

URSA EXPERIENCE PLANNING GUIDE

WHAT TO EXPECT

The Ursa Experience is a fun and exciting program for new students that help them make a successful transition to Missouri State University and begin to identify as a Bear.

Students will be assigned to a small group led by a current Missouri State student facilitator (a Major), which provides them an opportunity to meet others, learn, and have fun in a safe, supportive environment. Students will build strong bonds with peers, learn Missouri State history and traditions, and explore what it means to be a Bear. With team chants, a pool party, terrific food, team competitions, finding where your classes are, and much more, this experience emphasizes having fun and building social connections so that first-year and transfer students gain the confidence and support they need to be successful the minute they begin classes.

The Ursa Experience is incredibly fun; however, any successful experience depends on the full interaction of all participants. Each student should come ready and willing to participate fully.

Check-in

Ursa Experience Check-in will begin on the **2nd floor of the Plaster Student Union** (across from Bear Necessities) at **12:00 PM** on **Monday, August 10, 2026**. A welcome program will begin promptly at 1:00 PM. Please arrive to the Plaster Student Union around 12:00pm so you can check-in for the Ursa Experience.

Residence Life Move In

To participate in Ursa, you'll need to sign up for a move-in time on Monday, August 10 between 8 am-11 am, because we want you moved in and settled before activities begin promptly at 1 pm. When you sign up for your move-in time, you'll see the date of August 10th has already been populated for you, then just pick a time that's convenient for you and your family, between 8 am – 11 am. Once you have a housing assignment, we encourage you to get signed up for a move-in time: [My.MissouriState.edu - Housing Card - Move-in Time selection](https://my.missouristate.edu/housing-card-move-in-time-selection) sign up. You will see a message saying your are a part of the Ursa Experience. **Housing will let you know when you can pick your move-in time.**

As you will need to check in to the Ursa Experience starting at 12:00 PM, we encourage you to unpack only essential items at this time; you will have plenty of opportunity to fully unpack after the Ursa Experience concludes.

Housing is not available on campus for students on Sunday, August 9th, thus, it will be the student's responsibility for securing housing that evening. The Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau maintains a [list of hotel options](#) in the local area. Please contact Priscilla Childress at (417) 836-3060 or at pchildress@missouristate.edu if you have any questions about pre-event housing.

Commuter Students

Attending the Ursa Experience is a *great* way to make friends if you are living at home your first year at Missouri State. While the housing information above **does not** apply to you, know that you will be able to park your car on campus during the Ursa Experience, if applicable (please see the section below on parking information). You will need to arrive at the Plaster Student Union between 12:00 PM – 12:50 PM to check-in for the Ursa Experience on **Monday, August 10th**. **On the night of Monday, August 10th, commuter students will stay at their home residence, returning to campus on August 11th by 8 AM for the second day of Ursa Experience activities. Commuter students will sleep at home on the night of August 11th and return to campus for the third day by 8am.**

Parking

Family & Guest Parking (Monday, August 10th only)

For family members and/or guests joining their student for the **Ursa Kick-off** on Monday, August 10, 2026 please feel free to park in **Lot 15** behind the Foster Recreation Center.

Commuter Student Parking (Monday, August 10th – Wednesday, August 12th)

Students commuting from home during their first year at Missouri State and needing to park on campus for the duration of the Ursa Experience will need to order their commuter parking pass and park in a commuter lot **Monday, August 10-Wednesday, August 12th**. Order your parking permit online at <https://www.missouristate.edu/transportation/parking/buy-parking-permits.htm>. Parking permits for the 2026-2027 academic year will be available for purchase starting **July 1st**.

Residential Student Parking – Starting Monday, August 10th

Students residing on campus during their first year at Missouri State and planning to park on campus for the duration of the Ursa Experience should purchase a residence hall parking permit. [Order a parking permit online](#) on the Parking Administration website. You should receive your permit from Parking Administration in the mail within two weeks so order the permit as soon as possible after July 1st; however, you should print a temporary parking permit, available near the end of the purchasing process, if you believe the mailed permit will not reach you in time for the Ursa Experience.

Place your permit in the appropriate location in your vehicle. Park in any lot matching your permit's color (red or green); see our [parking map](#) for red and green residence hall lot locations.

Clothing

While we can provide you with clothing suggestions, only you know what makes you comfortable. Please plan accordingly.

Suggested Clothing

- Athletic shorts, t-shirts, and athletic shoes are generally the most appropriate articles of clothing for the Ursa Experience.
- Ample time will be spent both in-and-outdoors. Wear clothing that is comfortable in the August heat.
- Activities will continue rain or shine. Prepare for inclement weather, as rain can pop up unexpectedly.
- Some activities require various levels of physical activity. Your clothing will likely get sweaty, wet, and dirty, and you may want to change.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where will I be sleeping?

Starting August 10th, residential students will sleep in their assigned campus room. Commuter students will sleep at their personal home.

Is New Student & Family Programs liable for the attendees personal belongings?

New Student & Family Programs is not liable for any loss of, damage to, or stolen electronics. Ursa Experience participants are

completely responsible for all their personal belongings.

Can I bring family members or friends to the Ursa Experience?

Family members and/or friends can see you off at the Ursa Experience Kick-off (Monday, August 10th at 1 PM in the Plaster Student Union Theatre), but they cannot accompany you for the rest of the program.

If I need accommodations due to a disability, will those be provided for?

Yes! We want to ensure all facilities and activities are accessible to you. Please send requests for special needs or accommodations to the Disability Resource Center at drc@missouristate.edu or (417) 836-4192 as soon as possible so that we can prepare.

Can I cancel my reservation for the Ursa Experience?

If you encounter unforeseen issues that force you to cancel your spot at the Ursa Experience, please notify New Student & Family Programs as soon as possible. However, please be advised that the Ursa Experience registration fee is **non-refundable**. To ensure that we can offer the lowest price possible, we must secure our conference facility and purchase supplies/materials in advance, and thus are unable to offer any refunds.

Will there be down time during the Ursa Experience to meet other students and to relax?

Yes! While the Ursa Experience has a filled schedule over its two nights and three days, there is indeed free time built into the schedule. During free time you will have the opportunity to play games & sports or just hang out to get to know one another!

What meals will be provided? Will there be options if I am a vegetarian, vegan, gluten free and/or have any food allergies or dietary needs?

For lunch on August 10th, students (and families) will need to eat before Ursa check-in or after Ursa check-in but before the Ursa kick-off starts. The Plaster Student Union vendors will be open. Starting with the evening meal on August 10th, all meals and snacks on August 11th are provided, and breakfast and lunch are provided on August 12th. **Students will be on their own for dinner on the evening of August 12th. The dining halls will be open as will the vendors in the PSU Food Court.** The food is delicious and varies from day to day. If you have a special dietary need, please contact New Student & Family Programs at newbears@missouristate.edu or (417) 836-3060 as soon as possible so that we may provide reasonable accommodations.

Final Notes

Please direct any questions to New Student & Family Programs at newbears@missouristate.edu or Priscilla Childress at (417) 836-3060 or by text at 417- 812-5468.

As outlined in the confirmation email you received, please make sure to complete & sign the Ursa Experience Waiver Forms. This all needs to be completed by **Thursday, July 23rd at the latest.**

Ursa Experience: The Maroon and White Overnight

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

In consideration of being permitted to participate in the **Ursa Experience program at Missouri State University ("Program")**, I do hereby release, waive and discharge the State of Missouri, Missouri State University Board of Governors, their representatives, its officers, employees, agents, advisors, employees, and members (collectively, the "University") from any and all actions, damages, claims or demands which I, my heirs, personal representatives, executors, administrators, or assigns may have against any and all of the aforementioned for any and all personal injuries, accidents or illnesses (including death), known or unknown, which I have or may incur by participation in the above stated event and for all damages and loss to my property.

I understand that my participation in this Program is voluntary and that this event carries with it certain damages and risks, including but not limited to: abrasions, dislocations, fractures, concussions, strains, contusions, blisters, and eyestrain, overexertion, illness or loss from accidents, theft of or damage to personal belongings. This could ultimately result in injury, permanent disability, or death. I realize that I am responsible for any injuries to persons or property which may be incurred in connection with my participation in this event.

I also agree to indemnify and hold harmless the University from any and all costs, damages, liabilities and losses that they may incur due to my participation in this event. I hereby agree to abide by any policies, rules and regulations adopted by the aforementioned.

I further expressly agree that the foregoing acknowledgement of risk and waiver of liability is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the law of the State of Missouri and that if any portion is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

I certify that I have health care coverage (and will continue to have such coverage throughout the length of this program) which covers illnesses or injury suffered. I agree that I am solely responsible for all costs for medical care not covered by my health insurance.

I certify that I have no physical or medical condition that will impact my participation in the Program or that I have disclosed any physical or medical condition which may require special medical attention or accommodation in writing to the director of the Program.

I, the undersigned, am at least 18 years of age. I have read this Acknowledgement of Risk and Waiver of Liability and fully understand its terms. I acknowledge that I am signing this waiver freely and voluntarily with full knowledge of its significance. **If the participant is younger than 18 years of age, then participant's parent or legal guardian must also sign where indicated below.**

Printed Name	BearPass Number
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Signature	Date
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I am the parent or legal guardian of the participant indicated above, who is under the age of 18. I agree on behalf of my child or ward to all the terms contained in this release.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian (if participant is younger than 18)	Date
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Printed Name of Parent or Legal Guardian



Ursa Experience Participant Expectations

You are attending a Missouri State University (MSU) sponsored event. During this event, you will be representing more than just yourself. As such, I agree to the following:

- I will listen to and respect the event staff and student leaders.
- I will abide by all University Polices including the Student Code of Conduct (including but not limited to: alcohol, drugs, harassment, theft, assault, disorderly conduct, and disruptive conduct).
- I will obey all Local, County, State, and Federal Laws.
- I will refrain from the use/abuse/being in possession of illegal substances.
- I will refrain from the use/abuse/being in possession of alcohol.
- I will refrain from using any tobacco products.
- I will refrain from bringing or being in possession of any firearms, weapons or explosives.
- I will abide by all of the rules.
- I will respect and listen to members of the professional staff.
- I will avoid unnecessary roughness toward room furnishings, furniture, equipment, etc. I accept fullresponsibility for any damages or fines I incur.
- I will communicate any problems or violations of this agreement to the event staff.
- In the event of an emergency situation or a natural disaster, I will follow the protocol set forth by the Director of New Student and Family Programs.

Your contribution to the event is as important as what you receive from the event. As such, I agree to the following:

- I will attend and be on time for all of the sessions offered as part of the planned program.
- I will be an active participant in all events/discussions/activities. I understand that my contributions to my spirit team are important.
- I will be encouraging and supportive of my fellow Ursa participants.
- I will treat others and myself in a respectable manner.
- I will challenge myself to be open to meeting new people by interacting with individuals from different backgrounds and with diverse experiences.
- I will refrain from using inappropriate slang words, slurs, or derogatory comments.
- I will be enthusiastic, have a positive attitude, enjoy my time at Ursa and have fun!
- I will notify the event staff if I am not feeling well.
- I will refrain from using my cell phone during sessions.

Failure to adhere to this agreement may result in your removal from the program and forfeiture of amenities provided by the program. If removed from the program, you may also be referred to the Dean of Students Office, as well as local, state or federal law enforcement.

Student Participant Signature

Print

Date

Name

Date

BearPass Number



Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian
(if participant is younger than 18)

Print Name

Date