

Preparation for Life and Eating for Chinese Students in Northeastern University

Yuhao Xie and Hengjia Xu

26 May 2023

Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Research Questions	3
3	Background Research	4
4	Housing Options	5
4.1	On-campus housing	5
4.1.1	Meal plan requirements	5
4.1.2	Move-in/move-out with academic schedule	5
4.1.3	Roommate change request	6
4.1.4	Twin bed shared bedrooms	6
4.1.5	Located near resources	6
4.1.6	Proctors and RAs	6
4.2	Off-campus housing	6
4.2.1	Utilities may not be included	7
4.2.2	No dining requirement	7
4.2.3	Choose roommates	7
4.2.4	Private rooms with bigger beds	7
4.2.5	Transportation	7
4.2.6	Renter's insurance	7
4.2.7	Maintenance	8
5	Storage Options	8
5.1	On-campus storage facilities	8
5.2	Off-campus storage options	8
6	Dining	9
7	Local Resources	10
8	Extra Expenses and Healthcare	10

9 Problems in the Project/Suggestions for Future	11
10 Conclusion	12
11 Reference	13
11.1 "Living on- and off-campus." Northeastern University International Student and Scholar	13
11.2 "Dining on Campus." Northeastern University Admissions	13
11.3 "The top five places to grab a meal on the Boston campus." Northeastern University	13
11.4 "Moving to Boston for grad school, what do I need to know?" Reddit thread	13

1 Introduction

Northeastern University is an esteemed institution that attracts a diverse range of international students, including those from China. This report aims to provide comprehensive information to Chinese students on how to navigate university life at Northeastern University, with a specific focus on housing, dining, and living in Boston. The report will explore various options such as on-campus and off-campus housing, storage options, dining choices on and off campus, local grocery stores, public transportation, extra expenses, and health-care.

2 Research Questions

To guide our study, we will explore the following research questions:

How do Chinese students at Northeastern University integrate into university life?

What strategies can Chinese students employ to enhance their university experience?

How can Chinese students ensure a comfortable and successful stay in America?

3 Background Research

In conducting this study, we have gathered information from a variety of sources, including official materials from Northeastern University, a news article from Northeastern University's website, and insights shared in a Reddit thread where current and former students discuss their experiences and provide helpful tips.



4 Housing Options

Northeastern University offers various housing options to accommodate the diverse needs of its students. Chinese students can choose between on-campus and off-campus housing.

4.1 On-campus housing

Northeastern University provides a range of on-campus housing options, including residence halls and apartment-style living. These facilities offer a supportive community environment and convenient access to campus resources. Students can explore the official Northeastern University website and the International Student and Scholar Institute for information on available housing options, application processes, and deadlines. Semester payment + utilities included: On-campus housing at Northeastern University typically operates on a semester-based payment system, where students pay housing fees for each semester. These fees often include utilities such as electricity, water, and internet:

4.1.1 Meal plan requirements

Many on-campus housing options require students to enroll in a meal plan. These meal plans offer a range of dining options within the university, providing convenient access to on-campus eateries and dining halls.

4.1.2 Move-in/move-out with academic schedule

Move-in and move-out dates for on-campus housing align with the academic calendar, ensuring that students can settle into their accommodations before classes begin and move out at the end of the academic year or semester.

4.1.3 Roommate change request

Students living on-campus can often request roommate changes through the housing department if they encounter any difficulties with their assigned roommates.

4.1.4 Twin bed shared bedrooms

On-campus housing often features shared bedrooms with twin-sized beds, allowing students to live with a roommate in the same room.

4.1.5 Located near resources

On-campus housing is strategically located within close proximity to campus facilities, including libraries, academic buildings, student centers, and other important resources.

4.1.6 Proctors and RAs

On-campus housing typically has proctors or Resident Assistants (RAs) who provide support, guidance, and assistance to students living in the residence halls. They serve as resources for students and help maintain a safe and inclusive living environment.

4.2 Off-campus housing

Some Chinese students may prefer to seek off-campus housing options. Popular neighborhoods for off-campus living include Fenway, Mission Hill, and Allston. Resources such as rental websites and local real estate agents can assist students in finding suitable accommodation. It is advisable for students to start their search well in advance and consider factors such as proximity to campus, safety, and rental costs. Monthly rent (12+ months): Off-campus housing options often require students to sign a lease agreement with a monthly rent payment plan, usually for a duration of 12 months or longer. There are also some features to off-campus housing:

4.2.1 Utilities may not be included

Unlike on-campus housing, off-campus rental agreements may not always include utilities such as electricity, water, and internet. Students should inquire with landlords or property management companies about which utilities are covered.

4.2.2 No dining requirement

Students living off-campus have the flexibility to choose their own dining options and are not obligated to enroll in a mandatory meal plan.

4.2.3 Choose roommates

Off-campus housing allows students to select their own roommates or live alone if they prefer, providing greater control over their living arrangements.

4.2.4 Private rooms with bigger beds

Off-campus housing often offers private bedrooms, giving students their own personal space, and may feature larger bed sizes such as full, queen, or king beds for enhanced comfort.

4.2.5 Transportation

When living off-campus, students need to consider transportation to and from campus. This may involve using public transportation, biking, walking, or owning a car, depending on the location and individual preferences.

4.2.6 Renter's insurance

Students renting off-campus accommodations should consider obtaining renter's insurance to protect their personal belongings in case of theft, damage, or other unforeseen circumstances.

4.2.7 Maintenance

Unlike on-campus housing, where maintenance is typically handled by the university, students living off-campus are responsible for managing maintenance and repairs in their rented units. They should communicate with landlords or property management companies to address any issues that may arise.

5 Storage Options

Students may require storage solutions for their personal belongings during their time at Northeastern University. Here are two options for storage:

5.1 On-campus storage facilities

Northeastern University offers on-campus storage facilities where students can store their belongings during breaks or when they need extra space. These facilities typically require reservations, and students should inquire about availability and costs through the university's designated channels.

5.2 Off-campus storage options

Lazy Bones and other local storage companies provide off-campus storage solutions for students. It is recommended that students research and compare different storage providers in terms of pricing, accessibility, and security features to find the best option for their needs.

6 Dining

Northeastern University provides a variety of dining options to cater to students' diverse tastes and dietary preferences. Northeastern offers meal plans for on-campus dining that provide access to dining halls and food courts across campus. Students can choose from various meal plan options that suit their budget and dining preferences. If you are vegetarian, NU can provide you a vegetarian meal plan. If you have time for fast food, you can request NU to give you a fast food meal plan. The university prioritizes accommodating dietary restrictions, ensuring there are options for vegetarian, vegan, and other special diets. Instead of off-campus, if you want to eat outside, NU allows you to go out for dinner and lunch. Boston boasts a vibrant food scene with numerous eateries and restaurants. Popular off-campus dining spots near Northeastern University include Pavement Coffeehouse, Bangkok Pinto, and other local favorites. Students are encouraged to explore the local food culture and try different cuisines, considering factors such as affordability and proximity to campus.

When exploring dining options near Northeastern University, Chinese students can utilize the convenience of Google Maps. Google Maps is a widely accessible and user-friendly navigation tool that can help students locate nearby restaurants with ease. Just like Dazhongdianping in China. By simply entering their current location or the desired area around the university, students can view a map with various restaurant markers. These markers provide valuable information such as restaurant names, ratings, reviews, and even photos. Students can also filter the search results based on their preferred cuisine, price range, or dietary requirements. Google Maps also offers directions to the selected restaurant, providing step-by-step navigation to guide students to their desired dining destination. With the aid of Google Maps, Chinese students at Northeastern University can efficiently explore the diverse culinary landscape of Boston and discover new dining experiences that suit their preferences.

7 Local Resources

To make their stay in Boston more comfortable, Chinese students should be aware of local resources available to them. First of, there are a lot of grocery stores around NU. While specific information on local grocery stores is currently unavailable, students can conduct a local search upon arrival to find the nearest options. It is recommended that students explore nearby supermarkets and grocery stores to meet their daily needs and preferences. Secondly, public transportation is also convenient in Boston. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), known as "the T," provides an extensive subway and bus network throughout Boston. Northeastern University is conveniently located near MBTA stations, allowing students to easily access different parts of the city. Students can take advantage of student discounts and passes available through the MBTA to save on transportation costs. Therefore, if you wanna make your life easier in Boston, plenty of local resources are available in Boston for U to find out.

8 Extra Expenses and Healthcare

Chinese students should be prepared for additional expenses and take care of their healthcare needs during their time at Northeastern University. In addition to tuition and accommodation costs, students should consider miscellaneous expenses such as textbooks, supplies, and personal expenses. It is essential for students to budget wisely and manage their finances effectively throughout their university journey.

9 Problems in the Project/Suggestions for Future

Firstly, the unavailability of field investigation limited our ability to gather on-the-ground insights and visit the restaurant or house by ourselves. Conducting interviews or surveys directly with the target population would have provided a more comprehensive understanding of their experiences and perspectives. Visiting on person can help us making a more well-rounded evaluation.

Additionally, our limited understanding of U.S. social media platforms and online forums posed a challenge in accessing and analyzing information shared by Chinese students studying at Northeastern University. These platforms often serve as important channels for sharing personal experiences, advice, and recommendations. Expanding our familiarity with relevant social media platforms and forums would enhance future research efforts.

Furthermore, the challenge of distinguishing the veracity of information found on the internet, particularly regarding living and dining experiences, presented difficulties. Differentiating between reliable sources and unreliable or biased information requires critical evaluation skills. Future studies may consider employing fact-checking methodologies or cross-referencing multiple sources to ensure the accuracy and reliability of gathered information.

Another significant aspect that emerged during our research was the different eating habits between Chinese and Americans. Understanding these cultural differences is crucial in addressing the dining preferences and challenges that Chinese students may encounter while studying at Northeastern University. Future studies could explore this topic in greater depth to provide tailored recommendations and resources that bridge the gap between Chinese and American dining cultures.

To overcome these challenges and improve future research endeavors, we recommend engaging in field investigations to directly interact with the target population, expanding knowledge of U.S. social media platforms and forums, employing fact-checking methodologies for online information, and conducting in-depth studies on cultural differences in eating habits. Addressing these aspects would enhance the comprehensiveness and accuracy of future research on the preparation for life and eating experiences of Chinese students at Northeastern University.

10 Conclusion

In conclusion, Chinese students at Northeastern University can prepare for a fulfilling university life by understanding the available housing options, exploring diverse dining choices, utilizing storage solutions, familiarizing themselves with local resources, and considering extra expenses and healthcare needs. By planning ahead and seeking relevant information, Chinese students can enhance their overall experience at Northeastern University and live comfortably in America. The findings of this study emphasize the importance of preparation, proactive research, and utilizing university resources to ensure a successful transition and integration into university life.

11 Reference

11.1 "Living on- and off-campus." Northeastern University International Student and Scholar

<https://international.northeastern.edu/ogs/student-support/resources/housing/>

11.2 "Dining on Campus." Northeastern University Admissions

<https://admissions.northeastern.edu/student-life/dining-on-campus/>

11.3 "The top five places to grab a meal on the Boston campus." Northeastern University

<https://news.northeastern.edu/2022/10/12/best-restaurants-near-boston-campus/>

11.4 "Moving to Boston for grad school, what do I need to know?" Reddit thread

<https://www.reddit.com/r/boston/comments/1estam/moving-to-boston-what-do-i-need-to-know/>