Inside Washington 2013: The Presidential Inauguration

Frequently Asked Questions

These questions are some of the most frequently asked from students and faculty interested in participating in the program. If you have questions that are not answered below, please feel free to contact us at C2012@twc.edu and we will be more than happy to process your request.

Events and Tickets

How do I get tickets to the Inauguration Ceremony on January 21st (tentative)?

Tickets to the presidential inauguration are handled by the U.S. Congress and the presidential inauguration committee. Unless you have contributed thousands of dollars to the president-elect’s campaign, the best way is to request a free ticket from your U.S. Representative or U.S. Senator. The best approach is to call one or all of these offices and request tickets. You can approach the Members who represent either your place of residency or where you attend college.

If you are told that it is too early to request tickets, follow their directions, but also follow up with a written request and keep a copy of the request. Faxes are better because it takes quite awhile for Members to receive mail these days. Be sure to mention that you will be in Washington the week prior to the inauguration so you can pick the tickets up in person.

Does it help if someone who knows the Member of Congress helps me with my request?

It never hurts to have that person call or fax the office to follow up on your request. It is not essential, but sometimes offices hold back tickets for family friends, campaign contributors, and VIPs from the district.

What if I am told the tickets have all been allocated?

You should still go by the Members’ offices when you are in D.C. for the program. Sometimes people fail to pick up their tickets or there are some left over for some reason. Checking back on Friday, January 18 or even on the morning of the inauguration may be very worthwhile.

How much do tickets cost?

Tickets are free to constituents. If you have donated a lot of money to the president-elect’s campaign or to the presidential inauguration committee, you will be offered the opportunity to purchase tickets. But there is no reason why you should have to pay for tickets. We recommend that when you request a ticket that you ask for two, so you can give one to another student who is not able to obtain a ticket.
I am an international student. Can I still request a ticket?

If you go to school in the U.S., you can still request a ticket through the same means as others. If you live outside the U.S., see if you can have someone you know who does live in the U.S. to request a ticket. Also, we hope that students will request an extra ticket for themselves so they can share them with other students who don’t have a ticket. It might be worthwhile, however, to call your country’s embassy in Washington and find out if they are obtaining tickets through the Congress or even if they plan to have any kind of reception or special event to commemorate the inauguration.

What other inauguration events are scheduled?

The presidential inauguration committee has a lot of work to do in a very short period of time. Therefore, information about events is not usually announced until late December or early January. We’ll let you know if we hear about any public events that are available. Usually, free tickets are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Many organizations have inaugural parties and “balls” as well. Watch the Washington Post at www.washingtonpost.com for updates, but we’ll do our best to let you know if there is something that is free or at low cost that are available. You should also be in touch with your state society to see if they are planning any special events. Here is a website that you can reference: http://www.statesocieties.org/StateSocieties.aspx Just click on the flag of your state and see what events they may be planning. If there is a contact email, go ahead and ask them to let you know if they are planning any inaugural events. You may want to even volunteer to work at the event in order to get in free.

What about tickets to the inauguration parade in the afternoon of January 21st (tentative)?

Contributors and friends of the president-elect are usually able to buy tickets to the bleachers that are set up along the Pennsylvania Avenue parade route. Usually the public lines up along the route from early in the morning, so sometimes you have to choose whether to go to the inauguration ceremony on the Mall or hold a place along the parade route, but usually people head from the Mall over to the parade route right after the ceremony. The parade doesn’t start until after the new president has a traditional lunch in the Capitol with congressional leaders, so bring some sandwiches with you. Rules governing access to the parade route will be announced. Sometimes you also need a ticket or a pass of some kind to pass through the security checkpoints.

Lobbyists and others that have offices along Pennsylvania Avenue often have receptions so people can keep warm indoors and watch the parade from balconies and the windows overlooking the parade route. If you happen to have connections with lobbyists in D.C., you might call and ask them if they are sponsoring any receptions or can take you along with them to a reception. In any case, with so many out of town guests, many lobbyists will have some kind of reception even if their offices don’t overlook Pennsylvania Avenue.
The Washington Center Academic Seminar Information

When will The Washington Center academic seminar schedule be available?

We will announce the tentative program schedule about a week before the program begins. Many speakers have asked us to contact them in January so they can determine what times are best for them to speak. Because the program is dependent upon the results of the November election, the program will only begin to take shape after.

What are the types of things I will be doing during the Washington Center program?

The specifics of the daily activities will be released closer to the program start however here are some of the things you can expect at your time with the academic seminar

- Speakers, panels, and lectures in General Sessions
- Afternoon Bus Tour of Mall and Monuments
- Site Visits to Embassies, Think Tanks, Nonprofit Groups, etc.
- Visit to Capitol Hill and the Capitol Visitors Center
  - Time to visit congressional offices to pick up inauguration tickets
- Visit to the Newseum

When is check-in and check-out?

You should plan to arrive between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on January 12. If you expect to arrive later than 6 p.m., you should fill out the Late Arrival Form, which is available closer to the start of the program.

Check out is no later than noon on Tuesday, January 22. We cannot extend the stay beyond that date, because we have to prepare the rooms for our spring semester interns. If you are a spring semester intern, you will be given instructions about when you will be moving to your spring semester housing location.

When will I learn where I should check in?

All students will be staying in our Residential and Academic Facility located at 1005 3rd Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20002. We will be sending additional information on check-in procedures to students via e-mail closer to the start of the program.

Can I choose my roommate?

You can request a roommate by indicating that information on the second section of your application. You can add that information once you log back in to complete the housing section of the application.

How will my housing location be assigned?

We will do our best honor all roommate requests to the extent possible. Late applicants may be assigned to rollaway beds in some apartments in order to accommodate as many applicants as possible.

Which airport is closest to D.C.?

Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA) is the closest to downtown, D.C. and is most centrally located, but it doesn’t always have the lowest fares. Dulles International (IAD) is about 40 miles from downtown and handles mostly long distance flights. Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) is also about 40 minutes from downtown and often has the lowest fares, but is probably less convenient than the others.
Budgeting and Packing

Should I buy a Metrorail Pass since I am responsible for my own transportation?
That would be recommended, but you should wait until you arrive at your housing location to determine which pass is best, but most people will be buying the 7-day Fast Pass for $57.50 the first week. Here is the link to Metrorail passes: http://www.wmata.com/fares/purchase/passes.cfm

How much should I budget for out-of-pocket expenses?
Your expenses are likely to include roundtrip ground transportation from the airport to the housing location, which could range from $15 to $40 each way, the cost of a Metrorail pass (probably $57.50 for 7 days plus the cost of 3-4 more days either with a day pass or another weekly pass, depending upon your expected use), and the cost of meals. If you have the time to go to a nearby grocery store you can save money by preparing your own breakfast, lunch and dinner. If you eat out for lunch, expect to pay about $7-10 for lunch and $12 to 15 minimum for dinner, but it is easy to spend more if you want. Every room at the Residential and Academic Facility has a fully equipped kitchen with pots, pans, plates, refrigerator and dishwasher, which students are more than welcome to take advantage of, reducing their food costs. Additionally, the TWC shuttle (operating in the evening) will stop at the local grocery store.

What should I bring with me?
You will receive more detailed information with the housing email, but at least be prepared to bring the following:
• a government-issued ID card
• an alarm clock
• a small folding umbrella
• warm clothing that can be layered
• a small portable radio (to listen to during the inauguration ceremony)
• a notebook and pens for taking notes

Many students bring a laptop with them to write in their journals each night. There is free internet access in the apartment buildings. For security purposes, it may be a good idea to bring a laptop lock, just in case.

What should I wear during the program?
You should be dressed in a professional manner during all Washington Center academic seminar events. That means jacket, dress shirt and tie for men and no jeans, shorts or revealing outfits for ladies (this is a conservative town). If you think you will be going to an inaugural ball or special event, something more formal may be in order. Most importantly, bring comfortable walking shoes, especially for programming times.

Since it could potentially be quite cold, you should bring warm clothing you can layer, such as a hat, gloves, scarf, sweaters, overcoat, etc. In 1985 the temperature for the inauguration was 7 degrees Fahrenheit. In 1989 it was about 40 degrees. In 1961 it had snowed the night before. We suggest you looking at http://www.weather.com before packing to get an idea of the climate.

When is final payment due?
Unless otherwise arranged through a student’s institution, payment is due by December 15, 2012.

What contact information should I have handy?
Our main email address is c2012@twc.edu. If you need to ask us a program question, call us at 202.238.7936 (Laetitia Brock). If you have a student life or housing question, call the student life office at 202.469.8083 or email housing@twc.edu.