



**Office of Multicultural  
and International  
Student Affairs**

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**INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Although the university will be tracking your information through its computerized Colleague system, it is imperative that you personally **notify the MISA office and Records Office of any changes in your personal or educational life** so that immediate action may be taken in order to insure that your legal status remains intact.

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Please note that **many requests and obligations are time-sensitive**. Be certain to observe the deadlines, especially if applying for *Optional Practical Training* upon the completion of your degree program.

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Should you have any questions please contact:

Dave Blackburn

**MISA Office**

286-8405/e-mail: [deb@niagara.edu](mailto:deb@niagara.edu)

Elizabeth Broomfield

**Records Office**

286-8726/e-mail: [eab@niagara.edu](mailto:eab@niagara.edu)

or

Kristin Larson

**Records Office**

286-8728/e-mail: [klarson@niagara.edu](mailto:klarson@niagara.edu)

Alicia Gizzi

Assistant Director

**Office of Admissions**

286-8712/e-mail: [agizzi@niagara.edu](mailto:agizzi@niagara.edu)

DEB:ea  
August 2009

how to volunteer in the community

**Learn & Serve**

O’Shea Hall, First Floor

ext. 8750

e-mail: [jmf@niagara.edu](mailto:jmf@niagara.edu)

what is available at the campus store

**Campus Store**

Butler Building

ext. 8595

e-mail: [store@niagara.edu](mailto:store@niagara.edu)

**WELCOME TO NIAGARA UNIVERSITY**

The Multicultural & International Student Affairs office (MISA) has compiled this informational booklet to answer some basic questions you may have about the United States, Niagara University and your rights and responsibilities as an international student.

Please keep in mind this booklet is a brief guide. **You must register with our office.** We look forward to meeting you, answering any questions you may have, and keeping you up-to-date on upcoming events at your new "home away from home."

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# NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

## Office of Multicultural & International Student Affairs (MISA)

**Location:** Gallagher Center - Lower Level  
**Office Hours:** Monday - Friday  
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
**Telephone:** 716-286-8405  
**Director:** Mr. David Blackburn  
**Secretary:** Mrs. Betty Andropolis  
**e-mail:** [misa@niagara.edu](mailto:misa@niagara.edu)

### IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

**Be sure your documents are valid at all times!!**

Always have in your possession:

1. **Passport**
2. **I-20**
3. **I-94** The white arrival/departure card must be kept valid. D/S means "Duration of Status" and is valid as long as you are in legal F-1 status.

#### **If you lose and/or need a new:**

1. **Passport:** consult your country's embassy/consulate
2. **I-20:** go to the Niagara University Records Office
3. **I-94 card:** apply at INS Office, 68 Court St., Buffalo, New York

#### **International Student Check-in:**

Students with an I-20 must complete this check-in process in the Records Office during the first week of school

**EACH SEMESTER.**

**Be aware of the PROGRAM END date on your I-20 (item #5).**

**DO NOT LET THIS DATE PASS.**

**If you need more time to complete your degree program you must apply to the Records Office for an extension at least 30 days prior to the expiration date.**



how to get assistance with your academic coursework or advice on your English

#### **The Learning Center**

Seton Hall - First Floor  
ext. 8072  
e-mail: [eam@niagara.edu](mailto:eam@niagara.edu)

answers regarding international student status and USA requirements

#### **Records Office**

LL Gallagher Center  
Elizabeth Broomfield - ext. 8726  
e-mail: [eab@niagara.edu](mailto:eab@niagara.edu) **or**  
Kristin Larson - ext. 8728  
e-mail: [klarson@niagara.edu](mailto:klarson@niagara.edu)

more about recreation, intramural and club sports

#### **Kiernan Center**

ext. 8055  
e-mail: [jks@niagara.edu](mailto:jks@niagara.edu)

more about cooperative education

#### **Cooperative Education Program**

Seton Hall  
ext. 8530  
e-mail: [careers@niagara.edu](mailto:careers@niagara.edu)

more about student life on campus, or if you want to be an RA

#### **Student Affairs**

O'Shea Hall  
ext. 8566  
e-mail: [deanofsao@niagara.edu](mailto:deanofsao@niagara.edu)

what to do if you have a housing question

#### **University Housing**

O'Shea Hall  
ext.8100  
e-mail: [housing@niagara.edu](mailto:housing@niagara.edu)

how to write a resume, look for a job or further your career

**Career Development**

Seton Hall  
ext. 8500  
e-mail: [careers@niagara.edu](mailto:careers@niagara.edu)

how to deal with life's problems and stresses

**Counseling Services**

Seton Hall  
ext. 8536  
e-mail: [tmm@niagara.edu](mailto:tmm@niagara.edu)

what to do or where to go if you are feeling ill

**Health Services**

Butler Building  
ext. 8390  
e-mail: [health@niagara.edu](mailto:health@niagara.edu)

what to do if you have been a victim or to report a crime

**Judicial Services**

O'Shea Hall  
ext. 8566  
e-mail: [deanofsao@niagara.edu](mailto:deanofsao@niagara.edu)

how to get a job in food service

**Food Services**

Clet Hall  
ext. 8394  
e-mail: [mckibbin@niagara.edu](mailto:mckibbin@niagara.edu)

answers regarding your NU student ID card

**Information Technology**

St. Vincent's Hall, Room 108  
ext. 7300  
e-mail: [helpdesk@niagara.edu](mailto:helpdesk@niagara.edu)

## **SEVIS**

### ***Student and Exchange Visitors Information System***

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/index.htm>

The SEVIS program is an internet-based system that provides schools and the United States government with access to accurate and current information on nonimmigrant foreign students, exchange visitors and their dependents. It requires schools and exchange programs to transmit electronic information and even notifications, via the internet, to the US Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Citizenship & Immigration throughout a student's stay in the United States.

This program was authorized by the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA)*, and subsequently authorized on October 25, 2001 through the *Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act*, and the *Enhanced Border Security Act* on May 14, 2002. It calls for 100% compliance by institutions certified to accept nonimmigrant students. **For detailed information visit the Homeland Security website:**

<http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>

### **FAQ's Regarding SEVIS**

#### **What Student Information will be collected in SEVIS?**

1. Student and dependent's full name (as they appear in passport)
2. Student/dependent's current address (may not be a Post Office Box, also any changes to your home or local address must be reported to NU's Records and MISA offices)
3. Classification and date of visa issue
4. Academic status (full-time/part-time)
5. Country of birth and birth date
6. Country of citizenship
7. Port of entry and date of entry
8. Date you begin your studies

9. Degree program and level
10. Whether you enroll each semester, or fail to enroll
11. Number of credits completed each term
12. Change in status from full-time to part-time (for Canadian Commuters only)
13. Drop below full-time status with authorization
14. Withdrawal from studies
15. Completion date of program
16. Any curricular/optional training
17. Disciplinary action due to criminal convictions
18. Termination date and reasons

**What does “fail to maintain status” mean?**

Some examples of failure to maintain status include: dropping from full-time to part-time enrollment without prior approval from the DSO, attending a school other than the one a student is authorized to attend, failure to apply for a timely transfer or I-20 extension or change in level of study, unauthorized employment and failure to report a change of address.

**What are the consequences if a student fails to maintain status?**

Students who fail to maintain status lose the privileges of their student visa and become subject to deportation. Specific consequences may include denial of re-entry to the U.S., inability to move from undergraduate to graduate status, denial of requests for Practical Training, denial of requests to change visa status and possible denial of all future visa applications.

**Students who fail to maintain status, and whose I-20 document is terminated, would be required to pay the \$200 SEVIS fee again if they apply, and qualify, for a new I-20 document.**

**What can students do to assure they are in compliance with SEVIS?**

- Check the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration web site frequently for updates at: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/index.htm>.

**STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM**

Niagara University offers qualified students the opportunity to participate in Study Abroad Programs. These programs help the student recognize the values of diverse cultures and academic experiences by taking courses at other universities and college in countries outside the U.S. Those interested should contact Bernadette Brennen, in Alumni Hall, visit the Study Abroad Room at the library, or call 286-8360.

**HELPFUL OFFICES ON CAMPUS**

To know:

how to join the ISI, international events, or questions regarding U.S. employment

**MISA**

LL Gallagher Center  
David Blackburn - ext. 8405  
e-mail: [misa@niagara.edu](mailto:misa@niagara.edu)

what student organizations are meeting or social events are happening on campus

**Campus Activities**

LL Gallagher Center  
ext. 8510  
e-mail: [mortiz@niagara.edu](mailto:mortiz@niagara.edu)

about various religious services, community service projects and other ways to develop your faith contact

**Campus Ministry**

LL Gallagher Center  
ext. 8400  
e-mail: [ministry@niagara.edu](mailto:ministry@niagara.edu)

more about safety on campus or if you have an emergency

**Campus Safety**

Campus Safety Building  
ext. 8111  
e-mail: [safety@niagara.edu](mailto:safety@niagara.edu)

3. after completion of all required course work for the degree, while working on the thesis, dissertation or equivalent;
4. after completion of the course of study.

**Authorization** for practical training must be granted **before a student starts to work.** The fee for application is \$340.

More information is at: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/opt.htm> or see Elizabeth Broomfield in Records.

***The Bureau of Citizenship & Immigration Services is very strict regarding employment. If U.S. rules are violated, your permission to study full-time in this country can be revoked and you may be immediately deported.***

## **DEPENDENTS**

F-2 dependents are permitted to remain in the U.S. while the F-1 student is enrolled in school or engaged in Practical Training. F-2 dependents are not permitted to work while in the U.S.; they may, however, enroll in classes. Dependents must leave the country when the F-1 student leaves upon completion of studies and will not be returning to the U.S.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS INCORP.**

### **(ISI)**



This club is a Christian fellowship group promoting friendships between international students and residents of the United States. They currently function on some 240 college and university campuses, helping students adjust to and enjoy American life, as well as receive a well-rounded picture of this country and its people.

For further information on ISI, and to find out about other international organizations and programs, visit the MISA Office.

- Check the Niagara University website. Changes in immigration or visa procedures sometimes happen quickly. Any changes will be posted at: <http://www.niagara.edu/international>. Information is posted as soon as we have reliable facts. You also may be notified by e-mail to your Niagara University e-mail account.
- Be certain you understand the immigration regulations and how to maintain lawful status in the U.S. Refer any questions or problems immediately to Elizabeth Broomfield.
- Be proactive. Students should plan their course schedules carefully so they maintain full-time enrollment.
- Make travel arrangements early and anticipate delays at consulates and border crossings.
- Keep all documents up-to-date.
- Changes in degree level, extensions, and travel validations must be done in a timely manner and on SEVIS documents through the Records Office.
- Allow time for processing new forms.
- Be sure that your finances are in order. You will not be able to register for classes if you have an outstanding tuition balance.
- Register for classes in a timely manner. If you are not registered for fall or spring semester (summer registration is optional) you are required by regulations to depart the United States.
- Make certain you comply with your immigration responsibilities as outlined by the **SEVIS** system, or you may lose your student's status and thus not be eligible for benefits normally granted to F-1 students. In some situations you may be subject to deportation.
- Feel free to come to us for assistance. Niagara University is a better place because you are here, and we are committed to your success!

## What to do if you change your address

The United States Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Citizenship & Immigration Services requires "non-citizens" of the U.S. (other than diplomats on "A" visas or international organization representatives on "G" visas) who are present in the U.S. for more than 30 days, to register any change of address within ten (10) days of the change. ***This is particularly important for students in F-1 visa status who may lose their visa status if they do not follow this mandate.***

- If you are an international student in F-1 status and you move to a new address, make sure you stop by the Records Office to have your new address recorded with the Bureau of Citizenship & Immigration Services.

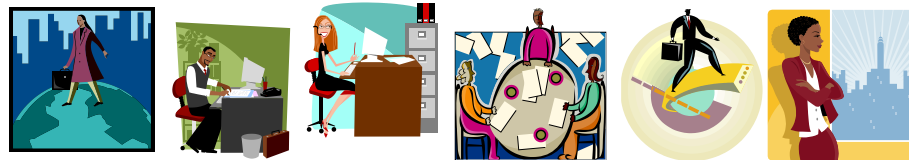
## HOUSING

All Niagara University students are required to live on campus for their freshman and sophomore years. If you decide to move off-campus for the summer, please be aware of any lease you sign with a landlord that would require you to live in or pay for any housing during the regular school year. Your Niagara University Housing Contract requires you to pay for on-campus room and board for a two-year period. The Housing Contract is for the academic year only, and does not include summer housing.



Summer housing is available only if you are registered for summer classes.

**All Niagara University students living on-campus are required to leave the campus for extended breaks such as Thanksgiving, the Winter and Spring Break. If you feel you will be unable to find a suitable off-campus location in which to stay during this time, you should strongly consider moving to *O'Shea Hall* for the school year. Living here allows you to remain on campus during the break periods, but you must move there for the entire year.** If you have any questions about housing policy, stop by the office in O'Shea Hall or call 286-8100



**EMPLOYMENT** - see ***Elizabeth Broomfield in Records for detailed instructions*** and visit <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/employment/index.htm> for U.S. government information.

**On-Campus employment**: You may work on campus without special work permission. You may work up to a maximum of 20 hours while school is in session and full time during vacation periods.

**Off-Campus employment**: Is only available through applying for CPT or OPT (see below).

## **CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING:**

You may be authorized by the International Student Advisor to participate in practical training which is an integral part of an established program before completion of your studies. The work may be internship, cooperative education, or other required practicum offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with NU. The work must be for credit, and be proven to result from an agreement between the employer and the university. Please note that students who have received 12 months of full-time Curricular Practical Training are not eligible for Optional Practical Training. Visit <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/cpt.htm> for more information or Elizabeth Broomfield in Records.

## **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING**

An F-1 student visa holder who has been in the U.S. as a full-time student for one academic year or more may apply to the US Government for OPT benefits. OPT allows eligible students to work in their field of study:

1. during vacation periods;
2. during the semester - less than 20 hrs./week ONLY (part-time will be deducted at the rate of 2 part-time to 1 full-time);

## CHANGE OF ACADEMIC LEVEL

Changing academic level (i.e. bachelor to master) within the university is considered an I-20 change of level and you must complete this I-20 procedure with the **Records Office** within 60 days of the completion of your initial degree, but before you start the new program. A new I-20 that reflects this change will be issued.

## DURATION OF STAY IN THE U.S.

**General:** You may remain in the U.S. to complete your program of study and participate in Optional Practical Training, provided you maintain legal F-1 status.

**Specific time limitations:** You may continue your studies provided you maintain legal F-1 status and the dates written on your I-20 and your I-94 have not expired.

1. If Duration of Study is written on your I-94, you may stay up to the time written in item #5 on your I-20 or you have completed your program, **whichever comes first**.
2. If you will need more time to complete your studies (i.e., beyond the date in item #5 on your I-20), you must apply for an Extension of Stay through the **Records Office** at least one month in advance of the expiration date in item #5.

## SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

***A passport is a secure and valid form of identification.***

**A Social Security Number will only be issued to international students who have an employment opportunity. The procedure requires that a student applying for a card must have a letter from the intended employer with specific details of employment outlined.**

Request will

take 2-3 weeks to process. Go to the Social Security Office in person with the following:

Social Security Administration, Niagara Falls District Office  
6540 Niagara Falls Blvd., Niagara Falls, New York 14304  
716/283-1066 -Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

- ◆ Passport
- ◆ I-20
- ◆ I-94
- ◆ proof of birth
- ◆ A letter from the Records Office stating that you are eligible for a social security card.



## REGISTRATION, ATTENDANCE AND COURSE LOAD REQUIREMENTS:

To register for classes you need to pick up a *Course Schedule* in the Records Office in the lower level Gallagher Center. After making course selections, schedule an appointment with your academic department chairperson who will assign you to an academic advisor. Your advisor will approve and sign your course selection card, as well as “unlock” your myNU account to enable you to register on-line. Registration times are posted and based on academic year (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior or Transfer Student). If you have difficulty registering on-line, please go to the Records Office for assistance. To register online go to: <http://www.niagara.edu>, enter *myNU* and *webadvisor*.

As an undergraduate student you must carry a full course load of 12 credit hours each semester unless:

1. you will complete degree requirements by the end of that school term and do not need a full course load in order to graduate.
2. your academic advisor approves a reduction in course load because of difficulties with English language, unfamiliarity with teaching methods or reading requirements, improper course level placement, illness, etc. (This must first be approved by Elizabeth Broomfield.)

If you are a **graduate student**, you must register for at least 9 credit hours per semester unless:

1. see 1 and 2 above.
2. you hold a graduate, teaching or research assistantship, in which case you must register for at least 9 credit hours.
3. you are working on your dissertation or thesis (see Elizabeth Broomfield).

You do not have to register for classes during the summer break.

**You must attend the school listed on your I-20.**

## **STUDENT ACCOUNTS (payments)**

If a student has an outstanding tuition balance a monthly statement will be mailed to their *preferred address*. If you wish to have the statement sent to a different address you must contact the Director of Student Accounts, Ms. Marti Howell (716/286-8383), in the lower lever Gallagher Center.

## **HEALTH CARE IN THE UNITED STATES**



The health care system in the U.S. may be very different from that which is utilized in your country. Specifically, individuals are responsible to pay for the costs of health care themselves. Payment is made in cash, using a health insurance policy that the individual pays for, or a combination of both. Every part of the health care system may charge for services. This means that a trip to the hospital can result in bills from one or more doctors, the hospital, the laboratory and/or any other parties that may be involved in care such as ambulances, paramedics or even helicopters for serious situations. Health care can become costly, even in the simplest illness or accident.

Therefore, all international students are required to demonstrate proof of acceptable health insurance coverage for accident and illness while living in the United States. Insurance coverage must be in effect for the entire time the student is residing in this country and must be renewed annually. Minimal acceptable coverage must be at the level of the insurance plan that is endorsed and available through the university and include specific repatriation and medical evacuation benefits. All international students must report to the Student Health Center **with an English translation** of their insurance policy for review at the start of each school year.

If you do not show proof of adequate insurance **your student account will be billed for health insurance. Cost for the 2009-10 academic year is \$768.** This is **not** refundable if you demonstrate proof of insurance after the deadline.

International students who fail to meet health insurance requirements will be refused acceptance into the residence

5. **Certified check or money order (U.S.)** made payable to "Canadian Consulate."

**By mail:** Include one **self-addressed, pre-paid, certified envelope for the return of your documents.** No cash. Your documents will be returned regular post otherwise.

Married applicants need only to complete one application. Every effort is made to issue visas the same day. However, there may be a mandatory waiting period. There may be other country specific requirements such as a photo requirement.

Application forms can be obtained from the:  
Consulate General of Canada - Visa/Immigration Section  
3550 HSBC  
(35th Floor, at Washington & Seneca)  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14203-2884  
(716) 852-1247  
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. to noon  
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

For the latest information on Canadian immigrations requirements visit <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/visas.html>

## **TRANSFER BETWEEN SCHOOLS**

NU recognizes the special needs of transfer students and welcomes applications from students who are considering transferring to our university. Students are admitted from other accredited junior and senior colleges and universities provided they are in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of transfer. Courses assigned a grade of C or better will be reviewed for transfer credit. Transfer credit is evaluated individually by the dean of each division

**Transfer to Another School:** You will need to obtain an updated I-20 *from the new school* and complete the SEVIS transfer procedure. You must complete official withdrawal paperwork from Niagara University's Records Office to transfer.

## **TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES**

1. Check the visa in your passport to see if it has expired. If so, you will have to apply at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate to have it renewed **before** returning to the United States. Also, make sure your visa is for multiple entries.
2. If you have changed your visa status to F-1 in the United States, you will have to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate before returning to the states. Remember, you are currently in F-1 Status, but you do not have an F-1 Visa Stamp.
3. **Note well:** If you need to get your visa renewed and are going to a country other than your home country, you should call the U.S. Embassy **in that country** to learn if you are able to get your visa renewed, and whether you need a visa to get into that country. Find out how long it takes to get a visa appointment.
4. Get current financial support documents from your financial sponsor. You may be asked for them by an immigration official at the airport/border when you return to the United States. If you need to renew your visa, you will definitely be required to show your current/recent Financial Support Documents at the US Embassy where you apply for a visa renewal.

**For complete and up-to-date information visit:**

[http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/visa\\_1750.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html)

## **TRAVELING TO CANADA**

Students from most countries are required to obtain Canadian visas from the government of Canada. The following documents must be submitted to the Canadian Consulate either in person or by mail:

1. Application for Temporary Entry (1 white and 1 yellow)
2. **Valid passport** or travel document
3. **Valid I-94** (entry/departure record)
4. **Valid I-20** for all "F-1" students (must be currently updated) original copy, new copy, and designated school official's signature.

halls and/or will not be permitted to register for classes. Lapses in coverage can and will result in suspension from Niagara University. For many students, this will result in the revocation of student visas and expulsion from the United States.

## **HEALTH CARE SERVICES AT NIAGARA UNIVERSITY**

The Student Health Center is located in the Butler Building next to the Campus Book Store and is open 6 days a week to all students who have paid the Health Center fee and have submitted the required Health record forms, including immunizations. Undergraduate students pay the fee automatically, but graduate students must pay a \$50 fee each semester.

Staffing in the center consists of a full-time nurse practitioner/director, a part-time nurse health educator, four registered nurses and a part-time physician. Students may walk-in and be evaluated by a RN according to protocols or have scheduled appointments with the nurse practitioner and a physician.

Services provided include illness evaluation, strep screens, allergy vaccines, Pulmoaide treatments and medications which are dispensed when necessary. There is no charge to be seen in the center, but there may be a small charge for medications and some treatments done outside of the center. Students who require additional care can be referred to area hospitals or specialists. The Student Health Center also provides health promotion/health education programming and information, as well as assistance with the completion of immunization requirements or management of insurance claims.

Students who carry the university-endorsed health insurance plan must report to the Student Health Center on campus for treatment to avoid high deductible charges. If the Student Health Center is closed or if the student is away from campus, any provider that is available may see them.

Please feel free to call (716) 286-8390 or stop in at the Health Center with any questions or concerns you may have.

For more information on health care please visit:

<http://www.niagara.edu/healthcenter/international-health-forms.htm>

## BANK ACCOUNT

Alliance (Niagara Federal Credit Union)

Clet Hall

Niagara University campus

716/286-8368

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00-1:30

Friday 9:00-1:00

To set up a bank account you will need:

1. school identification and passport
2. proof of home address, current telephone and local address.

Foreign currency exchange rates change daily. Once your new account is set up, bank personnel can help you electronically wire funds from your old account.

NOTE: There is a HSBC ATM located on campus in the lower level of Gallagher.

## TRANSPORTATION



Bus transportation is available through Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA).

Three bus lines pass through our campus (#50, #51, #52).

Schedules are available in the Campus Activities office LLGC, by calling 716/855-7211, or online at [www.nfta.com](http://www.nfta.com)

Taxi service (Paid Car Service)

*Blue United Taxi* - 716-285-3333

1898 Buffalo Avenue  
Niagara Falls, NY 14304



*LaSalle Cab Dispatch Service* - 716-284-8833

2230 Niagara Street  
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Train: Amtrak (National Rail/Passenger Service)

[www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)

27th St. & Lockport Rd., Niagara Falls, NY 14305  
(off Hyde Park Blvd.)

716-285-4224 or 1-800-872-7245



## TRAVEL



### Near-By Cities

Buffalo, NY 19 miles 20 minute drive, pop. 310,500

Rochester, NY 82 miles 1 1/2 hours drive, pop. 231,600

Toronto, Canada 85 miles 1 1/2 hours drive, pop. 653,700

### WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

1. Plan for your Travel/Trip. Think several weeks in advance about what you will need for your trip and get it ready! That way, you will not be stressing at the last minute.
2. Make **SEVERAL copies** of your important documents. That includes all of the I-20's you have been issued, the pages in your passport showing your picture, birth date, passport number, expiration date, visa and I-94 card. Keep one set of copies in your carry-on luggage, one set in your checked baggage and leave a set at home, preferably with someone who can send them to you if needed. Make sure to carry your original passport and I-20 with you at all times. If you are stopped by any government official (police, border patrols, immigration officers, etc.) you will be required to show them your original documents.
3. Visit NU's **Records Office** to have your I-20 signed. Do this several days before you travel. Do not wait until the last minute.
4. Order a **copy of your transcript** from the Records Office. At this time, also request a **Matriculation Letter** from the Records Office. This letter states that you are currently enrolled as a student at Niagara, and that you have registered for class for the upcoming semester. It typically takes a few days for these requests to be processed.