



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR UNIVERSITY (AETC)**

15 August 16

**MEMORANDUM FOR INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STUDENTS (IMS)**

FROM: SPAATZ CENTER/IOS  
120 S. Mitchell Street  
Maxwell AFB AL 36112

SUBJECT: International Officer School (IOS) Welcome Letter

1. As commandant of IOS and Director of Air University International Affairs, I congratulate you on your selection to attend Squadron Officer School (SOS) and welcome you to Air University (AU). This package provides reporting instructions and general information to help facilitate your transition to the United States. My faculty and staff are committed to your success, and we are excited to share with you the many services and programs AU has to offer during your stay.
2. On the next page, you will find reporting instructions to facilitate your arrival. Please read these instructions in their entirety, because they discuss important information regarding airport transportation, lodging, report time, and in-processing requirements. The arrival window and in-processing for your course is *26-29 September*. Students must arrive no later than *28 September* to complete required in-processing. Mandatory briefings for all students will occur on *30 September*, and the IOS Preparatory Course will begin *3 October*.
3. In addition to preparing you for SOS, the IOS Preparatory Course is designed to provide you with insight into U.S. culture, government, and economic institutions beyond what you will be exposed to in your military studies. You will participate in Field Studies Program (FSP) trips to the local area in Montgomery, these trips are mandatory.
4. We invite you to view the many resources available on the IOS website at <http://www.au.af.mil/au/spatz/ios/>. It will save you time while providing you with guidance on some of the important actions you will want to take care of soon after your arrival. You may also visit the SOS website at <http://www.au.af.mil/au/soc/sos.asp> to give you an idea of what is expected after graduation from the IOS Preparatory Course. Please be advised that you are not authorized to bring dependents to SOS, so any information you find online that pertains to dependents is not applicable to you. Please see the reporting instructions for additional information.
5. Again, congratulations on your selection, and we look forward to your arrival in the United States, Montgomery, and Maxwell Air Force Base. Should you need to contact IOS before you in-process, please call our student administration section at (334) 953-6914/6915 or email [au.imso@us.af.mil](mailto:au.imso@us.af.mil).

//SIGNED//

SCOTT W. RIZER, Colonel, USAF  
Commandant, International Officer School

**INTERNATIONAL OFFICER SCHOOL (IOS)  
INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STUDENT (IMS) REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS**

**Arrival to Montgomery:**

The arrival window for students attending IOS Squadron Officer School (SOS) Preparatory Class 16C is **26-28 September**. All students must arrive no later than **28 September to complete required in-processing**. The IOS provides transportation to Maxwell AFB for students flying into Montgomery Regional Airport (MGM) during the authorized arrival window. We cannot provide transportation from any other airport and cannot guarantee transportation outside the arrival dates. If arriving at MGM and requesting transportation, every effort should be made for the student to arrive at MGM between 0730-1630 Central Standard Time (CST). Upon arrival, students will be met by an IOS representative and provided a date and time to report to IOS for in-processing. Generally, students should expect to report for in-processing the day of arrival to Montgomery, or the next duty day if arriving after duty hours.

The IOS makes every effort to ensure a representative meets students at the airport upon arrival. Any changes to student arrival times or flight itineraries en route should be reported to the IOS as soon as possible. If contacting the IOS during duty hours (Monday-Friday 0730-1630 CST), calling internationally, dial 00+1+334-953-6338, or in the United States, dial 1+334-953-6338. If after duty hours, students should contact the 42d Air Base Wing Command Post, calling internationally, dial 00+1+334-953-7474 or in the U.S. dial 1+334-953-7474, and request to speak to the International Military Student Officer (IMSO). If there is no IOS representative at the airport upon arrival, students should call the same IOS numbers listed above, and instructions for transportation will be provided.

**Lost Luggage:**

Students who have lost luggage en route should file a claim with the airlines **before** departing the MGM airport. Students may use the University Inn, 450 North Lemay Plaza, Maxwell AFB, as the delivery address and 334-953-6915 as the daytime contact number for the claim paperwork.

**Lodging Upon Arrival:**

The IOS reserves lodging for students in the base Visiting Officer Quarters (VOQ) prior to their arrival. Suitable VOQ are available for unaccompanied students for the duration of all education or training programs. At a minimum, all rooms will contain a refrigerator and a microwave. Unaccompanied students receiving U.S. Government travel & living allowance (TLA) under the IMET or other security cooperation program **must** reside in the VOQ to receive TLA. **Should a student receiving TLA who is required to live on base choose to live off-installation for any reason, all allowances will be forfeited.**

All students attending SOS live in the VOQ. The SOS schedule often requires early reporting and multiple uniform changes per day; international students will be lodged in the same area through the duration of the IOS Preparatory Course but will move to a different room at the start of SOS that will enable them to live among their U.S. classmates. **Due to the large numbers of students that attend SOS, assignment to a room with a kitchenette is unlikely.**

**Reporting for In-processing:**

Students will be provided an in-processing date and time by the IOS representative who meets them at the airport. If not met by an IOS representative, students should plan to report at 0800 the next duty day. If not arriving via plane, students should contact the IOS to confirm their assigned in-processing appointment. In-processing takes place from 0800-1630 daily. Students must report to building 904 on Maxwell AFB to begin in-processing. See the "Transportation" section for information on transportation to in-processing. It is recommended [but not required] that students wear their duty uniform when in-processing. We recognize that some students have been traveling for a very long time and may not have time to change into uniforms or may have lost luggage.

**Information Required for In-processing:**

- Invitational Travel Order (ITO)
- Valid Passport and Visa \*\*
- International Driver's License or Country/National License (valid for the duration of the course)
- Date of Rank (when you were promoted to your current rank)
- Copy of travel itinerary showing dates of travel and airports transited – *for students receiving U.S. government allowance only*
- Any receipts documenting reimbursable travel expenses (i.e. baggage fees, taxi, hotel)- *for students receiving U.S. Government allowance only*

**\*\*A note on the Passport, Visa, & I-94:**

Passports must be valid through the entire length of training in the United States. International members may not travel on an expired passport. The visa can expire before the end of the course; however, if it does expire, travelers will not be authorized re-entry into the country should the need to depart the United States arise at any point after expiration.

As of May 2013, foreign visitors no longer receive a paper Form I-94 from U.S. Customs upon entering the United States. Visitors now receive an electronic Form I-94 when processing through Customs. After the electronic record is created, the Custom's official will place a stamp in the travel Visa that should be marked "D/S" for Duration of Status. The electronic record, the stamp, and the ITO together serve as authorization to remain in the U.S. for the period shown on the ITO. Travelers should make sure they receive the verification stamp before leaving the customs area. Travelers can retrieve admission information online at: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html>.

**What to Expect During In-Processing:**

Upon reporting to the IOS for in-processing, students will be provided an in-processing checklist and will complete paperwork. Students will receive a U.S. Government Identification Card and be given the opportunity to open a U.S. Post Office box. Those students who are to receive pay allowance from the U.S. Government will receive information about processing their pay. All students **must** attend mandatory in-processing briefings that are generally held the duty day prior to the class start date.

**Transportation:**

During in-processing, the IOS provides transportation from the airport to lodging. Once students arrive, the IOS will assist with transportation to building 904 for in-processing. For SOS students, the IOS provides transportation to all required SOS Preparatory Course events, but transportation outside of required course events is not provided and will be at the students' expense. Once the SOS course begins, students will be within walking distance of all course events. Temporary transportation options are listed below.

**Buses:** Limited city bus service is available within the Montgomery area. Bus service is not recommended for transportation to and from classes if living off base.

**Rental or Hire Cars:** Montgomery is serviced by most major car rental agencies, as well as locally owned companies. A valid driver's license and an internationally accepted credit card, such as American Express, Visa, or Master Card are required. Rates will vary by company and type of car, but a one-week rental generally costs at least \$200. Depending on course length, IMS may choose to lease a car. This will likely cost at least \$500/month and require a contract as well as the purchase of automobile insurance.

**On Base Taxi Service:** Maxwell AFB has a base taxi service that offers transportation on and between

Maxwell and Gunter Annex. This taxi is free of charge. The taxi CANNOT transport off-base, except to Montgomery Regional Airport. The base taxi runs Monday-Friday from 0500-2045; Saturday and Sunday from 0700-1900.

Off Base Taxi Service: For transportation off base, local taxi companies are available. A company commonly used by base personnel is Checker & Deluxe (334-241-0034). All local taxi companies will charge a mileage fee, plus a tip for the driver is expected. Taxi rates vary, but for most people, utilizing a taxi for local or long distance travel multiple times is not economical.

### **Other Important Notes for Arrival:**

Students should plan on being available for the entire duty day on the day of in-processing. Some requirements take an hour or more to complete. The IOS has a lounge, and the base resource center is located within walking distance of the IOS where students can access free commercial internet and printers. Please be advised that there are no food services at the IOS. There are a few fast food options within walking distance, in addition to a small convenience store and grocery store. Due to manning constraints, the IOS cannot guarantee transportation to any of these places; please read above for transportation options during in-processing and throughout the course.

### **Medical Care for Students**

Medical care is dictated by Item 12b on a student's ITO. All students have the option of utilizing the Military Treatment Facility (MTF) on Maxwell AFB for routine medical needs. Some students, to include IMET students and those students under a Reciprocal Healthcare Agreement (RHCA), must receive medical care through the MTF. Students will receive a medical orientation upon arrival that will clarify the procedures and options for medical care to ensure students do not unknowingly incur out-of-pocket medical expenses. Please note that the MTF on Maxwell AFB is not a full service medical facility. The nearest full service MTF is located over two hours away, so students are often referred to off-base providers within the local area for some types of care.

### **Driving in the U.S. or Obtaining a Personal Vehicle**

In the state of Alabama, you may drive with an international driver's license or a valid country/national license for up to one year. If your national license is not written in English, the IOS will issue a license translation card during in-processing that must be kept with the national license. Licensure rules vary from state to state within the U.S., so we advise reporting with an international driver's license at a minimum if planning to travel. If purchasing, leasing or renting a vehicle, the State of Alabama requires drivers to obtain automobile insurance. Students attending training at Maxwell for 160 days or more also have the option of applying for an Alabama driver's license. Due to the length of course, SOS students are not eligible to apply for an Alabama license. Driving on an expired license in the United States is illegal. It is extremely difficult to renew an expired national driver's license from the United States, and in some cases, impossible. Therefore, it is very important to arrive with a license valid through the entire stay in the United States. Visit the IOS website's "[Student & Family Support](#)" section, for more information about driving during your stay or for information on obtaining a personal vehicle.

### **Student Pay and Currency Exchange:**

It may take up to 3-4 weeks for students who are authorized TLA from the U.S. Government to receive their first paycheck. Students should come with sufficient money to cover approximately 15 days of expenses upon arrival. Students who do receive an advance prior to arriving to the U.S. will pay back the advance after arrival in monthly installments.

Students should expect billeting on base to cost \$60/day at the current rate. Unaccompanied students authorized to receive a living allowance will receive an additional \$30/day for food and \$11/day for incidentals.

Please note that the Montgomery area offers few options for foreign currency exchange. Students should plan to make any foreign currency exchanges at the airport or port of entry upon arrival in the United States.

### **Uniform and Other Dress Requirements:**

At Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex, all military personnel wear the utility uniform (ABU) or flight suit during the duty week, unless otherwise directed. Students must also bring the short sleeved service uniform as well as the dress or formal uniform for official events and ceremonies.

Students are required to wear “business casual” civilian attire on Field Studies Program (FSP) trips, which includes khakis or slacks, a collared shirt or polo shirt, and dress shoes. Blue jeans are not considered business casual. Visit the FSP Program link under “[Student & Family Support](#)” for more information.

### **Telephone and Computer Access:**

Wireless internet is provided for free in base lodging. Commercial internet and wireless internet are available at all base libraries/resource centers along with printing at no cost. Students will be issued government laptops for the purpose of completing course requirements, but it is strongly recommended students bring personal laptops if wishing to utilize specific programs like Skype.

International and long distance calling is available through the base lodging phone system; however, it is very expensive. Most students purchase prepaid phone cards upon arrival to contact their families and eventually obtain a “pay as you go” cell phone contract for long term use. Service in the area is good for most companies; the most commonly used companies are Verizon, T-Mobile, and AT&T. There is no option for purchasing “SIM Cards” on base, but cards can be purchased in local stores like *Best Buy* and *WalMart*.

### **Sponsorship Assignment:**

Upon arrival, students will receive a letter assigning them a local sponsor through the Air University (AU) Alabama Goodwill Ambassador (AGA) Program. Please visit the Alabama Goodwill Ambassadors link on the IOS homepage for more information about this program. It is common for AGAs to meet students at the airport and provide assistance to students throughout in-processing week and during the course. To contact your sponsor in advance, please email [au.imsa@us.af.mil](mailto:au.imsa@us.af.mil).

### **Bringing Your Dependents:**

Only students attending Air War College (AWC), Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), and the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS) are authorized to bring dependents. Bringing dependents to all other courses, including Squadron Officer School (SOS), is **not authorized**. Any student may invite family members for a short visit (less than 2 weeks), but such family members will not be listed on the Invitational Travel Order (ITO); therefore, they will not be authorized use of government facilities, and the student must accompany family members to any government facilities at all times. If students choose to bring family members at personal expense, family obligations cannot interfere with course requirements, and students must be able to provide for any and all needs of the family.

Unaccompanied students sponsored by the IMET Program must maintain residence in base lodging facilities at all times or risk losing all travel and living allowances (Reference Page 1 of these instructions). A student will be considered “unaccompanied” any time Block 12 of the ITO states “Dependents not authorized.” The IOS highly discourages unaccompanied IMET students from bringing family members for visits of more than 2 weeks when the family members are not authorized on the ITO due to the financial risks and logistical difficulties associated with lodging family members off base.

**Departures from Montgomery Regional Airport:**

Please be aware that due to the size of aircraft transiting Montgomery Regional Airport, servicing airlines limit all ticketed passengers, regardless of airline or status, to four (4) pieces of checked baggage at departure. Passengers are allowed one carry-on and one personal item. Baggage is subject to airline weight and size restrictions; please check airline websites for details. SOS students are only authorized 3 pieces of luggage due to the length of the course. Exception: Students coming to SOS directly from DLI are authorized 4 pieces of luggage.

**Additional notes:**

For more information on the local area and programs offered to students and families, please visit the IOS website under "[Student & Family Support](#)." This area of the website is updated often to include more information based on feedback we receive from international students.

**Who Do I Contact for Questions?**

Any questions on student administration or in-processing can be directed to the Student Administration section at [au.imso@us.af.mil](mailto:au.imso@us.af.mil), or 334-953-6914/6915.