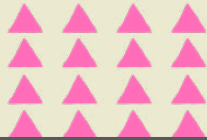


# Table of Contents

2 .....

4 .....

6 .....



..... 9

..... 11

..... 12

..... 13

# CHECK OUT *these*

# 4 Videos & Schedule Your Consultation

There are so many requirements for you to complete, before coming to the University of South Florida. We want to make this process as easy as possible for you by connecting you to our resources and supporting you with virtual consultations.

If you still have questions about your immunization and health insurance requirements, we strongly encourage you to watch our two compliance videos (using the links below):

Have you completed all of the immunization requirements needed to register for your classes? If not, be sure to watch our **immunization compliance video**, which provides step-by-step guidance on how to complete the USF Medical History and Immunization Form.

Are you confused about what type of insurance plan to purchase? This video will provide you with important questions to ask, before deciding on an insurance policy that is right for you, according to your medical and financial needs. This video will also explain the criteria and processes associated with obtaining USF or an acceptable alternate insurance plan.

If you are still trying to identify off-campus rental properties in the Tampa, Sarasota or St. Petersburg areas, be sure to watch the video.

This video aims to help you become a knowledgeable consumer in identifying and purchasing housing accommodations. The videos shares popular questions from students about housing leases, one-time and recurring expenses associated with rental properties, and ways to avoid rental scams.

Alex and Brian lead students on a tri-campus (Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Sarasota) transportation journey, teaching them about the different public transportation bus options, and promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety tips. This video is vital to students, who want to find their way around these areas, using public transportation.

## **Schedule Your 30-Minute Consultations on MS Teams!!**

Do you still have questions after watching these videos? Please don't suffer silently with your unanswered questions. Schedule a 30-Minute consultation on MS Teams with your International Student Support Team (Janna, Alex or Brian). We are friendly and helpful, and we look forward to meeting with you!

Please use the link below to schedule your consultations:



# All Kinds of Ways to Get from the Airport to USF!

Traveling from the airport to the University of South Florida or to an off-campus house, apartment or hotel can be hectic! It can also be enjoyable and exciting. It all depends on the traveler's willingness and ability to plan their journey in advance.

When I first arrived in Tampa, I was lucky enough to **travel with my family**. We rented a vehicle from a car rental agency at the airport and were able to navigate the city with ease. My colleague, Nusha, used a different form of transportation. She **hired an Uber vehicle from the airport**. Nusha was familiar with this service and - since it was her first time to visit Florida as well as the United States - she felt more confident using Uber. Another colleague, Dat, **asked a friend** from Tampa to pick him up from the airport. He really enjoyed driving through Tampa for the first time in the company of friends and joked that it was almost like having a personal Uber and tour guide all wrapped into one fun experience.

There are a variety of airport transport options that I would like to share to make your experiences traveling from the airport to any destination as smooth and stress-free as possible.



## Rideshare services:

One of the easiest options after arriving in Tampa is to book a ride through a rideshare service such as **Uber or Lyft**. You can download the app on your smartphone and create an account, which links to your debit or credit card. When you are ready to go, type in the address of the place you would like to be dropped off at and the spot you'd like to be picked up from and book the ride. It's as simple as that! However, the downside of this option is the higher cost, which can vary depending on the time and day and the distance to your drop off spot.



**DEPARTURE**



**ARRIVALS**



## Rental Car Services

The Tampa airport houses multiple car rental services that can provide a solution if needing transportation via car. However, keep in mind that you need to make sure you are **eligible to drive in Florida** with a valid, acceptable driver's license when you rent a vehicle. The downside of this option is that it **can be expensive**. Also, you will need to plan when and where you need to **return the rented car**.

## Carpooling with friends

If you have friends or know people that live in the Tampa area that have access to a car, asking them for a ride can be a great option when you first arrive. **Ask around!** You might know someone who knows someone in the USF area, you never know!

## Public Transportation

The advantage of taking the public transport bus in Tampa (the HART Bus) is that it is **free of charge** to any USF student when showing their **USF ID card** upon entering the bus. However, if you do not have your USF ID card yet, you may have to pay to use the bus. One of the simplest ways of **navigating the Tampa HART Bus system** is to type in your destination on **google maps**, click on the "directions" button and click "transit" (the train icon) to find out which buses to take. While the HART bus is less expensive than renting a car or taking an Uber or Lyft, it is also a **less expensive system of transportation**. When taking public transportation like the HART bus, it may take you **two or three times longer to arrive** at your destination.



# bus

# blues

It is hot, around 94 degrees Fahrenheit (34.44 Celsius), which is nearly the average temperature during summer in Florida. The temperature stays about the same into the beginning of the Fall semester months, so I stay inside mostly and wear 30 SPF sunscreen when I go outside. Today, however, near 2 p.m., I am outside, enduring the heat, and waiting for an opportunity to use public transportation. “Today ...” I say to myself, “... is the day I ride the Bull Runner bus”.

I have worked at USF as a Student Programs Coordinator position for about nine months. I do not live near campus, so I commute by car five days a week. As a staff member, I only use the Bull Runner sparingly. However, every day, I see more and more students ride our Bull Runner bus because it is a **free and convenient method to get to-and-from campus.**

If the Bull Runner is operating on a busy day, you should expect some delays. So, I wait and wait while looking at the **“Passio GO!”** app that tracks the buses live on a virtual map. Within five minutes, the Red Line bus stops with its signature ‘Wshhh’ sound at the Marshall Student Center located next to the shaded bus stop canopy.

The students and I line up one-by-one, and show our USF ID cards to the driver as we board.

I quickly sit near the mid-section of the bus when the driver stops the student who was directly behind me and asks, “Do you have your ID card?”



*Bull Runner Bus Stop near the USF Library*

## which buses go where?

The Red Line bus that I am taking shuttles students from the Marshal Student Center (MSC) to the west, going off campus, then south, and back east to the main entrance of USF Tampa.

Three other bus lines also go off campus: the Green and Purple line buses travel north off-campus. The Brown line travels south off-campus. If you live off-campus on the east side, you will need to bring or find your own transportation.

Additionally, two other bus lines stay on campus entirely: the Blue Line, which goes to most of USF Health's buildings, and the Yellow Line, which serves the Athletics or sports fields on campus.

Depending on the route, there are different bus sizes and types, but they are all air-conditioned and relatively clean, though stylistically speaking, the seat cushions remind me of **1970s Disco-era of American interior design**.

The student replies with shame, "No, I forgot it in my dorm room. Can I show you a picture of it on my phone?"

The driver thinks momentarily, then shakes his head, saying, "Sorry, kid, you must have the physical card with you."

"Oh," says the student with a bit of astonishment. The student waits a moment, and looks like they are about to negotiate with the driver to let them stay on the bus. Finally, though, they turn towards the exit and complain softly about the unbearably hot weather that awaits them.

"It is not worth arguing with the driver..." another student says to their friend "... that is why I make sure to have my USF ID card with me everywhere I go".

**"...I make sure to have my USF ID card with me everywhere I go"**

Everybody quickly finds a seat or remains standing, holding tight to the hand railings. The bus quickly departs at 9 mph (14.48 kph) and accelerates to around 24 mph (38.62 kph). On less crowded roads, the Bull Runner may accelerate to as fast as 32 mph (51.49 kph).



As we head from USF Holly Drive onto East 131st Avenue, a student tugs on the yellow cable that surrounds the inside of the bus, letting the driver know to stop at the next bus station. The bus driver acknowledges, with the audible recorded announcement telling riders the next stop. We stop at the “UATC to LIB” bus station just off campus, which connects students to the University Area Transit Center that operates the city of Tampa’s HART bus system, which is free to students with a valid USF ID card.

**“...I would not have to worry about purchasing a car to get to places...”**

A couple of students get off, and we wait for others to board. A student in a wheelchair waits for the bus driver to lower a ramp so that they may get onto the bus. **Each bus has a lift or ramp for students with accessibility needs and a section for persons with disabilities** near the front to get on and off the bus more easily. From what I know, especially during the busier days, students should call 30 minutes in advance to ensure they can get accessible space.

“The Bull Runner is nice,” I think to myself. “If I were a student, I would probably use it regularly. I can study on board, read a book, and enjoy the scenery. And I would not have to worry about purchasing a car to get to places on and off campus.”

It only takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes before we get to the bus’s next destination before it turns around. As we approach the USF Library, I tug on the yellow cable, wait for the bus to stop, and exit into the Florida heat.

## **should I take the Bull Runner?**

Walking back to my office, I think of the pros and cons of using the Bull Runner. The positives are that **I would not have to worry about transportation costs** to travel to nearby off-campus places. The negatives are that - like any transportation option - **the Bull Runner can be late**, so students should plan ahead on busy days and arrive at their bus stops early. The Bull Runner can also get crowded, especially during the first week of classes, so you may have to stand on the bus until a seat becomes vacant. The Bull Runner does not go very far off-campus, so if you need to travel further into Tampa, you might opt to buy a pedal bike or electric scooter. All in all, though, the Bull Runner was a worthwhile ride.








# Nusha's PACKING TIPS

## Adapters and electrical appliances:

One of the most crucial things to consider is the difference in electrical outlets. In the US, you'll need a travel adapter to plug in your foreign electrical appliances. Keep in mind that a travel adapter does not convert voltage or frequency. I learned this the hard way when I moved to Tampa. I brought my hair dryer along with an adapter, thinking it would work fine. However, the voltage was different, and my hair dryer ended up working with minimal power, rendering it almost useless. Electrical supplies worldwide can vary between 100V and 240V. Using an appliance rated for a different voltage can be dangerous.

In the USA, there are two plug types: type A (two flat parallel pins) and type B (two flat parallel pins and a grounding pin). The supply voltage is 120V with a frequency of 60Hz.

**Weather Preparedness:** Florida's weather can be unpredictable, especially during hurricane season. I arrived in August and got caught in heavy rain on my first day because I didn't have an umbrella or raincoat. Make sure to bring these items to avoid a similar situation. After the rain, the weather can quickly become sunny and hot, so pack sunscreen to protect your skin from the high UV index in Florida.



Packing for your first trip to Florida can be stressful, and I totally understand—I've been there myself. When I was preparing for my first trip to the US, specifically to Florida, I felt overwhelmed, especially since I was coming from a country with a completely different climate. To help make your packing process easier and stress-free, I've put together a list of important tips to consider.



## Clothing Tips:

When it comes to clothing, Florida's climate can be deceiving. I made the mistake of thinking Florida's hot weather meant I didn't need any warm clothing. However, indoor places like stores and restaurants are often much colder due to air conditioning, and the temperature difference can be quite noticeable. I found myself freezing and had to buy a jacket.



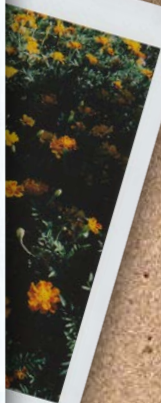


Additionally, while Florida is known for its warm climate, winter months can bring cooler temperatures, especially in the mornings and evenings. It's wise to pack a mix of clothing options, including a light jacket or sweater, so you're prepared for varying temperatures both indoors and out.

**First Aid Kit:** Lastly, don't forget to pack a first aid kit. When you first arrive, it might take some time to receive your insurance information and to find American alternatives to the medications you're used to. Having a basic first aid kit with essentials like pain relievers, band-aids, and any prescription medications you need can save you a lot of hassle and ensure you're prepared for any minor health issues that arise during your trip.



10.01.2020



Along with practical items, don't forget to pack some sentimental belongings that remind you of home. When I moved, I brought an album full of Polaroid pictures of my family and friends. It was comforting to have those memories with me, especially during moments when I felt homesick.

I realize how stressful it can be, packing so many items into just a couple of travel bags. Please remember, though, that many of the items listed above can be purchased locally in Tampa, so pack wisely, considering the weight limits on your bags, and be sure prioritize those supplies that would be quite expensive stateside or unavailable.



28.07.18

I hope these tips help you pack for Florida! If you have more helpful tips, DM us on Instagram - @usworld\_iss.

**SAFE TRAVELS!**

# Ways to

# GET AROUND

# Tampa

If you are looking for affordable options to travel throughout the Greater Tampa area, consider using the HART bus and the Streetcar system. I realize that navigating such new systems can be daunting at first, especially if you have just arrived from another country. But accessing a new form of transport may help you to become more self-sufficient, as well, giving you the freedom to visit different places in Tampa if you don't have a car. Let me tell you about two systems that I used.



## THE HART BUS

The HART Bus is free to students with a valid USF ID. It operates all around the Greater Tampa area, and can take you to the downtown area, the airport, and the popular shopping sites near the university. These buses operate on set schedules, which can be found on the HART website:

You can also navigate to “maps” to find areas in Tampa covered by the different bus lines:



## TECO Street Car System

Whether you are exploring the historic district of Ybor City or the Channelside area of Tampa, the TECO Streetcar can take you around downtown Tampa for free. However, it is limited to just one route. This streetcar takes you from Ybor, towards Water Street and Amalie Arena, alongside Channel District. And even if you own a car, it can be lots of fun to take the bus or trolley and not have to worry about parking or spending gas money!



A few words of advice: I have felt much safer taking the HART bus during daylight hours, though I do not recommend taking this system after dark, especially when you are alone. Additionally, navigating public transport in Tampa can be a bit tricky for someone who has just arrived to the country. However, a tip that has helped me to identify the correct bus to take is:

1. Type in my destination in google maps
2. Indicate “Directions” in the search bar, and then
3. Click the train icon “Transit,” which provides suggestions of trips you can take.

# Upcoming Events

**GRADUATION**  
*Cap Decoration*  
JULY 22 - AUGUST 2

10 AM  
4 PM

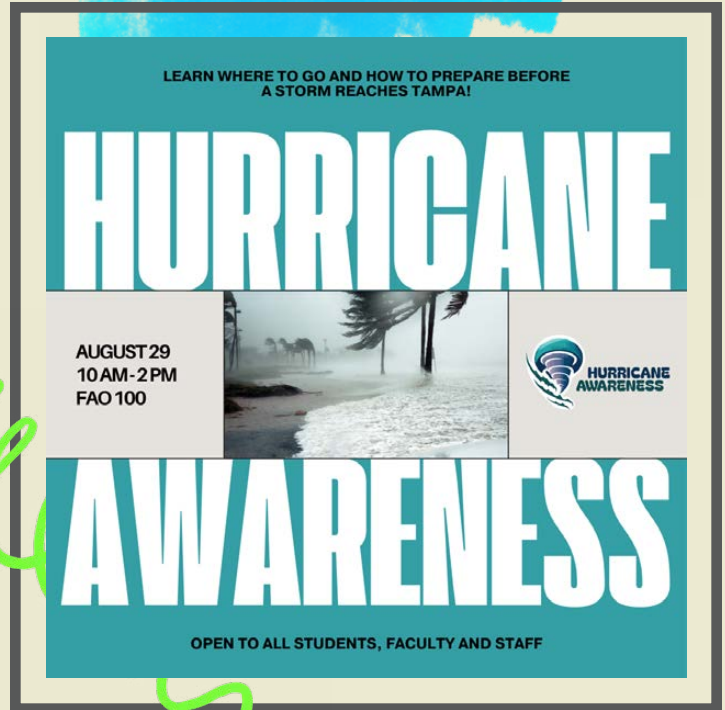
FAO  
127

A poster for a graduation cap decoration event. It features a central image of a black graduation cap with a yellow tassel. The background is a light teal color with various hand-drawn icons like a paper airplane, a pencil, and a star. The text is in a mix of bold sans-serif and cursive fonts.

LEARN WHERE TO GO AND HOW TO PREPARE BEFORE  
A STORM REACHES TAMPA!

# HURRICANE

AUGUST 29  
10 AM - 2 PM  
FAO 100

A poster for a hurricane awareness event. It features a central image of a beach with palm trees and waves. The background is a teal color. The text is in bold sans-serif fonts. There is a logo for 'HURRICANE AWARENESS' on the right side.

HURRICANE  
AWARENESS

# AWARENESS

OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

**B**icycle **SA**  
**A**uto **FE**  
**P**edestrian **TY**

September 12  
10 AM - 2 PM  
FAO 100

A poster for a bicycle safety festival. The background is a textured, light brown color. It features white line drawings of a car, a bicycle, and a person walking. There are also some colorful starburst and flower icons. The text is in bold sans-serif fonts.

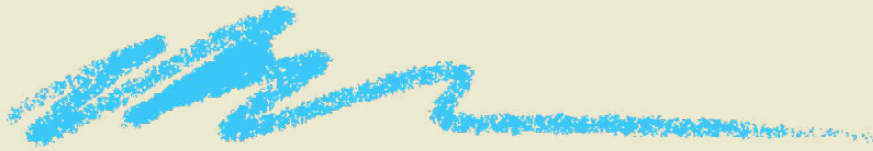
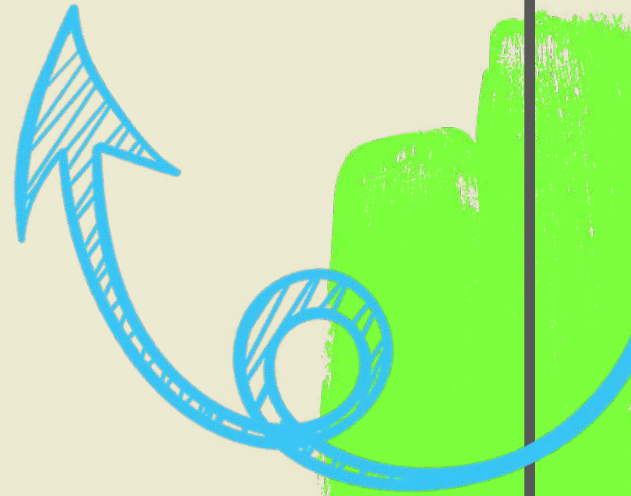
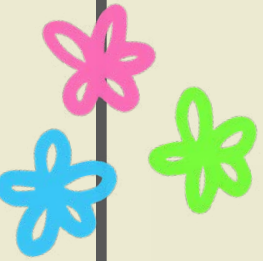
OCTOBER 7 - OCTOBER 11  
10 AM - 4 PM FAO 100

A poster for a de-stress fest. The background is white. It features a large image of a field of colorful flowers (orange, purple, pink). The text is in a mix of bold sans-serif and cursive fonts. There is a logo for 'de-stress FEST' at the top right.

de-stress  
FEST

# DE-STRESS

*Fest*



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**Contact  
Info**

