Best Practices for Hosting International Visitors

The following checklist is designed to provide you with assistance when you sponsor or invite an international visitor. This information will help the visiting faculty/scholar have a positive experience during his/her stay at Texas A&M.

Emergency Telephone Number

- The visitor should have an emergency telephone number where the sponsoring faculty or someone from your department can be reached at any time of the day or night, in the event of urgent need. This number should be provided to the visitor before his/her arrival to the United States.

- Immigration Services for Faculty & Scholars (ISFS) should have the hosting department's emergency telephone number to notify sponsoring faculty and department in case of an emergency of which ISFS becomes aware.

- ISFS will provide the visitor with an immigration emergency number for ISFS in case they experience difficulty entering the United States at the port of entry. This phone number will be provided with their immigration documentation.

- The sponsoring department should have contact information for ISFS, Human Resources, Dean of Faculties, and other emergency resources available to faculty and staff.

Housing Arrangements

- Provide housing information to the visitor prior to their arrival in College Station and according to their needs (e.g. family, roommates, and affordability).

- Other housing options are available at http://studentlife.tamu.edu/agoss/

- Encourage the visitor to choose housing that is accessible to campus and shopping and in safe neighborhoods.

Transportation

- Coordinate transportation from the airport to College Station, and give all the details to the visitor well in advance of their trip.

- Make plans in advance for how to handle unexpected changes in travel schedules (missed or delayed flights, immigration or custom inspections). For example, plan to call or email ahead if delays are experienced.

- Try to meet your visitor at the airport.

- Arrange for transportation for your visitor for at least the first few days while he/she settles in at Texas A&M University.
Check in with Immigration Services for Faculty & Scholars

- The check in process generally involves making a copy of the visa entry documents, entry stamp, and passport, so make sure your visitor has these with them.
- Make sure that the visitor checks in with the ISFS upon arrival at TAMU. ISFS provides to visiting scholars an orientation on program requirements, employment issues, community services, information on the campus shuttle bus system, and route maps.
- ISS will make visitors aware of campus resources (e.g. Code Maroon, completing emergency contact information in HR Connect, EAP, HR Benefits office, if coming as TAMU employee).

Courtesy Introduction to Texas A&M and Local Communities

- Introduce your visitor to their new neighborhood by showing them the shops and services nearest their residence (grocery store, laundry, school for children, emergency medical care).
- Show your visitor around your department and college, and the support facilities (dining, photocopying, computer labs, etc.).
- Ensure access to computing and library resources.
- Introduce your visitor to colleagues at the first possible department meeting, and encourage your colleagues to get to know the visitor as soon as possible.

Beyond the Introduction

- Arrange for social events to welcome your visitor, such as a reception for the visitor and their family or lunch and/or dinner with other colleagues.
- Show your visitor the University by taking advantage of the walking tours offered at the Visitor's Center in Rudder Tower.
- Provide information to your visitor (brochures, handouts, map, etc.) from the Bryan/College Station Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Possibly arrange for an out of town trip with your visitor to experience the wonders of the great state of Texas.
- Check back with your visitor after his/her first few weeks to see how they are settling in and if they are experiencing any difficulties.