

GREEN PATH PROGRAM

Parent Guide: 2010





PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

To Do:

- Obtain valid Passport
- Obtain a Canadian Study Permit
- Obtain a "Temporary Resident Visa" for Canada
- Purchase plane ticket to Toronto, Canada
- Confirm travel arrangements and notify the Green path staff of flight details via email
- Choose a housemate and let the staff know which one you have chosen via email
- Complete questionnaire, and send a passport style photo for "Student Profile Book"

To Bring:

- Limited amount of cash (\$2000 to \$3000 CDN maximum)
- International Bank Draft for additional funds (no limit)
- Cash for the Health Insurance Fee (\$173.00 CDN)
- Personal belongings (Clothes, shoes, etc.)
- A few things that will remind them of home (i.e./ a picture with your family)
- Small electronics (i.e./ laptop, digital camera, MP3 player)

IMPORTANT DATES

Student Questionnaire & Passport Style Photo Due	April 19
Arrival in Canada	May 26 – May 28
Green Path Classes Begin	May 31
Final Day to Apply for Residence	June 11
Course Selection for Fall/Winter 2009/10	July 13
Green Path Exams	August 13/16
Green Path Classes End	August 17
Graduation Ceremony	August 29
Green Path Residence Check-Out	August 21
UTSC Residence Check-In	September 4
Orientation Week	September 7/8
Fall Week Begins	September 19

TRAVEL PREPARATIONS

Travel Arrangements

All students are required to purchase their own airfare and make any necessary travel arrangements to ensure arrival in Toronto, Canada between May 26 and May 28, 2010. Students are encouraged to travel in a group with their school if possible.

Health Insurance

All international students studying at the University of Toronto are required to purchase health insurance to pay for health care services and medical treatment in Canada.

While studying in the summer Green Path program, students are required to purchase the health insurance prescribed by the University of Toronto. This health insurance must be purchased upon arrival. The cost of the summer health insurance in 2010 will be \$173.00 and provide coverage for the entire summer Green Path program. The coverage will begin the day your child arrives in Canada.

*Upon successful completion of the Green Path program, your child will then be covered under the University Health Insurance Program (UHIP) and SCSU's extended health and dental insurance plan.

Packing Your Suitcase

To help you select what your child should include in their suitcase, below we have outlined the items that we will provide and will offer you suggestions from former Green Path students on what and what not to bring. Be sure to follow the baggage restrictions of your airline so you are not charged extra fees at the airport.

Items We Provide

These items will be provided to all students for the duration of the Green Path Program. Therefore, they will not need to bring any of the following to Canada:

- Bed sheets
- Pillow and Pillow case
- Kitchen supplies (i.e. plates, bowls, cups, pots, cutlery, kettle, toaster, cutting board)
- Cleaning supplies (i.e. cloths, cleaning products, mop, broom, vacuum)

Things to Bring to Canada

- Clothes and shoes (not everything, but enough)
- Minimal toiletries
- A few things that will remind you of home (i.e./ a picture with your family)
- Small electronics (i.e./ laptop, digital camera, MP3 player)
- Musical Instrument (if you think you are going to continue to use it in Canada)

Things NOT to Bring to Canada - It is better for your child to buy the following items upon their arrival in Canada, due to reasons such as size, cost, and usability:

- Extra toiletries (soap, toilet paper, etc.)
- Appliances (i.e./ rice cooker, iron) – they are available in Canada and are relatively inexpensive to purchase
- Cell phones – most Chinese cellular (mobile) phones will not work in North America
- Printer – it is best to purchase a printer when you arrive in Canada
- Food
- Towels, blankets, bedding – they take up a lot of room, are available in Canada and are relatively inexpensive to purchase
- Sports equipment – it may take up a lot of room or cost extra to bring

Transporting Money

When your child comes to Canada, they should not bring too much cash (either USD or CDN). Instead, we recommend an International Bank Draft in their name, so that they can deposit this into their new Canadian Bank Account. The reason for this is that there are Canadian Laws and limitations on how much cash money you can bring into the country. However, there are no limitations on how much money you can bring into Canada in the form of bank drafts. Therefore, here is our recommendation...

Have your child bring one month's worth of living expenses with them in the form of cash. Though their expenses may vary from very little (\$1000) to very substantial (\$5000), it is probably wise to bring about \$2000 to \$3000 in cash.

The Basics of Banking

Banking in Canada is a little different than banking in China. Typically, you do not need to visit a Bank branch to do most of your banking because with your bank account, you will receive an "Interac" banking card. Most of your banking needs can then be done through an "Automated Banking Machine" (ABM), telephone banking, or internet banking. Additionally, when you are shopping (i.e./ for clothes, food, etc.) you will not need to pay with cash. Your Interac Card will allow you to pay electronically.

Banking Recommendation

We recommend that your child consider opening a bank account with SCOTIABANK for the following reasons:

1. All Automated Banking Machines on the University (UTSC) Campus are operated by Scotiabank. Therefore, they will not be charged additional service fees to withdraw money.
2. Scotiabank offers a competitive "Student Banking Advantage Plan."
3. Scotiabank provides excellent customer service.
4. The local Scotiabank branch is conveniently located only a short bus ride away.
5. Bank drafts are not subject to a holding period at Scotiabank



TRAVEL ADVICE

- Make sure your child carries all of the documentation that they need to enter the country (i.e./ passport, visa, study permit, all letters from the UTSC, etc.). Make sure they are accessible, but safe.
- Find a travel “buddy” – a friend (or someone they know) to travel with.
Note: it is alright to have more than one travel buddy. They should show their travel buddy what their baggage looks like, and stay with their travel buddy as they progress through the airport. If they do this, and if something happens, the travel buddy will be able to assist them, or vice versa.
- Double-check to ensure that your child is not bringing any prohibited items into Canada. <http://www.aircanada.com/en/travelinfo/airport/baggage/security.html>
- If they ask your child for their address, the address will be:

*University of Toronto Scarborough
1295 Military Trail
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M1C 3A8*

***NOTE:** this is **NOT** the address they will use to receive mail in Canada.
To ensure all mail reaches them in Canada, **DO NOT** give this address to family or friends.

- If they ask them for a contact name, provide the following information:
*Wynona Bardgett
Green Path Coordinator
University of Toronto Scarborough
Telephone #: 416-918-7815*
- EMERGENCY NUMBER: Will be the green path cell phone number (416) 918 – 7815 and should be used in the event that you get into a difficult situation during travel
(i.e./ lost, delayed in customs and immigration)
- The Green Path staff, along with a team of staff and volunteers from UTSC will be meeting them at Pearson International Airport. After they have passed through Immigration, they will need to collect their bags and make their way through Customs. After your child has collected their bags, they should proceed through the gates, where we will be waiting with a big “University of Toronto” sign.
- After they arrive, the University will call their school’s teacher to inform them that they have arrived safely. Your school’s teacher can then contact you (the parents). Please ensure that you (the parents), have told their teachers that you would like to be contacted. Your child may not be able to call immediately after they arrive, but they will call as soon as they possibly can.

ARRIVAL IN CANADA

Airport Arrival

After your child has passed through Customs and Immigration, and have collected their bags, they should proceed through the gates, where we will be waiting with a big "University of Toronto" sign. At the airport, we will board a bus and travel to the University, where they will check-in to residence.

Check-In

Checking-in to residence is a very simple process. We are going to ask your child to: (1) confirm their personal information, and (2) allow for a photocopy of their passport and travel documents. After we have done this, we will provide them with their residence keys and show them to their rooms.

Residence

Each student will live in a townhouse that sleeps 4 people, but be given a private bedroom, which is approximately 8' X 10'.

- Rooms are equipped with:
 - bed w/ mattress
 - bed linens, pillow, blanket, bedspreads
 - a three-drawer dresser
 - a closet (approximately 4'x3')
 - a telephone jack (resident must get the line activated at an extra cost)
 - internet capability
 - desk

- Kitchens include:
 - fridge, stove, toaster, electric kettle
 - mixing bowl, cutting board, frying pan, large pot, medium pot
 - cutlery tray, utility knife
 - vacuum, mop/bucket, broom & dustpan
 - bowls, plates, cutlery, mugs & glasses

- Common Room includes:
 - TV jack (which can be activated at an extra cost)
 - coffee table, couch, chairs
 - lamp

- Showering Room (1 in each house)
- Bathroom

Room Assignments

One of the goals of the Green Path Program is for your child to meet new friends from the other participating schools and to engage in the residence community. With this in mind, when we are assigning rooms, we will be pairing them with students from other schools. However, they will be given the option of selecting ONE, and only one person that they want to live with. Since each townhouse accommodates 4 students, they will be living with a total of 3 other Green Path students (2 students from another school and 1 student that they selected as their preferred roommate).

FIRST WEEK IN CANADA

Getting Started

In the days following your child's arrival, there will be a variety of things we need to accomplish. We will need to set up their internet access, go grocery shopping, buy household supplies, set up their personal bank accounts, and unpack their suitcases. These are all very, very important tasks and need to be completed this first weekend, prior to the start of their Green Path classes, which will begin on May 31, 2010.

Opening a Bank Account

All students will have a scheduled time for them to meet a bank representative of Scotiabank, but if they decide to open an account with another bank, arrangements can still be made, but it may take longer. More information regarding the schedule of meetings will be provided following their arrival.

Payment of Fees

Health Insurance Fee

Payment for Health Insurance is also due upon arrival. Upon payment, they will receive their "Health Card" and other related information. Health Insurance will cost \$173.00.

Canadian Prices & Currency

At first, they may find that everything in Canada is very expensive. In most cases, 1 Canadian Dollar will not buy them as much as 1 CNY. It is important for them to learn the value of the Canadian Dollar so that they are able to get the appropriate value for the money they are spending. However, remember that the lowest price does not necessarily provide the most value. There are times when paying more for a particular item or service may be the best choice.

1 Canadian Dollar = ~6.49 CNY

1 CNY = ~0.15 CAD

(for current conversion rates, visit: www.xe.com)

Phoning Home (China)

Using a "calling card" is an affordable way to make long distance calls to China. There are many different cards they can purchase; depending on how many minutes they want. Phone cards are available at most stores. Of course, they can also use online messaging and other services to communicate with friends and family back home.

Internet Access

Upon arrival, there will be instructions for them on how to set up the internet access in their bedrooms. To gain access, they will need to ensure that their computer (if you are running Microsoft Windows) has (1) all critical updates installed, and (2) active, updated anti-virus software. If they require help, there will be UTSC staff available to assist them during the first week.

Shopping

Food:

Unlike what your child may be used to in China, it may be very difficult for them to go shopping more than one day per week. Therefore, when they go grocery shopping, they need to plan what they will purchase, including enough food to last them for at least one full week. On their first trip to the grocery store, they will need to purchase basic supplies and ingredients that will last them several weeks. Therefore, they should be prepared to spend a lot of money on their first grocery trip (For an idea of current prices, you can visit www.foodbasics.com).

You may also want to give your child a list of some recipes, and maybe even a list of items that you recommend them purchasing during a weekly grocery trip, to ensure that they have a sufficient supply of food items so that they can cook themselves proper meals.

Household Supplies:

Your child will be able to purchase almost everything they need for their house at Wal-Mart. Since they will have many one-time purchases, they may spend a lot of money on their first shopping trip. However, spending a large amount of money is necessary so that they have the basic household supplies needed to be comfortable. And some of these supplies they will continue to use for the next four years, so they should consider their initial purchases to be an investment (For an idea of current prices, visit www.walmart.ca).

LIFE SKILLS

For most of your children, this will be the first time living away from home. This indeed will be a challenging and exciting experience. However, with this independence comes great responsibility, as they are ultimately responsible for all actions and decisions they make. So in order to ensure a positive and successful experience at UTSC, please adhere to the following advice...

Living Skills

Before arrival in Canada, students must have the following skills:

- Cooking skills (How to safely prepare meals using safe food preparation methods)
- Nutrition awareness (How to maintain a balanced and nutritious diet)
- Cleaning skills (How to maintain a clean & healthy living environment)
- Laundry skills (How to properly wash clothes, linen etc.)
- Time Management skills (How to effectively balance school, leisure & sleep)



CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Wynona Bardgett
Green Path Coordinator
University of Toronto Scarborough
1265 Military Trail
Toronto, ON
M1C 1A4

416-918-7815 (phone)
gpstaff@utsc.utoronto.ca (email)

<http://webapps.utsc.utoronto.ca/greenpath/2010/index.php> (Green Path website)