



October 17, 2011

Dear University of Minnesota English and Culture Immersion (UMECI) Participant,

On behalf of our program staff team: Welcome to the University of Minnesota!

Congratulations on your acceptance to University of Minnesota English and Culture Immersion!  
We are excited to have you on our campus in Minneapolis and extend our warm greetings to you! We hope that your time in Minnesota will be enriching and rewarding.

We are sure you have many questions and concerns about your life in the United States. This letter and welcome packet will provide some information and answers about housing, packing, and your academic experience here.

Again, we look forward to your arrival and hope that your experience here will be a very good one!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jon DeVries'.

Jon DeVries, Program Director,  
and the whole University of Minnesota English and Culture Immersion Team



## **Important Information**

### **Arrival at Minneapolis – St. Paul International Airport**

If you are arriving with a group of your classmates, a UMECI staff member will meet you at the airport and assist in getting you to your destination in Minneapolis. **As soon as possible, please send your flight schedule to Maren Stoddard, UMECI Program Coordinator: [stod0077@umn.edu](mailto:stod0077@umn.edu)** Maren will inform you via email whether a group pick-up can be arranged for you.

If you are arriving on your own, you must arrange your own transportation to your destination. For this, there are a few options:

#### **Taxi**

Taxi service at Terminal 1-Lindbergh is accessible via the Tram Level (Level T). Signs direct passengers one level up to the taxi starter booth, where airport staff will assist passengers in obtaining a taxi. The University of Minnesota is approximately 12 miles from the airport, with fares averaging \$37-\$47. All taxi fares are metered at a rate of up to \$2.50 per mile and include a \$4 airport access fee that is added to the final metered fare.

#### **Airport Shuttle Service**

*Super Shuttle* is another convenient transportation option. A one-way ticket costs about \$18 and reservations can be made in advance or after arriving at the airport. If more than one of you are traveling together, you can get a discounted rate on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (or more) traveler(s). Ticket counters are located in the Terminal 1-Lindbergh Ground Transport Center, accessible via the terminal's Tram Level (Level T).

\*\*\*Additional Ground Transportation information from the airport can be found on the Minneapolis – St. Paul International Airport Website:

<http://www.mspairport.com/>



## **Important Information**

### **Hotels near the University where you might be staying:**

You should already have received a list of hotels on campus that are convenient for you to stay at until you make arrangements for an apartment. For your convenience, they are repeated here.

#### **University Hotel (formerly the Radisson University Hotel – Minneapolis)**

615 Washington Ave SE

Minneapolis, MN 55414

**Phone:** 612-379-8888

1-800-822-6757 (Toll-free Reservation Desk)

612-362-6631

**Fax:** 612-379-8436

#### **Holiday Inn Minneapolis Metrodome (West Bank Campus)**

1500 Washington Ave S

Minneapolis, MN 55454

**Phone:** 612-333-4646 (Hotel Front Desk)

1-877-531-2703 (Toll-free Reservation Desk for the hotel)

**Fax:** 612-338-4049

#### **Days Hotel on University**

2407 University Ave SE

Minneapolis, MN 55414

**Phone:** 612-623-9303

1-800-375-3990 (Toll-free Reservation Desk)

**Fax:** 612-623-0103



## **Important Information**

### **Academic Experience and Orientation Schedule**

#### **Orientation schedule**

Your Program and Orientation will begin on ***Tuesday, November 1, 2011.***

On November 1, you should come to **BLEGEN HALL ROOM #125 at 9:00 a.m.**

<http://campusmaps.umn.edu/tc/>

You should arrive in Minnesota a few days prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>. Your program office may have dates they suggest you arrive.

NOTE: Every day November 1-4 you will be busy 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with classes and orientation. We will give you the final schedule for that week and the rest of the program when you arrive on November 1st.

You do NOT need to purchase any textbooks or other course materials in advance. Most of your course materials will be provided, or you can purchase the required materials after the program begins.

During the Orientation we will assist you in setting up your student email account and campus identification card. You will also learn about the program schedule, expectations, and curriculum.

***You should use the time after you arrive in Minnesota, but before orientation on November 1st, to find housing, explore campus, and get plenty of rest to recover from jet lag.***

#### **Academic Experience**

The UMECI program is a great combination of courses designed to improve your English Skills, help prepare you to succeed at a U.S. university, help you adjust to living in the U.S. culture, and introduce you to the campus and the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area. Your weekly schedule will include lectures, discussions, homework, and field experiences designed to help you apply what you've been learning in the classroom.

Come prepared to meet new people, learn from multiple teaching styles, and to explore our culture and your own cultural background.



## **Important Information**

### **Applications for Admission to the University of Minnesota**

You are currently only enrolled in the University of Minnesota English and Culture Immersion program which will finish in May, 2012. You are NOT admitted as a full-time undergraduate student at the University of Minnesota.

If you do wish to apply to begin at the University of Minnesota (UMN) in September (Fall) 2012, applications are due on December 15, 2011. *Applications require your high school transcript information, which may be easier to access in your home country before you arrive in the United States.* If you intend to apply to UMN, we recommend that you look through the application materials before you arrive.

- The UMN application website is:  
<http://admissions.tc.umn.edu/apply/>
- Website for Information for International Student applications is:  
<http://admissions.tc.umn.edu/admissioninfo/intl.html>



## **Important Information**

### **Housing**

You are responsible for finding your own accommodations in Minnesota. The University of Minnesota does not have dormitories available for you, so you will have to secure a residence “off-campus”. There are many options available within walking distance of the campus or near to a busline to campus. The following internet links are some resources to help you get started:

- University of Minnesota (UMN) website for Off-Campus Housing:  
<https://rentals.tc.umn.edu/ochls/index.xhtml>
- UMN International Student and Scholar Services On-line Off-Campus Housing workshop:  
<http://iss.umn.edu/new/housingshop.html>
- University Commons Apartments – located next to Minneapolis campus, fully furnished  
<http://www.ucmn.com/>
- Stadium View Apartments – located next to Minneapolis campus, fully furnished  
<http://stadiumviewapts.info/>

There are many kinds of housing available to you in the Minneapolis area. If an apartment is “fully furnished”, this means that all of the furniture and possibly some of the kitchenware is provided. If it is “unfurnished”, you will be responsible for purchasing a bed, furniture, eating and cookware, etc.

Please note that you must be 18 years or older to lease (rent) an apartment. If you are younger than 18, you can share an apartment with an older classmate.

### **Information from Stadium View Apartments**

One of the possible apartment buildings, Stadium View Apartments, has provided this information: They will have some apartments available for rent when you arrive in Minnesota. These apartments are only available until May 31, 2012. The kinds of rooms available are:

2 bedroom/2 bathroom: \$849 per month

3 bedroom/3 bathroom: \$799 per month

4 bedroom/4 bathroom: \$725 per month

Shared units (2 per bedroom): \$626 per month



- All appliances including washer/dryer are in the unit and each bedroom/bathroom suite has its own individual lock for privacy and security from the common living space.
- For all apartments, there is an application fee of \$25.00 and a Telecommunications fee of \$35.00.
- There is an electricity allowance included in your rental rate. If the apartment goes beyond that allowance, you and your roommates will be responsible for paying the remaining electricity bill every month.
- If you rent one of these apartments you will have to pay a security deposit equal to two months rent. For example, if you rent a 2 bedroom/2 bathroom unit, the security deposit amount will be \$1,698.00. This security deposit will be returned to you if the apartment is undamaged at the end of the rental period.

Caitlin Chalem is the Leasing/Marketing Manager at Stadium View Apartments and is happy to talk with you about a tour of the available apartments, or arrange a lease. Caitlin's contact information is below:

Caitlin Chalem, Leasing/Marketing Manager Stadium View

2508 Delaware St., Minneapolis, MN 55414

Office Telephone: 612-331-5900

Fax: 612-378-3982

Email: [cchalem@peakcampus.com](mailto:cchalem@peakcampus.com)

## **Shopping Day**

We will have an **OPTIONAL** shopping day on October 31. Together, we will take the city bus to downtown Minneapolis and go shopping at Target. Target is a great store to buy apartment supplies, food, school supplies, toiletries, clothing, winter gear, etc.

We will meet together in front of **Humphrey Hall 190 at 10:00 a.m.** <http://campusmaps.umn.edu/tc/> and go together. Please bring \$1.75-\$2.25 in exact change for the bus, each direction (the bus driver cannot give change). Additionally, bring money (cash or credit card) for whatever shopping you plan to do.

## **Bus Passes**

We will assist you in purchasing a student rate bus pass (which gives unlimited access to the Twin Cities area) during the orientation. Please do not buy your own prior to this, as you may not get the best rate!



## **Important Information**

### **Packing**

It is autumn in Minnesota and the temperature is dropping quickly. Winter in Minnesota is very cold! Though you may wish to purchase a winter coat and boots after arriving in the United States, it is highly recommended that you bring warm clothes with you such as a jacket, scarf, and shoes. If you do not have warm clothes, there are many places in the Minneapolis area to buy everything you will need for winter.

Suggested Packing List (some of these things can be purchased in Minnesota):

- Light jacket
- Winter jacket and shoes – you will do lots of walking on campus!
- Warm hat, gloves, and scarf
- Book bag or backpack for carrying your school supplies on campus
- Medications and prescription information, if any
- Small overnight bag for short out-of-town trips
- Swimsuit
- Laptop with charger
- Camera with charger
- Semi-formal outfit (for opening and closing celebrations)
- Bathroom supplies and toiletries
- Travel alarm clock
- Electrical Outlet Converter
- Extra glasses or contacts, if used
- Items from your culture to use in a presentation about Omani culture (such as traditional outfits, arts, fabrics, textiles, postcards, flags, etc.)
- International calling card and access numbers
- Addresses and photos of family and friends
- Contact information for your family or relatives in your country, in case of emergency
- Favorite recipes (note metric & Celsius conversions)