Host Family Orientation
Friendship Foundation for International Students and International Affairs, University of Oregon
September 6, 2014
They come to Eugene from all corners of the world.
And they all want the same thing: A successful, positive experience at UO!
You can make it happen!
Before Your Student Arrives,

- Send an email to your student
- Include a photo of yourself, your home, and pets
- Request that your student sent a current photo
- Resolve any dietary restrictions or allergies
Arrival Day

- Meet your student with a “Welcome Sign”
- Greet with a handshake or pat on the shoulder
- Be prepared for lots of luggage
- Take a photo and send to parents
- Optional: Give them a “Welcome Kit’
  - Card with your name and phone number
  - Dutch Bros. card or chocolates
  - House key

Note: Reception table at the airport
Important Stuff to Explain

- Bedding and sheets
- How to operate the shower
- Basic kitchen items—glasses, bowls, silverware
- How to access wifi in your home
- Your expectations
  - We don’t smoke in the house
  - We take off our shoes
  - We go to bed at 11:00 p.m.
  - No showers after this time
Don’t talk louder! If you don’t understand what the student is saying...

- Keep your voice at its normal level
- Speak more slowly
- Point to things
- Use sign language
- Draw pictures
Give Them Choices

- Ask opened-ended questions that require other than a Yes or No answer
- Students may say “Yes” even though they don’t understand what you are saying
- Students may say “Yes” because they want to please you and it’s their culture
Give Your Student Time to Unpack and Get Settled In

- Some students will unpack and crash
- Others are ready to explore Eugene the same day
- Expect irregular sleeping and eating patterns for several days
Some students may feel anxious and disorientated.
Many experience language fatigue, which creates a temporary decline in fluency.
Students may need help in the form of:
- Explanations
- Encouragement
- Guidance
Additional Tips

- Ask if you are pronouncing your student’s name correctly. Some students may choose an American name. Ask which they prefer.

- Americans tend to be talkative. Some cultures respond to new situations with silence and shyness.
Additional Tips - continued

- Be aware that some cultures view personal possessions as common property.

- Some cultures (tropical regions) shower several times a day. Others only once every few days. If needed, talk about use of deodorants.
Additional Tips - continued

- In some cultures dogs are viewed as unclean. Some international students claim to be allergic to pets as a polite way of avoiding contact. Be sensitive. Talk to your student about their comfort level with pets.
Additional Tips - continued

- It is fine to discuss religious practices that are a daily part of your household, such as family prayer.
- Ask if your student wishes to participate, and then respect their wishes.
- It is NOT ok to try and proselytize your student.
Host Tips

- **Language Barriers:**
  Speak slowly, Avoid slangs, Encourage

- **First-day Questions:** Ground Rules

- **Help students Check-in:** Welcome Table, International Student Orientation

- **Ask students to repeat information**

- **Teach American Culture**
Safety Concerns

Don’t frighten your student, but do discuss safety issues:

- Importance of locking doors
- Talking to strangers and panhandlers
- Internet scams
- Leaving personal property unattended in the library, classrooms, gym or sport fields
- Put credit cards, passports, social security cards, Pin numbers safely away in rooms

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
Call 911
Need Guidance

- Banking
- Cell phones
- Driver’s License/OR state ID
- Social Security Card

Ask questions to make sure your student is making good decisions – refer students back to Welcome Table and Orientation. Another Option: “Virtual Welcome Table” [http://international.uoregon.edu/isss/orientation/welcome](http://international.uoregon.edu/isss/orientation/welcome)
Students cannot be issued a driver’s license/State ID until their immigration record has been activated – after fall term begins. If a student needs a driver’s license earlier (i.e. children in school, etc.) they must see Becky Megerssa in person. Office of International Affairs.
Cell Phones

- Use host family address
- No SS# - cash deposit required
International Students cannot apply for a SS# without being employed

International students are only permitted to work on campus, so they must get an on-campus job before applying for SS#

Banks, Cell Phones, Property Management asking for SS# - creates problem for students

Refer them to Welcome Table
Student Housing

On-Campus:
- Residence hall check-in begins 9am Wednesday, Sept. 17th --Same day as ISO.

Off-Campus:
- Students’ responsibility
- Your involvement – set boundaries
- Finding inexpensive furniture
- Online resources:
  Online Resources for Off-Campus Housing
Once School Starts

- Send occasional texts or emails to your student
- Invite them to a meal or event
- Try to attend one event they are involved in
  - Sporting event
  - Music or dance recital
  - Drama or play
Office of International Affairs

- Main resource for international students
- Immigration advising, academic & personal support
  - Financial issues
  - Medical issues
  - Legal issues
  - Domestic violence/assault issues
  - Enrollment changes/leave of absences/travel issues

Oregon Hall, 3rd Floor,
Mon – Fri :: 8am – 5pm
Welcome Table/Check-In

New student check-in and resource table for information and answers.

- September 10 – 23
- 10 am – 4pm Monday through Friday
- EMU lobby inside main doors (near stairs)
International Student Orientation

Begins Wednesday, Sept. 17$^{th}$ at 1pm, EMU Ballroom
(Ends Tuesday, Sept. 23$^{rd}$)

- Mandatory!
- Schedule online:
  [https://international.uoregon.edu/isss/orientation](https://international.uoregon.edu/isss/orientation)
- Schedule
- Registering for classes
- Paying tuition and fees
- Health insurance
- Immunizations
Fall Picnic – Sunday, September 21st, 12-3:00 pm

- Alton Baker Park:
  100 Day Island Rd., Eugene, OR 97401
- Bring your student and a friend if you have room
- Bring a LARGE salad to share (serves 10-12)
- A group of staff and students will be walking to park from Oregon Hall at 11:30.
- NO parking fee
Need Help? Have Questions?

- Contact Becky or Robyn at the Office of International Affairs at 541.346.1436 or 541.346.1682
Thank You!

- For creating a positive experience for an international student.
I am pretty bad in saying goodbye – I think mostly because I hate doing so – , so I think I forgot to mention a lot of things I wanted to say.

I had a great year in Eugene that even surpassed the expectations and dreams I had when I was planning my year abroad. . . You kept on supporting me during my entire time in the US, gave me advice when I needed advice and made me feel at home at your place thousands of miles away home.

I just wanted to let you know that you did a perfect job as a host family and helped me in so many different ways. Thanks for being such a great host family! It was a real pleasure to meet the two of you and it is an honor to consider you as my friends!
Questions?