

About Saint Mary's University

Saint Mary's University (SMU) is one of Canada's top primary undergraduate universities known for its international collaborations, leadership in entrepreneurship, and research that benefits local and global communities. Our programs in Arts, Science, and the Sobey School of Business are among Canada's best and feature professors who are committed to the success of their students. Saint Mary's provides our 5,500 students from 117 countries with a place that fosters possibility, excellent research opportunities, and a caring community in the heart of Halifax, Nova Scotia, on Canada's east coast.

Address	923 Robie Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia Canada B3H 3C3
Website	Saint Mary's University ♦ Why SMU ♦ Social Media Directory
Exchange Program	(Mr) Johnny Shaw & (Ms) Miyuki Arai, Global Learning & Intercultural Support Office Office location: Atrium Building, Room106 (see campus map here)
Contact	Office email: Global@smu.ca / Jonathan.Shaw@smu.ca / Miyuki.arai@smu.ca

Eligibility and Requirements

Definition of Visiting (Exchange) Student

In the context of exchange and study abroad programs, a 'Visiting Student' is from a Saint Mary's partner institution and has obtained the home institution's approval (via a "Letter of Permission") to take courses at SMU for transfer of credit to their home institution.

Language requirements

Undergraduate students are expected to have English proficiency equivalent to the language requirements published [here](#). An official English score is not required for undergraduate admission.

Academic requirements

There are no GPA requirements, but a grade of C or higher is required for pre-requisite courses. Students can take most undergraduate courses, subject to availability and meeting the prerequisites.

Other considerations

- Visiting exchange students must be nominated by the home institution.
- **The exchange program is not recommended for students who need to take specific courses.** Not all courses may not be available due to cancellation, schedule conflicts, lack of pre-requisites, enrollment limits, etc. Students are most successful when they take elective credits at SMU.

Note about graduate candidates

SMU Exchange Program is best suited for students to take undergraduate courses. Due to specialized curricula as well as different admission requirements, schedule, and fee schemes, not all graduate programs accept visiting students. Email Miyuki.arai@smu.ca to inquire before nomination.

Academic Information

General subject areas

See <https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/programs/>.

Course information

See <https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/courses-az/>. Note: **DO NOT make study plans based on this website, since not all courses are offered every semester.** Check courses by term below to see if courses you want are offered in the chosen exchange term.

Course offerings by term

1. Go to <http://selfservice.smu.ca/> and select "Browse Classes"
2. Select a Term, "September-December 2026" or "January-April 2027" (**Available from Spring2026**)
3. Select Academic Level ("Undergraduate"), Course Subject, and Campus ("Main")

Course load per term

Each course meets approximately 3 hours/week for 13 weeks plus an exam period and is worth 3 credit hours. Visiting students need to register in a minimum of 3 courses per term (9 credit hours). A full course load at SMU typically consists of 5 courses per term (15 credit hours).

Course registration

Course registration is completed online via Self-service banner account. Register early! Once a course becomes full, students can join a waitlist but will not be guaranteed a seat in the course.

- Course registration period for Fall term is open from May 1, 2026 – September 18, 2026(TBC)
- Course registration period for Winter term is open from May 1, 2026 – January 15, 2027(TBC)

[IMPORTANT] The majority of 2nd, 3rd, and 4th-year courses (numbered from 2000-4999) have pre-requisites. **Visiting exchange students cannot register in courses with pre-requisites on their own.** Students must first contact an academic advisor of the relevant Faculty (Arts, Sobey School of Business, Science) at SMU and request permission. Not all times such permission may be granted.

Nomination and Admission

Nomination process for the international office of the partner institution

Email Miyuki.arai@smu.ca to confirm the number of available exchange places, if not determined yet. For each selected student, the partner international office should inform via email to Global@smu.ca:

1) student full name, 2) student email (personal email or university email, whichever the student checks most frequently), **3) exchange duration**, e.g., “one semester”, **4) exchange period**, e.g., “Fall2026”, “Winter2027”, **5) home university degree program and major subjects** (e.g., “Bachelor of Science, Biology major”), and **6) confirmation that the student will take undergraduate/Bachelor-level courses at SMU.**

Please attach to the nomination email:

7) an electronic copy of a Letter of Permission (use the template provided) and **8) the nominated student's home university transcript in English** (-- the transcript is not needed for admission but is critical during course registration which starts in May for both fall term and winter terms)

Admission application process for the nominated student from the partner institution

Following the receipt of an email from the home institution, the nominated student will receive instructions for an online application.

Nomination and application periods

- Fall2026: Nomination from **24 March – 24 April**; Application from **1 April – 1 May 2026**
- Winter2027: Nomination from **24 March – 24 August**; Application from **1 April – 1 Sept 2026**

Late nominations/applications will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Email Miyuki.arai@smu.ca.

SMU Fees, Tuition and Money Matters

How to access SMU student account

Students can access the Student Account Centre by logging into their [Self-service banner](#) account. Click on the Student Tab and select the Student Account. Then select the Student Account Centre link.

All Visiting Tuition-waiver/discount Exchange students will pay the following fees (all amounts in Canadian dollars; rates below are based on AY2025-26, thus subject to change in AY2026-27)

Students attending SMU in Fall term will pay:

- + Ancillary Fee **\$545.00**
- + Student Association Fee **\$99.50**
- + U-Pass bus pass Fee **\$91**
- + Medical insurance (a package of Basic Int'l, Extended and Dental plans) **\$1695***
- + Residence with mealplan **\$8086.10** (rate depends on room type; limited availability)

Total CAD\$10517 (pay in one lump sum between mid-August and Sept 18, 2026, via [CIBC International Pay](#) or credit card)

*If insurance is unused, up to \$1130 may be refunded in January 2027.

Students attending SMU in Winter term will pay:

- + Ancillary Fee **\$545.00**
- + Full-time Student Association Fee **\$99.50**
- + U-Pass bus pass Fee **\$91**
- + Medical insurance (a package of Basic Int'l, Extended and Dental plans) **\$1130***
- + Residence with mealplan **\$8086.10** (rate depends on room type; limited availability)

Total CAD\$9952 (pay in one lump sum between mid-December and January 15, 2027, via [CIBC International Pay](#) or credit card)

*If insurance is unused, up to \$574 may be refunded in May 2027.

Undergraduate tuition for international students per course is CAD\$3001 (Arts), CAD\$3001 (Commerce), and CAD\$3034 (Science) (note: amounts are subject to change in AY2026-27)

- **Fee-paying visiting students** should pay all tuition fees by Sept18(Fall2026)/Jan15 (Winter2027)
- **Fee-waiver visiting exchange students** will see their undergraduate course tuition still charged at the start of the exchange semester. Disregard tuition charges and wait a credit to be added to the Self-service banner account to offset the tuition amount at the end of September (Fall term) and at the end of January (Winter term). Questions? Email Miyuki.arai@smu.ca.
- **Fee-discount visiting exchange students** will see their tuition charged at the start of the exchange semester. A discount is applied to their Self-service banner account only at the end of September (Fall term) and only at the end of January (Winter term). The remaining tuition is due by Sept18 (Fall2026) and January15 (Winter2027). Questions? Email Miyuki.arai@smu.ca.

Books: Budget \$900 for 5 courses (i.e., \$180 per course) – purchased via SMU Bookstore.

If living off-campus, budget \$2000+/month for rent, \$400+/month for utilities, \$500/month for food, for a total average of \$2900+/month x 4months. See off-campus living information [here](#). **SMU does not offer assistance with finding off-campus housing.**

See also: [Cost of Living in Halifax](#), [How much does it cost to live in Halifax](#), [Prepare your budget to study in Canada](#) for your reference and planning.

Note: **Sales tax (the “HST”) of 14%** is added to most purchases of goods and services.

Other Information

Housing

On-campus housing is offered, but spaces are limited. Fall exchange students should apply for residence as soon as admission is confirmed. Winter exchange students apply in October. For information on online housing application, cost, housing types, and meal plans, please see [here](#). **[Tip1]** A “Double room with a mandatory meal plan” and a “Double apartment with a mandatory flex dollar only meal plan” are proportionally less expensive; however, students should use the most expensive option for budgeting purposes since not all times students are assigned cheaper options despite their preference. **[Tip2] Meal plan is optional for Rice Apartment**, since it is equipped with a kitchen (and thus has been the preferred option, when available, for many visiting exchange students). For information on **off-campus living** and cautionary notes on **housing scams**, please see [here](#).

Insurance

Health and Dental plans are provided by the SMU Students’ Association (SMUSA) and are mandatory*. See the basic health plan and the extended health and dental plans [here](#).

*Have insurance from your home country? “Opt-out” requests are considered only for students with CAD\$2million coverage through their home institution. Questions? Email healthplan.smusa@smu.ca.

Immigration

Visiting students need either a visa or an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) to travel to Canada. Find out which document is required [here](#). Visiting exchange students coming for a program lasting 6mo or less do not need a study permit (see [here](#)); however, there may be [benefits to getting a study permit](#) (and visiting exchange students **do not need a Provincial Attestation Letter (“PAL”)** to apply for it).

Immigration application processing times vary:

- Most applicants get their eTA approval (via an email) within minutes. However, some requests can take several days to process if you are asked to submit supporting documents.
- Visitor visas and study permits applied from outside Canada could take 2 months or longer depending on which country you are applying from. Check processing times [here](#) and apply on time. Questions? Visit the Government of Canada website [here](#) and/or contact the SMU International Student Services at International.centre@smu.ca.

Helpful Information for Upon Arrival and First Week

[New to SMU](#) ♦ [Services for accessibility](#) ♦ [Writing & Language Support](#) ♦ [International Student Life](#)

APPENDIX – IMPORTANT DATES IN THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2026/27

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2026/27	
Fall semester extends from September to December, and Winter semester from January to April.	
2026	EVENT
Beginning of May	Course registration starts online for both Fall and Winter Terms of 2026-27 academic year for Visiting students (Category C)
End of August-mid September	Welcome Weeks and New Student Orientation (updated schedule will be posted here)
September 7	Administrative Offices closed. Labour Day.
September 8	Academic year begins.
September 9	FALL TERM CLASSES BEGIN.
September 18	(a) Last day for adding and dropping courses in the Fall Term (Sept-December). (b) Last day for final payment of Fall Term fees.
September 30	Administrative Offices closed. No classes- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
October 12	Administrative Offices closed. No classes - Thanksgiving Day
November 9-15	Fall Break. No classes.
November 11	Administrative Offices closed. No classes – Remembrance Day.
December 9	Last day of regularly scheduled classes in Fall Term.
December 10	Make-up class in lieu of Thanksgiving Day, Oct 12
December 10	Last day for withdrawing, without academic penalty, from 3 credit hour courses.
December 11	Study day. No classes/No exams.
December 12	Start of formal final examinations in three (3) credit hour courses.
December 21	End of final exams and end of the Fall Term (To Be Confirmed)
December 22	Last day University Administrative Offices are open before the holiday break (TBC)
2027 Winter	EVENT
Early January	Welcome Weeks and New Student Orientation (updated here)
January 4	Administrative Offices open. The academic year resumes. (TBC)
January 7	WINTER TERM CLASSES BEGIN.
January 15	(a) Last day for adding and dropping courses in the Winter Term (January-April). (b) Last day for final payment of Winter Term fees.
February 15-21	Winter Break. No classes.
February 15	Administrative Offices closed. Heritage Day.
March 26	Administrative Offices closed. No classes - Good Friday.
March 29	Administrative Offices closed. No classes - Easter Monday.
April 7	Last day of classes in Winter Term
April 7	Last day for withdrawing, without academic penalty, from 3 credit hour courses.
April 8-9	Study Days – No classes/no exams
April 10	Start of formal final examinations.
April 21	End of formal final examinations and end of the Winter Term. (To Be Confirmed)

- Important Housing Dates: see [here](#)
- Welcome orientation schedule: see [here](#)
- SMUSA Health Plan Out-Out Period (for students with CAD\$2million coverage through home university):
 - August 15-September 25 (for students starting in September)
 - December 15-January 25 (for students starting in January)

Questions? Email Global@smu.ca