

Class of 2017,

Welcome to Stony Brook! This year we have an extraordinary strong class of 74 new students. On behalf of the entire department, I want to wish you a happy and healthy summer before you start your time here at Stony Brook University.

After reading this email, it would be extremely helpful if you could reply confirming that you received this detailed message.

Leaving your current university means that your existing university email address may no longer be valid a couple of months after graduation. If you do decide to change your personal email address, please let me know. Once your SOLAR account is set up (<http://it.stonybrook.edu/services/solar>) you will receive a Stony Brook University email address. Once this is set up, the department will use this SBU email account as our first point of contact when reaching out to you. Typically the email address are structure like the following, firstname.lastname@stonybrook.edu. If you share a name with a fellow Stony Brook student/staff/faculty your email address may be a little different.

If you noticed that we have been spelling your name incorrectly or if you would like us to use another name, please let us know so we can adjust our records.

By now you should have received a Stony Brook ID number (example: 111234567). If you are considering living on campus you should have payed the deposit for on campus housing; this does not require a NetID; (only if you use University housing). Please check Solar System; <http://it.stonybrook.edu/services/solar> ; to see the status of your enrollment. If you are interested in off campus housing please visit Stony Brook's Off Campus Housing website, <https://och.stonybrook.edu/>.

The official starting date for the orientation has not yet been announced, but based on previous years I expect it to start at 9 am on Monday, August 21 2016. It is required that all incoming students attend the orientation. Please pay close attention for announcements concerning this year's orientation. The program will be posted by the Graduate School; <https://www.grad.stonybrook.edu/>; and we have a WEB page for our part of the orientation which will be similar to the one of last year, <http://graduate.physics.sunysb.edu/orientation/2016>. The main difference between this year and 2016 is that the Tuesday and Thursday programs will be interchanged. At this moment the webpage for 2017 is not yet available.

Participating in the orientation is required by the University for employment as a teaching assistant. Make your travel reservations accordingly.

The first day of classes is Monday, August 28, 2017. I expect that university housing will be available for Friday, August 18, 2017. Please confirm your moving in date with the housing office and direct any housing questions to their office. If you arrive earlier please make the necessary arrangements with the housing office, <http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/res/>.

Several of you have successfully passed first year graduate courses in Classical Mechanics, Electrodynamics, Quantum Mechanics (two semesters), and Statistical Mechanics at your present Universities. If that is the case, a faculty committee will determine which of these courses you still need to take here (if any). Instead you can fulfill these course requirements by taking advanced courses as agreed on with the faculty committee. Please let me know if you would like to pursue this option.

If you did graduate courses elsewhere without obtaining a grade or if you studied the subject by yourself or if the graduate courses you took are different from our courses, you still can get the above courses waived by passing the department's Placement Exam. This is a difficult exam that requires extensive preparation. For details and problems from previous exams, please follow this link <http://graduate.physics.sunysb.edu/comprehensive/> .

The Physics and Astronomy Graduate Program offers a one semester laboratory course. This lab course covers various areas of physics. However, the main goal is to teach you about designing and carrying out experiments independently. If you did a similar course at home, please bring all related materials such as your written grade reports and other documents with you to campus. See more details by following this link, <http://graduate.physics.sunysb.edu/guide/index.shtml#wavers> .

All international students need an I-20. Issuing this document may take longer than you would like. The University has to process hundreds of incoming graduate and undergraduate students' I-20s. Please do not worry at this point. In the past Visa and Immigration Services has processed our students' paperwork on time in order for them to move in before orientation. If you have any question about your I-20, please contact Visa and Immigration Services, <http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/visa/>.

Starting January 1, 2016 the campus has been entirely smoke free, both inside and outside. This is one more reason to quit smoking as soon as possible, <http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/tobaccofree/> .

If you have questions, please ask Donald (donald.j.sheehan@stonybrook.edu) or myself (jacobus.verbaarschot@stonybrook.edu).

Looking forward to see you here in August,

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