

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

Planning Your Arrival

A guide for new international graduate students | Fall 2026

When Can You Arrive?

Your arrival window depends on your immigration document. Check the issuance reason on page 1 of your I-20 or DS-2019.



Initial Students

First-time F-1 / J-1 at Northwestern

30

days maximum
before program start

Earlier entry requires a different valid visa plus international travel within 30 days to re-enter on F/J status.



Transfer Students

Transferring SEVIS record to NU

No 30-day restriction

- Enter any time before program start
- Bring NU Transfer Pending I-20/DS-2019
- Passport valid \geq 6 months in the future

International Travel After Arrival?

⚠ **Permitted but not recommended. All students must complete these steps first:**

1

Complete Immigration Check-In

Submit through the OISS Portal after arrival.

2

SEVIS Record Activated

Your record must be active before you travel.

3

Immigration Document Authorized for Travel

Your I-20 or DS-2019 must have a valid travel signature.

4

Check OISS Travel Resource

Always review the latest travel guidance before departing.

If travel is unavoidable: Email oiss-students@northwestern.edu to coordinate with your OISS advisor before departing.

Getting to Campus

Arriving at O'Hare International Airport



FREE OISS SHUTTLE | SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

O'Hare Terminal 5 → Evanston Campus

9 AM–5 PM • First-come, first-served • Register at least 10 days in advance



Taxi

Lower-level curb,
baggage claim

\$50–\$75



Rideshare

Uber / Lyft —
designated zones

App pricing



CTA Train

Blue → Red →
Purple line

\$5–\$10

On-Campus Housing

Key dates, residence halls, and move-in logistics

KEY DATES

MAR 23

Housing application opens

SEP 8

Earliest graduate move-in date

BEFORE SEP 8

Requires approval from
housing@northwestern.edu

RESIDENCE HALLS

Engelhart Hall & Garrett Place

847-491-3015 • Mon–Sun 8am–8pm

engelhartdesk@northwestern.edu

McManus Center

847-491-5354 • Mon–Fri 8am–8pm • Sat–Sun 10am–2pm

mcm Manusdesk@northwestern.edu

Int'l Graduate Student Orientation

Programming for new international graduate students

IN-PERSON GISO

September

16–17

2026

WHAT TO EXPECT

■ Online pre-arrival course

Required F-1 / J-1 Student Orientation — complete before you arrive

■ U.S. Immigration Regulations for F-1 and J-1 Students

This session is mandatory for all F-1 and J-1 students.

■ Midwest 101

A crash course in Evanston, Chicago, and life in the Midwest

■ Resource Fair

Campus partners and services you'll want to know about

■ Exploring Chicago Neighborhoods: Evanston

Join your peers in an interactive activity designed to get you better acquainted with the city where one of Northwestern's campuses resides.



Living at Northwestern

Northwestern | STUDENT AFFAIRS
Residential Services

4,448

Undergraduate Residents
26 Residence Halls
10 Residential Colleges



613

Graduate Residents
4 Graduate Housing
Buildings



459

Fraternity & Sorority Residents
15 Occupied Houses
3 Vacant Houses



5,520 on-campus residents in 2025-2026

Graduate On-Campus Options

- Engelhart
- McManus
- Garrett Place



Graduate Resident Resident Assistants (GRAs)

- Student Leaders
- Community Building Events
- Resources
- One on One Conversations



Resident Director (RD)

- Live On Campus
- Events within the Community
 - Connection to Resources
- Supporting your Graduate Residential Experience

Operations Staff

- Program Assistants
- Desk Assistants
- Maintenance & Custodial



Graduate Housing Move In

- Move In for 2026-2027 will occur on Tuesday, September 8th.
- Students can request an early arrival through the application/contract. Those dates are June 15, July 1, July 31 and August 31.
- Students will arrive at the Front Desk (Engelhart Hall for residents moving in Engelhart Hall and Garrett Place Apartments and McManus Center for residents moving into McManus Center) with a government issued ID and our front desk staff will check residents in and provide keys to their unit.
- If residents arrive after hours, they can call the Graduate Resident Assistant that is on duty and they will check students in. Those numbers are listed on the front door as well.
 - McManus: 847-815-2484
 - Engelhart/Garrett: 847-815-2441
- We begin accepting mail and packages typically one week before their arrival.
- Move information can be found on our Graduate Housing Services [website](#).



Safety



GRAs/Hall Staff on Duty



Emergency Blue Lights
Blue Light Telephones

Safe Ride App Safe Ride

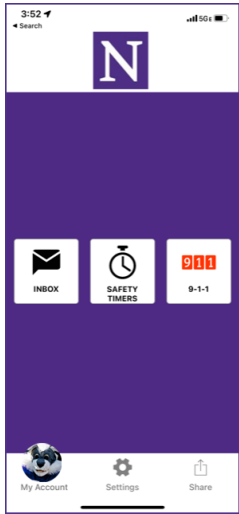


Front Desks



NU Shuttle
Campus Shuttle

NU
Guardian
App
NUGuardian



Due to my residential experience, I feel a sense of belonging to...

4.24

My Building



4.00

My Residential Area



4.37

Northwestern University

