



Hello Future Panther!

Welcome to Eastern Illinois University

Eastern Illinois University (EIU) is a state-assisted institution located in east-central Illinois in Charleston. Charleston has a population of 20,000 and lies eight miles east of interstate 57 on Illinois Route 16. Eastern's campus is located at the south edge of Charleston on 320 beautiful acres of landscaped grounds and is home for more than 8,000 students of which approximately 2,000 of those are graduate students. What is now Eastern Illinois University was established in 1895 as Eastern Illinois State Normal School. During the next 63 years, the school's name changed three additional times before attaining University status in 1957. Over sixty campus buildings display a variety of architectural styles. All buildings are within easy walking distance and being made fully accessible. Adjacent to the central campus lie several recreational fields, a campus pond, wooded tracts and a jogging trail.

Eastern Illinois University serves as the primary cultural center for the area. Plays, concerts, art exhibitions, lectures, and symposia are a regular part of campus life. Many off-campus cultural activities are also held regularly, for example, poetry readings, historical reenactments, community theatre, group discussions, and more.

UNIVERSITY MISSION

The University's mission is to provide superior yet accessible undergraduate and graduate education in the arts, sciences, humanities, and professions. Instruction is usually delivered to small classes allowing close individual attention and guidance by distinguished faculty from some of the finest institutions in higher learning.

CHARLESTON AND THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

Charleston, Illinois, is a safe, affordable, and friendly city. According to statistics published by state and federal law-enforcement agencies, Charleston and Coles County have very low crime rates. A recent survey of crime in 467 college communities showed Charleston was among the 20 safest. (Joseph Schwartz, *Crime at College: The Student Guide to Personal Safety*).

State parks, national forests, and nature preserves encourage outdoor activities such as camping, boating, canoeing, fishing, hiking, and climbing. Bicycling and horseback riding through the scenic countryside are also popular leisure activities in the area. Eastern has an on-campus recreation facility with a full range of fitness programs and equipment.

WELCOME WEEKEND

Welcome Weekend offers educational and social opportunities for you to learn about your new community and help you make a smooth transition to your new life as an EIU Panther. In addition to International Student Orientation, check out Welcome Weekend activities at <https://www.eiu.edu/prowl/>.

Our mission at OISS is to support and advocate for international students living and studying at Eastern Illinois University. We are committed to your personal, academic, and professional success! Your Designated School Officials at Eastern Illinois University are:

Mr. Andy Kabasele	Assistant Dean of International Programs	makabasele@eiu.edu
Mr. Tyler Custer	Program Assistant	tmcuster@eiu.edu
Ms. Melanee Bates	Program Assistant	mbates@eiu.edu

We look forward to seeing you on campus!



Office of International Students & Scholars
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Avenue, 2138 Blair Hall,
Charleston Illinois, 61920-3099, USA

OISS Telephone: +1 (217) 581-2321

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www.eiu.edu/international international@eiu.edu

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Applying for a Student Visa

With your Form I-20 or DS-2019, you can apply for your U.S. ENTRY visa at the nearest embassy or consulate. Please read the I-20 and sign and date page 1. Form I-20, along with evidence of support, should be presented to the U.S. Consular Office when applying for the visa. You may apply for your visa up to 120 days prior to your start date. Please check the embassy website for information on how to schedule your appointment.

Enter the following information for contact person on the visa application form:

Mutombo Andy Kabasele, Eastern Illinois University, 600 Lincoln Avenue, Charleston, Illinois, 61920-3099, USA. Phone: +001 (217) 581-2321

1. TIES TO YOUR HOME COUNTRY: Under U.S. law, all applicants for nonimmigrant visas, such as student visas, are viewed as intending immigrants until they can convince the consular officer that they are not. You must therefore be able to show that you have reasons for returning to your home country that are stronger than those for remaining in the United States. “Ties” to your home countries are the things that bind you to your hometown, homeland, or current place of residence: job, family, financial prospects that you own or will inherit, investments, etc. If you are a prospective undergraduate, the interviewing officer may ask about your specific intentions or promise of future employment, family or other relationships, educational objectives, grades, long-range plans, and career prospects in your home country. Each person’s situation is different and there is no magic explanation or single document, certificate, or letter that will guarantee visa issuance.

2. DOCUMENTATION: Evidence of sufficient funds to cover expenses as well as evidence of scholastic preparation may be requested. Make sure to include your letter of acceptance from Eastern Illinois University along with your I-20. If you have immediate family members (parents, siblings) in the U.S., be prepared to explain why they are here and what they are doing in the U.S. It should be immediately clear to the consular officer what written documents you are presenting and what they signify. Lengthy written explanations cannot be read quickly or evaluated. Remember that the interview time is typically less than ten minutes. **For additional information, please see the web sites listed on next page.**

3. LANGUAGE: Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English and not in your native language. One suggestion is to practice English conversation with a native speaker before the interview, but do not prepare speeches. Americans generally use direct eye contact when communicating so it is advisable to do the same.

4. SPEAK FOR YOURSELF: Do not bring parents or family members with you to the interview. The consular officer wants to interview you, not your family. A negative impression is created if you are not prepared to speak on your own behalf. If you are a minor (under age 18) and need your parents there in case there are questions, for example about funding, they should wait in the waiting room.

5. KNOW THE PROGRAM AND HOW IT FITS YOUR CAREER PLANS: If you are not able to articulate the reasons you will study in a particular program in the United States, you may not

succeed in convincing the consular officer that you are indeed planning to study, rather than to immigrate. You should also be able to explain how studying in the U. S. relates to your future professional career when you return home. Lastly, be prepared to answer the following question: *What will you do if your visa application is denied?*

6. BE BRIEF: Because of the volume of applications received, all consular officers are under considerable time pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview. They must decide, for the most part, on the impressions they form during the first minute of the interview. Consequently, what you say first and the initial impression you create are critical to your success. Keep your answers to the officer's questions short and to the point and remember to speak clearly.

7. NOT ALL COUNTRIES ARE EQUAL: Applicants from countries with a history of terrorist activities may encounter additional scrutiny. Countries suffering economic problems or applicants from countries where students have remained in the U.S. as immigrants may have more difficulty obtaining visas – statistically, applicants from those countries are more likely to be intending to immigrate. If you are from such a country, you may be asked about job opportunities at home after your study in the U.S.

8. EMPLOYMENT: Your main purpose in coming to the United States should be to study, not for the chance to work after graduation. While several students do work over the course of their studies, such employment requires authorization and is incidental to the main purpose of completing their U.S. education. You must be able to clearly articulate your plan to return home at the end of your program.

9. APPLY IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY: Applicants for student visas should generally apply at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate with jurisdiction over their place of permanent residence. Although visa applicants may apply at any U.S. consular office abroad, it may be more difficult to qualify for the visa outside the country of permanent residence.

10. MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE: Do not engage the consular officer in an argument. If you are denied a student visa, **request the reason you were denied in writing** and ask the officer for a list of documents to bring to overcome the denial.

(Modified from NAFSA, Association of International Educators & the U.S. Department of State)

Additional information may be found on the websites listed below:

- www.usa.gov/student-visa ~ Student Visa Information
- www.travel.state.gov ~ U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs
- <http://educationusa.state.gov/> ~ Education USA; Your Guide to Higher Education in the United States
- www.uscis.gov ~ General Immigration Services

SEVIS I-901 Fee

As of September 1, 2004, the United States Department of Homeland Security is requiring all students to pay a fee to support SEVIS (the Student & Exchange Visitor Information System); a web-based program which tracks information on non-immigrant students studying in the United States. SEVIS is administered by the Student & Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP).

The SEVIS fee must be paid prior to submitting the application for your student visa.

The online & paper application, directions for payment and frequently asked questions may be found on this website: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm>

IMPORTANT: You will need your SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt when you apply for your visa at the consulate. If you can make this payment using a credit or debit card, you may print the receipt upon submitting the payment online. Payment may be submitted by mail using a check or money order (see below). If paying by mail, please expect the return of the receipt showing proof of payment to take at least two weeks or more.

SEVP accepts payment online by:

- Visa, MasterCard, or American Express credit cards
- Western Union Quick Pay

Credit cards can only be used when paying the SEVIS I-901 fee and filing in the Form I-901 online at www.fmjfee.com

SEVP requirements for payment by check or money order:

Your check or money order must be an international money order, or a foreign draft drawn on a financial institution in the United States and payable in United States currency. Checks must be from one of the following:

- Banks chartered or operated in the United States
- Foreign subsidiaries of United States banks
- Foreign banks that have an arrangement with a United States bank to issue a check, money order or foreign draft that is drawn on a United States bank.

Please make checks and money orders payable to I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee. If your visa should be denied, you will not be required to submit an additional fee if you apply again within twelve months of the initial payment.

Health & Immunizations

Please bring your immunization records with you. Only original records documented on the World Health Organization's international certificate of vaccination (ICV) form, commonly known as the Carte Jaune or Yellow Card will be accepted.

During Orientation you will submit your records to the Health and Counseling Service's Medical Clinic for review. Students lacking immunizations, will be notified and requested to obtain missing or undocumented vaccinations at a special international student immunization clinic, or if the student has insurance coverage benefits which cover the immunizations at an off-campus entity, to get the vaccinations through those means.

All incoming students are required to show proof of:

- Three doses of Diphtheria, Tetanus, and two doses of Pertussis vaccine. All must be in the correct sequencing in order to be considered valid in the state of IL.
 - One must be a Tdap (contain acellular pertussis component). The last dose must have been received within the past 10 years.
- Two doses of Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) after the first birthday.

All incoming students under the age of 22 are also required to show proof of:

- One dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine on or after the 16th birthday.

*****Immunization records must be signed and dated by a nurse or physician. If records are not in English, they must be accompanied by a certified translation.***

Failure to submit a completed and verified immunization record will result in an administrative hold being placed on the student's account, as well as a \$35 administrative late fee.

Cost of immunizations at the EIU medical clinic (includes \$15 injection charge for each shot):

Tdap-\$60	Td-\$45	MMR-\$102	Meningitis- \$140
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Effective November 8, 2021, The White House announced that **COVID vaccines** were required for international travelers coming into the United States. For purposes of entry into the United States, vaccines accepted will include FDA approved or authorized and WHO Emergency Use Listing vaccines.

For more information, please contact the
EIU Medical clinic
217-581-3013 health@eiu.edu.

TUBERCULOSIS SCREENING

Persons from these countries (listed below) should be screened for TB and TB infection. Persons from countries not found on this list should only be tested if symptomatic or if they have risk factors. Students from high-risk countries require a TB Gold (blood draw) that costs a total of \$70.

Afghanistan	Ecuador	Malawi	Singapore
Algeria	El Salvador	Malaysia	Solomon Islands
Angola	Equatorial Guinea	Maldives	Somalia
Anguilla	Eritrea	Mali	South Africa
Argentina	Eswatini	Marshall Islands	South Sudan
Armenia	Ethiopia	Mauritania	Sri Lanka
Azerbaijan	Fiji	Mexico	Sudan
Bangladesh	French Polynesia	Micronesia (Federated States of)	Suriname
Belarus	Gabon	Mongolia	Tajikistan
Belize	Gambia	Morocco	Thailand
Benin	Georgia	Mozambique	Timor-Leste
Bhutan	Ghana	Myanmar	Togo
Bolivia	Greenland	Namibia	Tokelau
Botswana	Guam	Nauru	Tunisia
Brazil	Guatemala	Nepal	Turkmenistan
Brunei Darussalam	Guinea	Nicaragua	Tuvalu
Bulgaria	Guinea-Bissau	Niger	Uganda
Burkina Faso	Guyana	Nigeria	Ukraine
Burundi	Haiti	Northern Mariana Islands	United Republic of Tanzania
Cabo Verde	Honduras	Pakistan	Uruguay
Cambodia	India	Palau	Uzbekistan
Cameroon	Indonesia	Panama	Vanuatu
Central African Republic	Iraq	Papua New Guinea	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Chad	Kazakhstan	Paraguay	Viet Nam
China	Kenya	Peru	Yemen
China, Hong Kong SAR	Kiribati	Philippines	Zambia
China, Macao SAR	Kuwait	Qatar	Zimbabwe
Colombia Republic of Korea (South Korea)	Kyrgyzstan	Republic of Korea (South Korea)	
Comoros	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Republic of Moldova	
Congo	Latvia	Romania	
Cote d'Ivoire	Lesotho	Russian Federation	

Democratic People's	Liberia	Rwanda	
Republic of Korea			
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Libya	Sao Tome and Principe	
Djibouti	Lithuania	Senegal	
Dominican Republic	Madagascar	Sierra Leone	

HEALTH INSURANCE

Medical care in the United States is provided by private physicians, clinics and hospitals and is very expensive. The patient must have health insurance or pay the medical costs at the time of treatment. In the US, American citizens, as well as visitors, are responsible for these costs themselves. It is risky to be in the United States without adequate health insurance. Since a single day of hospitalization and medical treatment can cost thousands of dollars, many hospitals and doctors refuse to treat uninsured patients except in life-threatening emergencies. Most Americans rely on insurance, and you should do the same. Insurance gives you access to better and more timely health care and provides the only protection against the enormous costs of health care in this country.

The mandatory EIU health insurance policy goes into effect only 48 hours prior to the first day of classes.

EIU health insurance is a secondary insurance that does not fully cover all expenses. It is essential that you secure primary insurance coverage prior to your arrival.

If you have a government-sponsored health insurance policy and provide proof of that policy, you may apply for a waiver of the mandatory EIU health insurance policy requirement and a refund of the insurance premium at the Office of Financial Aid within the **first ten days** of classes.

J1 Program: Health insurance coverage is required for all J-1 program participants and their dependents. You must have insurance, or your J-1 sponsor is required to terminate your J-1 program participation. The U.S. State Department has established minimum requirements for the coverage to protect you and any family members who are here with you in case of sickness or accident. These requirements are listed in this section. NOTE: You are required to have this insurance even if your visit to the U.S. is very brief. All J-1 visitors must present proof of health insurance, which meets the J-1 health insurance requirements to the OISS as instructed in your introduction letter and before obtaining a DS-2019 for dependents, travel or extension.

For information, please contact:

Student Insurance 217-581-5290 Email: stuinsure@eiu.edu
<https://www.eiu.edu/studentinsurance/>

Travelling to Eastern Illinois University

WEATHER

Be prepared with the appropriate clothing. The chart below shows the average temperature you can expect during all four seasons.

Weather	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring
High Temperature	30 °C	18 °C	4 °C	19 °C
Low Temperature	18 °C	7 °C	-5 °C	7 °C

AIR TRAVEL & PORT OF ENTRY

Prepare for Port of Entry Inspection.

The following documents must be with you (not in your checked luggage) for entry into the U.S.:



- A Form I-20, signed by a Designated School Official from Eastern Illinois University
- A valid visa containing your SEVIS ID (unless you are visa-exempt)
- Financial documentation as evidence of ability to pay tuition and living expenses.
- A valid passport
- Proof of Payment of the SEVIS I-901 fee

Customs & Border Patrol (CBP) inspection takes place before you collect your luggage, so you must have these documents with you. **Do not put them in your checked luggage!**

Upon inspection of your documents, you may be sent to "secondary inspection" which is an additional search. Often this is done on a random basis and has nothing to do with your specific circumstances. If there is a question regarding your documents, inspectors at the port of entry will attempt to contact us to verify that you should be admitted. It is important that you remain calm during the process. You should have the telephone number of our office with you (in a place such as your wallet).

OISS can be reached at +1 (217) 581-2321 or (217) 460-7627. We recommend you review the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) travel FAQs before coming into the United States. <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel>

Admission Stamp & Electronic I-94

When you are at the port of entry, the officer will place an admission stamp in your passport and then write the visa status you are being given (F-1 or J-1) and the expiration date. For students in F-1 or J-1 status the expiration is noted with "D/S" which stands for *Duration of Status*. If your stamp shows the incorrect status or a specific date instead of

D/S, RETURN to the inspection area and request that your stamp be corrected. In the event this is not possible, please contact OISS the next business day.

After your arrival in the U.S., you should go to www.cbp.gov/i94 to print out your electronic I-94 (and those of any dependents). This document will have your status and expiration date as well as your admission number to the U.S.

When you enter the country, an electronic record of your admission, known as the I-94, will also be created. You can retrieve a copy of this record by visiting this page: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/>.

Arriving at Eastern Illinois University

ARRIVAL

It is your responsibility to arrive at O'Hare and travel to either Champaign, Illinois or Mattoon, Illinois. Be sure to plan and pay attention to the timing of your travels. Illinois is on Central Standard Time (CST).

We recommend using Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD) as your port of entry for U.S Customs.

Nearby airports include:

- Chicago Midway International Airport (Chicago, Illinois)
- University of Illinois Willard Airport (Savoy, Illinois)
- Indianapolis International Airport (Indianapolis, Indiana)
- Lambert – St. Louis International Airport (St. Louis, Missouri)

We recommend flying into **Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD)**. EIU will offer free pickups from the Amtrak Station in Mattoon, IL, beginning Sunday, August 17th.

Below are the steps to get from the Chicago O'Hare International Airport to Mattoon, IL:

AMTRAK STATION PICK-UP

OPTION #1 - Chicago Transit System-Union Station-Mattoon Amtrak Station (This option is the least expensive but takes the longest time.)

01. Most of you will arrive at Terminal 5. From that terminal, you must ride the Airport Transit System (ATS) to Terminal 3. Once in the terminals, follow "Trains to City" on overhead signs as you walk through the pedestrian tunnel to reach the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) station. This should take about 15 minutes.

02. Once at the CTA station, purchase a single-ride ticket for \$2.50 from the farecard machines using cash, debit, or credit cards. Pay your fare and pass through the turnstiles to the boarding platform. Take any train and travel to the Clinton station on the Blue Line (O'Hare-Forest Park). The travel time from O'Hare to Clinton is 46 minutes; trains run every 5-10 minutes daily.

03. Next, you need to get from the Clinton station to Union Station. Union Station is located two blocks (300 m) north of the Clinton station. Take the escalator up and walk north along Clinton (there is a sign pointing in the direction of Union Station at the exit from the Clinton station). You will see an entrance to Union Station near the intersection with Jackson. The entire walk takes about 5 minutes.

04. Once at Union Station, purchase a one-way ticket to Mattoon, Illinois. Ticket prices range from \$25 to \$120. Trains depart Union Station at **8:15 am, 4:05 pm, and 8:05 pm**. The trip takes a little over 3 hours.

05. You're almost here! As you leave the Amtrak station and head outside, EIU's representatives will be on hand to greet you and help you with your luggage. The drive to campus will take approximately 15 minutes.

OPTION #2 - Uber or Lyft-Union Station-Mattoon Amtrak Station (This option takes less time but is the most expensive)

01. Most of you will arrive at Terminal 5. From the terminal, you must ride the Airport Transit System (ATS) to Terminal 2.
The loading zone in Terminal 2 is in the waiting area on the Upper Level between Door 2A and Door 2E.

BLACK Zone A - Outside North of vestibule 2A

BLUE Zone B - Outside vestibule 2A

ORANGE Zone C - Outside vestibule 2B

GREEN Zone D - Outside vestibule 2E

02. Passengers should wait in the specific colored zones until their car arrives in the same colored zone before proceeding to the designated pickup location.

03. Direct your driver to Union Station. Fares between O'Hare and Union Station are usually \$50-\$100, depending on traffic and time of day.

04. Once at Union Station, purchase a one-way ticket to Mattoon, Illinois. Ticket prices range from \$25-\$120. Trains depart Union Station at **8:15 am**, **4:05 pm**, and **8:05 pm**. The trip takes a little over 3 hours.

You're almost here! As you leave the Amtrak station and head outside, EIU's representatives will be on hand to greet you and help you with your luggage. The drive to campus will take approximately 15 minutes.

*** If you purchase an Amtrak ticket in advance, select a departure time 2-3 hours after your flight arrival time in case of delays.**

[CTA Rail Map](#)

[Downtown Chicago Map](#)

Once you have arranged Amtrak travel from Chicago's Union Station to Mattoon, IL, no further purchases or connections are necessary.

NOTIFY OISS OF YOUR TRAVEL PLANS

Please provide your travel information on the Fall 2025 [Arrival Information Form](#).

OPTION #3 - Alternative Travel to Eastern Illinois University (arrange your own plans)

[Amtrak:](#)

Amtrak train service has service between downtown Chicago and Mattoon, Illinois (which is approximately 15 minutes away from Charleston). From Mattoon, you would need to contact a local taxi service for the last 10~ miles to campus

International Student Orientation

As a new international student at Eastern Illinois University, you are **REQUIRED** to attend the Orientation sessions held prior to the beginning of the semester. The Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) organizes this event to introduce you to student life at EIU. Orientation is required for enrollment at EIU as many tasks must be completed before the classes begin. Some of the activities during orientation are:

- medical clearance
- submission of immunization records
- application for an EIU identification card (I.D.)
- English language placement testing
- meet with academic advisors
- register for courses
- apply for a Social Security card (Graduate Assistants with signed contracts)
- establish local bank account

The Orientation sessions also provide an opportunity for you to become acquainted with OISS staff and to meet current international students. We hope these sessions are informative and enjoyable. Most students also appreciate this time to recover from jet lag and adjust to their new surroundings.

Mandatory International Student Orientation for Fall 2025:

- ❖ August 19-20 (Graduate Students)
- ❖ August 19-21 (Undergraduate Students)

You can register for International Student Orientation on your [MyEIU](#) portal.

Accommodations

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATIONS

Temporary Accommodations are provided for international students from August 17-22, 2025. These temporary accommodations are provided free of charge to students that complete the [Fall 2025 Arrival Form](#):

STUDENT HOUSING

All Eastern Illinois University students are required to live in University residence halls for the first two years after high school graduation. This includes transfer students (under the age of 20 as of the first day of enrollment) with less than 48 credit hours earned after high school graduation. Dual-credit courses do not count toward this number. A Residency Exemption Request Form must be submitted for approval if the student meets one or more of the following exceptions:

1. The student is married, as verified with a certified copy of the marriage license or civil union certificate.
2. The student has attained their 21st birthday *prior* to the beginning of the semester for which enrollment is sought, as verified with EIU records.
3. The student plans to live at home with a parent or legal guardian who resides within a 50-mile radius, as verified with a notarized Residency Exemption Request Form.
4. The student, by reason of medical necessity, requires special housing that cannot be provided by University Housing & Dining Services, as verified with a statement from their attending physician and approved by an EIU physician.

The Residency Exemption Request Form will be available in the student's Housing Portal, accessible through [MyEIU](#).

• **On-campus housing:** Please visit the EIU Housing website at <https://www.eiu.edu/housing/international.php>

• **Off-campus options:** Can be located through a Google search using the terms "apartments in Charleston, Illinois".

EIU offers 11 different residence halls. For a list of services in each hall, please see EIU's Housing and Dining webpage at: <https://www.eiu.edu/housing/>. Please refer to <https://www.eiu.edu/housing/international.php> for housing instructions specific to international students.

There are four main choices for student housing around EIU's campus:

- A. Residence Halls (On-Campus)
- B. University Apartments (On-Campus)
- C. University Court (On-Campus)
- D. Privately-Owned Housing (Off-Campus)

A. Residence Halls (On-Campus):

The steps for securing a room in one of the residence halls are to:

- Complete the Housing Application and pay a \$50 non-refundable Application fee
- Complete the Room and Board Contract and Preference Form
- Pay a \$100 Housing Down Payment.
- All residence hall contracts also include a meal plan. You may not live in residence halls without a meal plan.

You may complete your housing process in one of two ways:

- **Online:** Using your MYEIU portal, you can complete all of the housing steps online, including payments. You must first be admitted to EIU before you will be able to start the housing steps. Inside your MYEIU portal is a Housing Checklist that will detail the items you need to complete. Through your MYEIU portal, you will also be given access to RoomSync, a roommate matching app through Facebook. You may choose to search for a roommate through this service; otherwise, assignment information will be emailed to you. **In person, upon your arrival to EIU:** Please come prepared to pay the \$150 payment (\$50 non-refundable Housing Application Fee + \$100 Housing Down Payment). You will complete the paper application and contracts in our office, and your room assignment and roommate will be assigned to you once you arrive at EIU.

B. University Apartments (On-Campus):

University Apartments at EIU include 90 efficiency and one-bedroom apartments. To be eligible to live in University Apartments, a student must meet one of the following stipulations:

- Graduate Student Undergraduate Married Student
- Undergraduate Student with children
- Undergraduate Student who is 25 years of age or older

Students meeting a stipulation should send an email to Lindsey Hunter at housing@eiu.edu with the following information:

- Student Name
- Gender
- Year in school (undergraduate 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th, Graduate)
- Date of birth (month, date, year)
- Reason you qualify for University Apartments

The steps for securing an apartment are to complete the Housing Application and pay a \$50 non-refundable Application fee; complete the Apartment Contract; and pay a \$100 Housing Down Payment.

You must first be admitted to EIU before you will be able to start the housing steps. Once you send an email to Lindsey Hunter, she will respond with additional steps.

C. University Court (On-Campus):

Students must have a minimum of 30 credit hours earned to live in University Court. University Court at EIU includes two bedrooms. Each resident must find their own roommate before the signing of the contract. You may find more information here: [https:// www.eiu.edu/housing/universityct.php](https://www.eiu.edu/housing/universityct.php). To be considered for an apartment, please email univcourt@eiu.edu.

D. Privately-Owned Housing (Off-Campus):

There are many private apartments available in Charleston at an average cost of \$600-1000+ per person each month plus the cost of electricity, water, etc. The best rentals go quickly!

The following is a non-comprehensive of off-campus landlords and rental agencies as of March 2025:

Bowers Rentals

P.O. Box 55, Charleston, IL

217-345-4001

darin@eiuiliving.com

Website: <https://bowersrentals.com/>

Charleston Property Management, Inc.

1010 Lincoln Avenue, Charleston, IL

217-345-6210

Website: <https://www.charlestonpropertymanagementinc.net/champaign-homes-for-rent>

Hort Properties

516 Monroe Ave, Charleston, IL

217.798.9100

RentHPs@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.renthps.com/>

JB Bell Properties

617 W Grant Charleston

217-276-6867

jbbellproperties@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.jbbellproperties.com/>

Mac Apartments, LLC

820 Lincoln Avenue, Charleston, IL

217-348-7746

info@macapartmentsllc.com

Website: <https://www.macapartmentsllc.com/illinois>

Melrose on 4th & Brooklyn Heights Apartments

950 4th Street, Charleston, IL

217-345-5515

Leasing@MelroseonFourth.com

Website: <https://www.yost-management.com/single-project>

PP&W Properties

1611 Redbud Road, Charleston, IL

217-348-8249

ppwrentals@gmail.com

Website: <https://ppwrentals.com/>

Panther Properties, Inc.

654 Castle Drive, Charleston, IL

217-962-0790

Website: <http://www.pantherpropertiescharleston.com/>

Premier Properties

P.O. Box 135, Charleston, IL

217-348-6297

rentals@premierpropertiesil.com

Website: <https://premierpropertiesil.com/>

Williams Rentals

212 6th Street, Charleston, IL

217-345-7286

<http://jwilliamsrentals.com/>

Website: rentals@jwilliamsrentals.com

Wood Rentals

1512 A St, P.O. Box 377, Charleston, IL

217 345-4489

Website: <https://www.woodrentals.com/>

Unique Properties

739 Lincoln Avenue, Charleston, IL

217-806-0202

julie@unique-homes.net

Website: <https://www.unique-properties.net/>

Registering & Enrolling for Classes

TRANSCRIPTS

You are required to submit final, official educational records after admission. Transcripts must bear the seal and signature of the appropriate school official, and be accompanied by an official English translation if necessary. You may present the final documents after arrival, but OISS prefers that official forms are sent prior to arrival.

Students with transfer credit must submit official educational records as soon as possible to facilitate the transfer credit process. For transfer credit, students must submit either of the following:

- External evaluation provided by World Education Services (WES) or Education Credential Evaluation (ECE)
- Syllabi/class plan for courses taken

Without official copies of your educational records, you will be unable to enroll for classes and your SEVIS ID will be terminated.

REGISTRATION

You will need to meet with an Academic Advisor or Graduate Coordinator regarding registering for classes.

Undergraduate - Freshmen:

While you can wait till after your arrival to meet with an Academic Advisor or Graduate Coordinator, you may contact the Advising Center to set up an online meeting with an Academic Advisor to register for classes after you have received your F1 or J1 visa:

Academic Advising
McAfee Gym - Room 1110
(217) 581-2313
advising@eiu.edu

Undergraduate – Transfer:

Please contact:

- 1) OISS to inform them of your transfer credits
- 2) You may then contact your department to set up an appointment with a faculty advisor.

Fees & Payments

WHAT EXPENSES SHOULD I EXPECT BEFORE SCHOOL BEGINS?

It is necessary to have adequate funds for the first few weeks when your initial financial costs will be high. Food and miscellaneous expenses are estimated at \$25.00 per day. Please be prepared to make a down payment of \$ 150 for university housing. Off-campus landlords require a deposit of at least the first month rent and a security deposit. This could range from \$600.00 - \$1000.00. As there is no quick way to convert foreign currency or checks drawn on foreign banks in Charleston, we suggest you purchase travelers checks for your initial expenses. (Please do not carry large amounts of cash with you or in your luggage.)

TUITION

Tuition bills are available on PAWS (Panther Access to Web Services) around the first of each month **after you register for classes**. PAWS is an online system which enables students, faculty, staff, and alumni to access a variety of information. Information regarding your student account is located at https://www.eiu.edu/busofc/bursar_payment.php.

Tuition payments will be paid after you have registered for classes. You can make monthly tuition payments, but there is a 1% finance charge on monthly outstanding balances.

To avoid a finance charge, the bill must be paid in full after the first billing. Bills are generated monthly for any activity that might occur on your student account. Please check your PAWS account/billing statement every month. Bills are due in full by the end of the semester.

COSTS

Be prepared to pay for all expected costs ([undergrad](#) or [grad](#)). **If you are not able to pay, please defer your admission.** We do require a financial affidavit as well as a bank statement proving sufficient funds. There are jobs available on campus but you should not depend on them to pay your bills. Scholarships are also not guaranteed. (J-1 students, please keep in mind that there are fees that are not covered by EIU.) To see the most updated prices, please go to the Cost page located on the OISS website. (Prices do change per year.)

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover credit card payments can be made online at www.eiu.edu/paws. The Cashier's Office will also accept personal checks, cashier's checks, money orders or cash payments in person. Personal checks, cashier's checks or money orders may be mailed to:

Cashier's Office
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, IL 61920
https://www.eiu.edu/busofc/bursar_payment.php/

Regardless of the method of payment, the student's E-Number is required at the time of payment. Do not mail cash. Make all checks payable to Eastern Illinois University.

SCHOLARSHIPS & WAIVERS

Scholarships and waivers will be available on your PAWS account after the first week of classes.

WIRE TRANSFERS

To wire transfer payments, please contact:

Ramey Martin
Accountant III, Banking and Investments
Business Office
Room 1131, Old Main
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Phone: 217-581-7741
E-mail: rlmartin@eiu.edu

EIU Student Accounts

E#

This is your unique EIU Student Identification Number. You will find your E# on your [MyEIU](#) portal.

PANTHERMAIL

Once fully admitted, you will find your Net ID and password on your [MyEIU](#) portal. Please follow the instructions on your [MyEIU](#) portal to access your EIU student email.

You can login to your Panthermail here: <https://www.eiu.edu/panthermail/>

PAWS (PANTHER ACCESS TO WEB SERVICES)

PAWS is an online system which enables students, faculty, staff, and alumni to access a variety of information, including student accounts and registration. You will only receive a bill **after** you have registered for courses.

You can login to PAWS here: <https://www.eiu.edu/pawslogin/>

D2L

D2L is a learning management system where you may access your classes once you are registered. You can login using your Net Id and Password.

You can login to D2L here: <https://online.eiu.edu/d2l/lp/auth/saml/login>

PANTHER CARD

Your Panther Card is your Student ID. Once you register for International Student Orientation, you will be provided a link to get your first Panther Card at no-cost.

For technical assistance, please contact:

EIU User Services

Phone: 217-581-4357

Email: support@eiu.edu

Important Dates

Complete 2025-2026 Academic Calendar available here:
<https://www.eiu.edu/registra/files/2025-2026AcademicCalendar.pdf>

August 19 – 21	International Student Orientation
Monday, August 25	First Day of Fall 2025 Classes
Friday, August 29	Last Day to Add a Full Semester Course
	AIS Welcome & Bowling Social
Monday, September 01	Labor Day – No Classes
Monday, September 08	Last Day to Drop a Full Semester Course
	Last Day to Enroll/Opt out -Student Insurance
Monday, October 13	Registration for Spring 2026 begins
Wednesday, October 13	Mid Term
Friday, October 17	Fall Break – No Classes
November 24 – 28	Thanksgiving Break – No Classes
Friday, December 12	Last Class Day of Fall 2025 Classes
December 15 – December 19	Final Examinations
Saturday, December 20	Commencement
Monday, January 12	First Day of Spring 2026 Classes

To Do List

- ☐ Pay your SEVIS Fee
- ☐ Set up Visa Appointment
- ☐ Prepare for your Visa Interview
- ☐ Once your visa is approved, plan your travel itinerary
- ☐ Reserve On-Campus Housing
- ☐ If required, reserve free Amtrak train station pick-up
- ☐ If required, reserve temporary accommodation
- ☐ Arrange Off-Campus Housing
- ☐ Set Up your EIU Student Accounts
- ☐ Meet with an Academic Advisor – Register for Classes
- ☐ Register for International Student Orientation
- ☐ Get Excited for Your EIU Experience!