Welcome to K!

PRE-ORIENTATION INFORMATION

FALL 2015
Greetings from the CIP!

The Center for International Programs (CIP) warmly welcomes you to Kalamazoo College (K). This year, we look forward to receiving about 60 new international students from over 20 countries. We hope these few reminders will be helpful as you prepare for your journey to K and the U.S. We eagerly anticipate meeting you at the International Student Orientation (ISO) which will be held on Friday, September 4 through Tuesday, September 8, 2015!

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION (ISO) IS REQUIRED FOR ALL NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

ISO was designed specifically to assist newly admitted international students in adjusting to K. The college faculty and staff make special arrangements to meet you, share important information and answer questions during your orientation. For this reason, you are required to attend ISO. Please read this summarized guide carefully, it will answer many questions as you prepare for orientation and your K experience.

START PREPARING NOW!
· Make your travel arrangements to Kalamazoo
· Visit the International Student section of the CIP website for updates. Find it at: https://reason.kzoo.edu/cip/intls/
· Join the Facebook page to meet other new students and your Welcome Team: https://www.facebook.com/groups/1481558108805883/

Contact Information for the CIP

Center for International Programs
1200 Academy Street
Kalamazoo MI 49006 USA
Phone: 269.337.7133
Fax: 269.337.7400
Monday—Friday 8:00am—5:00pm Eastern Daylight Time
Website: https://reason.kzoo.edu/cip/
Orientation Resources

**Your International Student Advisor**, [Alayna Lewis](mailto:alamayna@kzoo.edu) will be among the first people to greet you and will continue to be a primary resource for you throughout your time at K. The International Student Advisor coordinates your orientation program and assists you with personal, academic, and student visa-related matters. You have probably already heard from her via e-mail or telephone. Alayna’s office is located in the Center for International Programs (CIP) in Dewing Hall.

**Your International Program Assistant** and Post-Baccalaureate Fellow Jasmine An is a 2015 K graduate from Ann Arbor, Michigan. She will be available to help you adjust and find your way at Kalamazoo College. Her office is also in the CIP and she available to help you with any of the following: Visa questions, Optional Practical Training (OPT), Academic Training (AT), Federal & State taxes, anything else!

**Your International Student Peer Mentor**, Terence Xu, is a junior at K College, from China. Terence will work in the CIP all year as the International Student Peer Mentor and will be a great resource to you.

**Your Welcome Team** consist of 7 continuing students who will be with you throughout orientation. They will be a great resource for anything related to what it means to be an international student at K and the US. See their profiles at: [https://reason.kzoo.edu/cip/intls/](https://reason.kzoo.edu/cip/intls/)
Travel Plans

Travel Plans: Please plan to fly directly to the Kalamazoo Airport (airport code: AZO) Even though Chicago and Detroit appear to be nearby, both are about 3 hours away by car from Kalamazoo. Arrange to arrive in Kalamazoo on Thursday, September 3, 2015. This is when you can move in your dorm room. If you arrive before, you will have to find alternative lodging such as in a hotel until Thursday September 3, 2015. Please send your arrival information to isa@kzoo.edu by August 21, 2015 so that we can pick you up from the airport, train or bus station. Also indicate if you will be arriving with any family/friends.

Lodgings: For a list of nearby hotels go to: http://www.kzoo.edu/college/?p=location&s=lodging

Mailing Address: If you wish to send some of your belongings before you leave your home country, you may send them in care of yourself to your box number as follows:
   Your Name
   1200 Academy Street
   [Your box number] Hicks Center
   Kalamazoo, MI 49006-3291, USA

OR to the CIP as follows:
   Your Name
   Center for International Programs
   Kalamazoo College
   1200 Academy Street
   Kalamazoo, Michigan, 49006, USA
Preparing for Your Stay

**Finances:** We recommend that you carry some US cash in either traveler's checks or cash. Convert your country's currency into US dollars before you leave home, because it may not be easy to do the conversion after you arrive in Kalamazoo. With traveler’s checks, you will have access to that money by check, debit card or cash withdrawal upon arrival. Previous international students recommended arriving with US$500 –US$1,000. During orientation, one of the local banks will be on campus for you to open a bank account, if you choose to do. There are several other banks in downtown Kalamazoo.

**Healthcare and Insurance:** As an international student, you are required to have health insurance. You will automatically be enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan. Also, be sure to complete all the required immunizations. For more information, please visit: [https://reason.kzoo.edu/healthcenter/entrancemedical/](https://reason.kzoo.edu/healthcenter/entrancemedical/)

**Important Visa Information:** International students may experience delays at U.S Ports of Entry due to heightened security. As a result, many international students will go through secondary inspection. For this reason, you should expect to spend a couple more hours at your first point of entry in the U.S so plan your flight connection accordingly. More information on Visa regulations will be available during orientation.

**Communicating with family/friends:** Before you leave home, talk with your family about how you will stay in touch. International calling cards are easy to purchase in Kalamazoo/online, but most students use e-mail and Skype. Upon arrival in Kalamazoo, students are encouraged to contact loved ones quickly to notify them of their arrival. Please see a Welcome Team member to use the phone in the CIP.
Kalamazoo College (K)

**K College** is a four-year undergraduate liberal arts institution. Students are encouraged to take a number of courses across academic disciplines. It is common for students to take a course in Music, literature, and Physics in the same quarter. International students are often dismayed when they are required to take courses that they feel are unrelated to their fields of specialization. Your academic advisor will work out a program of study that meets your education goals and supports your passion. For details, please see the Academic Catalog at: [http://www.kzoo.edu/catalog/](http://www.kzoo.edu/catalog/)

**Academic Expectations:** Teaching methods at K may differ from those you are accustomed to. Regular class attendance, daily lesson preparation, class participation and frequent exams are the norm. All these are components of your final grade. Consult with your professor early in the quarter if you have any questions or problems. Professors are ready and willing to offer assistance.

**Policies:** Kalamazoo College is governed by policies which you are expected to know. Please take time to read these and ask any questions you may have regarding any of the policies. These policies include the Honor System, Academic, Student Life, Title IX (non-discrimination), etc., all found here [http://www.kzoo.edu/catalog/?id=769](http://www.kzoo.edu/catalog/?id=769). It is pertinent that you familiarize yourself with the Sexual Harassment policy as well.

**Student Organizations:** With more than 60 Student Organizations (StuOrgs) on campus, there are numerous opportunities to get involved. Among these StuOrgs, a number of them have international students form the core. These include the International Student Organization, Kalama-Africa, Asian and Pacific Islander Student Association, Caribbean Society, Latino Student Organization, K Desi. A complete list of the other StuOrgs is found here: [http://reason.kzoo.edu/studentactivities/stuorgs/list/](http://reason.kzoo.edu/studentactivities/stuorgs/list/)
Residence Hall System: There are six residence halls each of which houses about 100-200 students. Halls are locked 24-hours a day and 24-hour security is provided by the college. You will likely live in a double room with a roommate or in a suite with 5 or 6 suitemates being matched on the basis of personal and study habits. You should communicate openly and try to resolve any disagreements that may arise between you and your roommate, but if a situation is unbearable feel free to talk to your RA or the International Student Adviser at the CIP. More information regarding campus housing will be provided during orientation and/or in the quarterly newsletter. Also, visit the residential life website at: https://reason.kzoo.edu/reslife/

Meals: During the quarter and exams, you will take your meals in the campus dining center along with other students, faculty and staff members of the college. You will receive a picture ID that will also serve as your meal card. Meals are served three times each day and most meal plans include munch money which can be used in the Richardson Room Deli, Papa Johns Pizza and at the Book Club in the library. Most Meals are US-American in style and preparation. The Director of Dining Services will help you resolve any challenges you might encounter with your nutritional needs. Also, feel free to bring recipes from home to share with the Director. Here is the link to the dining services: https://reason.kzoo.edu/dining/

Bills: You will receive a bill in your mailbox at the start of each quarter. It will show your charges for tuition, room, board, and other fees or fines for which you are responsible. Please pay these bills on time. Direct any questions to Patrick.Farmer@kzoo.edu in the business office. For other issues related to student accounts, please see https://reason.kzoo.edu/studentaccts/
Life in Kalamazoo

Kalamazoo is a city in South West Michigan, about three hours east of Chicago, Illinois and three hours west of Detroit, Michigan. The city has a population of about 75,000, with a downtown business district which offers shopping, banking, restaurants, postal services, and many more services. For details, please see Welcome to Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA at https://reason.kzoo.edu/cip/intls/

WEATHER AND CLOTHING NEEDS

- **Fall (September - November):** When you arrive, it will be still warm during the day, but evenings will be cool. As the days begin to turn cool, you will need sweaters, rain coat, and waterproof shoes such as rain boots.
- **Winter (November - March):** Snow and cold temperatures are characteristic of MI winters. You will need boots, warm socks, hats, gloves, scarves, heavy sweaters and jackets. These can be purchased after you arrive in Kalamazoo.
- **Spring (March - June):** Warm and cools evenings, often rainy. You will likely be able to wear your clothes from the fall during early spring.
- **Summer (June - September):** MI summers are usually sunny, hot and humid. Sunscreen and sunglasses come in handy.

Average temperatures in Kalamazoo, MI (degree Celsius)

Tornadoes: Tornadoes in Kalamazoo typically occur between April and July, although they can occur at anytime and in almost any month of the year. When you hear a tornado warning, go the nearest shelter, usually basement, avoid areas with glass and wide roofs.
Life in Kalamazoo

TRAVEL RESOURCES

**Taxi:** Some common taxi services in Kalamazoo include:
- Kalamazoo Taxi, Airport Shuttle (269.377.5448)
- Yellow Cab/Checker Cab (269.349.9300)
- Taxi of Kalamazoo (269.978.7226)
- Bronco Express (269.343.3000)
- Big Daddy Taxi (269.492.9444)
- Taxi Guy (269.355.4808)

**Bus:**
- Metro transit provides fixed route public transit service consisting of various routes within Kalamazoo. Check [www.kmetro.com](http://www.kmetro.com) for routes and schedules. These are also available at the Union Desk in Hicks Center.
- Indian Trails also provides services from Kalamazoo to other cities. See [http://www.indiantrails.com/](http://www.indiantrails.com/)

**Train:**
- Amtrak train offers daily trains from Kalamazoo to other cities as well. Details at [http://www.amtrak.com/home](http://www.amtrak.com/home)

**Airfare:**
- [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)
- [www.cheapflights.com](http://www.cheapflights.com)
- [www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com)
- [www.orbitz.com](http://www.orbitz.com)
Life in Kalamazoo

CELL PHONES
You will need to purchase a phone or if you have an unlocked phone, then you will need a U.S Simcard. There are numerous phone companies in the U.S. The common ones in Kalamazoo include: AT&T, T-Mobile, Sprint, Verizon, VirginMobile, MetroPCS

Regarding cell phone plans, current and past international student have provided the following general recommendation:

- Buy an unlocked phone so that you can use it even when you go home
- Unlimited text & calling plans are good because you will not run out of minutes in your billing cycle
- Join with 3 - 5 friends to get a family plan, it is cheaper
- Get a prepaid plan so that you are not tied down to a contract

TIME
Kalamazoo is in the Eastern Time zone of the United States. Michigan practices Daylight Saving Time, which means that clocks are set ahead one hour in March and are set back one hour in November to give more daylight hours for normal daytime activities. K International, the quarterly newsletter, will announce when these changes will take place.

PERTINENT MICHIGAN LAWS
You are accountable for Michigan and U.S Laws during your stay in the U.S. Please see the International Student Handbook/Guide on the Center for International Programs website for information on Laws surrounding alcohol, drugs, traffic and driving, smoking, among others. Here is the link https://reason.kzoo.edu/cip/intls/
U.S Culture

LIVING IN THE U.S SOCIETY

It is difficult to provide an accurate “guide” to social relations and customs in the US due to various situations that require different responses, as with any country. Typically, US Americans are encouraged to be involved in their community, to express their personal opinions and to question the system. They also place much emphasis on individuality and personal identity, resulting in a high degree of informality in appearance, interpersonal relationships and methods of communication.

Use of Names: First names are readily used with peers and people are generally informal about their title and status. It is best to use their titles “Professor, Dr., Mr., or Ms.” unless they tell you otherwise. Often people will tell you what they would like to be called when you first meet or simply ask them how they would like to be addressed.

Introductions: A brief handshake is commonly used upon introduction. Hugging or kissing occurs only between people who are very familiar with each other.

Making friends: Many US Americans readily welcome new people into their social groups. Initially, you will probably be greeted with considerable warmth, but will find that this does not always continue. US Americans have many interests and engage in a variety of activities so the warmth expressed in one meeting, while genuine and sincere, may be confined to that occasion. US Americans also tend to "compartmentalize" their friendships, having their "friends at work," "friends at school," "a tennis friend," etc. Close friendships are the result of repeated interactions between individuals as they identify similarities in point of view and share a variety of experiences.
**U.S Culture**

**Time:** Life in the U.S may at first seem rushed to you. US Americans are usually time-conscious and being on time is very important in both academic and social settings.

**Social Etiquette:** You may receive invitations in person, by telephone, or by mail. A casual verbal invitation such as "come and see me sometime" is usually given with the understanding that you will call and make more specific plans before coming over. It is considered impolite and extremely inconsiderate to fail to keep an appointment or "date" without giving prior notice to the other person. US Americans are more offended by the guest who accepts an invitation and then fails to appear than by a person who refuses an invitation.

**Family Customs:** A typical US "family" may be composed of a mother, father and children; a single parent with children; two or more professional persons who live together; a husband and wife with no children at home or no children at all; or an adult who lives alone and has close friends who share special activities. Household responsibilities are often shared among family members, including children. The opinions of children are often asked for and accepted. If the family has a pet it may be introduced to you as if it were a member of the family. US Americans love their pets and may treat them more like people than animals.

**Religion:** The major religious tradition in the U.S is Christian, but there is no official religion or established church that is supported by the government. US Americans will generally not raise the subject of religion with people they do not know well, lest they offend or create an argument with someone who has different views. Your religious practices and observances may differ significantly from those of many U.S. American students who may be unfamiliar with them. The College Chaplain, Reverend Elizabeth Candido, is available to provide any needed help.
Cultural Adjustment

Culture shock is the impact you may feel when you enter a culture that is unfamiliar to you. Not everyone is affected by culture shock in the same way, at the same time, or to the same degree. A typical situation would involve noticing the many things that are not available here; things that you feel you cannot live without. These may include your favorite food, books in your language, sport, etc. Homesickness begins to develop when you start missing your family and friends, made worse when you don’t find the support usually offered by them. Eventually, you begin to feel that you are alone, you don’t know anyone here.

The W Curve below describes the various stages of culture shock and adjustment.

![Cultural Adjustment Curve](image)

**Coping with Culture Shock**

- Get plenty of rest in order to deal with the stress and fatigue that you may experience.
- Make an effort to be optimistic, but not to the point of avoiding negatives that should be expressed. You don’t have to accept/like everything.
- Try not to compare and search out "things like home." Enjoy the differences and seize the opportunity to teach others about your culture.
- Always keep an open mind and a sense of humor. Remember to give yourself time to get over it, it helps to remember that culture shock is not permanent. This will help reduce the emotional impact.
- Talk over concerns with the International Student Advisor, the Post Baccalaureate Fellow, or the Peer Mentor.
If you are in the United States with either an F-1 or J-1 student visa, it is your responsibility to maintain your legal visa status. You must meet certain obligations as follows in part:

- Maintain a valid passport
- Be on campus when each quarter begins
- Attend the College you are authorized to attend (Kalamazoo College).
- Engage in activities only permitted under the program and category
- Carry a full course of study (minimum of 2.4 courses/quarter)
- Limit employment to a total of 20 hours per week while school is in session and 40 hours per week during school breaks or holidays.
- Work ON CAMPUS ONLY! International students are not permitted to work off-campus without authorization
- Report a change of address to the Center for International Programs within 10 days of the change. (This includes changes in dorm rooms.)
- Maintain required health insurance coverage.

If you do not meet these obligations, you are in violation of your F or J status and are subject to deportation by the Department of Homeland Security and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement. [22 Code of Federal Regulations 514]
Federal and State Income Taxes
As a student under the F and J programs, you are required to submit U.S. federal and state (if applicable) income tax forms for the tax years (or any portion) in which you participate, regardless of whether you earned any income through wages or scholarship. In the winter quarter, you will receive a packet of documents from the Business Office and the Center for International Programs with information about this process. The Center for International Programs also sponsors tax advisory meetings prior to the filing deadline of April 15 and will contact you through campus mail or email to indicate the dates and times of these meetings. In order to file taxes, you must apply for and receive a Social Security Number (SSN). Please see below for more information.

Social Security Number
As an F-1 or J-1 student visa holder, you are eligible to apply for a Social Security Number through the Social Security Administration of the United States. Information about applying for this number will be available during your campus orientation program. If you are a citizen of the United States who has returned to the U.S. for college and do not have a Social Security Number, please speak with the International Student Adviser, during your orientation program. Please visit the section on the CIP website with this information: https://reason.kzoo.edu/cip/intls/moneymatters/#SSN

Michigan Driver’s License or Identification Card
As an F-1 or J-1 student, you are eligible to apply for a Michigan Driver’s License or Identification Card. You can do so by visiting the Secretary of State office. It is located along Stadium Drive. Please see their website for more information and the documents required. http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1627---,00.html
Emergency Information

Police/Medical Emergency (Life-threatening) 911
Urgent Issues (Campus Security) 269-337-7321
Alayna Lewis, International Student Advisor 269-760-9129 (mobile – call/text)
Dr. Brockington, Associate Provost for International Programs 269-267-2599 (mobile – call/text)
Dr. Wiedenhoeft, Associate Director, CIP 269-267-5800 (mobile – call/text)
Mental Health Emergency (Counseling Center) 269-337-7190

After Student Health Center Hours
* Bronson Family Medicine 269-341-8282
* Sindecuse Health Center 269-387-3290
* Bronson Hospital Trauma/Emergency 269-341-6386
* Borgess Hospital Emergency/Trauma Center 269-226-4815

Sexual Assault Resources
On Campus
* Counseling Center 269-548-6907 (24 hours)
* The Chaplain (Rev. Liz Candido) 269- 337-7362

Off Campus
* YWCA 269-345-3036 (24 hours)
* Gryphon Place 269-381-4357 (24 hours)
Suggested Packing List

Items you should consider bringing from home…

1. A couple of favorite snacks and recipes
2. Movies (note: the video system in the US is NTSC, but students can reserve a classroom with a universal DVD player and TV), music and books in your native language
3. Souvenirs from home (clothing, sculptures/carvings paintings/pictures/posters, etc. (For any wall posters, use poster putty or removable adhesive – no duct tape or nails)
4. Prescription medication
5. Travel adapter/converter plug – The U.S has a different voltage and wall sockets/plugs*
6. Unlocked cell phone – so that you can get a U.S simcard
7. Bed sheets for the first few days (A blanket and pillow will be provided)
8. Bring your own supply of common personal products such as bathing soap, body lotion, etc. It might take you a while to find a local store that sells these.
9. Formal Clothing

* The electricity supply in the US and the shape of electricity outlets may be different than in your home country. Electricity supply is 120 volts, 60 Hz. If your appliances do not match the electricity supply or outlet shape, consider bringing an adapter or purchasing your electronics in the United States. Here is how US electric outlets look like:

http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets/ab/
Suggested Packing List

We recommend you get most of these suggested items after you arrive in Kalamazoo. You will have a chance to go shopping during orientation. This will save you extra baggage and shipping costs.

1. Bed linens, comforter (beds are extra long in size)
2. Bath towels, hand towels, wash cloths, bath robe
3. Flip flops/shower shoes
4. Shower Caddy - Something to carry toiletries to and from the bathroom (most new students are assigned spaces with community bathrooms)
5. Toiletries/hair dryer
6. Laundry bag/bin/basket, laundry detergent labeled ‘HE’*
7. Medications/first aid kit. Student Health Center lists specific recommendations found here.
8. Seasonal clothes (you will need a hat, mittens, boots and a warm coat in the winter, and umbrella and rain boots for fall and spring)
9. Hooks with removable adhesive/over the closet hanger/ other space savers for storage
10. Laptop (24 hour computer labs with printers are available on campus)
11. Power strip to plug in multiple electronics (maximum rating of 15 amps and must offer surge suppression and circuit protection). Available at the Bookstore.
12. Storage bins, Stationary, Alarm clock, Flashlight
13. Area rug (Discuss with Roommate)
14. Mini-Refrigerator (Discuss with Roommate)
15. Microwave (Discuss with Roommate)

*Laundry rooms are equipped with high efficiency, large capacity front load washers and dryers. For best results it is recommended that students use high efficiency laundry detergent (marked with the 'he' symbol on the container). See https://reason.kzoo.edu/reslife/policies/laundry/
Common Acronyms

K Kalamazoo College

CIP Center for International Programs

VI Visiting International (Students here for one year)

DS Degree-Seekers (Students here for four years)

TA Teaching Assistant

RA Resident Assistant

SRA Senior Resident Assistant