VISITING INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM
Home for Today’s Professionals, Tomorrow’s Leaders

VIPP Participant Handbook
Visiting International Professional Program
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
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VIPP - Home for Today's Professionals and Tomorrow's Leaders

Are you looking for an opportunity to study in the US but do not have time or financial resources to pursue a full degree program? The Visiting International Professional Program (VIPP) at Michigan State University (MSU) is your solution. VIPP is a world leader in providing executive education and professional development training for international audiences. We offer non-degree certificate programs and short-term workshops for international professionals in any field. We connect you to the expertise of world-class faculty and resources at MSU. You will benefit from the distinct American Higher Education System without enrolling in a full degree program.

Founded in 1991, VIPP has trained over 4,000 professionals from 30 countries including South Korea, China, Japan, Mongolia, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Russia, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Turkey, and many others.

VIPP is the brainchild of Dr. Gill-Chin Lim, the former Dean of International Studies and Programs at MSU. Dr. Lim recognized the need for professionals from around the world to gain access to MSU's diverse educational resources. To fill that need, Dr. Lim developed VIPP as a non-degree professional education program.

Dr. Dae-Bong Kwon served as the first Director of VIPP from 1991 until the summer of 1993. Under the leadership of Lim and Kwon, VIPP enjoyed its initial success and began its journey to becoming a world leader in executive education and international professional development.

Since the first group of eight participants, VIPP has expanded to include four distinct long-term programs with more than 200 participants each year, as well as tailor-made short term executive workshops on various topics. VIPP has a network of over 4,000 alumni in more than 30 countries. Our alumni are leaders of their professions and work hard every day to their workplaces and their communities for the better.
Director’s Greeting

I’m Xinyu Wu, the new Director of VIPP. I hope you enjoy our Spartan stories, and connect or reconnect with us through this platform to share your Spartan experiences and spirits too.

As a new Spartan (I took up the directorship in East Lansing three weeks ago after working in Europe for 24 years), I look forward to reading the proud history of VIPP and MSU, the inspirational achievements of the Spartans (MSU has 500,000 living alumni in every corner of the world!), and the various exciting sports, cultural and social events on and off campus. It is an exciting time at MSU. President Lou Anna Simon recently set the great vision to transform MSU from a Land Grant university to a World Grant university to lead the way in solving worldwide challenges in areas such as Environment and Energy, Food and Water Safety, Poverty, Global Health, Access to Education and Social Justices. A collaborative approach is essential to realize such ambition, and VIPP is uniquely positioned to facilitate international collaborations between individuals as well as organizations around the world with MSU and the wider Michigan business community.

VIPP has a long and successful history in supporting visiting scholars including a large number of professionals from Korea, China, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, India, Turkey, Middle-Eastern and African countries. It is my ambition to lead VIPP to provide international professionals the most effective training programs to enhance their skill sets; to facilitate their access to MSU’s rich research and education resources; and to encourage and support collaborations. I would like to develop VIPP into the home of today’s professional and tomorrow’s global leader.

VIPP Services

The Visiting International Professional Program offers non-degree certificate programs for international professionals in any field. Our program is normally a one-year program and many students bring their family with them. We understand moving to a new country for study can be daunting. That is why we provide 360-degree support services, from academic support to settlement support, to help you and your family transition to the United States smoothly.

Academic Support
We provide individual consulting and advising services for your academic and professional goals to help you make progress and meet program requirements. In addition to your program curriculum, we provide extra seminars, workshops, field trips, and events all year to enrich your learning experiences. Our academic support includes but is not limited to:

- Small class sizes and dedicated faculty.
• Special seminars, workshops, speaker series, domestic and local field trips, and events.
• Academic advising and research support.
• Liaison services to connect you to academic and professional resources and opportunities at MSU and in Michigan.
• An opportunity to present and share your work with professional peers.
• Support for conference travel.

**Logistic Support**
We provide logistic support to make sure you’re quickly settled in to jumpstart your study. We will help with following (services may vary depending on programs you enroll in):

- Visa processing: DS 2019 for J-1 non-degree student visa or I-20 for F-1 non-degree student visa.
- Pick up at the airport: Capital Regional International Airport (LAN) or Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW).
- On-campus badging and computer system authorizations.
- Finding housing, enrolling in health insurance, and obtaining Social Security Number (SSN).
- Getting a driver’s license, purchasing a car, and signing up for car insurance.
- Family support including enrolling children at local schools.

**Visa Type and Requirements**
We normally process J-1 non-degree student visa for you and any accompanying family members (restricted to your spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21) as legal dependents. If your study is supported by someone other than yourself (your company, government, or other external agency) and their support is more than 51 percent of your funding, you are eligible for a J-1 non-degree student visa and we will process DS 2019 for yourself and any accompanying family members.

Being on J-1 student visa means you are required to conduct a minimum of 18 hours of academic activities each week throughout your stay at VIPP, including the summer semester. We typically arrange 9 hours of classroom study each week, which is likely to be 3 courses (if semester-long, 9 credits) for all the participants during fall, spring and summer semesters. The remaining 9 hours of the required 18 hours can be used for independent study and other academic activities, such as attending other campus lectures,
seminars, conferences, workshops, etc. VIPP informs participants of various academic events going on at MSU and also provides our own additional academic programs such as signature lectures, brown bag seminars, and field trips.

Fee Structure
All VIPP programs are fee-based. We cannot provide any financial aid to applicants at this stage. When you apply for admission to a VIPP program, you need to provide a financial document to prove your source of funding: funding from yourself, employer, government or scholarship council. The funding (which may be from different financial resources) needs to be sufficient to pay for VIPP program fees, health insurance premiums, and other living expenses for yourself and your accompanying family.

MSU Community

Pure Michigan
Michigan State University is located in East Lansing, Michigan. Michigan is a mid-western U.S. state with a population of 10 million. Nicknamed the “Great Lakes State,” Michigan borders four Great Lakes: Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, Lake Eerie, and Lake Huron. Lake Michigan is the largest body of fresh water in the United States and the world’s fifth largest lake. Michigan also has more than 11,000 inland lakes, which spread across its lower and upper peninsulas. Michigan’s lakes provide not only clean and fresh water to its residents but also lots of recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, sailing, and many other water sports.

There are 103 state parks and recreation areas in Michigan, and Michigan residents are never more than an hour away from a state park or recreation area. Michigan’s combined natural wonders of lakes, beaches, forests, waterfalls, and sand dunes attract over one hundred million visitors annually. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Mackinac Island, Sleeping Bear Dune National Lakeshore, Isle Royale National Park, and Tahquamenon Falls are all top vacation destinations in Michigan.

Michigan’s Economy
Michigan’s business climate is stronger than ever and its automobile industry is booming again. Michigan is number one in automotive-related jobs and businesses and a leader in the global mobility community. As the center of the U.S. automotive industry,
it is the home to US's three major automobile companies - General Motor, Ford and Chrysler. In addition to advanced manufacturing, Michigan has developed a diverse economy including aerospace, agribusiness, cyber-security, and defense. It is a great place to do business and live.

East Lansing Areas - Affordable, Safe Quality Living
Living on campus, or living near MSU in the East Lansing, Okemos, or Haslett areas will offer you and your family affordable and safe quality living. According to Town and Country Magazine, Okemos is the fourth best place to live in America, reflecting several key factors including the quality of local schools, crime rates, housing trends, employment statistics, and access to amenities. Our neighboring K-12 systems (elementary, middle, and high schools) are among the top in Michigan and the U.S. Housing and living costs are moderate compared to big cities in the U.S. and there are lots of grocery and retail stores, restaurants, banks, libraries, museums, and parks and recreation facilities.

Excellent Location
MSU's campus is only three miles away from Lansing, Michigan's capital city, home to the state government. Capital Regional International Airport (LAN) is located in Lansing and provides daily flights to the nation's busiest travel hubs (like Detroit, Chicago, and Minneapolis). Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW) less than two hours driving distance, and the Michigan Flyer bus provides easy access from DTW to East Lansing. Chicago, the third largest city in the U.S., is only four hours driving distance. Close to the East coast, you can easily visit New York City, Washington D.C. and Florida by car or plane.

Go Green, Go White! Michigan State University
Michigan State University Spartans work to advance the common good with their uncommon will. The nation's pioneer land-grant university, MSU began as a bold experiment that democratized higher education and helped bring science and innovation into everyday life. Today, MSU is one of the top research universities in the world and home to a diverse community of dedicated students and scholars, athletes and artists, scientists and leaders. MSU has one of the biggest, greenest campuses in the U.S.

MSU Facts
• Founded in 1855, MSU was the first-ever land-grant university in the world.
• Located in East Lansing, three miles east of Michigan's capital in Lansing.
• MSU has a 5,200-acre campus with 545 buildings and another 2,100 acres in existing or planned development. Approximately 19,600 acres throughout Michigan used for agricultural and natural resources research and education.
• Member of the prestigious 62-member Association of American Universities.
• The largest single-campus housing systems in the country, with 21 residence halls and three apartment communities.
Community

• The Spartan Community consists of over 50,000 students that come from all 82 counties in Michigan, all 50 states in the U.S., and 133 other countries.
• Currently there are 39,090 undergraduate and 11,254 graduate and professional students studying here, 51.7 percent are women and 48.3 percent are men. MSU is a proud supporter of diversity with 18.7 percent students of color and 14.4 percent international students.
• MSU employs approximately 5,542 faculty and academic staff and 6,974 support staff employees.
• There are over 550,000 living alumni worldwide.

Academics and Recognition

• More than 200 programs of undergraduate, graduate, and professional study.
• 25 undergraduate and graduate programs ranked in the top 20 nationally by U.S. News & World Report, including six no. 1-ranked programs in undergraduate supply chain management/logistics and graduate programs in nuclear physics, elementary and secondary education, organizational psychology, and rehabilitation counseling.
• Ranks 75th among the world's top 100 universities by U.S. News & World Report.
• Ranks 40th among public universities for in-state students in Kiplinger's 2016 edition of Best Values in Public Colleges.
• More than 275 study abroad programs in more than 60 countries on all continents.
• Ranks No. 7 in the nation for study abroad participation and No. 11 for international student enrollment.
• Ranked among the top 100 global universities in the 2015-16 World University Rankings by Times Higher Education.
• Ranked among the top 100 global universities according to the 2015 Academic Ranking of World Universities from the Center for World-Class Universities of Shanghai Jiao Tong University.
• MSU libraries comprise the 29th largest academic library system in North America with over 4.9 million volumes.
• The MSU Library houses the world's largest comic book collection.

Global Outreach

• Approximately 1,400 faculty and staff members engaged in international research and teaching.
• More than 300 international institutional partnership agreements in 80 countries.
• 25 internationally focused centers, institutes, and offices.
• Average annual funding of $75 million for international work.

Prep Yourself

Packing can be a headache when you are trying to decide what to bring and what to leave behind. Pack lightly since most participants are traveling internationally. You can buy almost all your daily necessities after you arrive in the U.S. Make sure to check the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website, which list things you can't bring on the airplane with you.

Plan for four-season weather

• Michigan has a distinct four-season weather—cold in the winter and warm in the summer. Make your choice of clothing for every season.
• Don't forget your bathing suit! Lake Michigan isn't too far from East Lansing, and there are swimming pools on campus.

• Michigan winter can be harsh for students from tropical areas. You can purchase winter coats, hats, gloves etc. after you arrive.

Pack for all occasions

• Most MSU students dress very casually in jeans and t-shirts when they go to class.

• Students may dress up a little more when they go out at night.

• It is recommended you bring at least one semi-formal outfit or professional attire in case you are invited somewhere with a new American friend, or your class requires you to dress formally for a special presentation.

Things from home

• In the United States, most students from Asia, Africa and Europe will have to use plug converters. There is no need to bring home appliances, for instance, a rice cooker. You can purchase them after your arrival.

• Healthcare and medicine can be rather expensive in the US. You may bring some common medicine with you depending on the period that you are going to be abroad. However, for instance, if you prefer traditional Chinese medicine, it is advised to
bring them with a translated doctor’s prescription. And be sure to check the [TSA website](https://www.tsa.gov) to make sure that you are not carrying any substance that is considered illegal under federal law.

- A very common occurrence is to bring local food to the US. This is unnecessary since almost all kinds of ingredients can be found in local ethnic markets. Seeds in particular are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated at U.S. customs.

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**Academic Calendar**

Click this link for the [MSU Academic Calendar](https://www.msu.edu/calendar/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>M.L.K. Jr. Day – No Class</td>
<td>Mar. 3 - 8</td>
<td>MSU Spring Break (No VIPP Classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 11</td>
<td>VIPP Half-Semester Courses Begin</td>
<td>Apr. 1 - 5</td>
<td>VIPP Spring Break (No VIPP Classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 26</td>
<td>Last Day of Classes for MSU &amp; VIPP</td>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>MSU &amp; VIPP Summer Session 1 Begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>VIPP Graduation (Graduates Only)</td>
<td>June 28</td>
<td>MSU &amp; VIPP Summer Session 1 Ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>MSU &amp; VIPP Summer Session 2 Begins</td>
<td>Aug. 15</td>
<td>MSU &amp; VIPP Summer Session 2 Ends</td>
</tr>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 29</td>
<td>MSU Fall 2019 Semester begins</td>
<td>Sep. 5</td>
<td>VIPP Fall 2019 Semester Begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>VIPP Football Tailgate</td>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>VIPP Half-semester Courses Begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>VIPP Thanksgiving Celebration</td>
<td>Nov. 22</td>
<td>Thanksgiving – Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>Last Day of Classes for MSU &amp; VIPP</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>VIPP Graduation (Graduates Only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 6</td>
<td>MSU Spring 2020 Semester Begins</td>
<td>Jan. 13</td>
<td>VIPP Spring 2020 Semester Begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 20</td>
<td>M.L.K. Jr. Day – Class Canceled</td>
<td>Mar. 2 - 6</td>
<td>MSU Spring Break (No VIPP Classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 9</td>
<td>VIPP Half-Semester Courses Begin</td>
<td>Apr. 1 - 5</td>
<td>VIPP Spring Break (No VIPP Classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 24</td>
<td>Last Day of Classes for MSU &amp; VIPP</td>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>MSU &amp; VIPP Summer Session 1 Begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>VIPP Graduation (Graduates Only)</td>
<td>June 26</td>
<td>MSU &amp; VIPP Summer Session 1 Ends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Housing Options
Spartan Village Housing
Spartan Village is an MSU on-campus apartment. It is located at the southwest corner of MSU campus. Most of our program participants choose to live there. It is 35 minutes' walk away from campus, however participants can also choose to ride a bike or take a bus to get to campus. Since there are limited apartment units provided by Spartan Village, please complete the application as soon as possible once you make the decision to live there. Application and payment must be made by scholars directly to the Spartan Village Housing Office. VIPP cannot do it for the scholars.

Leasing Office: The leasing office handles general questions regarding your lease and can point you in the right direction should you have any questions.

Mailroom: Each apartment will be assigned one mailbox in the mailroom. You should get the mail key when you sign the lease. Larger mail items or packages will be stored in larger mail compartments and the key to that compartment will be left in your mailbox.

Maintenance: If there is anything wrong with the apartment (for example, heat, gas, electricity or water), you should contact the maintenance department at 517-355-9557.

Off Campus Housing
MSU has good resources to help you get started; [https://offcampushousing.msu.edu/](https://offcampushousing.msu.edu/) & [http://www.collegelifeel.msu.edu/the-sparten-guide-3](http://www.collegelifeel.msu.edu/the-sparten-guide-3).

Central Park Apartments
Central Park Apartment is located in Okemos, MI, 20 minutes away from MSU's campus by car. Central Park is close to everything you need - from shopping, restaurants to parks and recreation. They offer 1, 2, & 3 bedroom apartment homes. You can choose from
spacious floor plans with fireplaces, private balconies, walk-in closets and additional storage space. For more information please go to their website at http://www.ampresidential.com/central-park-okemos-mi/.

Knob Hill Apartments
Knob Hill apartments in Okemos, Michigan are just minutes from Michigan State University and offer 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments for rent. Their apartments feature large balconies and spacious closets, as well as new kitchen appliances, new flooring and custom cabinetry in select homes. Take a dip in the sparkling pool, work-out at the fitness studio, enjoy a game of sand volleyball or take a stroll on our scenic hiking and biking trail. Knob Hill is in the coveted Okemos School District and close to shopping, restaurants and entertainment with easy highway access and close to shopping and restaurants, with easy access to I-96. Floor plans start at roughly $790 per month and vary based on size, amenities, etc. For more information please visit http://www.dtnmgt.com/apartments/mi/okemos/knob-hill-apartments/default.aspx#floorPlans-tab.

Club Meridian Apartments
For more information please contact Club Meridian directly.
4425 Heritage Drive, Okemos, Michigan 48864
Phone: 517-347-1850
Fax: 517-347-8348
Email: clubmeridianapts@gmail.com
Health Insurance

All international students/scholars (and their accompanying family members) are required to carry health insurance as a condition of enrollment at Michigan State University. The lack of valid insurance can result in the university revoking your DS2019, which would mean that you no longer have the legal status to stay in the U.S. It is in your interest to have adequate health insurance to avoid unmanageable high costs should you or your family fall ill during your time in the U.S. Federal law requires all J-1 and F-1 visa holders to carry health insurance. When your MSU student ID is activated upon your arrival, you will be automatically enrolled in Blue Care Network (BCN) of Michigan (www.bcbsm.com/msu) and the insurance premium cost will be charged to your Student Account. With this coverage, you’ll have access to quality health care through hospitals, physicians and affiliated health care professionals in the Blue Care Network of Michigan provider network. Providers can be located on the BCN website at www.bcbsm.com. BCN health insurance premium charges for a year or a semester can be found at MSU Human Resources Page. For VIPP participants, international tuition-billed students charges will apply.

If you'd like to choose another health care option and remove the BCN Health premium charges, your own insurance policy must meet MSU's waiver criteria. Each year waiver criteria changes.

Unless staying for a whole year, purchasing daily MSU Blue Care Network insurance is the most convenient option for VIPP participants. Costs vary depending on how many people are covered and the length of your stay.

Daily health insurance policy must cover the actual period of your stay in the U.S. from arrival date to departure date. A daily cost is $5 per day per person.

Based on $5 daily rate per person, your monthly MSU BCN Insurance Cost will be:

a. Participant only: $155
b. Participant + Spouse/Domestic Partner: $310
c. Participant + Spouse/Domestic Partner + One Child: $465
d. Scholar + Spouse/Dom. Partner + Two or More Children: $620

For more information on health insurance such as a member guidebook and summary of benefits, visit MSU Human Resources Page or consult with your program coordinator.

Please note that before you arrive in the US you must make a decision on your health insurance choice, sign the VIPP Health Insurance Information form and send it to us.
This video below teaches international students how to prepare for their arrival in the US, how the US healthcare system works and how students should seek medical care appropriately if they become sick or injured:

**TB Awareness**

When you first register as an international student at MSU, you will be automatically enrolled in a short “course” called TB Awareness on [www.D2L.msu.edu](http://www.D2L.msu.edu). It’s required that all international students complete the course and survey. Failing to do so will result in a hold on your student account and you will not be able to register until the hold is lifted.

Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by a bacterium called Mycobacterium tuberculosis. The bacterium usually attacks the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body such as the kidney, spine, and brain. Not everyone infected with TB bacteria becomes sick. As a result, two TB-related conditions exist: latent TB infection (LTBI) and TB disease. If not treated properly, TB disease can be fatal.

**The Important Role of OISS**

OISS stands for The Office of International Students and Scholars. Their services include:

- Advising on and facilitating compliance with U.S. immigration regulations.

- Conducting orientations and other special programming that help international students and scholars integrate into and adjust to the academic, cultural, and social life of MSU.

- Serving as a liaison with U.S. government agencies, foreign embassies, sponsors and educational foundations that support international students and scholars.
• Contributing to the internationalization of MSU by providing opportunities for growth through cross-cultural interactions.

To consult with OISS, either make an appointment over the phone at 517-353-1720 or come during OISS walk-in hours:

Fall and Spring: Monday - Friday
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Arriving at MSU

Once you decide on your travel plans, please make sure to send your arrival information to your program coordinator and VIPP’s office vipp@msu.edu.

Our most recommended way of getting to MSU is to fly to Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW) and take the Michigan Flyer to campus or fly to Lansing Region International Airport (LAN) via Chicago (ORD) or other major US cities.

If You Fly to Detroit

After arriving at the Detroit Metro Airport (DTW) and picking up your luggage, you will use the Michigan Flyer bus to travel to East Lansing. East Lansing will be the last stop the bus makes after leaving the airport. There are two Michigan Flyer stops at DTW: McNamara Terminal and North Terminal. It is very important that you know which terminal you are arriving and find out the correct pick up time in that terminal.

Visit http://www.metroairport.com/TravelerInfo/Arriving.aspx for further information. For example, if you are flying with Delta Airlines, you will be arriving at McNamara Terminal. Locate Michigan Flyer’s stop in the McNamara Terminal below and find out exact pick up time. If you are flying with United Airlines you will be landing in North Terminal. Find Michigan Flyer’s stop and the pick up time in the North Terminal below.

You can save money by pre-paying and booking online in advance. You don't have to print the ticket. When you arrive at the terminal, go to the bus stop, and just tell the driver your name. They will check you in electronically. If you choose to pay with cash,
the fares are slightly higher and you will need exact change. It is best to pay in advance online through the link above. Make sure to arrive to your terminal before your departure time to ensure you don't miss the bus. For more information and a departure timetables, refer to the Michigan Flyer schedule at www.michiganflyer.com/ScheduleRoute.aspx.

At McNamara Terminal, Michigan Flyer stop is located at the south end of Ground Transportation/Public Transit parking garage Level 4. After you pick up your luggage, follow the signs for Ground Transportation/Public Transit. Cross the bridge walk and take an elevator or escalator down to the Ground Transportation Center.

At North Terminal, Michigan Flyer picks up passengers in the Ground Transportation Center (GTC). Once you come down the stairs or elevator to the GTC, exit the door to your left and proceed to Stall #1. Look for the small Michigan Flyer/AirRide sign.

**Train**

Amtrak has a stop in East Lansing minutes from campus. [http://www.amtrak.com/home](http://www.amtrak.com/home)

**Bus to Campus**

Michigan Flyer provides an excellent and affordable service to campus from the Detroit Airport at $30 one-way and $50 round trip ticket. [http://www.michiganflyer.com](http://www.michiganflyer.com)

Megabus and Greyhound are a reliable and inexpensive bus to travel to nearby cities, including Detroit and Chicago. [https://www.megabus.com](https://www.megabus.com), [https://www.greyhound.com](https://www.greyhound.com)

CATA is the largest local public transportation service in the area. Its membership includes the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing and the Townships of Delhi, Lansing, and Meridian. You can purchase a CATA bus pass with your student ID at the MSU ID Office. [http://www.cata.org/](http://www.cata.org/)

**On Campus**
VIPP’s settlement team will pick you up at the Lansing Airport, Amtrak Station or Michigan flyer stop and shuttle you to campus or reserved hotels.

Campus Bus Systems

CATA’s Spartan Services operates 24/7 in the Fall and Spring semesters with service to all university apartments, residence halls, commuter parking lots, and main campus buildings. CATA bus passes can be purchased in the following locations in the table below as well as online at www.cata.org. Bus pass pricing is $6.00 for a 10-ride pass, $18.00 for a 31-day pass (unlimited rides for 31 days), and $50.00 for a semester pass (unlimited rides for a semester). Bus stops and routes are shown on the image below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location/Address</th>
<th>Fixed-Route Tokens</th>
<th>Fixed-Route 31-Day Passes</th>
<th>Fixed-Route 10-Ride Cards</th>
<th>Spec-Tran Passes &amp; Tokens</th>
<th>Other Fixed-Route, CRS, Redi-Ride Options</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATA Transportation Center (CTC)</strong> 420 South Grand Ave, Lansing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Adult, Student, Value</td>
<td>Adult, Student, Value</td>
<td>4-Punch, 10-Punch, Blue Tokens</td>
<td>Student Semester, MSU Commuter Lot, CRS Punch, Redi-Ride Punch</td>
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<td><strong>Lansing Community College Parking Services Gannon Building, Lansing</strong></td>
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<td>Adult, Student, Value</td>
<td>4-Punch, 10-Punch</td>
<td>Student Semester</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meijer Lansing</strong> 6200 South Pennsylvania Ave, Lansing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Adult, Student, Value</td>
<td>Adult, Student, Value</td>
<td>4-Punch</td>
<td>Student Semester, Redi-Ride Punch</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meijer Okemos</strong> 2055 W Grand River Ave, Okemos</td>
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<td>Adult, Student, Value</td>
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<td>Student Semester, Redi-Ride Punch</td>
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<tr>
<td>421 E Grand River Ave, East Lansing</td>
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After you arrive, complete the government check-in process at OISS as soon as possible. Make sure to bring your DS2019 and passport to the front desk. You will be asked to update you contact information including your U.S. address, phone number and emergency contact (both U.S. and international contact persons are needed). Without this information, your check-in process won't be completed!

You should also stop by the MSU ID office in the same building to get you student ID. With an MSU student ID, you have access to

- MSU libraries
- Student CATA Bus Passes (bring cash!)
- MSU Cafeteria Meal Plan
- Student discounts in movie theaters, museums and stores
- IM Gym Memberships [http://recsports.msu.edu/Fitness/Memberships.html/](http://recsports.msu.edu/Fitness/Memberships.html/)

**Bank Account & Cell Phone**

- Opening a US bank account is also one of the first things you should take care of once you arrive. There are a lot of options when it comes to choosing a bank. One of them is the MSU Credit Union. There are many MSU Credit Union ATMs on campus and several branches nearby.
• There are several major providers of mobile services in the US, including AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint and so on. They all have local branches to help you set up your mobile service. You can take your pick according to your preference.

Shopping

There are several grocery stores in the area. Meijer, Kroger, Walmart, Fresh Thyme, and Whole Foods are all within reach. For Asian food and ingredients, there are several local stores, Oriental Mart, the Better Asian Market, Lotte Market etc. that can make you feel like home.

Eat At State

There are 11 residence dining halls and 6 retail dining options on campus. No matter where you live, work, study, or play, there is a residence dining hall nearby.

With your student ID, you can purchase meals at https://eatatstate.com/.

International students can get a taste of home by preparing their own meals or by dining out at local restaurants. Luckily there is a wide variety of ethnic restaurants which offers all sorts of authentic food in the area. Simply start walking along Grand River Ave and you’ll find food from all around the world.

Important Documents

All the documents can be found on the OISS website: http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/resources/forms.htm

Driver's License

1. To apply for a driver’s license, see http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/students/license.htm
Step 1: Present your identification at the Secretary of State Branch Office.

Step 2: Take tests on written knowledge, road signs, and vision.

Step 3: Take driving skills test.

Step 4: Return to the branch office to finalize your license application.

2. If you already have a driver’s license from your home country, an English translation can make the Michigan licensing process 30 days faster.

   STEP 1: Find a translator. You cannot do your own translation. Your translator must be someone who is a graduate student or a faculty member at MSU who can speak your language.

   STEP 2: Your translator must type the translation into the following PDF template:

   [http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/documents/students/dltranslation.pdf](http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/documents/students/dltranslation.pdf)

   STEP 3: Your translator must print the translation and sign it in the lower left corner.

   STEP 4: Bring the translation to OISS. OISS will verify your status and your translator’s position at MSU, then sign the translation in the lower right corner.

Social Security Number (SSN)
A Social Security Number (SSN) is a unique, 9-digit identification number, issued by the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and qualified foreign nationals—including those in F and J status who meet the requirements.
Travel Information
Valid I-20 or DS-2019 recently endorsed with signature from OISS. You must bring your I-20/DS-2019 to OISS for travel signature. Travel signatures take 24 hours, so plan ahead.

1. Valid visa stamp in passport. Check the expiration date. If expired, you must renew at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy. (Please note, if you have been outside of the United States for 5 months or longer and your F-1 or J-1 visa is still valid i.e. unexpired, you may need a NEW visa according to a recent State Department rule. Please check with the nearest U.S. consulate to determine if your visa is still valid for entry to the US.)

2. Valid Passport: Passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the intended date of entry into the U.S. If your passport is valid for less than 6 months, then we recommend that you renew your passport or run the risk of being denied entry into the U.S.


Notice of Departure
When your program is finished, you must give a written departure notice to OISS. OISS is required to report your program end date to the federal government. This could be the end date on your DS-2019 or it could be a prior date if you complete your program early.
Program Extension Request Form
You must apply for an extension of your program of study prior to the expiration date on your I-20 or DS-2019 if you cannot complete your program by that date. Requests for extensions should be submitted 30-60 days prior to the expiration date of the I-20 or DS-2019 so the extension process can be completed prior to the expiration date on the document.

Child Care & School Admission
Children aged six and above can be admitted to your local public schools. Make sure to bring the child’s immunization record with an English translation. Official transcripts are needed if the children are attending high school. Please see the chart below for the required childhood immunizations for Michigan school settings.

Academic Policy and Support

1. Required Academic Activities – J1 student (Minimum 18 hours/week)

1) As J-1 students, participants need to fulfill the requirement of a minimum 18 hours study per week to comply with J1 student visa regulation. Your visa may be revoked if you do not comply with this regulation. Normally, VIPP students take 2-3 VIPP classes, engage in supplementary instructions and conduct independent study.

Here is the example of all academic activities you can engage.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes (VIPP, ELC or MSU)</th>
<th>6 – 9 hours per week</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supplement instruction*</td>
<td>3 – 6 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent project**</td>
<td>9 – 3 hours per week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Supplement instruction includes
  1. VIPP Signature Lectures
  2. Brownbag lunch seminars
  3. VIPP Business Expo
  4. Academic forums
  5. End-of-year presentation
  6. Seminars offered in different schools (e.g. academic units, the area centers in ISP).
  7. Community services
  8. Exchange with MSU faculty
  9. Field visits to local school, company and government office.

** Independent project:

Independent projects will be overseen by VIPP program coordinators. Participants are required to meet their coordinators individually or in small groups on a weekly basis to discuss their project progress. The coordinators provide academic advice and support, and often connect participants to relevant MSU faculty, local organizations and communities for their project.

2) Final report on independent project is compulsory. It can be done via one of following venues:

- Research paper/essay submission
- In-class Presentation
- Public Presentation (Academic Forum, End-of-Year Presentation, or VIPP Business Expo)

2. Weekly Time Log

- You are required to submit a weekly time log to report your academic activities. For example, if you take three courses (9 hours) during summer session, you will
need to spend minimum 9 hours for your supplement instruction and independent study.

- The issuance of your certificate will be delayed until you have submitted this form.

- It only takes a few minutes to complete the time log and it will help build your portfolio, which may be useful in your final report for your organization and sponsor.

Note: If you want to get credits for your professional activities, you should report those activities accordingly via the weekly time log.

3. D2L (Desire-to-Learn)

- Learning management system to share resources and communicate with students
  https://d2l.msu.edu/

4. Evaluation Form

- You will be asked to complete a VIPP course evaluation form during the last 2 weeks each semester.

Your feedback will help us in future course design and teaching delivery.

- A link for each course you enroll in will be emailed to you.

5. Conference Travel Grant

Through its Endowments, VIPP is able to provide small travel grants to support GPEP and SGPEP program participants and help them attend academic or professional conferences, workshops or other relevant events held in the U.S. during your program in MSU VIPP. If you are currently a VIPP participant and are planning to attend a conference or professional activity directly related to your professional development, we invite you to apply for funding from the VIPP Endowments. Note that travel must remain domestic.

- If you plan to travel and participate officially in a professional conference as a presenter where your paper is published in the conference proceedings with an ISBN number, relevant VIPP Endowment may provide up to $600 in travel grants. This grant award is valid to participants who submit their paper during the 12 months of their VIPP program, the conference can be during or after the program. Paper must acknowledge MSU VIPP to qualify.
• If you plan to travel and attend a professional conference as a presenter where there is no formal publication, or you will chair a session or act as a panelist, relevant VIPP Endowment may provide up to $300 in travel grants.

• If you plan to travel and attend a professional conference, or any event that directly relates to your professional development, VIPP relevant Endowment may provide up to $200 in travel grants.

• VIPP participants may apply more than once for Conference Travel Grants, but priority is given to those participants who are applying for the first time.

• Application form is available at VIPP website. Completed applications must be submitted electronically to Dr. Kiwon Kang, Academic Advisor (kangkiw1@msu.edu) at least four weeks before the travel takes place. Evidence of conference acceptance or copy of email communications must also be submitted.

• VIPP’s Academic Committee will review all applications and will award funding based upon (a) availability of the funds; (b) relevance of the travel to professional development.

• Approved funding will be paid to the participant upon return from the travel subject to evidence of conference or event registration with a short report, which should be submitted to Dr. Kiwon Kang.

**Things to Do at MSU**

**Wharton Center**

• Home of the Lansing Symphony Orchestra

• Broadway at Wharton Center series

• Concerts by local, national, and international acts

**Gyms**

• IM East, West & Circle

• Outdoor and indoor pool

• Spartan Village Gym and free classes

**Munn Ice Arena**
• Public Skating

Forest Akers Golf Courses
• Golfing

The Demmer Center
• Archery and Shooting Ranges

The Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP)

http://vetp.isp.msu.edu/
• The Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP) provides free English conversation practice for Michigan State University's international students and scholars and their adult family members through conversation classes and conversation partners. VETP is part of Community Volunteers for International Programs (CVIP), a 501(c)3 organization.

The MSU Lending Center
• Lending Center loans used household items in good condition to MSU international students and scholars. It is located at 1434F Spartan Village and opens Tuesday from 1-2pm and Thursdays from 3:30-5pm.
Using the correct car seat or booster seat can be a lifesaver: make sure your child is always buckled in an age- and size-appropriate car seat or booster seat.

**REAR-FACING CAR SEAT**
**Birth up to Age 2**
Buckle children in a rear-facing seat until age 2 or when they reach the upper weight or height limit of that seat.

**FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT**
**Age 2 up to at least age 5**
When children outgrow their rear-facing seat, they should be buckled in a forward-facing car seat until at least age 5 or when they reach the upper weight or height limit of that seat.

**BOOSTER SEAT**
**Age 5 up until seat belts fit properly**
Once children outgrow their forward-facing seat, they should be buckled in a booster seat until seat belts fit properly. The recommended height for proper seat belt fit is 57 inches tall.

**SEAT BELT**
**Once seat belts fit properly without a booster seat**
Children no longer need to use a booster seat once seat belts fit them properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs (not the stomach) and the shoulder belt lays across the chest (not the neck).

Keep children ages 12 and under in the back seat. Never place a rear-facing car seat in front of an active air bag.

*Recommended age ranges for each seat type vary to account for differences in child growth and height/weight limits of car seats and booster seats. Use the car seat or booster seat owner’s manual to check installation and the seat height/weight limits, and proper seat use.

Graphic design: adapted from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/cps
Michigan’s Child Passenger Safety Law Requires: Children younger than age 4 to ride in a car seat in the rear seat if the vehicle has a rear seat. If all available rear seats are occupied by children under 4, then a child under 4 may ride in a car seat in the front seat. A child in a rear-facing car seat may only ride in the front seat if the airbag is turned off.

Children must be properly buckled in a car seat or booster seat until they are 8 years old or 4-feet-9-inches tall. Children must ride in a seat until they reach the age requirement or the height requirement, whichever comes first.

Safety Laws Against Leaving a Child Unattended in a Car

- 0-6 year-olds should not be left in a car unattended
- Penalties vary with state depending consequences.
- Do not leave your child unattended anywhere!

“Home Alone” Laws

- Most states do not have laws specifying when kids are old enough to stay at home alone.
- In Michigan, a rule of thumb: a child 10 years old and younger is NOT responsible enough to be left home alone.
- However, age is not the only factor to consider! Consider your child’s maturity as well.

What Should I Do If I Am Stopped or Contacted by the Police?

The MSU Police Department has updated their brochure on “What to Do If I am Stopped or Contacted by a Police Officer.” It also includes some frequently asked questions and answers. MSUPD is proud to have been the first agency in the country to introduce a brochure such as this more than a decade ago.
Learn more about Michigan State University Community Team Policing at http://www.police.msu.edu/