Welcome to University Housing & Dining at The University of Iowa!

Live on: Living On-Campus for International Students

Welcome to University Housing & Dining (UH&D) at The University of Iowa! We are excited that you have decided to live on-campus in a residence hall. You will have an excellent opportunity for cross-cultural learning and building personal relationships with U.S. students and students from other countries.

This resource is designed to assist you with learning the 10 Essentials You Should Know About Living In The Residence Halls.

1. Moving Into the Residence Halls
   - Living in a Community
2. Your Resident Assistant (RA) is an Excellent Resource
   - Getting Involved in the Residence Halls
3. Getting to Know The Helpful Residence Hall Staff
   - Living with Roommate(s)
4. Understanding Residence Hall Policies
   - Eating at the Market Place
5. Living in and Learning About U.S. Culture
   - Learning to Transition
After you have completed the residence hall housing sign-up process, you will be assigned to move into one of the 12 residence halls at The University of Iowa. You should receive your assignment email based on when you applied - earlier applicants will receive notice by late May 2013 and later applicants in mid-summer with information about the residence hall and room you have been assigned and who will be your roommate(s).

You can move into your residence hall room starting at 12 pm on Saturday, August 17, 2013. You should go to your residence hall. You will be greeted by staff explaining the check-in process. You will complete the necessary paperwork and then can move your belongings into your room. Your first few days on campus will be busy and exhausting, spent adjusting to a new time zone, unpacking, setting up your room, and attending International Student Orientation.

Residence Halls
You may want to learn more about the residence hall you have been assigned. Visit the UH&D website for specific information about each residence hall. http://housing.uiowa.edu/departments/reslife/residencehalls.htm

Pre-Arrival Checklist
Read and complete the iHawk Pre-Arrival Checklist for all new international students arriving at The University of Iowa. http://international.uiowa.edu/international-students/mandatory-online-pre-arrival-checklist

Orientation
ISSS International Student Orientation program is designed to answer questions you may have and to give you information that will help you be successful in meeting your academic and personal goals. Attendance is expected at all scheduled sessions, and you will want to work out any conflicts with other activities. http://international.uiowa.edu/international-students/orientation-overview

“ar benefit of early international student move-in is getting to know your floor, RA, and residence hall before it gets busy with everyone else moving in.”

- Edoardo (Italy)
Buses
You will be provided a bus schedule when you check-in at your residence hall.

Shopping Trip
UH&D and ARH will be sponsoring a shopping trip and welcome program for international students when you arrive in August. Free buses will provide transportation for international students to the Coral Ridge Mall, which features many retail stores and a general merchandise and grocery store. You will be able to purchase all the necessary items you will need for your residence hall room. Additional information about the shopping trip and welcome program will be provided when you check-in to your residence hall.

What to Bring/Buy for Your Room
You should plan to bring or buy the essentials for your room or suite but remember you will be likely sharing the space and you will need to pack and move everything out at the end of the academic year. You will want to contact your roommate(s) to determine what kinds of shared items to bring.

Essentials
- Clothing - You will want to bring clothes for both hot and cold weather. The average high temperature in August in Iowa City is 85°F (29°C), and the average low temperature in January is 15°F (-9°C).
- Academic supplies (backpack, pens, notebooks, etc.)
- Alarm clock
- Bathrobe, shower sandals, and a small bucket for carrying toiletries
- Bed Linens - blankets, pillows, and sheets (all beds require extra-long sheets, 36” inches x 80” inches)
  Building 3 @ Hawk’s Ridge requires full sheets
- Cleaning supplies
- Clothes hangers
- Cable TV cord (if bringing a TV)
- Fan (if living in a non-air-conditioned room)
- Flashlight
- Laundry basket/bag, detergent, and supplies
- Towels, washcloths, and toiletry items

Useful - Not Essential
- Computer/Tablet
- All residence halls have wireless internet but you may prefer an Ethernet cord (at least 14 feet) for wired internet access to have a better connection.
- Refrigerator (not to exceed 5 cubic feet and 9 amps - no personal refrigerators needed in Building 3 @ Hawks Ridge, Mayflower, Centerstone, or Parklawn).
- Small appliances (no appliances with open heating elements)
- Desk lamp

Residence Halls Close Dates
The residence halls will close at 5 pm on Saturday, May 18, 2013.

Temporary Housing
You may arrive in Iowa City before the residence halls open at 12 pm on Saturday, August 11, 2012 January, 12, 2013, and you will need to find temporary housing. You will want to research a local hotel accommodation and make a reservation in advance to accommodate you until the residence halls open.

http://www.uiowa.edu/admissions/undergrad/housing/intl-temp.html

“I tried to move in 3 days early and thought I’d be able to but the residence halls weren’t open yet so I had to find a hotel. Make sure you know when you can move in, don’t just assume they will let you move in early because the halls might not be open.”

-Quian (China)
You will be living in a community environment, meaning you will be sharing space with many other students living in the residence halls. The residence halls are co-ed, housing both men and women on typically alternating floors or wings, and designed to develop a community with shared hallways, bathrooms, and study lounges. Each community has about 40-50 students living together with a Resident Assistant.

You will have an excellent opportunity to meet and get to know students from a variety of different backgrounds. You should take advantage of this opportunity and introduce yourself and start developing friendship with other students.

"Get to know different people, not just people like you, and live in the residence halls for at least the first year. It makes it easier to meet people and it’s a lot of fun." - Zidan (China)

Front Desks:
Each residence hall (except Building 3 @ Hawks Ridge and Centerstone) has a centrally located front desk. Front desks operate 7 days a week with varying hours depending on the residence hall, and provide important services to the students living in the halls.

You will need to go to the front desk to:

- Pick up a package
- Checkout a spare key or prox card (you may misplace your room key for your room and/or access card that provides access to exterior and interior doors in your residence hall)
- Submit a work order to reconfigure your bed or fix a maintenance issue in your room (work orders are documentation notifying staff of issues or concerns needing to be fixed in your room)
- Check out a hall association movie or board game (hall associations are student governments in the residence halls which provide services such as movies and board games to members)
- Complete a guest pass for a visiting overnight guest
- Ask a question about the residence halls or The University of Iowa

ITC Computer Labs:
Currier, Mayflower, and Hillcrest Hall have Instructional Technology Centers (ITCs), which are 24-hour computer labs. The ITCs are open to all students accessible by card access and include both Windows and Mac OSX computers with print stations. Centrally-located public print stations are located in Slater, Rienow, Quadrangle, Parklawn, Burge, and Daum Hall that you can use to print documents from your personal computer.
Fitness Centers:
Currier, Mayflower, and Hillcrest Hall have Fitness Centers, which operate 24-hours/day with card access to only students living in the residence halls. The Fitness Centers include aerobic and weight lifting equipment.

Study Lounges:
Study Lounges are located in most the residence halls and provide an opportunity for students to study 24-hours/day in a quieter environment.

Living-Learning Communities:
Living-Learning Communities (LLCs) are an excellent opportunity to expand your academics outside the classroom by living with a group of students with similar interests. You may want to consider living in the Global Village LLC, which is specifically designed for international and domestic students interested in living with other students around the globe. You need to preference on your housing application to live in the Global Village LLC. The LLC offers a one semester hour course in the fall semester, Cool Places and Hot Spots, about world cultures, customs, arts, and traditions. Living in Global Village LLC will provide you with an opportunity to develop study groups, attend cultural programs related to the LLC, and interact with faculty members outside the classroom.

"Initially I thought living in the West Neighborhood was so far from campus but now I don’t have a problem with it at all. The buses are great and it’s really nice to walk home or to classes. I feel like I’m “traveling” somewhere when I go for walks, which reminds me of home.”

- Lynda (Kenya)
Resident Assistants (RAs) are student staff members, employed by University Housing & Dining, who assist students in their acclimation to the residence halls and the University. RAs provide information about activities, events, policies, and assist students with roommate conflicts, homesickness, and academic concerns. Each RA also plans social programs for the students living on their floor, and will work to develop individual relationships with each student. A Resident Assistant is assigned to each floor in the residence halls.

Your Resident Assistant is an excellent resource in the residence halls to go to if you have questions or concerns. Your RA has received training on responding to questions and concerns, and can assist with most any issue you may be having. In most cases, your RA can help explore your concerns and refer you to the proper campus resource to help you resolve your problem or concern. RAs are here to help!

Resident Assistants rotate being scheduled to be on-duty on nights and weekends, which consists of being available to assist students and conducting walk-through rounds of the residence halls. You can contact your front desk if you need the assistance of an RA.

Ways Your RA Can Help

- My roommate and I don’t get along.
- Where is Macbride Hall?
- What’s for dinner at the Market Place?
- Where do I go to pay my U-bill?
- I’m concerned about my chemistry class.
- How can I get involved in the residence halls?
- I want to live somewhere else. How do I switch residence halls?
- I was documented for a residence hall policy violation; what will happen when I speak to the Hall Coordinator?

“My RA has given me great advice, if you have any questions or just want to talk, go to your RA. It is okay to feel disconnected when you get here but make sure you find people (the right people) like your RA and the residents in your community to talk to, open up, and share your feelings.

-Jienian (China)
Living with a Roommate(s)

You will likely be sharing a room in the residence halls with a roommate(s). Your roommate(s) may be another international student from your country or a different country or a U.S. student. You will have an incredible opportunity to learn about other individuals and their backgrounds by sharing a room.

Contact Your Roommate Before Move-In

A housing assignment email will be sent out in June, and the email will include information about the residence hall and room you have been assigned and who will be your roommate(s). Once you receive your housing assignment email, call or send an email to your roommate(s). This will give you an opportunity to start to get to know each other before you live together. It is very important to remember not to judge your roommate(s) based on your first contact with them or their Facebook profile. It is recommended you discuss with each other what each of you plans to bring or buy for the room. This will ensure that your room doesn’t have duplicate items that could easily be shared.

“My roommate is a blessing; she is American, and she has always helped me with things. She’s really great.”

-Lynda (Kenya)

Speak TO - Not ABOUT - Each Other

If a problem or issue does arise, it is very important that you and your roommate(s) speak openly and honestly about it. It is common in the U.S. to have a discussion-based approach to conflict, which may be different from your culture and will require you to speak directly with your roommate(s) about the problem. It is important not to talk poorly about your roommate to others. It is recommended that you make an effort to consider your roommate’s point of view. You should talk to your RA if you do not feel comfortable speaking directly to your roommate(s), and they can help mediate the situation.

Stay Calm

It is very natural to feel a little nervous. Remember to be patient with each other. Any anxiety should go away as you and your roommate(s) get to know each other better. This may be the first time either you or your roommate(s) have ever shared a room.

Have Realistic Expectations

It is not common for roommates to become best friends. You should take advantage of this opportunity and develop friendships with other students while building a good relationship with your roommate. It is important that you and your roommate(s) are respectful of each other and feel comfortable living together.
Roommate(s) (Cont.)

Learn From One Another

Having a roommate is a great learning experience. You will likely be living with someone whose appearance, tastes, ideas, childhood, family, culture, religion, and values are different from your own. This is your opportunity to see the world from a new perspective.

You will have a valuable learning experience if you are living with a U.S. student. The relationships that develop between U.S. students and international students sharing a room tend to foster a new appreciation for how others live and view the world, and can contribute to achieving one of the principal values of cross-cultural experience: cultural self-awareness. Because we learn so many of our basic assumptions, values, and behavior patterns at an early age, we rarely think about them as we conduct our daily lives. We tend to assume that most of our behavior and beliefs are “natural” – that is, universally experienced. Cultural self-awareness allows us to see that our way of doing things is but one of many different, equally "natural” ways. The ability to accept those differences helps in building relationships with people from other cultures. [Source: NAFSA: Association of International Educators]

Roommate Agreement Process

During one of the first few weeks of classes your Resident Assistant (RA) will be giving you and your roommate(s) a Roommate Survey. You will need to individually complete the Roommate Survey by answering the questions about your preferences for an ideal living environment - noise, cleanliness, studying, guests, etc. It is very important to think about your preferences and be open and honest to avoid conflict. You will next schedule a time to meet with your roommate(s) and RA to complete a Roommate Agreement. The Roommate Agreement is a shared agreement that will help you and your roommate to better understand each other, set rules, and avoid misunderstandings and conflicts. The Roommate Agreement will help you establish the foundation for a successful relationship.

Resolving Issues

Conflicts and misunderstandings may occur between roommates. You will need to work together to resolve any conflicts or misunderstandings. It is common in the U.S. to have a discussion-based approach to conflict, which may be different from your culture and will require you to speak directly with your roommate(s) about the problem. If roommates cannot reach a mutually satisfactory resolution to a disagreement after talking to each other, your Resident Assistant (RA) is trained and ready to assist. Your RA can pull out your Roommate Agreement and help you and your roommate(s) work through any issues to make your living environment better.

"The residence hall environment makes it very easy to make friends and meet new people. You meet many people with all different majors so it's very interesting to hear what people are educated in.”

- Jienian (China)
You will want to get to know the Residence Hall Staff responsible for helping maintain a community environment in the residence halls that is clean and safe for all residents.

Hall Coordinator

Each residence hall has a Hall Coordinator, a full-time professional with a master's degree, living and working in the residence hall. Hall Coordinators manage the day-to-day operations of the residence hall desk, advise the hall association, supervise RAs, and oversee all programming and counseling. A few residence halls also have an Assistant Hall Coordinator, a graduate student, who assists with running the residence hall.

Hall Coordinators are interested in helping you have a positive living experience in the residence hall, and they are available to answer questions and assist with any issues or concerns. A Hall Coordinator is on-call 24-hours a day in each residence hall neighborhood and available to respond to crisis and emergency situations.

Custodian

A custodian is assigned to each residence hall floor with the responsibility of cleaning the common spaces (bathroom, hallway, and study lounges), removing trash and recycling, and completing work orders to reconfigure beds and change lights. Custodians work hard to maintain a clean and safe environment for all students living in the residence hall.

Custodians work 7 days a week between 7:30 am - 4 pm. Please help the custodians maintain a clean environment by not creating messes and staying out of the bathroom during the posted cleaning times.

“Towan people are really friendly and are very willing to help you. I come from a big city where people do not have the time to help, and they don’t care to help so it was really nice to come here and find such great people.”

-Zidan (China)

Maintenance

Each residence hall has maintenance staff responsible for all residence hall repairs and maintenance. The maintenance staff works Monday - Friday 8 am - 4:30 pm, and one maintenance person is on-call 24 hours a day for emergency maintenance issues.

Maintenance staff will fix maintenance issues in residence hall rooms that have been submitted as work orders by students.
You will need to know and understand the residence hall policies, which are designed to promote a community environment conducive to academics and involvement. Resident Assistants (RAs) are trained to enforce residence hall policies and confront and document any policy violations. Residents in violation of residence hall policies will need to meet with the Hall Coordinator to discuss the incident and may receive a sanction for being in violation.

The student guidebook issued to you when you checkin to the residence halls has a detailed list of the policies. The most common policies are listed below.

**Alcohol and Drugs:** The University of Iowa residence halls are substance free. Alcohol, illegal drugs, and empty containers that previously held alcohol are not allowed. The legal age for alcohol consumption in the U.S. is 21 years old. Residents may have tobacco products in their possession in the residence halls. However, they may not use those products inside the residence halls.

**Bed Configurations:** Residents may not reconfigure or dismantle their bed furniture. If a resident would like to change the configuration of the bed furniture they must do so by filling out a work order at their residence hall desk. EVERY resident in the room needs to sign the work order.

**Candles:** Residents are not allowed to have candles, incense, or any type of open flame decoration.

**Cooking Appliances:** Residents are not allowed to have any cooking appliances with an exposed heating element, which use cooking greases, or have an open flame. Toaster ovens are not allowed except in rooms with a kitchen.

**Explosives and Combustibles:** The possession, use or distribution of any type of fireworks, ammunition/gun powder, fuses, or any explosives/combustibles of any kind is prohibited in or around the University of Iowa residence halls.

**Fire Alarms:** Any persons found not leaving the building during an alarm may face immediate disciplinary charges.

**Furniture:** Any public area furniture found in a resident’s room will be removed by residence hall staff at the resident’s expense and the residents may also be subject to disciplinary action.

**Guests:** Residents are responsible for the behavior of all their guests and may be held accountable for their policy violations. All guests staying overnight must be registered at the desk and approved by all roommates.

**Hall Sports:** You may not use rollerblades, rollerskates, or skateboards in the residence halls. Also, frisbees, footballs, etc, may not be thrown in the buildings.

“My RA helped lead a discussion with all the residents in my community to create ground rules for living together.”

-Kumar (Nepal)
Hall Policies (Cont.)

**Noise:** Quiet Hours campus-wide begin at 11:00 pm Sunday – Thursday and 1:00 am Friday and Saturday. Courtesy Hours are in effect 24 hours a day to ensure an environment conducive to academics.

**Pets:** The only pets allowed in the residence halls are fish.

**Refrigerators:** Students may bring their own refrigerators that are no larger than four-cubic-feet capacity. Only one refrigerator is allowed per room. If University Housing & Dining has provided a room/suite with a refrigerator they are not allowed to have another.

**Room Decoration:** Students are not permitted to paint their room. Nothing should be attached or suspended to the ceilings.

**Solicitation:** No resident is to use their room for any commercial purpose. Students may not conduct a commercial business via residence hall computer data ports. The solicitation policy includes regulations on bulletin boards, physical distribution of materials, distribution centers, tables at dining entrances, table tents, and mailboxes.

**Webcams:** The use of a webcam in the halls to capture the images of an individual other than the camera owner without the individual’s consent is strictly prohibited.

**Window Screens:** Screens are not to be unhooked or removed from windows for any reason. A fee will be assessed for re-hanging screens as well as additional fees if the screen is damaged.

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Getting Involved in the Residence Halls

You will be provided many opportunities to be involved in the residence halls including academic support, student leadership and social programs. Take advantage of these opportunities to meet others and become involved by attending programs, serving on a Hall Association Executive Team, and asking for help from a tutor. Ask your RA or Hall Coordinator about opportunities to get involved in the residence halls.

**Residence Hall Tutoring:**

University Housing & Dining offers free, walk-in tutoring between the hours of 8 - 10 pm Sunday - Thursday for the following subjects: rhetoric/writing, chemistry, biological sciences, and mathematics.

The tutoring schedule with specific locations, subjects, times, and dates can be found at: [http://housing.uiowa.edu/departments/reslife/academics_initiatives.html](http://housing.uiowa.edu/departments/reslife/academics_initiatives.html)

"The residence halls are very nice, convenient, and have a lot of fun events to keep you interested and lets you meet a lot of new people. I like to go to the hall events, there’s free food and fun things to do; I went to a super bowl party, a big dance party, and other fun events"  -Quian (China)
Getting Involved (Cont.)

Additional Tutoring Services at The University of Iowa:

SWAT - Study, Workshops, & Tutoring: [http://fye.uiowa.edu/SWAT](http://fye.uiowa.edu/SWAT)
Astronomy and Physics: [www.physics.uiowa.edu/atutorial.html](http://www.physics.uiowa.edu/atutorial.html)
Engineering Tutorial Services: [www.engineering.uiowa.edu/tutorial](http://www.engineering.uiowa.edu/tutorial)
History Writing Center: [http://clas.uiowa.edu/history/teaching-and-writing-center](http://clas.uiowa.edu/history/teaching-and-writing-center)
Language Media Center: [http://clas.uiowa.edu/dwlc/lmc/](http://clas.uiowa.edu/dwlc/lmc/)
Mathematics Tutorial Center: [www.math.uiowa.edu/MathTutorialLab/index.html](http://www.math.uiowa.edu/MathTutorialLab/index.html)
New Dimensions in Learning: [http://trio.uiowa.edu](http://trio.uiowa.edu)
Speaking Center: [http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/for-students/speaking-center](http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/for-students/speaking-center)
Writing Center: [www.uiowa.edu/~writingc/tutoring/online.shtml](http://www.uiowa.edu/~writingc/tutoring/online.shtml)

Associated Residence Halls (ARH)/ National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH):

Associated Residence Halls (ARH) is a student government body that provides a student voice in residence halls through University policy concerning their environment, programmatic initiatives, and enables students to further develop through educational, social, and recreational interaction. The National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) is an honorary organization recognizing the top 1% of student leaders based on four pillars: leadership, scholastic, service, and recognition.

“There is a lot of freedom to do whatever you want. You can participate in activities, stay in and study, or go out and meet people. You have that choice but I would suggest you go out and get engaged. If you do stay in your room, keep your door open and allow people to come to you. You will absorb way more knowledge from meeting other people than any other way.”

-Yifan (China)

Late Hour:

Late Hour is a student staff programming team coordinating late night activities on Friday and Saturday nights in the residence halls. These activities range from hypnotists, arts and crafts, board game nights, and dances.

Night Games:

Night Games is a free late night event open to the public with a variety of recreational activities including: rock climbing, swimming, basketball, badminton, dodge ball, volleyball, racquetball, and special events. Free food is available. Night Games is held approximately once per month during the academic year and sponsored by University Housing & Dining, Recreational Services, and Health Iowa.
You will want to be familiar with the conveniently located on-campus dining facilities to stay well-nourished and socialize with others.

Burge Market Place and Hillcrest Market Place:
University Dining operates two dining facilities located in Burge and Hillcrest Halls, providing delicious and nutritious meals to students living in all twelve residence halls. Walk into one of the Market Places and you'll notice a lively, welcoming atmosphere where students come not only to eat, but to socialize and relax. The Market Place concept invites students to roam through the many food stations, choosing from an abundant assortment of foods. Every day features a wide variety of wholesome, healthy and tasty foods available on an "all you care to eat basis."

Using Your Meal Plan:
Residents with meal plans may use their meal swipes at Burge and Hillcrest Market Places, as well as four designated Campus Cafes. Pat's Diner (PBB), Food for Thought (Main Library), the Mayflower C-Store and The River Room (IMU) accept meal swipes for "portable" meals. At the Market Places, meals are served on an all-you-care-to-eat-basis, but no food can leave the dining area. Portable meals consist of a choice of entrée, two sides, and a drink and may be taken from the premises.

Convenience Stores (C-Stores):
Convenience Stores (C-Stores) are located in Hillcrest, Mayflower, and Burge Hall. The hours of operations for the C-Stores are 9 am - 11 pm Monday - Friday and 11 am - 12 am Saturday-Sunday. The C-Stores offer an opportunity for students to purchase snack food, beverages, personal items, grocery food, and frozen food. Hillcrest and Burge Hall C-Stores offer hot food options.

"The C-Store is super convenient, the study spaces are nice, the ITC is great, and the work out facility is amazing - there is everything you need right in your residence hall."

-Jienian (China)

Hours of Operation:  http://housing.uiowa.edu/departments/residentialdining/dininghours.htm
Food Menus:  http://www.housing.uiowa.edu/departments/residentialdining/menus/index.html
Nutritional Information:  https://menus.martinsmart.com/ui/
Market Place (Cont.)

Vegetarians/Vegans

A variety of meal options are available in the Burge and Hillcrest Market Places. Vegan and Vegetarian options are available at each meal and marked as such. If you have questions about the options available please contact either Market Place office.

Special Diets

Contact the Burge or Hillcrest Market Place office if you have questions regarding ingredients used in preparing foods, need advice on following a particular diet or to preview menus in advance. Students with special dietary needs for medical reasons should complete the medical accommodations form [http://housing.uiowa.edu/departments/housing/howtoapply.html#forms](http://housing.uiowa.edu/departments/housing/howtoapply.html#forms) and return to 4141 Burge Hall.

Living and Learning About U.S. Culture

You will have an incredible opportunity to live and learn about United States culture in the residence halls. While Americans may be open and friendly, it can take time to develop actual friendships. International students are often discouraged, finding that making friends isn't as easy as they thought it would be. Some international students have commented that they feel Americans are insincere. Mistaking American friendliness for friendship, they are disappointed when relationships do not take on a deeper meaning. In many other cultures, friendship is reserved for a very few people, is based on mutual love and respect, and involves unlimited obligation.

In the United States, close friendships certainly exist, but Americans also have many “friends,” among whom an international student may be only one. Talking about how friendships develop in the United States may help achieve a realistic view of what can be expected of his or her American friends.

“Practice your English as much as you can before you come; watch American movies, listen to others talking, and don’t be afraid to ask questions.”

-Jeffrey (Malaysia)
Learning U.S. Culture (Cont.)

**Achievement:** In the United States, status is primarily based on what individuals have achieved on their own, including education and the level of success in their employment. Many international students' cultures dictate that respect is given based on other qualifiers such as age or title. Additionally, some international students may not be used to the high level of competition in the United States.

**Informality:** The United States lifestyle is generally quite casual, and this can be shocking to some students who are accustomed to a more formal structure. Some international students may find it unusual in the beginning to use first names and dress casually.

**Individualism:** Americans are encouraged at an early age to develop and pursue their own goals. There is a higher value placed on self-reliance than in many other countries where parents and families help with the decision-making. In many countries, being part of a group is more important than focusing on the individual.

**Privacy:** The United States on the outside appears to be open and transparent, with open homes and office doors. However, Americans enjoy time alone, value private space, and are guarded with what they consider personal information. International students can have difficulty adjusting to this, especially if they live in residence halls and share a room with an American.

**Time:** Americans take pride in using their time wisely, which is why they tend to plan events in advance. Punctuality is valued in the United States and this can be a major cultural adjustment to many. Americans may “live by the clock,” but this is not true in many other cultures. In some places, for example, the time noted on a social invitation implies one should arrive an hour or more later. In others, an invitation is extended several times before it is accepted.

**Equality:** International students are often used to a hierarchical system in which genders are treated differently. It is important for international students to know that in the United States everyone is supposed to have equal opportunities and has the same rights as everyone else. [Source: NAFSA: Association of International Educators]

“My experience has been completely positive; I don’t think I would change anything if I could.”
- Edoardo (Italy)
You will have tremendous opportunities to learn about the United States culture and grow as a global citizen by studying at The University of Iowa. However, you will likely encounter some challenges with adjusting to a new culture and being away from home. You should be familiar with the different stages of culture shock to help with learning to transition.

Talk to your Resident Assistant, Hall Coordinator, or ISSS if you are struggling with culture shock and need help with learning to transition. They are excellent resources to help you have a positive experience studying here and living in the residence halls.

Stages of Culture Shock:

- **Honeymoon** - upon arrival in the U.S.; you will be excited and eager to learn about your new home. Typically this stage is relatively short.
- **Culture Shock** - as you settle in to daily life, the novelty and excitement wear off, and you may start feeling sad or unsatisfied.
- **Recovery** - when your experience in the U.S. starts to become more familiar and you are more comfortable living here, you will be happier.
- **Adjustment** - you have successfully learned to live in the U.S. and integrate your beliefs and lifestyle choices.
- **Reverse Culture Shock** - you will experience many of the same ups and downs when you return to your home country.
- **Reintegration** - you will learn to adjust your new perspectives into your home country’s environment and eventually feel comfortable at how the experience in the U.S. fits in at home.

Symptoms of Culture Shock:

- Excitement and stimulation
- Confusion, irritability, or withdrawal
- Sudden intense feeling of loyalty to home culture
- Physical reactions such as appetite change or headaches
- Depression, boredom, or lack of motivation
- Friendship or relationship stress

[Source: NAFSA: Association of International Educators]
"Don't be scared to do anything; you're only here for 4 years, don't waste this opportunity to meet people, don't hold back, just get to know as many people as possible."

- Jeffrey (Malaysia)