no wrong time to wear this type of footwear in Hawai‘i except for very formal occasions.

Ohana

Ohana means family, but not in the typical way. Ohana speaks to the concept of a larger family that is not necessarily connected by blood. One’s ohana can include best friends, neighbors, or anyone else who is special in your life. An ohana is special. The people within it are bound by genuine compassion, culture, support, loyalty, and love for each other. To become part of someone’s ohana is a great honor.

Aunty and Uncle

In Hawaii, the terms Aunty and Uncle are used as a sign of respect towards elders. It is often used by friends, neighbors, and sometimes even amongst complete strangers, as no blood relationship is implied. Even if you consider yourself quite young, you may even find yourself being called Aunty or Uncle by children and those younger than you.

Hawaiian or local?

Try to learn a bit about the history of Hawai‘i before you begin your program. It may help you to understand some of the friction that sometimes exists between Native Hawaiians, Hawai‘i residents, and visitors. It’s also important to keep in mind that not everyone who lives in Hawai‘i is Hawaiian. Hawaiian refers to the indigenous people of Hawaii. You can be native Hawaiian by ethnicity and never live in Hawaii, while people who have lived in the islands for generations but do not have any Hawaiian blood are not Hawaiian, they are locals.



Hawaiian language

Hawai'i is a very international and multicultural place. There are two official languages, Hawaiian and English, but you will hear many other languages (e.g. Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, etc.) depending on where you are. Some commonly heard Hawaiian words and phrases are listed below. It is appreciated if you take the time to learn at least a few Hawaiian words while you are here. You'll hear many of these words on a daily basis.

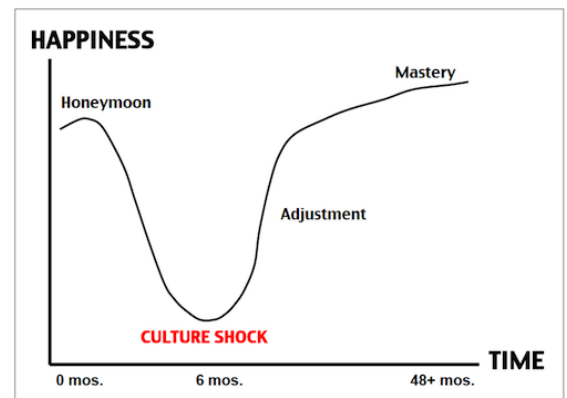
- 'aina = The land.
- "Aloha 'aina" = is a love of the land.
- Akamai = Clever; smart; intelligent
- Aloha = Love; welcome; hello; good-bye; a common greeting.
- Hale = House
- Haole = Foreigner
- Hapa = Literally "half," is used to describe a person of mixed heritage
- Hau'oli lā Hānau = Happy Birthday
- Hau'oli Makahiki Hou = Happy New Year
- Hui = A group or organization
- Kama'aina = A longtime resident of Hawaii
- Kanaka maoli = Indigenous Hawaiian
- Kāne = Man or men
- Keiki = Child or children
- Kōkua = Help. "Please Kōkua" means "Please Help."
- Kuleana = Responsibility
- Kumu = Teacher
- Lanai = Porch; balcony
- Lū'au = Hawaiian feast
- Mahalo = Thank you
- Makai = Toward the ocean
- Mālama = To take care of; care for; preserve; protect
- Malihini = Newcomer
- Mauka = Toward the mountains
- Mele Kalikimaka = Merry Christmas
- 'ohana = Family
- 'ōlelo = Language
- 'ono = Delicious
- Pau = Finished; ended; done. "Pau hana" is the end of the work week.
- Puka = Any kind of a hole or opening or blank (to be filled)
- Wahine = Woman or women.

Want to learn more about Hawaiian language and culture while you are here? Check out the [Hawaiian Language and Hawaiian Studies courses](#) you can take at UHM. Please note that some of these classes may have limited space and/or prerequisites.

Culture shock

Culture shock refers to the anxiety and disorientation experienced when adapting to a new cultural or social environment, like moving to a foreign country for an exchange program. This adjustment process typically unfolds in four phases:

- **Honeymoon Phase** - Initially, when you arrive in a new place, like Hawaii, you may be excited and infatuated with the language, people, and food. Everything feels like an exciting adventure.
- **Conflict/Culture Shock Phase** - As time passes, you might struggle with adjusting to your new environment, especially if English isn't your first language. You may miss your old routines, face language barriers, and experience feelings of homesickness, frustration, anger, anxiety, or depression. Minor health issues, sleep problems, and decreased motivation can occur, and you may even contemplate leaving prematurely.
- **Adjustment Phase** - Eventually, you start to adapt and feel more comfortable with the local culture, people, food, and language. Frustrations diminish as you establish friendships and find support within the community.
- **Acceptance/Mastery Phase** - In the final stage, you reach acceptance, realizing that complete understanding of the new culture isn't necessary to function and thrive. You become familiar with your surroundings and can access the resources you need to feel at ease. This stage may take weeks, months, or even years to achieve.



Dealing with culture shock

When experiencing culture shock, it's important to understand that these reactions are normal. Instead of isolating yourself, seek support from friends and others. Connecting with students and scholars from your home country, sharing your language, having meals together, and discussing your adjustment to life in Hawai'i can be beneficial. Joining student organizations can help you meet people from your country and others. Exploring the attractions on Oahu and participating in on-campus and off-campus events can also be a helpful way to ease the transition.

Campus activities and student life

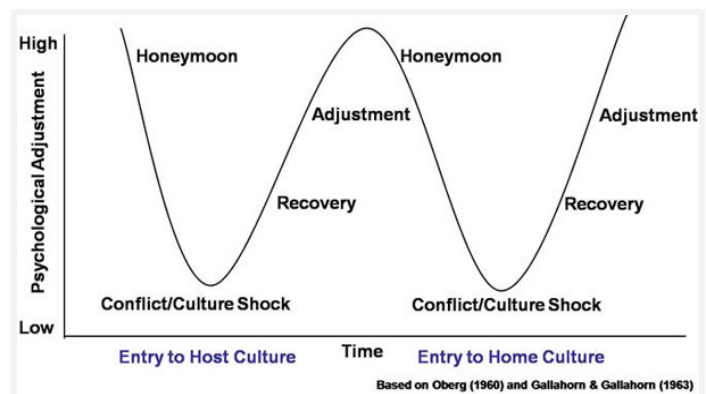
- [Explore Mānoa Virtually](#) - Links to videos and useful guides.
- [UH Mānoa Event Calendar](#) - Social and academic events for any student to join.
- Join a [student club](#) - Categories include academic, professional, culture, leisure, political, etc.
- [Life at Mānoa](#) - Links to information on dining options, theatre, and concert events, and more.
- [International Exchange Student Facebook Group](#) - A place you can connect with other exchange and visiting students, as well as UHM students planning to study abroad. You can also ask questions, share advice, etc.

Getting help

If you need more help, please do not hesitate to contact the MIX Office (inbound@hawaii.edu). We will try our best to connect you with resources to help you. You may also wish to contact some of the offices listed at the start of this guide, such as the Counseling and Student Development Center, which offers psychological services, psychiatry, consultation, and more.

Reverse culture shock?

Returning to your home country after an extended stay abroad can be a surprising experience. Your home culture may have changed in your absence, and you may have adapted to certain aspects of life in the foreign country. This can lead to a form of culture shock in your own homeland, which may come as a surprise but is actually quite common among returning students.



Additional Resources

Honolulu

[City of Honolulu](#)

Embassies and Consulates

[Foreign consulates in Honolulu](#)

Popular neighborhoods

[Hawaii.com - Places on Oahu](#)

Entertainment

Cinemas: [Consolidated Theaters](#), [Regal Theatres](#)

Theater: [Hawai'i Theatre Center](#), [Manoa Valley Theatre](#)

Restaurants

[Yelp - Honolulu](#)

[Tipping in Hawaii](#)

Museums & art galleries

[Bishop Museum](#)

[Hawai'i State Art Museum](#)

[Honolulu Museum of Art](#)

Historical

[Iolani Palace](#), [Hawai'i Mission Houses](#),

[Pearl Harbor](#)

Festivals and events

Oahu Annual Events: [GoHawaii](#)

Oahu Schedule of Events: [GoHawaii](#)

Travel

Attractions: [Yelp](#), [Tripadvisor](#)

Post office

[USPS](#)

Parks and recreation

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

Transportation

[TheBus](#)

[Biki](#) (rental bikes)

[Uber](#), [Lyft](#)

Shopping

[Ala Moana Center](#)

[International Marketplace](#)

[Kahala Mall](#)

[Kakaako Farmers Market](#)

[KCC Farmers Market](#)

Grocery and specialty stores

Close to campus: [Nijiya Market](#), [Kokua Market](#), [Down to Earth Organic and Natural](#)

Around Honolulu: [Foodland](#), [Times Supermarket](#), [Safeway](#)

Big box stores

[Don Quijote](#), [Target](#), [Walmart](#), [Costco](#)

Discount and thrift stores

Stores: [Ross](#), [TJ Maxx](#), [Goodwill](#), [Salvation Army](#)

Online: [Craigslist](#), [Facebook Marketplace](#)

Pharmacies

[CVS/Longs Drugs](#)

Urgent Care

[Clinics near UHM](#)

Pre-Departure Checklist

Have you received your admission email from manoa.admissions@hawaii.edu? If so, have you set up your UH username and emailed inbound@hawaii.edu to confirm your new email address?

Have you scheduled your English Language Institute (ELI) Placement Test, if needed?

Have you received your I-20? If so, have you started your visa application process?

Have you obtained your visa? If so, have you started Visa Clearance?

Have you submitted proof of health insurance or purchased a pre-approved health insurance plan?

Do you understand what is required to clear the health clearance process and the consequences for failing to do so by the first day of class?

Have you obtained and made copies of any important medical records that you may need while abroad (e.g. immunization record, doctor's notes, prescriptions, etc.)?

Have you applied for on-campus housing and/or off-campus housing?

Have you identified your course registration start time and do you understand the registration process?

If you have finished registering for courses, have you made plans to pay for tuition, student fees, and/or course fees by the appropriate deadlines?

Have you made your travel arrangements?

Are you aware of your housing move-in date and what requirements must be met before you are able to move-in? Do you need to arrange temporary housing, such as at a hotel, before you are able to move-in?

Have you prepared a small amount of US currency in cash to cover the initial expenses of your arrival, e.g. transportation from the airport, meals, initial housing costs, etc.?

If necessary, have you made arrangements for transferring money to the U.S.? Do you know what documents are required and what the restrictions are? If you plan to mostly use a debit/credit card, do you have a clear understanding of your card's restrictions, if any?

Welcome Guide prepared by Manoa International Exchange (MIX).

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DISCLAIMER: The materials in this guide have been prepared for general information purposes only. They do not constitute legal advice or serve as a substitute for legal counsel.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution and is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender identity and expression, age, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, genetic information, marital status, breastfeeding, income assignment for child support, arrest and court record (except as permissible under State law), sexual orientation, national guard absence, and status as a covered veteran. This policy covers admission and access to, as well as participation, treatment, and employment in, UHM's programs, activities, and services.

Questions? Contact Mānoa International Exchange at inbound@hawaii.edu.

See you soon!

