

The Graduate School (TGS) New Student Guide

Key Dates

June 1

The for all incoming international students to request an F1 Visa through the [International Office](#).

July 1

The deadline to submit your health record, including proof of immunizations.

August 1

TGS's deadline to enroll in the Aetna Student Health Insurance plan to have coverage begin September 1. International students are automatically enrolled in this plan.

August 20

Deadline to inform [TGS Financial Aid](#) of external funding, if you have it.

Late August (date changes each year)

Northwestern considers new enrolling students to be active at the University
New students can obtain a WildCARD/student ID card

Early September (date changes each year)

Full-time enrolled students can pick up their U-Pass.
[View distribution schedule](#)

September 1

Deadline for students to complete section 1 of E-verify

September 3-7

Versant (English Proficiency) Testing

September 7-8

The International Office's Orientation

September 14

The Graduate School's New Student Orientation
10-7PM Pick-Staiger Concert Hall

September 15

New TA Conference

September 15

Students can begin to register for classes at 9 AM

September 15

ESAM Program Orientation Date

September 20

Classes begin

September 22

Deadline to complete Section 2 of E-verify

September 23 (for Students Receiving a Stipend or Being Paid)

Last day to submit direct deposit enrollment in [FASIS Self-Service](#) prior to September 30th pay

September 26

The last day to add a class, change a section, or change the grading basis for fall quarter. (No reductions are made to bills for dropped or swapped classes after this date. Last day for full tuition refund.)

October 10

First invoice for year generated. You will receive an email to review your account and pay by November 1st any balance due. Remember even if you are receiving a stipend and full tuition support, you will still need to pay the Activity Fee.

October 12

Deadline for official transcripts to be received by TGS.

October 28

The last day to drop a class. (No tuition adjustments can be made after September 29.)

Academic calendar

The Graduate School keeps a calendar with these and more key dates. [VIEW IT HERE.](#)
[THE UNIVERSITY'S ACADEMIC CALENDAR CAN BE VIEWED HERE](#)

I. Action Items

Transcripts

Please keep in mind that transcripts uploaded onto your online application are not official documents. Therefore, you are required to submit one official hard copy of each of your transcripts to the TGS Admission Office.

- Official transcripts must be sent directly from the issuing institution's Registrar (either mailed in sealed envelopes or emailed as official, electronic transcripts) to: Northwestern University, The Graduate School, Office of Graduate Admission, 633 Clark Street, Evanston, IL 60208-1113; tgsadmission@northwestern.edu.
- Emailed transcripts must be sent from the issuing institution via a password protected, e-transcript delivery service. Please check with your institution's Registrar's Office to see if they offer an e-transcript service.
- Please do not submit your official transcripts until all degrees you will earn prior to enrolling at Northwestern University are listed. Verifying the completion of your previous degrees is an important step in our transcript collection process.
- New students will not be permitted to register for their second quarter of study at Northwestern until all official transcripts (including degree-awarding transcripts) have been received by TGS.

Please refer to our [webpage](#) on transcripts for questions and additional information.

Enter Emergency Notification Phone Numbers and Emergency Contacts

You must identify at least two phone numbers in CAESAR that the University can use to contact you in the event of a campus emergency, as well as an emergency contact person. You must provide this information before you can register for classes. Missing information in either category results in a [registration hold](#). If you need help with entering this information in CAESAR, please visit the [Registrar's website for instructions](#).

Notify TGS of External Funding (if applicable)

If you have accepted funding from a source other than Northwestern University (NSF, Ford Foundation, VEF, etc.), you must notify TGS's Financial Aid staff [via email](#) prior to your first quarter of enrollment so that your funding can be processed appropriately and you avoid any accounting errors in your student account. If necessary, TGS may make appropriate adjustments to your TGS funding package.

Health Requirements

All new full-time and half-time students must visit the [Northwestern University Health Service \(NUHS\) website](#) to review information relating to University and State of Illinois health requirements, and download the required entrance health form. There are deadlines associated with these requirements (listed on the NUHS website).

Health Insurance

Northwestern University requires all students maintain health insurance while registered at the University. During the time you are registered at the University, you are required to enroll in the [Aetna/Northwestern plan](#). You may waive enrollment by providing evidence that you have health insurance coverage that is comparable

for the entire period of registration. International students holding a F1 or J1 visa may not waive the Aetna/Northwestern plan.

E-verify (for students receiving a stipend or being paid)

Students receiving stipend support must complete the E-verify process and complete the Employment Eligibility Verification form I-9. Begin the process at [the I-9 Service Center](#) and bring documentation to Norris University Center on either September 14 from 1-4 PM or September 15 from 9 AM-4 PM. Chicago E-verify hours will be held on September 16, time TBA. Students who have not completed this process during orientation should visit Northwestern's Payroll Office at 720 University Place, 2nd floor, in Evanston or 710 N. Lake Shore Drive, Abbott Hall, room 850.

If you have previously been paid by the University, you do not have to complete this process again.

You must present the required work authorization documents and complete the required forms for Northwestern University's payroll system. Please follow the directions provided under Stipend Payments and Payroll Process; it's a two-step process.

1. Students should complete Section 1 of the E-Verify form by Tuesday, September 1.
2. Students must complete Section 2 of the E-Verify form by Tuesday, September 22 (earlier is preferred).

Beginning on September 17th, this should be taken care of through Northwestern's Payroll Office, 720 University Place, 2nd Floor, Evanston.

Sign up for Direct Deposit (students receiving a stipend)

[Complete the direct deposit process at Northwestern's Human Resources website.](#)

For international students who do not have a Social Security Number, you must apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). Only those students earning wages qualify for a Social Security Number; otherwise, students must [apply for an ITIN number](#). When you arrive on campus and complete your payroll forms, you will then prepare the application for the ITIN with Northwestern's Payroll Office, 720 University Place, 2nd Floor, Evanston.

Student Accounts

Students may set up their preferences for payment of their accounts (tuition and/or fees, including the Activity Fee, which all full-time students pay quarterly) by logging in to [CAESAR](#) using your NetID and password. Learn more on the [Student Financial Services website](#).

II. Action Items for International Students

Visa

Please note, students admitted to the Fall Quarter should have submitted your I-20/DS-2019 request no later than June 1, 2016. This includes doctoral students participating in the International Summer Institute.

For all questions regarding choosing the proper visa, or errors in the visa document, please contact the International Office via email at intadmit@northwestern.edu or phone at 847-491-5613.

International students who have not yet submitted their request should do so as soon as possible. Please click here for the [International Office](#) website to download visa and forms information. Please visit the International Office's [Plan Your Trip](#) web page and follow the directions to complete the process.

Social Security Number/ Individual Taxpayer Identification Number

International students must apply for either a Social Security Number (SSN) or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). Only those students earning wages (i.e. Research Assistant and Graduate Assistant positions) qualify for an SSN; otherwise, students must [apply for an ITIN number \(ie. Scholarship/Fellowship positions\)](#). After arriving on campus and completing payroll forms, students will then prepare the application for the ITIN with Northwestern's Payroll Office, 720 University Place, 2nd Floor, Evanston.

English Language Programs

International PhD and MFA students must fulfill [The Graduate School's English Proficiency Requirement](#), which establishes a minimum level of spoken English proficiency students must reach before becoming eligible to earn funding as teaching or graduate assistants.

Entering PhD and MFA students who have not yet fulfilled the English Proficiency Requirement must take the [Versant English Test](#) once they arrive at Northwestern. Versant test sessions will be held on the Evanston campus from September 7 - 13, 2016. Students will be contacted with more information about the test during the summer, and in late August will receive an email about registering for a specific test session.

See English Language Programs below under Campus Life or visit [our website](#) for more information about English language services for international students. For all questions about the English Proficiency Requirement and proficiency testing, please contact Dr. Erin Leddon at e-mcmahon@northwestern.edu.

III. Academic Tools and Systems

NetID

Students receive NetID and email account information within two weeks after declaring intent to enroll. At this point you should have received your NetID and email account information. Your NetID will be used to access the student services system (CAESAR), your email and other university systems. If you do not receive your NetID prior to the start of classes, you may obtain it by visiting an NUIT Support Center with your WildCARD (student ID card). The NUIT Support Center will not release NetID data over the phone or via email. More information is available at the [NUIT website](#).

EmplID

Included in your admission letter (at the bottom of the page) is your seven digit EmplID. Your EmplID is often referred to as your "Student ID Number." You may be asked to include your EmplID on housing, health record, or other University forms. Your EmplID will remain with you throughout your tenure at Northwestern University.

CAESAR

The student information portal allows you to register for classes, review your funding, and review and pay your student account.

WildCARD

Northwestern Student ID cards are called “WildCARDS”. Your WildCARD will allow you to enter university facilities and utilize various services around campus. New students typically obtain a WildCARD the week before classes start. It is printed for you at the WildCARD office at Norris University Center in Evanston or Abbott Hall, Room 100 in Chicago. Save time and submit your WildCARD photo before arriving to campus.

[Learn more.](#)

Faculty and Staff Information System (FASIS)

The Faculty and Staff Information System is an online system from which graduate students’ stipends are processed. Students can access information about their appointments using the Self-service portal.

Northwestern University Information Technology (NUIT)

Northwestern University Information Technology offers tech support and information on existing technological resources supporting Northwestern’s learning environment.

Student Enterprise System (SES)

The Student Enterprise System is the administrative system used to access applicant and student-related data including admission, financial aid, student record, and student financial aid information. Students may view information relevant to their graduate career in CAESAR.

Student Financial Services

This office provides information regarding federal and private student loans. Staff are available to assist you with questions and concerns you may have.

TGS Financial Aid

The administrative office in each academic program of study should be the first point of contact for questions regarding funding. The TGS Financial Aid office (tgs-fa@northwestern.edu) can also assist you with information regarding your funding and health insurance subsidy. Students should notify TGS if they receive any external funding.

IV. Policy Guide

All students within The Graduate School should be aware of both [The Graduate School’s academic policies](#) and [Northwestern University’s policies pertaining to students](#). [Northwestern’s Office of Student Conduct](#) serves as a resource for reporting concerns and promoting responsible action campus-wide.

A. Campus Life**V. Diversity**

Northwestern is committed to excellent teaching, innovating research, and the personal and intellectual growth of its students in a diverse academic environment. Northwestern has an existing [Office of Diversity & Inclusion](#), led by Associate Provost Jabbar Bennett, PhD. The Graduate School’s own Office of Diversity & Inclusion is

led by Assistant Dean Nsombi B. Ricketts and provides support services and programming to existing students, as well as recruiting a population of underrepresented minority students to graduate study at Northwestern.

VI. Student involvement

The Graduate School offers a number of ways to engage with students and postdoctoral fellows on campus through quarterly events, [Community Building Grants](#), and [student organizations](#). The Graduate Leadership and Advocacy Council (GLAC) is the main student leadership and advisory group, and its members regularly meet with senior administrators at The Graduate School. [The Center for Student Involvement](#) is another campus resource connecting students with one another and offering leadership opportunities.

Northwestern Career Advancement

[Northwestern Career Advancement \(NCA\)](#) fosters excellence in career development, preparation, and professional opportunities. Career counseling services are offered through NCA, as are professional development activities and programming. [The Graduate School also offers a variety of professional development programs.](#)

English Language Programs

This office supports international students who wish to improve their English language skills. Services are offered year-round, and include [group language classes](#), [one-on-one tutoring](#), and [NativeAccent™ online speech training software](#). New PhD and MFA students may also receive intensive language support through the [International Summer Institute](#) and [Integrated Academic Skills](#) programs. Services are all offered free of charge, and are limited to students and employees of Northwestern University. For more information, contact our staff at elp@northwestern.edu, or visit the [English Language Programs website](#).

Student Affairs

Made up of 30 departments, the [Division of Student Affairs](#) engages students in the activities and culture on campus and in the surrounding community. Student Affairs offers support to students in need through providing learning programs, services, and mentoring to sustain a safe and healthy Northwestern community.

AccessibleNU

This office serves, supports and empowers Northwestern students with disabilities by ensuring equal access to fully participate in academic programming and all other facets of University life. AccessibleNU connects students with resources and services within the University to meet the unique requests of individuals in our population.

Wellness Services

Northwestern's Health Services provides quality medical care to students on both the [Chicago](#) and [Evanston](#) campuses. All full-time students who register for three or four courses are eligible to use outpatient services. Northwestern's [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) serves as the primary mental health service at Northwestern with offices on both campuses.

Northwestern students who are enrolled full-time have access to the Henry Crown Sports Pavillion, Northwestern's main gym. [Learn more on their website.](#)

Housing

For information on housing for graduate students, please refer to the [Graduate Housing website](#). The on-campus housing application is available online, but requires a NetID login. If your NetID is not yet activated, please contact the housing office and request an application via email.

Activity Fee

The Activity Fee for full-time enrolled students is \$110 per quarter and provides the [U-Pass](#), [Community Building Grant](#) activities, and quarterly TGS Nights Out for students.

U-Pass

The Graduate School (TGS) and the Chicago Transit Authority provide the CTA University Pass (U-Pass) to full-time graduate students through the Activity Fee. The CTA U-Pass program uses fare cards called Ventra, a contactless payment system that serves as a U-Pass. Benefits of this system include:

- Can be used 365 days a year
- Can be used on [CTA buses](#) and trains
- Can be used on [Pace buses](#) as a fare card (charges apply)
- Can be loaded with funds and changed to a full-fare card once you are no longer enrolled full-time
- Personalized with your photo and name

Child and Family Resources

The Office of the Provost provides a list of resources for students who are parents, which [can be found here](#).

Changing Personal Information

If there has been or will be any changes to your personal information (address, phone, etc.) since you submitted your online application, you will have the opportunity to update your information in CAESAR once you begin your study at Northwestern. Formal name changes are processed by the Registrar's Office. If you are receiving a stipend from Northwestern, you will also need to update the Payroll system via the Self-service portal when there are changes to your address, phone number, etc.

Social Media

The Graduate School frequently posts news, events and opportunities on our Facebook page. [We invite you to like us and join the conversation](#).

[You can also find us on LinkedIn](#).