



Ready to Start Your Journey to Becoming a Doctor in the US?

Your Guide to Applying to Medical School



St. George's University
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Grenada, West Indies

Your Guide to Applying to Medical School

as an International Student Looking to Practice Medicine in the US

Find out how to start your journey to becoming a doctor in the US with St. George's University (SGU).

Student Journey

Determine

Analyze

Apply

Accept

Arrive

Determine your career goal



1

Decide where you want to practice medicine

Page 02 //

2

Understand the accreditation, recognition and licensing required to practice in your desired destination

Page 03 //

3

Shortlist medical schools that support your career goal

Page 04 //

4

Connect with medical school admission teams

Page 04 //

Analyze shortlisted medical schools

5

Take a campus tour of your shortlisted medical schools

Page 06 //

6

Research study destination, lifestyle, and living cost

Page 07 //

7

Understand the entry requirements of the program

Page 07 //

8

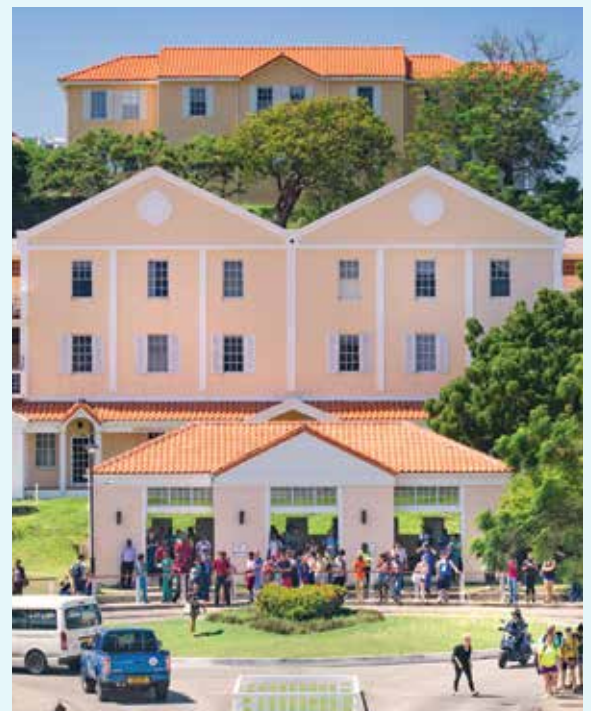
Consider visa requirements

Page 07 //

9

Explore tuition fees and scholarship opportunities

Page 08 //



Apply for your program or pathway



- 10 Prepare your supporting documentation Page 10 //
- 11 Submit your application Page 10 //
- 12 Prepare for your interview Page 11 //

Accept your offer

- 13 Accept your offer Page 14 //
- 14 Apply for accommodation Page 14 //
- 15 Attend pre-enrollment webinars Page 15 //
- 16 Book your travel Page 15 //



Arrive on campus



- 17 Familiarize yourself with local amenities Page 18 //
- 18 Attend campus orientation Page 18 //
- 19 Meet with The Dean of Students (DOS). Page 19 //
- 20 Attend White Coat Ceremony Page 20 //



Determine your career goal

To help you decide which medical school could be the right fit for you, you need to consider **where you want to be a doctor in the future**, what is required to get there, and how you will be supported by the medical school on your journey.



Step 01. Decide if you want to practice medicine in the US.

This will help you choose a medical school that can support your career goal in the US.

The first stage in the process of selecting a medical school is to **determine which country you want to practice medicine in** directly after graduation. Having this end goal in mind will ensure that the decisions you make now are paving a pathway that could lead you to your future goal.

It is normal to be excited about your time in medical school and to think about where your study destination might be for the next few years. But it is also exciting to think about your future as a practicing doctor and your future life and career in your chosen destination. If you decide you are looking to practice medicine in the US, choosing a medical school based on its **ability to support your career goal the US** is key, as not all medical schools are equipped to support students looking towards this goal due to certain **accreditations and recognitions**.



“ I chose to study at St. George’s University because it offers a pathway into practicing in the US. The number of US residences filled by SGU graduates was also very impressive and I knew it was well respected by my peers. ”

Dhaval Patel, MD
SGU 2020 Graduate

Step 02. Understand the accreditation and recognition required to practice in your desired destination.

In addition to ensuring educational outcomes, accreditation and recognition also dictate student's access to clinical rotations, licensing exams, and residency programs in certain countries.

Accreditation is a process by which a medical school undergoes **extensive external evaluations** by experts to ensure **high educational standards are achieved**.

Common recognition bodies to research if you are interested in practicing in the US:

WFME

World Federation of Medical Education

WFME is the leading global authority responsible for reviewing medical accreditors and when a medical school's accreditor has WFME recognition it allows qualified students of that medical school to take the United States Medical Licensing Examinations (USMLEs) that enable students to access US clinical rotations, allows participation in the National Residency Match Program (NRMP), and the opportunity to apply for licensure to practice in the US.

NCFMEA

US National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation

This recognition declares that the standards used by a foreign medical school's accrediting body are comparable with the medical accreditation standards used by Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) body that accredits US medical schools.

ECFMG

Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates

Each student who graduates from an International Medical School must be "ECFMG Certified" to participate in the US National Residency Match Program. Starting in 2024, ECFMG will require foreign medical schools to have recognized accreditors for its students to be eligible for USMLE Step exams and to pursue residency and licensure in the United States.

SGU's School of Medicine has been continuously accredited for decades and provides a reliable path for graduates to pursue residency and licensure in the US. SGU's School of Medicine accreditor, the **Grenada Medical and Dental Council (GMDC)**, is recognized by WFME and NCFMEA, meeting the ECFMG requirement at least through 2032.

Step 03. Shortlist medical schools that support your career goal.

No other medical school in the world provides more new doctors to the US healthcare system than SGU. Over 1,000 US residencies in 2023.¹

Upon graduating from medical school, medical students go through **post-graduate training**, in the US, this is known as residency. It is when students can finally put everything they've learned into practice. This is when you will be immersed in **fast-paced, hands-on training, working with actual patients** under the supervision and guidance of a licensed doctor.

Securing post-graduate training is arguably the **most important step toward becoming a doctor**, so you will want to evaluate previous years' residency placement rates for each school you are considering.

Considering the **size of the alumni** of a medical school can also be an indicator of a **school's history of producing graduates** who contribute to the medical profession and can have a positive impact on the medical community.

SGU has contributed over 22,000 physicians to the global physician workforce, with students, graduates, and faculty from over 150 countries. They have practiced in every state in the US, as well as in more than 50 countries.²

89% US residency placement rate for international graduates over the last three years.³



Step 04. Connect with medical school admission teams.

Asking specific questions can help compare medical schools easily.

Looking at university websites can help you get some information with regards to the programs on offer, but there are 5 important things you may want to ask an admission team about:

- Graduate success
- Accreditation and recognition
- Student support
- Examination results
- Clinical opportunities

Scan here to access an online guide on **Choosing the Right Medical School: Questions to Ask When Looking for a Career in the US**



¹As the medical school graduating the largest number of students per year, SGU places the largest number of graduates into residency programs each year, based on internal SGU graduate/expected graduate and residency placement data as of June 2023.

²Based on the number of students who have completed the Doctor of Medicine program from 1981-2022.

³Average of 2020, 2021, 2022 residency placement rate. International graduates are non-US graduates. Residency placement rate is defined as the total number of students who obtained a US residency divided by the total number of students who applied to a US residency program in a given year as of May 2022.



Analyze shortlisted medical schools

Once you have shortlisted the medical schools that you believe can help you achieve your career goal, you will need to invest your time getting to know everything about the schools you have chosen. This will help you rank your choices if you receive more than one offer.



Step 05. Take a campus tour of your shortlisted medical schools.

This provides you with a firsthand experience of what life could be like as a student there.

Here are some tips of what to take note of when on a campus tour or open day:



Facilities:

Visit the libraries, laboratories, classrooms, and lecture halls. Are they equipped with modern technology? This can help you gauge whether the university prioritizes modern teaching methods. Medical school requires a lot of attention, so checking for secluded study areas is also important.



Faculty:

Try to interact with faculty members, ask them about teaching style and how available they are to students.



Student Life:

Spend time observing the student population and picture yourself in that environment. Ask about extracurricular opportunities like clubs, and student organizations. If possible, speak with current international students about their experiences with the university, and what student services they use the most.



Amenities:

Consider how close are the supermarkets, food outlets, and religious buildings to the campus, and the transport links to get there.



We've made it easy to "visit" us. Watch this video about our True Blue campus and immerse yourself in Grenadian culture.

For international students, it can sometimes be difficult to visit multiple campuses, so **the university may offer a virtual tour**, speak to your admission team to find out if this is an option for you.



“SGU was an incredible mix of a studious and serious academic environment alongside Caribbean sunsets, wonderful food, and beautiful scenery.”

Joseph El-Khoury, MD
SGU 2002 Graduate

Step 06. Research study destination, lifestyle, and living costs.

Living costs can vary between countries and cities, so it may impact where you apply.

If you are considering studying abroad, you will need to consider the **cost of accommodation** and other associated **living costs** such as food, daily transportation, and entertainment. Doing your research at this stage can help you have a smoother transition to campus when the time comes.

Step 07. Understand the entry requirements of the program.

Not all medical schools offer the same pathways or programs to students looking toward a career in medicine.

Understanding what pathway or program you would be offered based on your **academic qualifications** will help determine **how long you will be in medical school**, and therefore how much funding you would need.

SGU offers students a **four-year MD Program** for students entering with a **bachelor's degree** and **five-, six-, or seven-year Medical Degree Pathways** based on **high school academic background** and performance.

Step 08. Consider visa requirements.

Checking your eligibility early in the process can help avoid disappointment if you gain acceptance into a medical school that you cannot attend. In some countries, you may require a **student visa or post study visa**. Remember to constantly check government websites for the most reliable and up-to-date information on visas and immigration.

SGU offers a unique opportunity for students to begin their studies in Grenada, the UK, or India. Students then complete their clinical rotations during the third and fourth years of their MD Program across a large network of **75+** affiliated hospitals and health centers in the US and UK.



Grenada visa requirements:

When you arrive in Grenada, you don't need a student visa, but you must have a passport (valid for six months beyond the date of entry), an SGU Letter of Acceptance (dated within 6 months) and an SGU Letter to the Immigration Authorities, or SGU student ID card.



UK visa requirements:

You will need to follow the UKVI Regulations and provide proof that you are enrolled in classes at Northumbria University with a Confirmed Acceptance of Studies (CAS), the CAS can then be used to obtain a student visa.



India visa requirements:

If you choose to start your studies in India and do not have an Indian citizenship, you may need a student visa. A provisional Student Visa may need to be applied for before arriving in India. You should contact the Indian Mission in your country for the most reliable and up-to-date information.



US visa requirements:

You may need to apply for various types of US visas depending on if your route to Grenada transits through the US, or if you wish to complete clinical rotations, or residency in the US. Pre-arrival, you can utilize the US visa and immigration website. Students on campus can reach out to SGU's Visa and Immigration support team.



Step 09. Explore tuition fees and scholarship opportunities.

Universities can offer scholarships to help with tuition fee costs. Scholarships can be based on your academic merits, or financial need.

Remember that medical school is not something you'll pay for by writing a few checks. The upfront cost might be steep, but it aligns with the commitment required to be a physician.

While you may be tempted to make a decision based solely on cost, assigning a dollar value to each institution simply doesn't account for everything you should be considering. As you compare SGU's tuition with other schools' expenses, be sure to maintain a critical eye. Do other programs provide the support and guidance you need to make your dream a reality?

You can also explore other scholarship options such as through **government ministries, organizations, or grants from your home country.**

At SGU, incoming preclinical students are eligible for the **Global Scholars Bursary or the International Peace Bursary.**

Scan to learn
more about
scholarships.





Apply for your program or pathway

Deciding that you want to apply for a program, or a pathway, is a big milestone on your journey to becoming a doctor. During this period, utilize your admission team as much as possible to guide you through the process.

Step 10. Prepare your supporting documentation.

Universities will require documents to support your application.

Check with your admission team what documents you will need, as failure to supply could result in an application not being submitted successfully.

SGU requires the following documents for international students:

- Academic transcripts (or awards, if applicable)
- Academic References
- Personal statement
- An English exam is required for any prospective student whose country is not considered English-speaking as per UKVI*.
- Passport copy



Step 11. Submit your application.

The SGU admission team will keep you updated about your progress every step of the way and answer any questions you may have.

The SGU admission process is comprised of three stages:



Initial Review



Interview



Final Review

Initial Review:

Once your application has been submitted, and your supporting documents have been received, the admission team will send your application file to the admission committee, The Faculty student Selection Committee (FSSC), for an “initial review.” Following the initial review, you will either be invited for an interview, or you will be notified that you have not been selected. Applicants are usually notified about their interview decision within 5 business days. On occasion, the committee may request additional information before an interview decision is made.

*Approved English-speaking countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada**, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, United States of America.

** International students (non-Canadian citizens) who graduated from a Canadian university will require proof of language skills.



Step 12. Prepare for your interview.

This is your opportunity to demonstrate how your journey has prepared you for success as a medical student and for a lifelong commitment to the field of medicine.

Through dialogue with our professional interview team, you are able to explore the lessons you have learned from your challenges and highlight the **experiences that will guide you to being a compassionate, dedicated, and outstanding doctor.**

The Interview:

Generally speaking, medical schools want to know a few key things about applicants:

- Their preparedness for an academically challenging curriculum
- How well they work with others
- Whether they would be a good **doctor**

Final Review:

Following your interview, your admission team will send the summary of your interview along with your application file back to the FSSC, who will **holistically review your complete file** and make a provisional admissions decision based on multiple factors.

Final decisions will be made once final grades are submitted.

Be patient, **SGU receives thousands of applications**, and it takes time to consider each application.



Top Tips:

How to prepare for your medical school interview.

- ✔ **Review the medical school's student selection criteria** and think of examples of how your academic preparation, interests, and life experiences align with these attributes.
- ✔ Be prepared to **discuss what you have learned from any academic challenges** you have experienced and strategies for success you have developed in moving forward.
- ✔ Ensure that you **set aside a quiet space and test your device for camera and sound quality**. This will help you feel confident in starting your interview on time and ready to engage in conversation with the interviewer.
- ✔ **Bring your best self to the discussion** by dressing professionally, sharing your strengths, and demonstrating an openness to learn from the medical school experience and interaction with faculty, peers, and patients.
- ✔ Take advantage of the **support provided by the admission team** and reach out with any questions you have in selecting the date and time for your interview.



“SGU’s application site was surprisingly straightforward and easy to navigate – what was expected of me was clearly laid out and not overwhelming in the slightest. I felt constantly supported by my admission officer and took advantage of the opportunity to speak with an alumnus, which was very motivating when it came to getting everything completed.” ”

Sara Conway
SGU Student Class of 2024



Accept your offer

Accepting an offer to medical school may seem like the final stage of the admission process, but there are still a number of administrative tasks to consider that can make your transition to medical school smoother.



Step 13. Accept your offer.

If you have been made an offer, you are one step closer to becoming a doctor.

Once you have been accepted, you will need to **pay your deposit to secure your place.**



“
SGU gave me the opportunity to pursue my dream of becoming a physician. It is through its extensive clinical affiliations that I was able to secure clerkships in many great hospitals that provided me with amazing mentorship opportunities that helped me find my path and pursue my dream.”

Iman Naimi, MD
SGU 2014 Graduate

Step 14. Apply for accommodation.

You will need to submit a housing application as a part of your enrollment process.

At SGU, all **new students must live on campus for at least two terms**, regardless of program or pathway location (Grenada, UK, or India). Living on campus provides more opportunities to **meet people, cultivate relationships with faculty members**, and make new friends. Your education will be enhanced by the opportunity to **access study groups, campus activities, the library, and recreational facilities**. The initiation and cultivation of these relationships can also prepare you for fostering similar relationships throughout your professional career.

Sharing with your peers is a great way to **build your support network**. Dividing household chores, attending activities together, and engaging in group study are all ways to ensure your happiness and success whilst studying medicine.





Step 15. Attend pre-enrollment webinars.

SGU hosts a variety of virtual events to help you acclimate. Webinars available to accepted students:



Accepted Student Webinar

In this webinar you will learn more about your **dedicated Enrollment Team** and how to utilize their expertise to guide you through the enrollment process.



New Student Welcome

This session is designed to provide you with **inside information about SGU's academic journey**, the student experience, and our unparalleled student support.



Virtual Socials

In this virtual event you will **meet fellow students** who will be starting their studies with you so you can start building valuable relationships ahead of the start of the term.



Know Before You Go Sessions

These sessions will help you get answers to all the questions we've received from students like you. We cover **what to pack, airport arrivals, banking, student life, and much more.**

Step 16. Book your travel.

All entering SGU students are expected to arrive in time to participate in their orientation. There are many routes into Grenada, the UK and India and you can use any of the internet-based companies or travel agents to help you.

For students arriving by air or train, SGU organizes transportation to the campus from the airport or train station closest to their accommodation.

Top Tip: What to Pack



School supplies
(laptop, pens, notebooks,
planners, calculator)



Clothing
(consider the weather of your
study destination)



Home comforts
(hangers, ear plugs, laundry bags,
clothes airers, room spray)



**Electrical plug transformer/
adaptor**



**Daily health care
items**



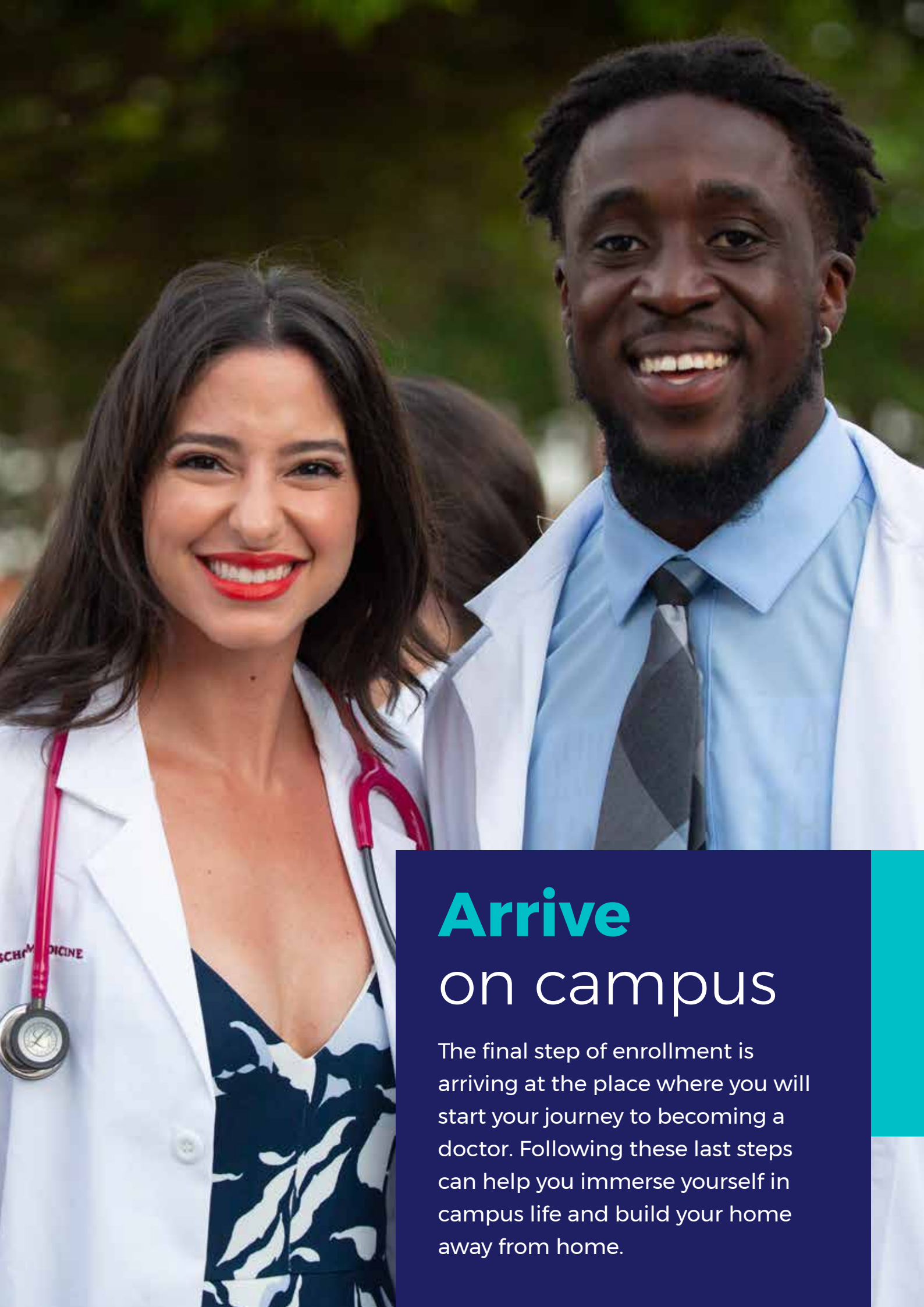
**Personal
hygiene items**



**Sports and
recreational items**



**Kitchen
supplies**



Arrive on campus

The final step of enrollment is arriving at the place where you will start your journey to becoming a doctor. Following these last steps can help you immerse yourself in campus life and build your home away from home.

Step 17. Familiarize yourself with local amenities.

This will be your new home and you will need to have access to the same day-to-day amenities you do in your hometown.

When you arrive on campus make sure you remember to set up a **new bank account** and **register with a local GP** or medical practice.

It's also a good idea to become familiar with nearby supermarkets and modes of transport.



“SGU gave me access to everything I needed in order to succeed and continue down the path of becoming a very knowledgeable and professional doctor.”

Ninad Desai, MD
SGU 2019 Graduate



Step 18. Attend campus orientation.

As part of welcoming all new students, SGU organizes an extensive orientation program.

All students are encouraged to participate in walking tours of the campus and to familiarize themselves with the many **recreational opportunities on campus**.

Throughout orientation week, an informational tent with **SGU ambassadors** will be available for questions upon arrival. You can also **connect with an SGU student mentor**.

All new students need to register at SGU, read the student manual, and sign their acknowledgment form.



Step 19. Meet with The Dean of Students (DOS).

From orientation to graduation, the Dean of Students Office (DOS) provides support and guidance in academic and non-academic areas to all students in the University.

Helping students achieve academic success and encouraging them to exhibit the **highest standards of professionalism** in their chosen fields is at the very center of what we do. This is accomplished by enabling students to freely access the services and support mechanisms they need to achieve their professional goals and **enhance their personal growth during their tenure at SGU**.

Academic advice and referrals, individual advancement program advisement, mid-term, and end-term progress assessments, monitoring student progress through the curriculum, and managing the Fitness and Wellness Center are just a few of the services the DOS offers.

For additional ongoing support, the DOS assigns faculty advisors to matriculated students as part of its Faculty Advisor Program. The advisor becomes personally acquainted with the student's goals, strengths, and challenges, and serves as a source of support and advice throughout the student's time at the University.

The DOS supports **over 60 student organizations** that enhance student life by promoting a variety of activities with a range of goals: **religious, cultural, professional, political, social, and academic**.



Step 20. Attend White Coat Ceremony.

Each term, a White Coat Ceremony is held for first-term students entering the Four-Year MD Program.

The White Coat Ceremony is an important milestone in the lives of students because it marks their **entry into this noble profession**. The event includes remarks from the University's President, an alumnus emcee, recognition by name of each entering student, recitation of the Professional Commitment, and an **opportunity to meet SGU Deans and Faculty at a reception immediately after the ceremony**.



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Take The Next Step

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