



Welcome to McNeese State University!



Office of International Programs

Chozen Hall

internationaloffice@mcneese.edu

You've been admitted! Now what?



Receiving your I-20

- Submit your [Affidavit of Support](#) and sponsor's bank letter or statement to intinfo@mcneese.edu
- Review your I-20 carefully, and if no corrections are needed, print and sign the form on the bottom of page 1
- Schedule your visa interview with a [U.S. Embassy/Consulate](#) near you



SEVIS I-901 Fee and the Visa Process

- Pay the [I-901](#) fee **prior** to your interview
- Review the [U.S. Department of State's](#) website for helpful tips
- Complete the [DS-160](#) and pay applicable fees
- Bring all necessary documents
 - Signed I-20
 - Acceptance letter from McNeese
 - Financial documents
 - Valid passport
 - Photos as specified by the Embassy
 - DS-160 payment receipt
 - SEVIS I-901 payment receipt



HELPFUL TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL VISA INTERVIEW



DO

- Be honest and fully answer all questions asked
- Be confident about your upcoming educational journey at McNeese – know your program and how you plan to use your degree when you return home
- Be prepared to answer questions about how you'll finance your education
- Establish strong ties to your home country



DON'T

- Rehearse responses you think the officer wants to hear
- Memorize information about McNeese that has nothing to do with your degree program or academic goals
- Forget to emphasize how you will use your degree once you return home.
- Misrepresent any facts or information



WEBSITES TO HELP YOU PREPARE

[Study in the States](#)

[NAFSA](#)

[EducationUSA](#)

[Visit Lake Charles](#)

[McNeese Catalog](#)

Your visa has been approved! Let's get ready to travel!



Pre-travel Information

- Find the earliest admission date on your I-20
- Watch this [video](#) to learn what to expect at the Port of Entry
- Keep these documents on you – not in your checked luggage
 - I-20
 - Passport and visa
 - Financial documents
 - Acceptance letter
- When you arrive, an [I-94](#) will be created
- A Customs and Border Patrol agent will [interview](#) you



Arriving in Lake Charles

- If possible, fly into the [Lake Charles Airport](#)
- If you need ground transportation to the campus, you can use one of these services:
 - Yellow Cab Co. 337-433-8282
 - Fast Taxi 337-853-2534
 - \$10 Taxi Cab of Lake Charles 337-990-5573
 - LYFT (mobile app)

Items NOT to Bring

- Large amounts of cash (but make sure you have a reasonable amount of U.S. currency on you to cover your basic needs for at least the first week you are here)
- Any prohibited item listed [here](#)



CAMPUS HOUSING INFORMATION

- Some of the benefits of living on campus include proximity, safety, all-inclusive utilities, internet, on-site computer labs, and dormitories that are open year-round
- If you live on campus, a [meal plan](#) will be required
- Must sign a ten-month (August-May) lease agreement
- \$150 security deposit (refundable)
- \$225 screening and application fee (non-refundable)
- Priority placement deadlines are March 1st for the Fall semester and October 1st for the Spring semester
- International students should confirm move-in dates with Housing Office PRIOR to booking flights and schedule a move-in appointment

[Residence Life](#) Contact Information

General inquiries and leasing information: drew@mcneereserlife.com

Phone number: 337-475-5606

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING INFORMATION

- Students are not required to live on campus, although we do recommend it.
- Find available rentals by searching “apartments in Lake Charles, LA”
- Some complexes popular among our international students are:

[Flats on Walters](#)

[The Commons at McNeese](#)

[University Villas](#)

MANDATORY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CHECK-IN

- All new international students are required to attend one of the **MANDATORY** check-in sessions held at the beginning of each semester (usually, the Friday and Saturday after classes begin)
- Participation in Cowboy Camp is separate from (and does not exempt you from) International Student Check-In
- Check your McNeese student email regularly for updates from our office, including when to come to Chozen Hall for check-in
- Bring the following items with you to check-in:
 - Signed I-20
 - Passport and visa
 - Completed Address Update Form (if you are living on campus, you must include the NAME of your dorm as well as the room number; we cannot register your SEVIS record without this information)
 - Completed Next of Kin Form
 - Immunization documents (if you've brought copies with you)



ACADEMIC ADVISING

- Pre-arrival advising and registration is strongly recommended
- All incoming freshmen have a [Freshman Advisor](#) based on their major
- All transfer students should reach out to their department head as soon as possible so they can be connected to their advisor within their major field of study
- Graduate students should reach out to their department heads for academic advising
- It is your responsibility to reach out to your advisor and initiate the advising/registration process
- Once you are registered, sign up for the [F-1 Hub](#). This is your PRIMARY method of requesting many services provided by our office, and it contains helpful resources and information about the campus and the Lake Charles area
- Foreign transfer credit can only be assigned with a WES or SpanTran evaluation
- Graduate students in the mathematical sciences will be required to complete pre-registration testing. Please contact your advisor for full details.



Enrollment Requirements and Payment Options



Enrollment Requirements

- F-1 students must enroll in a full course of study each semester
 - Undergraduate students: 12 hours minimum
 - Graduate students: 9 hours minimum
- Only one 100% online class per semester may be counted toward the full course of study requirement
- Students are not required to enroll in summer courses
- Most courses are three credit hours
- We suggest less intensive courses for your first semester as you get acclimated to the U.S. educational system.




Tuition Payment Options

- Payment is handled by the Cashier's Office (Smith Hall), which can be reached at msucashiers@mcneese.edu
- If you'd like your on-campus housing and meal plan to show on your bill, please contact Housing to complete the EM-1 Form
- Payments can be made via FlyWire (recommended), debit or credit card, or wire transfer (to request a bank transfer letter, email intinfo@mcneese.edu with your name, McNeese ID number, and the subject line "Bank Transfer Letter")
- Exact estimates of the cost for your tuition and fees cannot be calculated until you register for classes



HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTHCARE INFORMATION

- Health insurance is mandatory and assessed as part of your fees
- Currently, health insurance is administered through [ISO Insurance](#) and is about \$180 per semester (but varies slightly each semester)
- This insurance is extremely basic and does not cover pre-existing conditions
- Many students opt to purchase supplemental health insurance
- Enrolled students at McNeese can use the [Health Services Center](#) on campus
- Emergencies and after-hours care must be sought at area hospitals or urgent care facilities (please note that ER care in the U.S. is extremely expensive and should only be used in medical emergencies)
- Counseling services are available to enrolled students through the [McNeese Counseling Center](#)
- Familiarize yourself with the closest urgent care centers and hospitals, and have a plan to get to either in case of an urgent or emergent medical situation



In case of an emergency,
dial 9-1-1



TRANSFER STUDENTS

If you are transferring to McNeese from another U.S. institution, you must have your SEVIS record transferred to us (school code: NOL214F00101000) before you can register.

Communicate your intent to transfer to your previous school's international advisor and provide them a copy of your McNeese Acceptance Letter.

Clarify your SEVIS release date with the international advisor; we cannot issue your McNeese I-20 until the release date set by your previous school.



ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Graduate Assistantships are awarded by each department. Our office is not able to assist graduate students with securing GA positions. Many assistantships are not awarded pre-arrival. For more information, please contact your department head.
- The Scholarship Office awards scholarships based on SAT scores for first-time freshmen or GPA for transfer and graduate students; all scholarship questions should be directed to scholarships@mcneese.edu.

THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS LOOKS FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU TO MCNEESE!



The Office of International Programs is located in Chozen Hall/Student Central



(337) 562-4586



internationaloffice@mcneese.edu



www.mcneese.edu/international