

STEP 5: PREPARE FOR YOUR DEPARTURE

Key Words:

- **PDO:** This stands for pre-departure orientation, an informative session where you can discover with the help of advisers what to prepare for before you start your academic semester at a U.S. higher education institution
- **DSO:** This is an acronym for Designated School Official. (S)he represents his or her U.S. university or college in matters dealing with foreign students entering the United States. Others use the term PDSO or Principal Designated School Official.

Congratulations for making it to Step 5! Preparing for your departure is the final step to your Five Steps to U.S. Study! EducationUSA advising centers organize annual and one-on-one pre-departure orientations for free.

Why Attend a PDO?

- Interact with EducationUSA advisers who will walk you through the final steps of preparing for your travel and academic semester
- Discover meaningful strategies and fun tips from Filipino U.S. university student or alumni and their parents/guardians
- Learn which skills to develop to adjust to a new living and academic environment
- Receive information and resources from the U.S. Embassy that will be helpful for your new experiences in college

Topics Discussed During a PDO

- Changes in academic settings and expectations
- Coping in a new cultural setting
- Culture shock and cultural difference
- Opportunities to make the most of your U.S. stint
- Reverse culture shock
- Basics of student visa and travel arrangements
- Ways to represent the Philippines

Key Tips as You Prepare for Departure

- Get in touch with your student adviser to gauge better how you should prepare for dorm life. Know what is provided there and what isn't.
- Read up on the safety tips and travel safety plan provided by your university to international students.
- Prepare a [checklist](#) of things you should bring.





Fact Sheet

- If you are an exchange student, check with your home university how to get your classes in the United States credited when you return.
- Keep a handy emergency contact list on your phone or in your wallet of key people you can contact during an emergency such as your DSO, student adviser, local police authority, etc.

Ways to Stay in Touch with Your EducationUSA Family

- Schedule a call with your advisers to update us about your campus experiences.
- Send us a photo or a testimonial that we can share with aspiring Filipinos who want to study in the United States.
- Let us know if you are interested in speaking in one of our virtual or in-person engagements on U.S. study.
- Pitch any ideas or interesting projects you have in mind that can further promote the interest of students to study in the United States.
- Join our alumni networking events!

To learn more about **Preparing for Your Departure**, visit <https://educationusa.state.gov/your-5-steps-us-study/prepare-your-departure>.

