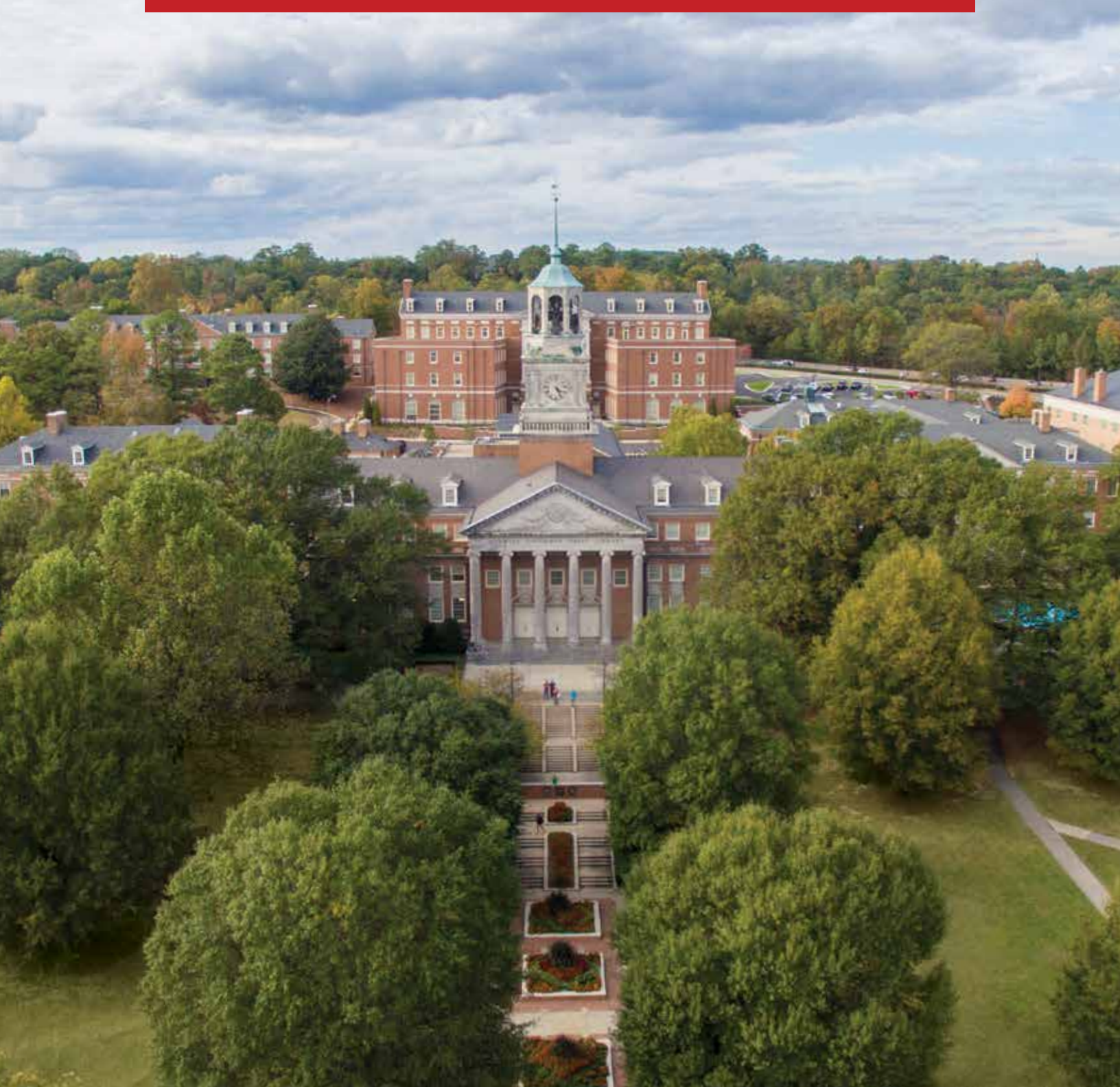


Pre-Arrival Information for
International Students

Samford University





Welcome to Samford!

Congratulations on your admission to Samford University!

We look forward to welcoming you to the United States and to our great city of Birmingham, Alabama. You are joining our community at an exciting time of great growth in our student body. The Global Engagement Office wants to help you make a smooth transition to the university and the United States. As you prepare for your academic career at Samford, please carefully read this important information and complete all the necessary steps before you arrive in Birmingham.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact us at geo@samford.edu or **205-726-2741**.

We look forward to meeting you,

Lauren Doss, Director

Global Engagement Office

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Samford Pre-Arrival Checklist

Please make sure you have prepared everything before you arrive at Samford University!

Checklist:

- Access Pre-Arrival Orientation and Immigration Check-In for International Students Course**
You can log into the course on Canvas through Samford Portal. Check your email for more information about accessing the course.

- Visa and Passport**
To obtain your F-1 student visa, you must receive your I-20; pay the SEVIS I-901 fee; confirm that your passport will not expire within six months of your expected entry date to the US; and schedule a visa application interview at a US Embassy or Consulate. An overview of the visa application process can be found on page 4.

- Submit Health and Immunization Forms**
You will receive an email from Med+Proctor to your Samford email account with instructions for creating your account and providing your health information. For more information, visit page 6.

- Plan Travel and Complete Immigration Check-In Day Form**
Find travel information on page 8.

- Find Housing**
Review your options for on campus or off campus housing on page 11.

- Check Your Finances**
Flywire is the official payment method for Samford international students. You will need to set up your Flywire account to pay for your classes. Find more information on page 12.

- Pack your bags!**
Prepare supplies before leaving your home country. For a detailed list of what to bring and which documents you will need to carry on the plane for the US Port of Entry, visit page 9.

- Follow Samford Global Engagement Office on Instagram**
Learn more about our office and exciting events happening on campus by following @samfordglobal.

Getting Your Student Visa

As an international student, you are required to have a visa that permits study in the US. Below, we provide you with information about applying for an F-1 visa, which is a student visa and will allow you to study at a US university. You will need to schedule an appointment to apply for this visa at a US Embassy or Consulate in your country and complete a visa interview.

Get additional support with Pre-Arrival Course through Samford Portal. As a new international student at Samford University, you will receive an email at your Samford email address with information about the course and how to access it.

Please ensure you follow the instructions from the US Department of State, the information below is for general guidance:

1. Obtain the Form I-20 from Samford University.

You will receive the Form I-20 from the Global Engagement Office. Carefully read the instructions included with the I-20 before visiting the US Embassy or Consulate for your F-1 student visa. Keep this document in a safe place because you will need to bring the original signed form for your visa interview.

2. Pay the SEVIS I-901 Fee.

The I-901 fee is required to get the F-1 visa. At least three business days before you schedule your visa interview, pay the SEVIS I-901 fee by going to the SEVIS I-901 fee website at www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html. You must follow the instructions to pay the SEVIS fee and print the receipt. This fee is not the same as the visa application fee. You will need your SEVIS ID number when you pay the fee. It can be found on the top right-hand side of your I-20. You will also need the university school code. **Samford F-1 School Code: ATL214F00124000**

3. Complete the Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-160.

After paying the SEVIS I-901 fee, you must complete the online visa application, Form DS-160. When you have completed and have submitted the application, print the DS-160 bar code page and confirmation page. Please note you will need to upload a photo during this process, so ensure that you have one ready that meets requirements.

Check photo requirements: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos.html>

Learn more about completing the DS-160: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/forms/ds-160-online-nonimmigrant-visa-application.html>

4. **Schedule your visa appointment**

To schedule your appointment, go to the US Embassy and Consulate webpage: www.usembassy.gov. Find the location where you want to have an appointment and follow the specific instructions for scheduling.

5. **Prepare for your interview**

Gather Documents:

- Passport – ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond your period of stay in the US (unless exempt by country-specific agreements).
- Form DS-160 confirmation page and bar code page
- Application Fee (I-901 fee) payment receipt
- Photo – bring a printed of the photo you used for your DS-160 application form.
- Form I-20 issued to you by Samford University
- Proof of funding documents that you used to get your confirmation
- Additional documents: Please see additional documents that are required or recommended on the travel.state.gov website at bottom of this page.
- Check with embassy or consulate where you will be applying to see if there are additional requirements.

6. **Transferring from Another US School**

If you are transferring from another school in the US and you already have an F-1 visa, you must complete the SEVIS Transfer Clearance form at least 15 days before the start date of your program. If you plan to travel outside of the US before beginning your program at Samford, please contact the Global Engagement Office to obtain an I-20 for re-entry.

7. **Visa Delays**

If you are unable to obtain a visa before the start date for which you have been admitted, contact Samford University immediately. You may defer and apply your deposit toward the tuition for the next semester.

It is important that you check for any updates and specific requirements online at the US Embassy or Consulate near you: www.usembassy.gov and follow the instructions from the US Department of State: travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html

Questions about visas?

Contact the Samford International Student and Scholar Coordinator at jlbeck@samford.edu or 205-726-2741.

For more information about traveling to the US: studyinthestates.dhs.gov/

For more information about SEVIS I-901 fee: ice.gov/sevis/i901



Medical Information

Samford University Health Services provides care for basic medical needs you may have while studying at Samford.

University Health Services

SUhealth@samford.edu

205-726-2835

Health and Immunization Forms

Health forms are required of all undergraduate and graduate students studying at Samford. Samford uses Med+Proctor for collecting health and immunization forms. Med+Proctor will email you at your Samford email account with instructions for creating your account and providing health information. All medical forms must be uploaded to your Med+Proctor online account **before arriving at Samford.**

All medical documents you bring with you must be written in English or come with a certified translation in English.

Health Insurance

Samford University requires you to purchase medical insurance in order to help defray eligible medical costs in the event of an injury or sickness. The student insurance charge will be automatically included on your Samford e-bill.

Enroll online in Samford's health insurance plan

or

Use health insurance from your own country and complete the online waiver

Email any questions about health insurance to geo@samford.edu.

Waiving Samford Student Insurance

If you have purchased an alternative insurance policy, you have the option to complete a Waiver Form, which will be sent to you via Samford email in August. If Samford determines that your coverage meets the minimum coverage standards, you will not be required to enroll in Samford University's student insurance plan and the charge will be removed from your e-bill.

Prescriptions

Bring to the US a copy of all prescriptions for medicines, eyeglasses and contact lenses.

The prescriptions must be in English.

Plan Travel

Book your flight

As an international student, you will plan to enter the US no earlier than 30 days before the program start date listed on your I-20.

When scheduling your flights, you should plan to arrive on the designated arrival days for international students as listed on the Immigration Check-In Day form. Please complete the Immigration Check-In Day form found on your application status page to help us prepare for your arrival. Birmingham Shuttlesworth International Airport (BHM) is the arrival airport.

Early Arrival

If you arrive before your scheduled arrival day, you will be responsible for arranging and paying for your temporary accommodations.

Hotels that offer special rates for Samford students can be found at samford.edu/admission/hotels. Ask for the Samford rate.

Arrival

If you arrive on the designated arrival days for international students, the Global Engagement Office will provide a complimentary airport pick up from Birmingham Shuttlesworth International Airport (BHM). You must complete the Immigration Check-In day form to provide your flight details prior to departure from your home country. An international ambassador (IA) from Samford University will greet you at the airport according to your scheduled flight arrival time and transport you to an on-campus or off-campus housing arrangement. If your flight plans change, please call the Global Engagement Office at 205-726-2741.



What to Bring

Housing Supplies

All residence halls contain furniture, including:

- Single-sized bed
- Desk
- Desk Chair
- Dresser
- Closet space to hang clothes

It is recommended that you bring your own supplies, such as:

- Single-sized sheets (Go to samford.edu/reslife for exact dimensions)
- Pillows
- Blanket
- Towels

You also may purchase supplies once you arrive at Samford.

Electronics

All international students are required to have a US phone number. You can bring your own cell phone or purchase a new one upon arrival. Cell phone service can be purchased after arriving in the US. Discounted rates are available through local cell phone providers.

It is recommended that you bring a laptop computer to complete course requirements.



Clothes

Average seasonal temperatures in Birmingham:

Winter: 13.3° C

Spring: 23.5° C

Summer: 32.1° C

Fall: 24.1° C

Average rainfall:

9-12 days per month

Average snowfall:

0-1 day per year

During warm weather:

Students wear shorts, short-sleeved shirts and sandals.

During cold weather:

Students wear blue jeans, coats and boots.

What should I carry on the plane?

- Original I-20 (printed and signed)
- Valid Passport and visa
- Acceptance Letter
- Receipt of I-901 SEVIS fee
- Evidence of financial support
- Insurance documents
- Personal electronics
- Contact Information for Global Engagement Office

Luggage

Label your luggage with your full name and the address of: Samford University
800 Lakeshore Drive
Birmingham, AL 35229



Where to live



On-Campus Housing

Samford has 28 residence halls on campus. Living on campus is the most convenient way for you to get to class and to get involved in campus life.

How to apply

- Complete the residence hall application included on the applicant status page.
- Sign the housing agreement.

Email reslife@samford.edu.

Who can live on campus?

- All undergraduate students under the age of 21 are required to live on campus; undergraduate students under the age of 24 are allowed to live on campus if they choose to do so.
- All exchange (J-I visa) students are required to live on campus.
- Graduate students under the age of 25 may live on campus if housing is available.

How to find off-campus housing

- Go to apartmentfinder.com/Alabama/Birmingham.
- Call or email the apartment complex to lease a room.
- Email geo@samford.edu and we will assist you in finding a roommate if one is available.

Off-campus housing

Most graduate students live off campus.

If you want to rent an apartment, you should do so before you leave your country. Most apartments are completely unfurnished.

There is limited public transportation to and from Samford. Students in apartments should consider purchasing a car or carpooling to school.



Paying for Classes

E-Bill Payment

The Samford One Stop provides financial services and advising for students and can be contacted at onestop@samford.edu or +1 205 726 2905 to answer your questions. Find more information on samford.edu/departments/financial-services/.

Wire Transfers

Flywire is the official payment method for Samford international students.

- **No hidden bank fees**
- **Wholesale exchange rates**
- **Support in your own language 24 hours a day**

To find more information about setting up an account, visit flywire.com.



Student Information

SUId

Every student has a unique 9-digit identification number. Sometimes this number is called your "SUId," "900 number" or "student number." Do not confuse this number with your username. You will receive your SUId in an email message.

Username

Use this name any time you are asked for your "username" or "user ID." You will receive your username by email. If you have not received this information, please email support@samford.edu.

Create your password

1. Go to pwchange.samford.edu/newuser
2. Enter this information
 - 9-digit SUId
 - Family name
 - Birth date
3. Follow the instructions to create your password and to choose a security question.

Your password must contain the following:

- 10–20 characters
- 1 capital letter (such as A , C)
- 1 number (such as 1 2 3)
- 1 symbol (such as # \$ % & * @)



Bulldog Email

Check your Bulldog email every day.

- Login to portal.samford.edu
- Click on Bulldog Mail
- Enter your username and password





Samford University

Contact our office

Global Engagement Office

1-205-726-2741

geo@samford.edu