Expenses / Misc Stuff

Housing and Expenses

A decent house with electricity, water & heating would cost anywhere between $175-$350 per month per head when shared by 2-4 people, depending upon location and amenities. (The cost will be approximately $7,000 per year ($583) for room AND board if you stay in a residence hall.) Finding an apartment is not too difficult as there are quite a few apartment complexes around campus and beyond. The average monthly living expenses should be around $400, if one is not extravagant. Apart from housing and food expenses, the only major expense could be your long distance calling.

Initial Expenses and Insurance

You need to pay one semester's tuition fee initially and this would be around $1350 for a graduate student on a half-time TA/RA/AA, $2400 for quarter-time TA/RA/AA or $8150 otherwise. Check with your department or admission's office (website) for exact amount. These amounts can be paid in three installments with additional $15 finance charge. If you have a PACE award in addition to a half-time TA/RA/AA, you do not have to pay tuition. You are also required to purchase health insurance, which the university provides at about $343 per semester for a single student. (Married students and those with children will find insurance to cost between $2,600 for married and $5,000 for children per year.)

Note that the University pays the insurance for graduate assistants. Medical services are astronomically expensive, so have a thorough medical and dental check-up before coming here. Also bring medication for common ailments and extra pairs of glasses if you use them. Initial expenses also include an advance for the apartment (typically 2 months rent) and purchase of winter clothing. Typically initial settling down expenses should not exceed $750-$1500 (apart from the fees). housing and food expenses, the only major expense could be your long distance calling.

Financial Assistance and Campus Employment

Students coming with assistantships normally have no problems, but for those of you without assistantships, surviving is very tough out here. There are also very few hourly jobs available on campus. If you do not have an assistantship, come prepared to support yourself. A limited variety of jobs are available on campus. These pay between $5.00-7.00 per hour. As a student coming on an F-1 visa, you are restricted to working at most 20 hours a week. Remember, however, that these jobs allow subsistence only, and do not include a tuition reduction or waiver. Jobs are available in various places like the library, cafeteria, food service, and tutoring service.
**Prior Experience**

Prior Experience in your related field will definitely help you in your assistantship search and above all prior computer experience (familiarity with programming applications, web-design tools, database management, network etc.), especially with UNIX/C environments, gives you an edge over others in your job search.