



English as a
Second Language
International



West Texas A&M
University

Pre-Arrival Handbook

Building a better global community
by connecting people and cultures
through international language study

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Arrival Checklist



Congratulations! You have received your ESLI acceptance! What do you do now?

This Pre-Arrival Handbook contains all the information you need to successfully arrive to your ESLI campus. Below is checklist to guide you.

- ✓ Pay your SEVIS fee and obtain your F-1 student visa
 - Detailed information found on page 4
- ✓ Book your flight
 - Remember, you cannot arrive more than 30 days prior to the start of the term
- ✓ Make Arrival Arrangements using ESLI's online [Arrival Preparation Page](#). From this page, you can:
 - Inform ESLI of your arrival day and schedule airport pick-up
 - Apply for housing
 - Submit any required immunization forms
 - Pay a tuition deposit and housing deposit (if applicable)
 - Ask questions!
- ✓ Travel to and Enter the United States
 - Detailed U.S. customs information found on page 11
- ✓ Join us at your ESLI campus for orientation. We can't wait to meet you!

ESLI at WTAMU Contact Information

Director/Designated School Official: Ms. Yvette Saenz

Phone: 1-806-651-2980

Email: ysaenz@mail.wtamu.edu

**Address: Old Sub Building, 301 23rd Street,
Suite 1000, Canyon, Texas 79016**



Connection Trouble?

- If you are having trouble connecting to the Arrival Prep Page, [click here](#). Under Arrival Preparations, select your school.

Obtaining your Visa



After your acceptance to your school, follow these steps to obtain your F-1 student visa for study in the United States:

1) Get a Form I-20: Once you receive acceptance to an SEVP-certified school and provide evidence of financial support, as well as any other supporting documents, that school's designated school official will send you a Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Status."



- 2) Pay the I-901 Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Fee. [Click here to pay.](#)
- 3) Apply for a visa to travel to the United States: You can apply for a visa to travel to the United States at your designated U.S. embassy or consulate. [Click here to find the U.S. embassy in your country.](#) Be sure to follow their instructions.
- 4) Prepare for your visa interview. [Click here for guidance.](#)
- 5) Once your visa is approved, you may make preparation to enter the U.S.
- 6) If your visa is denied, you may reapply for another interview according to the Embassy's instructions. Contact ESLI at the [Arrival Preparation Page](#) select Defer/Cancel option to defer attendance.

Making Arrival Arrangements



Travel Safety

If your travels require for you to overnight in your port of entry city:

- Book your hotel before you leave your home country
- Ask your hotel about whether they have a shuttle service from the airport
- Be careful who you trust for help at the airport.
- If you want to take a taxi, make sure that your car has a clearly written 'TAXI' sign
- Ask your driver how much the ride will cost before you start to drive.



Airport Pickup

- To make life easy, ESLI offers airport pick-up service, for a fee.
- ESLI will pick you up from this airport destination: **Amarillo Airport (AMA)**
- Please schedule your pick-up after purchasing your ticket on our [Arrival Preparation Page](#). You will receive confirmation from ESLI.
- When you schedule your pick-up, you will be able to download an airport map and other important information

Please note that arrivals later in the evening may require a hotel room



Connection Trouble?

- If you are having trouble connecting to the Arrival Prep Page, [click here](#). Under Arrival Preparations, select your school.



Hotels

You may find it necessary to book a hotel room for the first few days after arriving in your campus's city. Here are the ones we recommend:

Best Western- Canyon

- Roughly USD \$90/night
- Phone: 1-806-655-1818



Buffalo Inn- Canyon

- Roughly USD \$65/night
- Phone: 1-806-655-2124

Holiday Inn Express- Canyon

- Roughly USD \$120/night
- Phone: 1-806-655-4445



Housing & Dining



Housing Options

- It is **recommended**, but not required, that students live on-campus while attending ESLI WTAMU.
- To download and submit a WTAMU Residential Living application, please go to our [Arrival Preparation Page](#). If you cannot connect to this link, [click here](#).
- A completed application and payment of the WTAMU housing deposit (USD \$150) are **required** to process your residential living application. Payment can be made on our Arrivals Preparation Page.
- Your ESLI Student Invoice will list the **average** one semester cost for a dorm room at WTAMU. The final cost may vary depending on room placement.
- You can check out the residential halls here: <http://wtamu.edu/student-life/residence-halls.aspx>



Meal Plan

- WTAMU offers [a variety of meal plan choices](#) to ESLI students living on-campus. Select your desired meal plan on your Residential Living application.
- **Meal plans are not required.**
- Students who live off-campus may choose to have a meal plan as well. Ask about this when you register with ESLI.
- Go to [WTAMU Dining Services](#) for menus and information.





Insurance

- Health insurance is mandatory while studying in the U.S. or Canada. All ESLI students are required to have insurance through the plans offered at their campus.
- **Important:** Insurance does not cover all medical expenses! Contact your ESLI program director for more information.



Emergencies

- If you need **non-emergency** medical attention upon arriving in the U.S. it is strongly recommended that you choose from one of the providers on the in-network list. Out-of-network providers may not take student insurance. Please contact your program director for further assistance.
- If you need **EMERGENCY** medical attention upon arriving in the U.S. or Canada, dial 911.



Immunizations

- Immunizations are required at ESLI WTAMU
- Please go to the [Arrival Preparation Page](#) to download and submit your required immunization forms, prior to your arrival.



Connection Trouble?

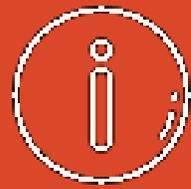
- If you are having trouble connecting to the Arrival Prep Page, [click here](#). Under Arrival Preparations, select your school.



Prescription Drugs

Students bringing prescription medication into the USA should bring a letter from their doctor stating what it is, what medical condition it is for, and the quantity in their possession. **The note must be in English.** Be aware that some medications used in other countries are considered illegal in the USA and are not permitted and could be confiscated. Check with the U.S. embassy or consulate regarding such items.

General City Information



Climate

Canyon, Texas averages 264 sunny days a year. The climate is mild and dry. Summers are sunny and hot, but evenings are cool. Winter is mild with occasional snow.

 **Summer** 21-35° C

 **Winter** -3-10° C



Money & Banking

- Bring \$200-500 USD cash or traveler's checks.
- Students will need enough money to cover living expenses.
- If you plan to use a credit card, be sure to check that it is accepted in the U.S.
- The staff at ESLI will assist you with opening a local bank account. The bank we recommend for ESLI WTAMU is Wells Fargo.
- There is a Happy State Bank ATM located on campus



Transportation

- Public transportation is limited in Canyon, Texas.
- Students often rely on Uber to travel into the larger city of Amarillo, Texas which is about 25 minutes away.
- WTAMU offers a shuttle bus around campus with 6 stops.
- Students can track the WTAMU shuttle bus on their smart phones.



General City Information



Restaurants

There are several restaurants available off-campus to students in Canyon, Texas. These include:

- Domino's Pizza
- Feldman's Wrong Way Diner
- Palace Coffee Co.
- Taco Villa
- La Bella Pizza
- Pepito's Mexican Restaurant
- Rockin' Zebra Soda Shoppe
- Sayakomarn's Restaurant (Thai)
- Schlotzsky's Deli



Shopping

- Canyon, Texas offers two main supermarkets where students can find groceries and a wide assortment of other items. These are:



- Additionally, many students travel to Amarillo, Texas (25 minutes away) to visit Westgate Shopping Mall, which has over 60 stores ranging from clothing, electronics (including U.S. cellular phone stores), and dining.



What to Pack



Here are some items you might want to either bring with you or buy as soon as you arrive:



Clothing

- Pack at least two changes of clothes in your carry-on
- American students usually wear casual clothing in the classroom (jeans, t-shirts, sneakers)
- Clothing for different types of weather, it changes often in the U.S.
- Formal outfits for any special events or ceremonies
- Traditional clothing from your home country for cultural events on campus



Toiletries and Cleaning

- Soap, shampoo, and so on
- Tooth brush and tooth paste
- Shower curtain and shower hooks
- Shower shoes (on-campus housing)
- Laundry detergent
- Laundry bag
- Paper towels
- Dish Soap



Bedding and Linens

- A pillow
- Bed sheets (Twin-XL recommended)
- Blankets
- Bath Towel



Other

- Electrical outlet adapter/converter
- Backpack or book bag
- Laptop Computer
- Cultural items for events on campus
- Basic kitchen supplies (plate, cup, utensils, pot/pan)

Entering the United States



Before you leave for the United States, make sure that you have:

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Visa
- ✓ I-20 "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status."
- ✓ Acceptance letter from your school
- ✓ ESLI acceptance/welcome letter (**make sure you note your school's Director/DSO contact information**)



Make 2 copies of your documents. Leave one copy with your family at home and keep a copy with you.

Do not put any of these documents in your checked baggage!

Immigration officials may conduct a limited search of any electronic devices at the Port of Entry.

Some students may be subject to a [Secondary Inspection](#) upon entry in the US.

This is common procedure in which you will be asked additional questions and/or asked to provide more documentation.

- ✓ You will be asked to go with a CBP officer in to separate interview room
- ✓ Remain calm.
- ✓ Cooperate with CBP officers

