



American Language and Culture Institute, Academic Hall 415
California State University San Marcos
San Marcos, CA 92096-0001
Phone: 760-750-3200
Fax: 760-750-3779
Email: alci@csusm.edu
www.csusm.edu/alci

We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you to the ALCI. The following information will help you prepare for your life as an ALCI student. Please read it carefully. If you have any questions or need help, contact the ALCI office at alci@csusm.edu or 760-750-3200.

APPLYING FOR AN F-1 STUDENT VISA

- ❖ When you receive your I-20, review the document. If everything is correct, you must sign, date and print your full name at the bottom of page 1 (item #11).
- ❖ Pay the SEVIS fee online with a credit card at: www.fmjfee.com.
- ❖ Print two copies of the computer receipt for your records.
- ❖ Make an appointment at your local U.S. Consulate and prepare any required documents or application forms.

F-1 Visa Interview

During the interview answer every question truthfully. Your visa application will be denied if the consular officer thinks you are not being truthful. Think about the questions that you may be asked. Be prepared to answer those questions. Listen carefully to every question. Answer each question directly and honestly. Do not prepare a speech. If you do not understand the question, ask the consular officer to repeat or explain it.

You must provide evidence that you plan to return home after you complete your studies. The best evidence of a plan to return is "strong ties" to your country. This may include:

- ❖ Family living in your home country
- ❖ A job you plan to return to after completing your studies
- ❖ A business of your own, property or other assets in your home country
- ❖ If you had a brother or sister who came before you as a student and returned to your home country

F-1 Student Visa Approval

Contact the ALCI office as soon as you receive your visa. We will give you helpful information about housing, travelling to San Marcos, and new student orientation. When your F-1 student visa is approved, a visa stamp will be put in your passport. **You must bring your original I-20, passport, visa, and I-94 stamp with you when you travel to the U.S.**

REQUIREMENTS FOR MAINTAINING YOUR STUDENT STATUS

All students with an F-1 student visa must maintain legal status while in the United States. To do so, you:

- ❖ **Must report to the ALCI and register for class by the program start date on your I-20.**
- ❖ Must be a full-time student.
- ❖ Cannot work unless you have permission from ALCI.
- ❖ Must not let your I-20 expire.
- ❖ Must not let your passport expire.
- ❖ Must attend all classes and make academic progress.



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Students who do not report to ALCI by the program start date on their I-20 will have their I-20s terminated (canceled). Students who do not attend class or do not pass ALCI classes will have their I-20s terminated. When your I-20 is terminated, you are in the United States illegally. If your I-20 is terminated, you must leave the United States immediately. If you have any questions about maintaining your status in the United States, please contact the ALCI staff.

ENTERING THE UNITED STATES & ARRIVAL IN SAN MARCOS

Bring your original I-20, SEVIS fee receipt, passport, and visa with you when you travel to the U.S. You will receive an I-94 stamp in your passport either on the plane or when you arrive in the U.S. F-1 students must have an I-94 stamp. Do not lose your passport. Check all of your immigration documents to make sure your name and birth date are correct before you leave the immigration post. When you arrive in the U.S., the immigration official will also read your I-20.

Flight Arrangements

Make your travel plans early. San Marcos is about 37 miles (60 km) north of the San Diego International Airport (SAN) and 100 miles (160 km) south of the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). We strongly recommend that you arrive at the San Diego International Airport. If you have to change planes in the U.S., **you must allow at least three hours to go through immigration and find your connecting flight.**

Transportation from the Airport

You must make your own travel arrangements from the airport to San Marcos. We strongly recommend that you arrive at the San Diego International Airport. Airport shuttles from Los Angeles International Airport can cost about \$200. Connecting flights from Los Angeles to San Diego can cost about \$50 - \$150. Companies that provide transportation from the airport include:

1. [SuperShuttle](http://www.supershuttle.com): (888) 888-6025
2. [PrimeTime Shuttle](http://www.primetime.com): (800) 733-8267

You can find additional shuttle information from either the San Diego Airport or Los Angeles at www.san.org or www.lawa.org. If you arrive in San Diego, and you are living in homestay, then you may reserve airport transportation from the homestay company for an extra fee. We do not recommend taking a taxi cab from the airport to San Marcos. The ALCI does not provide airport transportation. **You must reserve a shuttle or arrange your transportation before you leave your home country.**

HOUSING

Make housing arrangements before you travel to San Marcos. The ALCI does not arrange housing for students. Please see the housing information on our website at: <http://www.csusm.edu/alci/housing>. Tell the ALCI office if you will live with a family member or friend in the San Marcos area. **You may not** live with relatives or friends in Los Angeles because it is too far away. Los Angeles is about 150 km (100 miles) north of San Marcos. Read the housing choices below.



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Homestay with Local Families

Living with an American family in homestay is one of the best ways to learn about American culture and customs. Many students choose homestay for their first semester at the ALCI. You may contact the following homestay agency directly to apply for homestay:

Homestay Services International: www.homestayservices.com
Coordinator: Jenny Cole
Phone: 760-740-9224
E-mail: jennycole3@cox.net

Campus Housing

University Village Apartments and the new Quad at San Marcos are modern apartments designed exclusively for students attending California State University San Marcos. Please apply early. Campus Housing fills up many months before each semester. Choose from the 2 options below for campus housing:

[University Village Apartments](#) offers 9 and 12 month lease.

[The Quad](#) only offers 12 month lease. If you choose to live in The Quad, you must pay for the summer months, even if you will be travelling.

Off-campus Apartments

The San Marcos, Carlsbad, Escondido, Oceanside, and Vista communities near CSU San Marcos offer many reasonably priced apartments. The following sites may be useful in your search for off-campus housing:

[CSU San Marcos Off-Campus Housing Guide](#)

Apartmentguide.com

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

New student orientation is on the first day of the semester. This is the start date on your I-20. You will receive an orientation schedule via email 2-3 weeks before the start of the semester. Orientation is required for all students. At orientation you will learn about the ALCI English language program and the university campus. You will meet the ALCI staff, instructors, and other ALCI students.

You will take a mandatory English placement test on the first day of orientation. **There is a \$250 late testing fee for students who do not take the placement test on the first day of orientation.** Bring the following items with you to new student orientation: original I-20, passport, visa, I-94 stamp, local address and phone number, immunization form, and proof of health insurance or a check or credit card (Visa/MasterCard) to buy health insurance.



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Expenses & Money

When you arrive you must have enough money to pay for ALCI tuition, fees, housing, health insurance, books and other personal expenses. You should arrive in the United States with cash, a credit card (Visa/MasterCard), or traveler's checks. Tuition and student fees are due **before** the first day of the semester. See the attached invoice. **There is a \$100 late fee for students who do not pay tuition and fees, in full, by the due date.**

ALCI Refund Policy

- ❖ Application fees are not refundable.
- ❖ 100% of tuition, less a \$250.00 cancellation charge, will be refunded if you withdraw from the program before the start date. Refunds will be processed within three weeks of written notice.
- ❖ If you are a second entry student with conditional admission to CSUSM, you will be charged a \$500.00 cancellation charge if you do not enroll in the following semester.
- ❖ If you paid tuition through an educational agency, university or sponsor, you should check the refund policy of the agency, school or sponsor to see if you may receive a refund. In this case, you will not receive a refund from the ALCI or CSUSM.
- ❖ If you withdraw during the first week of the Intensive Academic Preparation (IAP) program, you will receive a 75% refund of tuition.
- ❖ If you withdraw during the second week of the IAP program, you will receive a 50% refund of tuition.
- ❖ If you withdraw after the second week, you will not receive a refund.
- ❖ Payment of refunds will only be made directly to the person who paid tuition.

Health Insurance

Health Insurance is REQUIRED. There are no exceptions. All ALCI students must have written proof of health insurance (translated in English) that meets the following requirements:

- ❖ The medical benefit is **at least \$500,000 per condition** with a co-payment of no more than 25% and a deductible of no more than \$100.
- ❖ The policy is valid as long as the student is enrolled at ALCI.
- ❖ The repatriation benefit is at least \$7,500.
- ❖ The medical evacuation benefit is at least \$10,000.
- ❖ The policy includes prenatal (pregnancy) and maternity coverage at no extra costs.
- ❖ The policy pays for pre-existing conditions after 6 months of continuous coverage.

Students who do not have health insurance that meets these requirements must purchase health insurance at the ALCI on the first day of orientation. The policy costs approximately \$419-\$432 for fall or spring semester and \$287 for the summer semester.

Immunization Requirements

You must complete the enclosed ALCI Immunization Form. Please have your doctor complete the form with all the requested information *before* you arrive on the CSUSM campus for the ALCI program. Remember to bring your documents with you.



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Directions to the CSUSM Campus

From San Diego

Go north on Interstate 15
Take Highway 78 West
Exit Twin Oaks Valley Road and turn left (south)
Turn left onto Craven Road
Park in Student Parking Lot B or C
ALCI is located in Academic Hall, Room 415

From Los Angeles

Go south on Interstate 5
Take Highway 78 East
Exit Twin Oaks Valley Road and turn right (south)
Turn left onto Craven Road
Park in Student Parking Lot B or C
ALCI is located in Academic Hall, Room 415

Parking Information

Parking is strictly enforced on campus. Visitors must buy a permit from the kiosk in Parking Lot C or B, or from the vending machines located in the middle of the student parking lots. It costs \$3.00 for the first hour or \$9.00 all day. Bring cash. You will be able to purchase a student parking permit during orientation.

REQUIRED ITEMS TO COMPLETE BEFORE YOU BEGIN CLASSES AT THE ALCI:

- Review your I-20. Make sure your name, birth date and personal information are correct.
- Print your name and sign your name on line #11 of page 1 of your I-20.
- Pay the SEVIS fee (\$200) online at www.fmjfee.com. Print two copies of your receipt.
- Schedule a visa interview. Find your local U.S. Consulate at: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>
- If you did not receive a visa, tell the ALCI if you will go for a second interview.
- If you receive a visa, contact the ALCI at alci@csusm.edu and complete the following steps:
 - Reserve your plane ticket.
 - Arrange housing in the San Marcos area. Visit <http://www.csusm.edu/alci/housing> for more information.
 - Complete the immunization requirements.
 - Reserve and confirm airport transportation at least two weeks before your arrival.
 - Pay tuition and fees by check, credit card (Visa/MasterCard), or wire transfer.
 - Check your email regularly. Print the New Student Orientation Schedule.
 - Bring your original I-20, passport, visa, I-94 stamp, immunization form, and other documents with you.
 - Report to school by the semester start date on your I-20.
 - If you have any questions or need assistance, contact the ALCI at 760-750-3200 or alci@csusm.edu