

# INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS

## Pre-Arrival Guide



**SOUTHERN  
ARKANSAS  
UNIVERSITY**  
**TECH**

**SOUTHERN ARKANSAS UNIVERSITY TECH**

PO Box 3499, Camden Arkansas 71711  
[www.sautech.edu](http://www.sautech.edu)  
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## Southern Arkansas University Tech

Southern Arkansas University Tech (SAU Tech) was founded in 1968 and is part of the Southern Arkansas University System. SAU Tech is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and authorized under Federal Law to enroll non-immigrant students.

SAU Tech is a two-year public college located inside the Highland Industrial Park in East Camden, Arkansas. East Camden has convenience stores, banks, restaurants, and a golf course where SAU Tech students can play at no charge. SAU Tech is about 8 miles or 12.8 kilometers from Camden, Arkansas, a city with a population of about 12,000 that offers a variety of restaurants, shopping, healthcare providers and recreational activities.

SAU Tech is an affordable option for college. Our tuition and housing costs are typically about half of the cost of a four-year university. SAU Tech offers both on and off-campus housing. SAU Tech is on the semester system which means we have two academic semesters a year. The fall semester is from late August to early December and the spring semester is from early January to early May. We also offer two summer sessions. The summer sessions are optional for students. SAU Tech has a small student to teacher ratio that assures more individual attention for students. Student success is the key element at SAU Tech. Free tutoring and personal counseling services are available for all students.

### American Education System

In the United States, undergraduate associate and bachelor programs take two to four years to complete. The first two years of transfer programs consist of general classes such as math, science, and history. Some technical programs consist mostly of hands-on courses, but also include some general education courses like English, math, and social sciences. SAU Tech has transfer options for both arts and science based degrees and technical degrees.

It is not uncommon for students to find another subject interesting and change their major. **(M-1 status international students cannot change their major of study.)** Students normally start working on their upper-level classes during the second or third year. This may sound strange but the American Education system tries to create a well-rounded education where students finish with basic knowledge in several fields.

### Traveling to SAU Tech

Immigration regulations state that you can only arrive in the USA up to 30 days before the program start date listed on your I-20. Arriving before the 30 day date will result in denied entry into the United States. If you are choosing to live in SAU Tech's housing, you will need to observe housing move-in dates which can be found at [www.sautech.edu/housing](http://www.sautech.edu/housing)

Camden, Arkansas does not have a commercial airport. Staff from the college can arrange to pick you up at the airport in Little Rock, Arkansas. (Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport in Little Rock, Arkansas (LIT)) If you fly into another location, you will need to make arrangements to travel to the campus.

Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport, Little Rock, Arkansas (LIT)

- LIT does not have direct international flights, but international flights can be connected to Little Rock from international airports like Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas (DFW), Houston-Intercontinental, Texas (IAH), Chicago-O'Hare, Illinois (ORD), and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International, Georgia (ATL).

#### Greyhound

- Greyhound is a national busing system that has a terminal in Camden at 313 Jefferson South West, Camden, Arkansas 71711. Students can fly into an international airport and then ride a Greyhound bus to Camden and request pick-up by the college once they arrive in Camden in residing in college housing. Costs will depend on the date and time of the ticket and the distance of the origin city from Camden.

Make travel plans and let us (SAU Tech's International Admissions Staff) know in advance (at least 7 days) when and how you will arrive. Even if you are driving to SAU Tech yourself, please let us know this information as well. You will need to fill out the Transportation Arrival Plans form on our website at [www.sautech/international-admissions](http://www.sautech/international-admissions).

## Packing for the Trip

- Single (Twin) Size bed sheets and towels (dorm rooms do not have sheets on the beds)
  - Pillows and blankets can be bought once you arrive.
- Assorted clothing for all seasons
  - Southern Arkansas has four seasons which vary from 30°F to 60°F, or 0°C to 15°C, in winter to 85°F to 100°F, or 29°C to 37°C, in summer. Pack clothes for all year long. You can buy additional clothes after you arrive.
- Personal grooming products
  - Pack toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, razor, makeup, etc. Items can also be purchased once you arrive.
- Documents
  - Be sure to pack all your important immigration, immunization, and educational documentation in your carry-on luggage.
- Money
  - Do not travel with large sums of money. You can wire transfer money to pay for college costs or use a check. It's a good idea to have a credit/debit card or a small amount of money to pay for food, emergencies, and to buy things you will need once you arrive.
  - When you arrive you will have the opportunity to open a bank account. Please see the Finance section.

## Once You Arrive

### Arrival

When you arrive, we will check you into housing if you are staying on campus (see section below) and depending on when you arrive, you will need to visit:

- County Health Department- You will get a TB (Tuberculosis) skin test and we will review your immunization records with you. See the Immunization section below.
- Rocket Success Center to get your SAU Tech Student ID card. Your Student ID card is used to check out books at the Center, get into facilities like the Computer Commons and Student Activity Center, and get student discounts at the Tech Diner.
- Testing Center to take a placement test (if needed)
- Academic Advisor to get registered for classes.

### Placement scores

If you have not taken the ACT or SAT before you arrive, then you will take a college placement test when you arrive. The exam is used to determine your math and English skills. If your scores are low, then you will be placed in transition courses your first semester to prepare you to take the required coursework.

### Registration and paying for classes

If you are not already registered for classes when you arrive, you will meet with your advisor and get registered for classes. After you are registered, you pay your tuition and fees to the Business office. You have to wait and pay after you are registered because the total cost is based on the number of credit hours you are taking each semester.

## **Housing**

### **SAU Tech Campus Housing**

Campus housing is available for students planning to study at SAU Tech. Once a student has secured a Visa, then a housing application (with a \$100 application damage fee) must be submitted to the Housing office. Your housing application is not complete until you have paid your application damage fee. Payments can be made by calling our Business Office at 870-574-4503 or emailing Lisa Holland at [lholland@sautech.edu](mailto:lholland@sautech.edu).

There are on and off-campus housing options available to students. Please visit the Housing website ([www.sautech.edu/housing](http://www.sautech.edu/housing)) to learn more about your options.

### **Non-SAU Tech Campus Housing Options**

If you decide not to live in campus housing, there are apartments and houses for rent in East Camden and Camden. This requires you to have some type of transportation since the Camden area does not provide public transportation to its residents. You are responsible for making all living arrangements on your own if you choose not to utilize campus housing.

It is customary in the United States to pay a deposit and/or sign a lease (contract) when you rent a house or an apartment. You will be responsible for paying for rent, electricity, gas, water, internet, etc. if you choose to live on your own.

### **Getting Around East Camden and Camden**

Camden does not offer public transportation, but the Housing office does offer free limited transportation around town for students living in housing. Every Wednesday evening, SAU Tech Housing provides shuttle service to that takes students around town so they can go shopping, to the bank, or whatever else they need to do. Because the town is spread out walking may not be the best option for students, but cycling is an option if student do not need to go too far.

SAU Tech offers transportation to Little Rock Airport at the beginning and completion of the student's program of study for international students at no cost. For transportation during your stay other than the initial arrival and final departure, contact the PDSO or DSO.

### **Immunizations**

Certain immunizations are required for students in the state of Arkansas. Before leaving your country, try to get a MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) immunization and bring copies of your immunization records (in English). During your first semester at SAU Tech, you will be required to have two MMR injections, so getting one before you arrive will make the process easier for you.

You can expect to get a TB (Tuberculosis) skin test upon arrival. Depending on the test results, a second test might be given or a chest x-ray may be scheduled. Any subsequent treatment will be handled by the local health department.

## **Safety and Laws**

The safety of our students is a primary concern. The SAU Tech campus is safe, and we have a well-trained police department here on campus. This is common for most American campuses. If for any reason you need the campus police, you can call 870-574-4517 (office) or 870-818-6353 (cell).

In Arkansas, the legal drinking age is 21 years old. It is illegal for anyone under that age to buy or drink alcohol. Students are not allowed to have alcohol on the SAU Tech campus and it is a serious offence if you are caught with alcohol or drinking.

The legal age to smoke tobacco is 18, and like drinking, it is illegal to buy or smoke under age 18. The SAU Tech campus is smoke and tobacco free which means all tobacco products are not permitted on campus grounds.

## **Staying in Contact**

### **Internet**

The SAU Tech campus has free wifi access. If you don't have a computer, there are free access computer labs in the Rocket Success Center, the Computer Commons, and in Enrollment Services. If you live off campus, you can still come to the campus to access the wireless network or computer labs.

### **Mobile "Cell" Phones**

Your best option is to get a pre-paid plan. These plans are the most affordable compared to getting a contract. You can purchase phones at the Camden Wal-Mart.

## **Campus Employment**

As an F1 student, you can only work at SAU Tech and for no more than 20 hours a week during the semester. Finding employment is the student's responsibility. To find work on campus, you will need to see the SAU Tech Human Resources office to see which departments have positions available.

***M-1 international students are not allowed to work at all.***

## **Social Security Card**

Obtaining a social security card takes time and requires paperwork. Since this is usually a major concern for new students, the process is outlined below:

First, to apply for a social security card, you must find employment on campus (see above). Our PDSO and DSO do not control the hiring process, so they cannot help you with finding employment. After you find employment, give your form to your employer to complete and bring the form back to your PDSO or DSO. Once you return the form to the PDSO or DSO, it will need to be processed. This can take a few days to complete, but once it is done it can be picked up from the PDSO or DSO.



Due to immigration processing time, you cannot submit a social security application until 20 days after the semester starts. You are not allowed to interview for a job until after this time.

Because the Social Security Office is in a nearby town SAU Tech can, with prior notice, offer transportation to the office. If you have transportation, you can go at any time after the first 20 days of the semester.

## **Finances**

Full payment for tuition and fees must be made by the first day of classes. SAU Tech offers payment options through eCashier in MyCollege on the SAU Tech website. Payment in full OR a payment plan through eCashier is required by the payment due date or you will be dropped from classes.

Tuition and fees can be paid in full by wire transfer or credit card by calling Lisa Holland at 870-574-4503 or emailing Lisa at [lholland@sautech.edu](mailto:lholland@sautech.edu). Tuition and fees can also be paid in full by bank draft made payable to Southern Arkansas University Tech and mailed to:

SAU Tech Business Office  
PO Box 3499  
Camden, Arkansas 71711

It is very important to make sure **your name and school issued student identification number** is listed on the information wired to us, so that the Business Office knows whose student account to deposit the money.

There are several banks in the Camden and East Camden areas. Some banks require a social security number to open an account while others do not. You will need to check with the local banks to see which bank will offer the services that will fit your needs.

## **Campus Services**

### **Cafeteria**

The Tech Diner provides meals throughout the year and serves only lunch on Monday through Thursday. Students can choose from a variety of foods including entrees, salad bar, desserts, and beverages. Prepaid meal cards can be purchased. Campus housing comes with a full kitchen for cooking and preparing meals.

### **Rocket Success Center**

The Rocket Success Center has an extensive collection and an even larger online database. It also offers individual as well as group study areas and multiple computers for student use. The Center provides tutoring and retention services to all students.

### **Student Activity Center**

The Student Activity Center has a gym, workout area, and game room open to all students. It has an indoor basketball court with a full workout area for students. The game room has pool and ping pong tables, air hockey, video games and a television.



Beverly Ellis, PDSO  
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870-574-4717  
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Jenny Sanders, DSO  
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870-574-4530  
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Campus Police Department  
870-574-4517

SAU Tech Campus Map  
<http://www.sautech.edu/contact>

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