



EASTERN IOWA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

International Student Handbook
for Studying in Iowa



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Information for students who have submitted all required documents, have been accepted, and have been issued a Form I-20; or students who are participating in an academic exchange program attending one of the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges.

F-1 students will require an I-20 form. J-1 students will require a DS-2019 form.

Please note – upon arrival to Iowa, F-1 students need to contact the International Student Admissions Advisor at the college you select to attend.

Clinton Community College – Heather Mohler: 563-244-7007 / hmohler@eicc.edu

Muscatine Community College – Ben Huntington: 563-288-6007 / bhuntington@eicc.edu

Scott Community College – Stephen Bergren: 563-441-4004 / sbergren@eicc.edu

General Information

The purpose of this handbook is to make the beginning of your stay in Iowa as easy and stress-free as possible. It includes general information about the USA and Iowa, how to get started, and how to live as a student in Iowa. We advise you to read all the information in the handbook before you leave for the USA, and keep it for reference during your stay.

Passport, Visa, I-94 Card, and I-20 or DS-2019 (suggested sequence, as the first 3 are documents all students need, and the last two are determined by Visa).

Form I-20, Passport, Visa, and I-94 Card

Upon arrival to your college, you will need to present the documents listed above to your International Student Advisor.

The advisor will make copies for your college file, and your immigration information will be updated/activated in SEVIS (Student Exchange and Visitor Information System). SEVIS requires that you immediately inform your advisor of any change to your local address.

F-1 Students - You must register each semester as a full-time student and maintain full-time status for your F-1 Visa (full-time student Visa).

J-1 Students – You must follow the policies and guidelines set forth by your program regarding class registration and part-time vs. full-time status.

WARNINGS – DO NOT enter the United States with a B-1 / B-2 visa! If you have been accepted by a school and you have an unexpired B visa, do not use it to enter the United States to begin your studies here! You must obtain a Form I-20 and apply for an F-1 student visa before entering the United States.

Visa Required - Unless you are a Canadian, you cannot enter the United States without a visa! Students from all other countries must have visas. Please note – that Canadian students should still have a passport.

Form I-94 must be completed at the time of entry to the United States by foreign citizens that are being admitted into the United States in a non-immigrant visa status. Click on the following link for more information [I-94](#).



You must attend the school that issues your I-20! - Once you enter the United States - you must attend the school that issues the I-20. If you are transferring from another U.S. school, you will lose your legal status if you travel on your old school's I-20 and do not return to that school. Talk to us before you travel and be sure to enter the U.S. with a Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (Clinton, Muscatine, Scott) I-20.

Checklist to Becoming a Student

Please view the following information on how to become an International Student at one of the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (Clinton, Muscatine, Scott). The documents that you will need to send us are:

1. Application for Admission ([click here for details](#)).
2. Transcript(s) ([click here for details](#)).
3. Evidence of proficiency in English ([click here for details](#)).
4. Proof of financial responsibility ([click here for details](#)).
5. Proof of the SEVIS I-901 ([click here for details](#)).



Once EICC has all your documentation, EICC can issue you a Form I-20 that you can take to a U.S. Consulate / Embassy in your home country and apply for an F-1 visa. You will need to pay the U.S. Government for your SEVIS I-20 through the internet and print off the receipt. Bring your I-20, I-20 receipt, passport, financial documentation and other important documentation to your visa interview. Please visit <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee> for more information.

When you enter the United States you will be given an I-94 Arrival / Departure Record (card) that shows:

1. Your date and place of entry into the United States
2. Your U.S. immigration status – it should be “F-1” (dependents are F-2)
3. Your admissions number (eleven digit number)



After your arrival to the United States / Quad-City area, you should come to our college within a few days. Please be sure to bring your: Form I-20, Passport, Visa, I-94 card and any other documentation. One of the international student coordinators will “register” you in the SEVIS program to give you an “active” student status – which makes your stay here legal. If you do not have health insurance - you must make arrangements for it. We encourage all students to arrive at least two weeks prior to classes to arrange housing and register for classes if you have not already done so.

We look forward to you becoming an International Student at one of the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges!

Contact Information

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Living in Iowa

Located in the heart of the American breadbasket, Iowa is one of the nation's leading producers of corn, soybeans, oats and hogs. Farm life makes up a great deal of the cultural identity of Iowa, though certainly not all. Ames and Iowa City boast major universities and lively cultural centers. Des Moines, the largest city (208,000) and capital of Iowa, is dubbed the 'Insurance Capital of America' with major financial service corporations based there. The cities which make up the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges are Davenport (102,000), Bettendorf (35,000), Clinton (26,000), and Muscatine (23,000). Education is given a high priority in Iowa, with a low teacher-student ratio, well-funded library services and high average test scores compared to most U.S. states. Despite its small land mass (145,741 sq. km) and population (just over 3 million), Iowa is a remarkably diverse state located in the center of the USA. Iowa is known for agriculture and education.



For more information on Iowa, visit <http://www.iowalifechanging.com>.

Education

The Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) consists of Clinton, Jackson, Muscatine, and Scott counties, and parts of Cedar and Louisa counties. EICC stretches along the Iowa side of the Mississippi River with Clinton Community College to the north, Muscatine Community College to the south, and Scott Community College in Bettendorf in the middle.



EICC boasted a fall 2013 enrollment of more than 8500 students with approximately 5100 enrolled in Associate in Arts/College Transfer programs, and 3400 enrolled in one of more than 40 career technology programs.

Climate

Iowa, like most of the Midwest, has a humid continental climate throughout the state with extremes of both heat and cold. Winter (December, January, and February) is often harsh and snowfall is common. Average winters in the state have been known to drop well below freezing, even dropping below -10°F (-23°C). Spring (March, April, and May) ushers in the beginning of the severe weather season. Iowa averages about 50 days of thunderstorm activity per year. Summer (June, July, and August) is known for heat and humidity, with daytime temperatures often near 90°F (32°C) and sometimes exceeding 100°F (38°C). Fall (September, October, and November) is when the farmers harvest their grain, and the leaves change color and fall to the ground. The weather can be hot, cold, snowy, rainy, or perfect throughout this season.

Monthly Normal High and Low Temperatures For Various Iowa Cities ($^{\circ}\text{F}$)

City	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Davenport	30/13	36/19	48/29	61/41	72/52	81/63	85/68	83/66	76/57	65/45	48/32	35/20

Manufacturing

Manufacturing is the largest sector of Iowa's economy, with \$20.8 billion (21%) of Iowa's 2003 gross state product. Major manufacturing sectors include food processing, heavy machinery, and agricultural chemicals. Sixteen percent of Iowa's workforce is dedicated to manufacturing. Food processing is the largest component of manufacturing. Its industrial outputs include processed food, machinery, electric equipment, chemical products, publishing, and primary metals. Companies with

direct or indirect processing facilities in Iowa include ConAgra Foods, Wells Blue Bunny, Barilla, Heinz, Tone's Spices, General Mills, and Quaker Oats. Meatpacker Tyson Foods has 11 locations, second only to its headquarter state Arkansas. Major non-food advanced manufacturing firms with production facilities in Iowa include 3M, ALCOA, Amana Corporation, Dexter Apache Holdings, Inc., Electrolux/Frigidaire, Emerson Process, Fisher Controls International, Hagie Manufacturing Company, HON Industries, The HON Company, IPSCO Steel, John Deere, Lennox Manufacturing, Maytag Corporation, Pella Corporation, Rockwell Collins, Vermeer Company, Procter & Gamble, and Winnebago Industries.

Crime

Iowa ranks in the top 10 in the nation for its low crime rate. Like most countries, the larger cities have a higher crime rate than the rural communities. As a whole, Iowa is a safe place to live and attend school.

Daylight Savings Time

In the USA, daylight saving time is when clocks are turned forward one hour in March, and back one hour in November to maximize sunlight during the day.

Currency

The **dollar** (sign: **\$** or code: **USD**) is the currency of the United States. The dollar is divided into 100 *cents*. The currency comes in paper called bills, and coins with a variety of names. Below are the coins and bills most commonly used in the US. One may also see \$.50 and \$1 coins, and a \$2 bill but they are not common.



For an up-to-date U.S. currency exchange rate see this Web site: www.x-rates.com.

Living in Eastern Iowa

Quad Cities (Davenport, Bettendorf, Moline, Rock Island)

The Quad Cities (QC) area consists of Davenport and Bettendorf in Iowa, and Moline, East Moline and Rock Island in Illinois. The cities are separated by the Mississippi River which separates Iowa from Illinois. With a combined population of 475,000, the QC area brings you all the excitement of a big city with all the hospitality of a small town. Award-winning museums, cultural centers, festivals, and the beautiful riverfront will ensure that you always have something to do while you are studying in Iowa. For more information, see www.visitquadcities.com.

Muscatine

Muscatine has a population of nearly 23,000 and is located in East Central Iowa along the banks of the Mississippi River. Muscatine is a city rich with history and business sense. It is located just 15 miles south of the nation's only East/West transcontinental interstate highway, Interstate 80, and astride U.S. 61, a major North/South route through the central United States. Muscatine is an easy half-day drive from Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota; Omaha, Nebraska; and Indianapolis, Indiana, while being just hours from Des Moines, Iowa, and Chicago, Illinois. Once the "Pearl Button Capital of the World," Muscatine today is home to five Fortune 500 companies. For more information see www.muscatineiowa.gov.

Clinton

With a total population of nearly 28,000, Clinton offers many things to do with a river view. Located just 30 minutes from I-80 and 20 minutes from I-88, Clinton sits on the eastern most section of Iowa along the banks of the Mississippi River. Within a 65-acre park-like setting, you can play in the aquatic center, attend a Class 1A baseball game, enjoy a game of tennis, listen to a live performance in the band shell, attend a professional theater production aboard a renovated paddle wheel boat, take a walk, or run along the Discovery Recreational Trail. For more information see www.clintonia.com.



Living Expenses

It is, of course, difficult to predict how much money for living expenses you will need while you are in Iowa, but the estimate used for issuance of Form I-20s is \$19,000 USD per year (12 months). This amount represents housing, food, insurance, and any other personal expenses. [Click Here](#) for more details on living expenses.

Scholarships

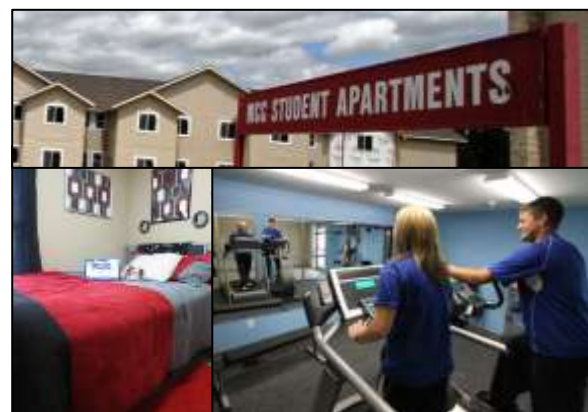
Scholarships are available for second year students. Scholarships are awarded based on merit, gpa, and student achievement. Please see the foundation office for scholarship due dates and the application process.

Getting a Job

Most students who study in the USA are not allowed to be employed. Do not plan on getting a job when you arrive in the USA as your visa will not allow you to work.

Housing

Housing options vary between campuses. Clinton Community College has no dormitories or residence halls; therefore students rent apartments and commute between their apartment and campus. Scott Community College has a partnership with The Villas, and Muscatine Community College has on-campus housing managed by The Villas. On both campuses, The Villas are within walking distance of campus, restaurants, and shopping. For more information, see www.liveatmcc.com, or www.thevillasatdevilsden.com.



Federal Holidays

A list of federal holidays can be found by clicking on the following link [USA Federal Holidays](#). EICC is closed on most federal holidays. Check to official school calendar for a complete list of when the college will be closed.



Getting Around Eastern Iowa

Airport

The Quad City International Airport (QCI) serves travelers throughout Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois. There are currently five airlines serving 10 nonstop hubs, or connecting cities. The airport code is MLI and is an easy, convenient way to travel domestically and internationally. The airport is located in Moline, Illinois, just across the Mississippi River from Bettendorf, Iowa, and is only a 30-minute drive from Clinton or Muscatine. See www.qcairport.com for more information.

Bus

No matter which campus you attend, the local communities each have a city bus system to serve their citizens. Davenport has a major bus depot (with a waiting room) which allows transportation throughout the United States.

Bicycle

In Iowa, it is becoming more common for citizens to ride a bicycle to and from work, school, or while running errands during spring, summer, and fall. There are many local bicycle trails throughout eastern Iowa which many Iowans ride for recreation and leisure.



Walking

Most international students find it surprising how rare it is for people in Iowa to walk. Most citizens will drive their car even short distances to work, school, and to run errands. All cities enjoy designated walking paths (called sidewalks) to ensure safety from cars and trucks if you choose to walk rather than drive, take a bus, or ride a bicycle.

Taxi

Taxis are quite rare and expensive in Iowa. Typically a telephone call to schedule a taxi is required, and you may be standing on the side of the road for some time if you intend to flag one down in the street. Local taxi service providers are listed in your city telephone directory.

Train

Passenger train systems are not a regular form of transportation in Iowa. This type of transportation is used in bigger cities and areas, such as New York City and Chicago. The nearest Amtrak stations to travel to Chicago are located in Princeton, Illinois, and Galesburg, Illinois, which are both about an hour from the Quad Cities.



Insurance

Health Insurance

EICC requires all international students purchase medical insurance through LewerMark. For more information on the costs and benefits of the required health insurance plan please visit www.lewermark.com/eicc.



J-1 students are typically provided medical insurance coverage by their program sponsor.

Dental

Dental treatment is not free in the United States, and health insurance policies typically do not cover dental treatments. You will need to call a dentist to make an appointment. If it is not an emergency, it may take a couple of weeks to schedule an appointment. Students should be prepared to pay for the evaluation and any procedures that may follow. In the USA, dental treatment is expensive. Check with your LewerMark representative to ensure your dental procedure will be covered.

Car Insurance

If you plan to obtain an Iowa Driver's License and drive a motor vehicle, you must have insurance for that vehicle. EICC strongly advise that your insurance policy includes adequate liability coverage.

Renter's Insurance

In the United States, renter's insurance covers the loss or damage to your personal furnishings (furniture, personal belongings, etc.) in case of burglary, fire, etc. Most policies also cover you if you need a lawyer in case of a law suit. Costs can vary, depending on the value of your belongings. Students can purchase renter's insurance from private agents as listed in your city telephone directory, or on the Internet.

Public Health and Safety

Emergency: In case of a **medical emergency, fire, or crime, call 911** (free number). The 911 operator will ask you to state your name, location, and the type of situation you need assistance with: doctor, fireman, police, etc.

Non-Emergency (If your medical situation is not life threatening)

Medical

If you need to see a doctor, you must call your own doctor to make an appointment. A listing of all the local doctors in your area can be found on the LewerMark website www.lewermark.com/eicc. Prior to scheduling a visit make sure the doctor is a LewerMark preferred provider. Most offices require an appointment in advance. If immediate medical attention is needed, all hospitals and most clinics have an emergency room or urgent care office.

Walk-in medical clinics are common and do not require an advanced appointment. Sometimes called Urgent Care, they provide a less expensive option than a never-closed hospital emergency room if your condition is not life threatening.

Banking

To obtain a local bank account, you will need to present your passport, visa, and other requested documents in person to the bank officer. A local bank account will allow you to secure and safely access your money. You will discuss options for checking accounts, debit cards and credit cards, wire transfers, etc. with your personal banker. There are many local and nationally recognized banks in

every college community. Your International Student Advisor can provide further information regarding local banks.

Television, Internet, and Cell Phone

Television

If you would like to have cable television, you will need to contact a local provider to start an account with them. A technician from the provider will come to your home and complete any installation that needs to be done. Cable television costs about \$50-\$75 or more per month.

Internet

All colleges and The Villas have wireless Internet. If you live in an independent apartment, you will need to contact a local Internet provider for service. Internet service costs about \$50-\$75 per month.

Cell Phone

If you would like to have a cell phone during your stay, there are options for a contract or a pre-paid cell phone. Typically a cell phone can cost \$50 - \$80 per month depending on the contract plan.

Electrical

COUNTRY	VOLTAGE	FREQUENCY	PLUG	COMMENTS
United States	120 V	60 Hz	A & B	Type A and Type B plugs are used for 120 volts. Type A has been phased out, but type B plugs are in all new buildings and houses since the 1970's.

Type A Electrical Receptacle

The Type A electrical plug, or flat blade attachment plug, uses two flat parallel pins or blades. It is found in most of North America and on the east coast of South America on smaller devices that do not require a ground connection.



Type B Electrical Receptacle

The Type B electrical plug has two flat parallel blades like the Type A, but also has a round grounding or earth pin that grounds the device before the power is connected. The neutral blade is wider than the live blade to ensure proper insertion.



Check your electrical equipment (PC, hair dryer, mobile phone charger, game console, etc.) to see if equipment can automatically handle the increased voltage. If not, you will need to purchase a transformer to be able to power your equipment. At a minimum, you will need to purchase plug adapters to be able to plug in to electrical outlets.

Shopping – Daily Needs, Shopping in Iowa

Each college community has numerous stores, supermarkets, and shopping malls. Wal-Mart, Target, and Hy-Vee are the well-known stores and supermarkets. All have a wide range of convenience goods at fair prices, with Wal-Mart and Target also selling clothing, kitchen utensils, mobile phones,

and other assorted products. You can also buy less expensive used furniture, kitchen items, and clothing at local resale shops like Goodwill or the Salvation Army.

NOTE: The amount shown on the price tag is the cost of the item. Sales tax is added to this cost when you make your purchase.

Intercollegiate Athletics

Clinton, Muscatine, and Scott Community Colleges are members of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) and the Iowa Junior College Athletic Association. Athletics are governed by the Director of Athletics, and rules are set forth by the executive committee of the Iowa State Association for Community College Athletics. Sports programs offered at the colleges are volleyball at Clinton Community College, softball and baseball at Muscatine Community College, and men's and women's soccer and cross country at Scott Community College. Athletic scholarships are available.



Intramural Sports

Clinton, Muscatine, and Scott Community College students have a wide variety of intramural sports in which all students can participate. Both men and women students may enter competition in the intramural program throughout the academic year.

Clubs & Organizations

Your college education doesn't end at the classroom door. Sure, your classwork is your most important objective, but the experience you gain participating in student clubs and activities can be almost as valuable.



You'll learn teamwork and leadership skills, improve your organizational abilities and, gee, you'll even have some fun. Often, the friends you make in a student activity are friends for a lifetime.

So check out what Clinton, Muscatine and Scott Community College have to offer and join the fun! [Click Here](#) to learn more about the clubs and organizations at EICC.

Additional Information on the United States

See the CIA's *The World Factbook* which provides information on the history, people, government, economy, geography, communications, transportation, military, and transnational issues. [Click Here](#) to visit the CIA World Factbook.

U.S. State Department supports international education and welcomes foreign students and exchange visitors. Students and exchange visitors must be accepted by their schools or program sponsors before applying for visas. [Click Here](#) to visit the U.S. State Department Web site.

If you have additional questions, contact Dr. Jeremy Pickard, EICC, via email at jpickard@eicc.edu.