



Capstone International Center
International Student & Scholar Services



International First Steps

Welcome to UA



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Capstone International Center

International Student & Scholar Services



Hours of Operation: Mon-Fri: 8 am - 4:45 pm
Walk-in/Virtual Advising: Mon-Thur: 11 am - 3 pm

Location: [105 BB Comer Hall](#)
Website: <http://international.ua.edu/iss/>
Email: international@ua.edu
Phone: 205 348-5402



Welcome from the Director



On behalf of International Student & Scholar Services, I would like to welcome you to The University of Alabama. It is an exciting time of the year for all of us and particularly for all of our newly arrived students.

We can only hope that you will catch the welcoming nature of Tuscaloosa and find comfort as you settle in to pursue your academic career at The University of Alabama.

The University of Alabama has had a rich history of academic excellence since its founding in 1831. This year we are looking forward to seeing you succeed in your goals and participate in the many culturally enriching activities our campus has to offer.

We hope you will join us in many of the campus-wide events designed to welcome new students, scholars, and faculty.

Best wishes for a successful and productive year!

Charter Morris

Director, International Student & Scholar Services



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International Student & Scholar Services' Mission



The mission of International Student & Scholar Services is to provide essential services and innovative programs for The University of Alabama's international students, scholars and their families to enable them to achieve their educational, professional and social goals. ISSS seeks to foster diversity and strengthen inter-cultural relationships throughout the UA campus and community. It is our commitment to promote understanding and respect for the world's many cultures



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ISSS Website



Faculty/Staff Outreach UA Home Get Involved Forms A-Z Index Q

A Capstone International Center English Language Institute Student & Scholar Services Education Abroad Programs About

Graduating soon?
We have some important information for you

<http://international.ua.edu/iss/>

or

Short URL
is.ua.edu



FUTURE & NEW STUDENTS

- Admission to UA
- Scholarships & Aid
- Required Funding and Estimated



CURRENT STUDENTS

- Maintaining Student Visa Status
- Academic Resources



INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS, FACULTY & STAFF

- H-1B Workers



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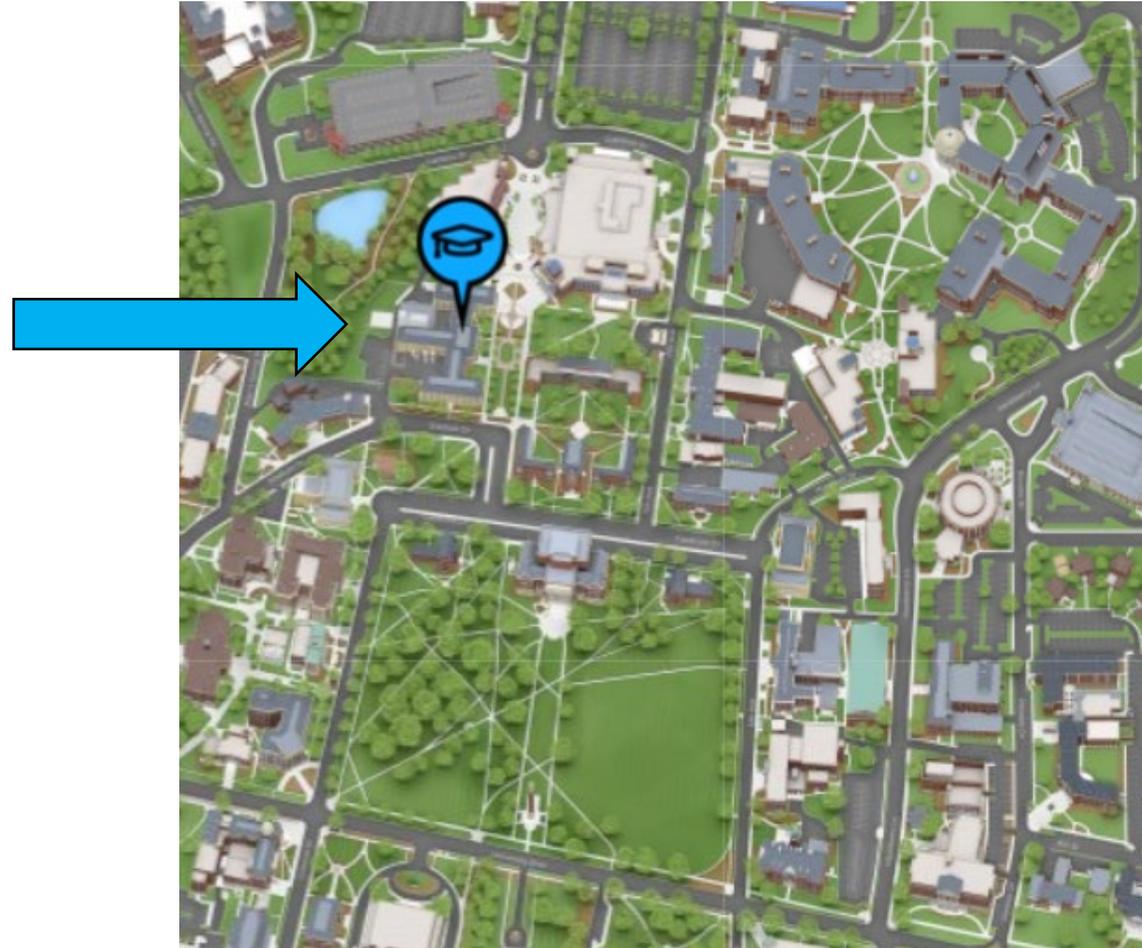
Location of ISSS Office

105 BB Comer Hall

400 McCorvey Drive
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

Campus Map -Building ID: 1043

Google Map



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First Steps

As a new international student you have a lot to do to settle in.

Below are your big first steps:

1. Complete International Orientation and Pass the [Immigration Quiz](#)
2. Update Address in MyBama with Local Tuscaloosa Address
3. Complete International Check-in by uploading documents
4. Other Orientations – Bama Bound, GROW, GTA Workshop
5. Register for Classes
6. Confirm Schedule
7. Set up ACT Card
8. Set up Apps and Accounts
9. Attend New Student Welcome Event



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Step 1: International Orientation

All new international students must complete International Orientation & Check-in online, which can be accessed on our website here:

<http://international.ua.edu/iss/future-new-students/orientation/>

To complete this orientation, you must do the following:

1. [Review the Cultural Adjustment and Health Resources.](#)
2. Review the [Academic Success](#) and [Campus Life](#) Resources.
3. Complete the [Immigration Section Video](#) and take the [Immigration Quiz](#). You must score 100% on the quiz.



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Orientation Guide



International Orientation Guide



Our **International Orientation Guide (pdf)** contains helpful information about campus resources, adjusting to campus life, and academic success at The University of Alabama.

This information will be covered throughout the Online Orientation, and at various points, we will refer you to sections of the guide.



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Step 2: Update Address

You must report your address at check in and keep your address updated. All non-U.S. citizens residing in the U.S. are required update their address within 10 days of any change of address.

When you move, you should update your address in [myBama](#), and ISSS will report the change to the Department of Homeland Security in SEVIS.

ISSS must have the following information to report to immigration:

- Local Address – This is where you physically live in Tuscaloosa.
- Permanent Address – This is your address in your home country.

The screenshot shows the 'myBama - Academics' interface. On the left is a dark red navigation sidebar with the Alabama 'A' logo at the top and menu items: Home, Academics, Admissions/Scholarships, Campus Life, Employee, Library, Faculty, Research, and Tech. The main content area is titled 'Banner Self Service' and contains a list of links under 'My Banner Links'. The 'Update Addresses and Phones' link is highlighted with a yellow box. Other links include Class Schedule, Exam Schedules, Course Catalog, Transfer Credit, Order Textbooks Online, Letter of Transiency, Personal Information, Answer a Survey, View E-mail Addresses, Update Parent's E-mail Addresses, Update Employee Email Address, View Emergency Contacts, Update Emergency Contacts, Update Marital Status, Name Change Information, Social Security Number Change Information, Update Preferred Name and Pronoun, Faculty & Advisors, and Employee Services.



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Step 2: Updating Address

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®

Personal Information



ID Number: 123456789

big.al@ua.edu

1 University Blvd., UA, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

205-348-5402

Personal Details

First Name Big Al	Middle Name	Last Name Elephant
Date of Birth 12/31/1981	Marital Status Married	Legal Sex Male
Preferred First Name	Personal Pronoun He	

Name or SSN Change Information

Address

Local Street (non-mailing)
Current
11/01/2019 - (No end date)
1 University Blvd., Apt. 12
Tuscaloosa
Alabama 35401

Local Mailing Address
Current
03/21/2013 - (No end date)
P.O. Box 870254
Tuscaloosa
Alabama 35487

Permanent Home Address
Current
03/21/2013 - (No end date)
1 Roll Tide Avenue
Dhaka
Bangladesh

+ Add New

- Local Address – This is where you physically live in Tuscaloosa.
- Permanent Address – This is your address in your home country.



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Step 3: Complete Check-in: Uploading Documents for Check-In



 The University of Alabama

Check In Document Upload Form for International Students

Welcome Charter Morris !
Please select document types and add check in documents for submission.
Remember, Upload file has to be **image, pdf or word file** with less than **5MB** in size.

Choose Upload Document Type

--- Select ---

Add Files

Submit

Choose Upload Document Type

--- Select ---
--- Select ---
Contact Information Sheet
Acknowledgment of Responsibility Form
Passport
Visa
I-94 Record
I-20 or DS-2019

Submit **Reset**

- Access our [Secure Immigration Check-in Portal](#)
- Remember, your documents must be saved as an image, pdf, or word file less than 5 MB in size.



Step 3: Complete Check-in: Required Documents for Upload



- Contact Information Sheet;
- Acknowledgement of Responsibility Form;
- Your passport main information page;
- Your F-1 Visa or J-1 Visa;
- Your F-1 I-20 (pages 1 and 2 only) or J-1 DS-2019 (page 1 only);
- I-94 Arrival/Departure Record (note: only accessible after arrival to the U.S.); and
- If you have a spouse or children with you, please also scan their documents for check-in.



Address Updated? Documents Uploaded? SEVIS Validated!



Once these steps are complete, ISSS will process the validation of your SEVIS Record with Homeland Security's Student Exchange Visitor Program, which can take 2 – 3 business days at a minimum.

After the check-in has been completed and your SEVIS record has been validated, you will be notified.

After SEVIS Validation, ISSS will be able to process any requested verifications for I-9 processing, Alabama Credit Union accounts, Driver's Licenses, and Social Security Number applications.



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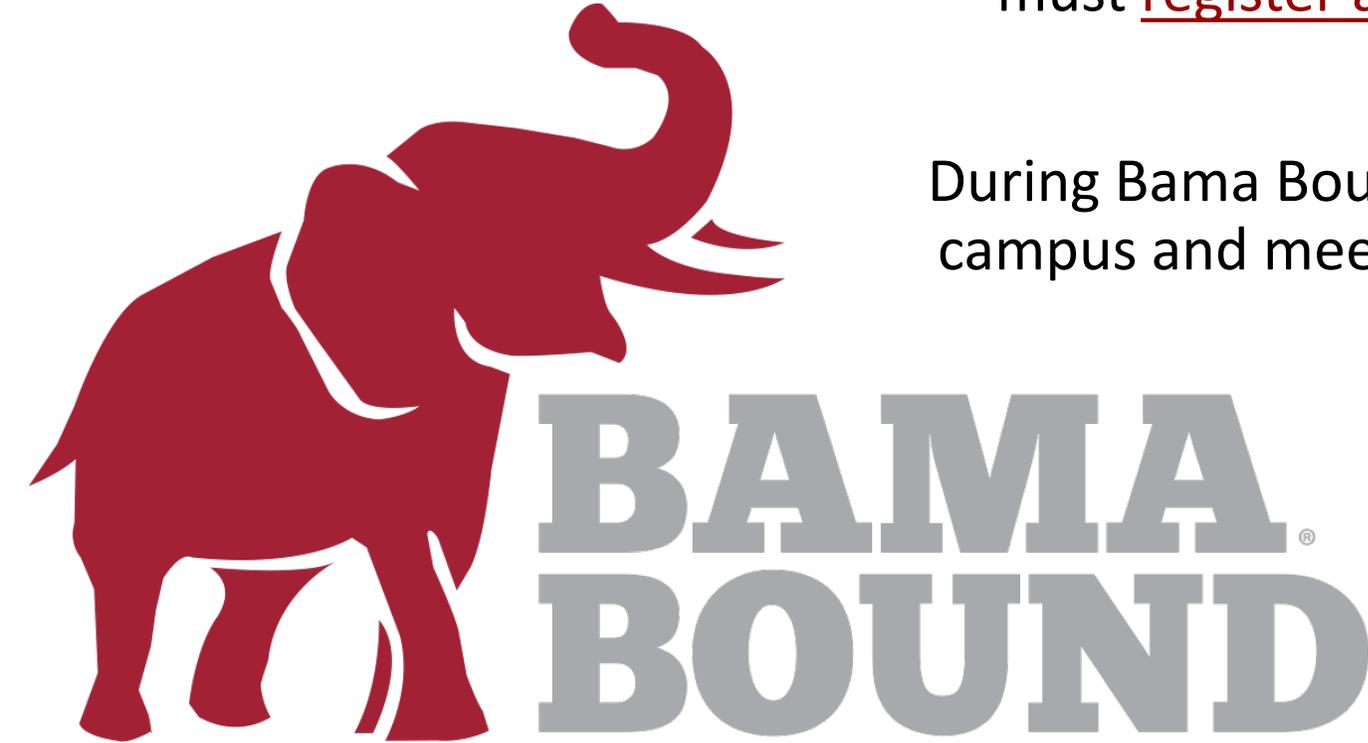
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Step 4: Other Orientations - Undergrads



Bama Bound is for all first-year and transfer **undergraduate students** – both American and international students must register and attend a Bama Bound Orientation.

During Bama Bound, you will receive a full introduction to campus and meet with your academic advisor so you can register for courses.



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Step 4: Other Orientations – Grad Students



GRADUATE ORIENTATION AND WELCOME (GROW)

GROW is designed to prepare incoming graduate students with the necessary information to make their time at UA a success. In addition, it serves to supplement your departmental orientation experience and give you a well-rounded view of the UA experience through the graduate student lens.

WORKSHOP FOR NEW GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Held in the Fall Semester only, this workshop is required for all new Graduate Teaching Assistants. New GTAs should contact the Graduate School about participation in the August Workshop.

GROW
GRaduate **O**rientation and **W**elcome



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Step 5: Register for Classes

- You must register for full-time classes before the end of drop/add.
- Work with your Academic Advisor to select appropriate classes and follow the steps on the Registrar's page to enroll: <https://registrar.ua.edu/student-services/registration/>.
- General Enrollment Requirements
 - **Graduate Students**
 - 9 credit hours minimum
 - 6 credit hours with a .5 FTE (20-hour per week) Assistantship
 - **Undergraduate Students**
 - 12 credit hours minimum
- Online Class Limits
 - **F-1 Online Limits** - Only one 3-credit hour course can be counted towards enrollment minimums
 - **J-1 Online Limits** - J-1 students may not count any online courses toward the minimum enrollment requirement.



Advising Guide



International Student Advising Guide



Our [International Student Advising Guide \(pdf\)](#) contains helpful information about course registration, academic advising, and academic success at The University of Alabama.



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Step 6: Confirm Schedule



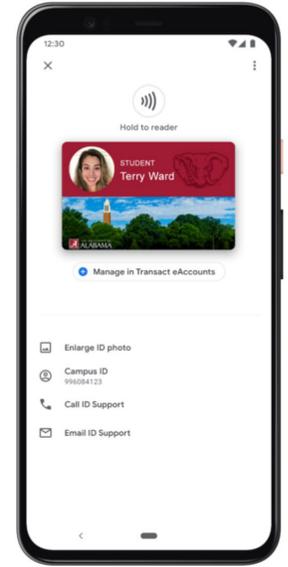
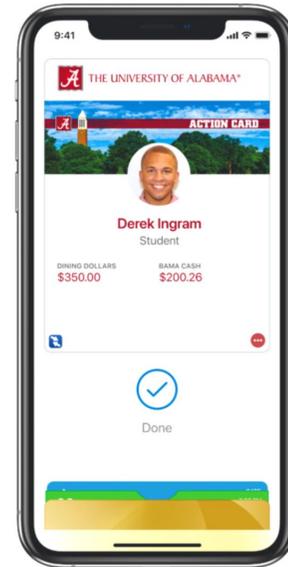
- Once you have registered for classes, your schedule will not be “confirmed” or “secured” until you have either paid your balance with Student Account Services, set up a Payment Plan, or taken other action to secure your schedule.
- Payment info: <https://studentaccounts.ua.edu/payment-methods/>





Step 7: Set up ACT Card

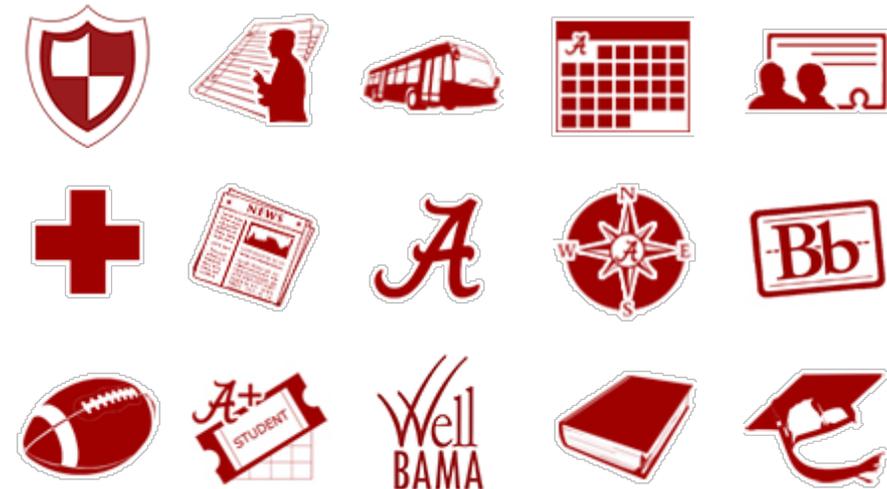
- The ACT Card (or Action Card) is a Digital ID Card that gives you access to your residence hall, labs, dining halls, recreation centers, libraries, the Student Health Center, and a lot more! <https://actcard.ua.edu/actcardbasics/>
- To set up your ACT Card, follow the steps on the [ACT Card Photo Submit Page](https://actcard.ua.edu/photosubmit/) <https://actcard.ua.edu/photosubmit/>.
 - You will need to take a photo of yourself as well as your passport.
 - Make sure the photo of yourself that you submit meets all of the requirements listed here <https://actcard.ua.edu/tipsandcriteria/>
 - This process will set up the ACT Card on your phone.
- **Make sure you complete this process as soon as possible as your ACT Card is required to access your residence hall, utilize your meal plan, or go to the Student Health Center.**





Step 8: Set up Apps and Accounts

- Download the UA App to your phone (Android or Apple): <http://app.ua.edu/>
- One app contains multiple functions:
 - Directory
 - Events
 - Library
 - Safety App
 - Blackboard
 - Map
 - Crimson Ride Bus Routes and Location
 - ACT Card
 - News
 - Emergency resources
 - Student Tickets



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Step 8: Set up Apps and Accounts



Download the UA Safety App to your phone (Android or Apple): <https://ready.ua.edu/safety-app/>

The UA Safety App provides students with immediate access to information in case of an emergency.

Features include a built-in GPS to every campus building and shelter, AEDs and safety guidelines for potential hazards.

Users also receive exclusive UA Alerts and current UAPD advisories for up-to-date information.

Additional features include National Weather Service Information for Tuscaloosa County and an emergency contact list for instant dialing with one push.



Step 9: Attend New Student Welcome Event



- Come to the Welcome Event and meet other new UA International Students – Friday, August 19 at 3 pm
- Food, refreshments, and new friends!



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...and next steps...

You are also likely in need of many other documents and services.

We will try to tackle other important steps here:

1. Housing
2. Social Security Number
3. Driver's License
4. Bank Account
5. Phone Account/SIM Card
6. Transportation Resources
7. Other Resources





1. Housing



- Most apartments require long-term leases of at least one year.
- It is common for most landlords to require you to pay a deposit which is equal to one month's rent when you sign a lease for an apartment or house as well as the first and last month of rent upon move-in.
- Be sure to read through the terms of your lease carefully before signing. By signing a lease, you are promising to pay the landlord for the entire time listed on the lease.
- Ending a lease early or violating the lease agreement can cost you the rental deposit.
- Please visit Off-Campus Housing's resources for renters: <https://offcampushousing.sa.ua.edu/resources/>.





2. Social Security Number



1. You must first have a job or job offer on-campus, **and** you must have completed check-in and had your SEVIS Record validated.

NOTE: Scholarships and fellowships will not qualify you for an SSN. It must be a job to qualify.

2. Have your campus employer complete an [Employment Verification Form](#) on their letterhead.
3. Submit the [Employment Verification Form](#) to ISSS, and we will verify it and provide instructions on setting your SSN appointment.

Full details on the SSN Application Process: <http://international.ua.edu/iss/ssn-itin-taxes/>



3. Driver's License

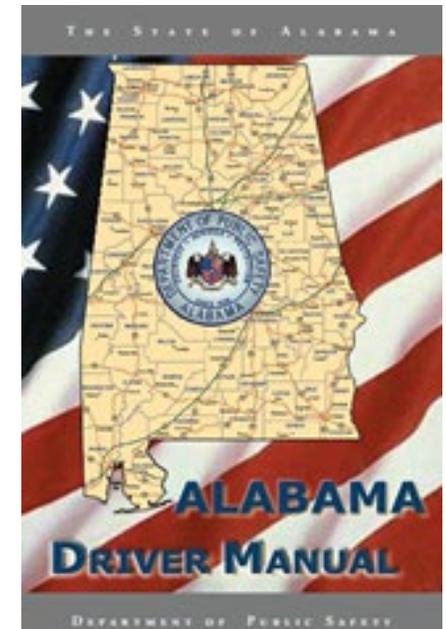
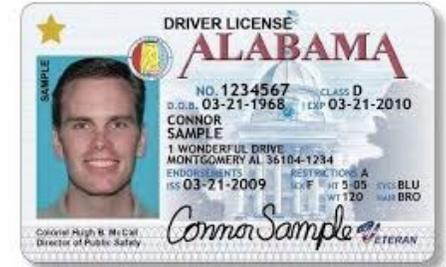


You should study the [Alabama Driver's Manual](#) prior to applying for a license.

Students must have at least 160 days remaining on their I-20/DS-2019 to be eligible to apply or renew license.

1. **Prepare SSN Card or get an SSN Denial Letter** – if you don't have a Social Security Card, you must do this before requesting a [Verification Letter](#) from ISSS
2. **Obtain Status Verification Letter from ISSS** – Once you have either the SSN Card or SSN Denial Letter, then complete a [Verification Letter Request](#) with International Student & Scholar Services so that you may obtain a verification of your visa status. This letter is required for F-1 and J-1 students as well as for their dependents.
3. **Gather your immigration documents** – Besides the [Verification Letter](#), you must take all of your immigration documents, including your I-20 or DS-2019, your passport, and your [I-94 Record](#).
4. **Make an appointment online with the Driver's License Office** – You will need to take both your written test and your driving test at your local driver license office. You must make an [appointment online in advance](#).

Full details on the License Application Process: <http://international.ua.edu/iss/life-in-tuscaloosa/transportation-driving/>



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4. Bank Account

General documentation required to set-up a checking account:

- Passport
- I-20 or DS-2019
- I-94 Record
- Proof of Physical Address
- Mailing Address
- University of Alabama Action ID Card
- Tuscaloosa Phone Number
- Email Address



PLEASE NOTE: In addition to the documents above, The Alabama Credit Union requires a Verification Letter from ISSS.

Full details on Banking: <http://international.ua.edu/iss/life-in-tuscaloosa/finances-banking/>



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5. Phone/SIM Card

Cellular Phone Store Locations

Most major wireless phone service providers are available in Tuscaloosa. You can find most of these phone providers at the University Mall, Wal-Mart, Target and other locations around the city.

- **Verizon** – <https://www.verizon.com/> - 2340 McFarland Blvd. E, Tuscaloosa, AL
- **AT&T** – <http://www.att.com/> - 1701 McFarland Blvd. #4, Tuscaloosa, AL
- **T-Mobile** – <http://www.t-mobile.com/> - 1006 Veterans Memorial Pkwy #B, Tuscaloosa, AL
- **Metro** – <https://www.metrobyt-mobile.com/> - 426 15th Street, Tuscaloosa, AL



Specialized Plans for International Students and Scholars

There are a few companies which offer specialized no-contract plans that are specifically designed for international students, scholars, and dependents.

Campus Sims – <https://www.campussims.com/student-sim-order-form/>

StudentSIMs – <https://mysimportal.com/order/studentsims/>



studentSIMS
A J1SIM Company

Full details on Phones: <http://international.ua.edu/iss/life-in-tuscaloosa/telephone-services/>



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6. Transportation Resources



TUSCALOOSA BUS SYSTEM –
<http://tuscaloosatransit.com/>

CRIMSONRIDE – UA BUS SYSTEM –
<http://www.crimsonride.ua.edu/>

GREYHOUND BUS LINES –
<http://www.greyhound.com/>

AMTRAK TRAIN SERVICES –
<http://www.amtrak.com/>



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7. Campus and Community Resources

The Campus Visitor's Guide contains extremely helpful information about the campus.

<https://visit.ua.edu/>

Tuscaloosa's Visitor's Guide is an amazing resource for all that is great about Tuscaloosa and why this is Title Town!

<https://visittuscaloosa.com/>



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