International MBA Student Pre-Departure Guide
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Visa Process

- Sign-up for Visa interview early & keep MBA Admissions office posted on progress

- Interview
  - Smile all the time & maintain eye contact
  - Answer the questions confidently and clearly
  - Know what documents you have
  - Know where your finances are coming from
  - Have an idea of what you want to do once you graduate
  - Be prepared to have reasons showing strong ties to home country (Consulate expects you to return post completion of education and practical training)
  - If questions about off-campus jobs or other part time jobs are asked, be aware that they expect you to be sufficiently funded and not take up off-campus jobs outside practical training
## Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 15-19, 2019 or sooner</td>
<td>Students Arriving at TCU</td>
<td>• Students can enter US 30 days prior to Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 22, 2019</td>
<td>Casual Dinner with Graduate Program Staff</td>
<td>• Time and Place: TDB</td>
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<td>July 24, 2019</td>
<td>ISTART</td>
<td>• Graduate Career Services SMI</td>
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<td>July 25 &amp; 26, 2019</td>
<td>Communication Workshop</td>
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<td>July 30-August 16, 2019</td>
<td>All MBA Students START Workshop</td>
<td>• IEP Office Rickel Building Ste. 244</td>
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<td>• Graduate Programs</td>
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Housing – Under 0.5 Miles

☞ TCU Graduate Housing ($$) – Leibrock Village – www.brite.edu/leibrock
☞ Contact Erin Houchin – erin.houchin@tcu.edu

☞ Lowden Terrace Apartment ($) – http://www.harvestrockrealty.com/

☞ McCart Apartments ($) – http://www.mccartinfo.com

☞ GrandMarc ($$$) – http://www.grandmarctcu.com/

☞ Loft VUE ($$) – http://loftvueliving.com/

☞ Village East ($$) – http://www.villageeasttcu.com/

☞ University House ($$) [this is not a TCU managed housing] – http://www.universityhousetcu.com/
Housing – Farther Away

- Between 0.5 to 1.5 miles from the business school (may need a car)

- More than 1.5 miles from the business school (definitely need a car)
  - Cross Creek Ranch ($)
  - Lincoln Park at Trinity Bluff ($$)
Housing – Other Sources

- There are plenty of other housing options available in and around TCU which can be looked up online.

  - Look for postings on TCU Announce student marketplace (https://tcuannounce.tcu.edu/?sortString=Title&pageType=List&page=2&desc=True)

- Some other websites which can provide information are:
  - Zillow.com (with a pin search for 76109/76110
  - PurplePads.com
  - Purplehousing.com
  - Awardhomes.com

- Try contacting current first-year international students for their views on apartments and houses around the business school.

- Be sure to review what utilities and amenities are included in the rent. Factor in any not covered for a more full picture of your housing costs before deciding.

- Also refer to comprehensive housing guide on MBAFYI page
Life at TCU – Essentials

- Get a US phone number at the earliest. – Many options are available ranging from AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, T-Mobile
  - Getting a group plan is less expensive. You can join in existing group plans of the current students
  - If you plan to buy a new phone from your home country before the start of your new school, check the bandwidth and frequency of your phone, certain Asian made phones do not work in the American carrier’s bandwidths.

- Open a bank account – Popular options are Bank of America, Chase and BB&T on Berry Street
  - If feasible, take a secured credit card (generally requires a $400 security deposit amount) – this will help you build the much needed credit history

- OPTIONAL:
  - Apply for a State ID / Driver’s license – Other than US Identification cards, only international passport is accepted at many places as a valid ID, so it would be in your best interest to do this
  - Car – Your requirement of a car will, to a large extent, depend on how far you choose to live from the campus. If you live close to campus, you may able to get by without a car. Some students who live farther use a bicycle. During the second year, students typically buy a car. Apart from the buying cost, please add an extra $150/month to your budget towards maintenance / insurance of the car, and approximately $30-$40/month for fuel.
Life at TCU – Acclimating

☞ Take the I-START workshop seriously- The workshop focuses on making you aware about the resources at your disposal and cultural subtleties

☞ Be ready to try new foods- The campus is surrounded by restaurants for all kinds of tastes

☞ Within walking distance from the campus- Bookstore, Pharmacy, Grocery, and Bars!

☞ Polite greeting is a social norm in Ft. Worth. Be willing to reciprocate

☞ There is a lot to do in Ft. Worth, explore your interests online (www.fortworth.com)
Life at TCU – Academics

- You will have a full load of 18 hours in the first semester with a GPA grading system
- Course is divided into modules involving a lot of team work
- After START workshop, there is a 3 week module followed by two 6 week modules and ends with 1 week of Integrative Project
- Non Business background- Familiarize yourself with the basics of accounting, finance, and statistics. Take the pre-enrolment modules seriously. You should have received email instruction from Academic Program Director, Olivia Williams regarding mandatory online pre-enrollment courses.
- It is important to get involved in extra-curricular activities (these are an integral part of personal development during the MBA experience)
- Socializing is very important and helps in networking. If this is not something you are comfortable with, read up about it, and be prepared to practice once you get here (you will have plenty of opportunities to practice, so ensure you make good use of them)
Life at TCU – Attire

♫ Business Professional:
- For men: Suits, ties, dress shoes
- For women: Suits (pant suits / skirt suits), dress shirts / blouses, closed-toed shoes
- Suit - Basic black recommended for both men & women (other color options are dark shades of black, grey, or navy). Please plan to bring at least one suit with you from your home country as you will need it for START workshop, and you may not have enough time after arriving here to find a well-fitting suit

♫ Business Casual:
- For men: Shirts / polo shirts, trousers, sweaters
- For women: Formal dresses, pants, skirts, shirts / blouses, cardigans / sweaters
- Always carry a light sweater and/or jacket as it can get pretty cold inside the buildings

♫ Definitely bring or plan to buy sunglasses and a hat! Summers are hot and winters are cold with 4-5 days of expected snowfall – bring summer & winter wear accordingly, or buy here. There are many big box retail within a few miles from the school where you can go shopping if you forget something important
If you don’t drive, learn the basics before you arrive

Start working on getting your drivers license
- It will not be an easy test
- Waiting period for the road test is about 1 month
- If you buy a car, the insurance premium amount decreases with an increase in the duration of your American Driver’s License

Public transportation is scarce
- Cabs/Uber/Lyft are easily available but vary in prices based on time of the day

You would be able to drive in the US for a few months (usually 90 days) from the date you arrive here with an international driver’s permit (IDP), or your driver’s license from home country
Life at TCU – Part time employment

- Working on-campus (International students cannot work outside the campus in the first year)

  - Uninformed labor and illegal employment will result in deportation from US
  - First semester is heavily loaded with very little time for work
  - Takes away time from meeting with your teams and project work
  - SSN is mandatory before beginning any kind of employment on or off campus (MBA Admissions Office/GCC and ISS departments will help with this)
  - Usually get paid minimum wages (around $16/hr for graduate students and around 14% tax)
Life at TCU – Budgeting

☞ Mandatory Expenses:
☞ Living expenses (rent, utilities, food, furniture, transportation, social life, etc.)
☞ Books & Case Studies (some books can be as expensive as $300; used books and rentals may cost lesser, but ensure you buy the right version)
☞ Health Insurance (the Aetna insurance provided by university requires a co-pay)
☞ Other medical expenses (the Aetna insurance provided by the school does not cover dental or vision)

☞ Optional Expenses:
☞ Car (maintenance & insurance)
☞ Career Fairs (NSHMBAA, NBMBAA, NAWMBA, NAAMBA)
☞ MBA educational domestic trips (New York, California, Omaha, Houston)
☞ MBA International Study Abroad trips (China, Italy, South Africa, Chile, Costa Rica)
Getting to TCU

- The MBA Office will try to make arrangement for airport pick-ups. Note:
  - Book flights arriving Dallas/Fort Worth Airport on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, or if during the week, later in the evening. Be prepared to arrange your own transportation if no students are available to pick you up. Useful link [http://www.supershuttle.com/Locations/DallasDFW](http://www.supershuttle.com/Locations/DallasDFW) or Uber/Lyft services

- Send your itinerary to: h.nguyen@tcu.edu and mbainfo@tcu.edu

- Check and recheck your documents before leaving the home country – I20 and Passport with F1 Visa is a must

- When in doubt about the data on I20 or Visa- contact TCU’s International Students Services ([www.wholewideworld.tcu.edu](http://www.wholewideworld.tcu.edu))
New Student Liaisons* & Current Students

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