Taxes

The U.S. tax system is complicated and while we will address key elements of your responsibilities during orientation, it is important to know for your planning that you are likely to have tax withholdings from your stipend and campus wages. Unless you are from a country with a tax treaty, these withholdings are currently 14%.

Since all international students and scholars are required to file a U.S. federal tax return, even if you do not have U.S. source income, you should start familiarizing yourself with the U.S. tax system [1]and begin to understand your obligations.

The good news is that you will not need to worry about filing your taxes until the Spring semester (mid-April every year) and we will share information and resources about tax filing in early March. However, there are two things you need to take care of at the beginning of the fall semester after your arrival to the U.S. (please note that you cannot do these until after you arrive at Yale):

1. Completing your Foreign National Information System (FNIS) [2] entry with the International Tax Office. FNIS determines your tax filing status (nonresident vs. resident) and your eligibility for benefiting from a tax treaty. If you do not complete FNIS, the university might withhold more taxes from your stipend or paycheck than necessary.
2. Applying for a U.S. Social Security Number [3] (or ITIN [Individual Taxpayer Identification Number])

These two action items should be your priority if you want to get settled in terms of your taxes.

Gross vs. Net Pay: Tax Withholdings

If you are receiving a salary, stipend or scholarship funds, you may have federal taxes withheld from your pay (14%) unless you benefit from a tax treaty. U.S. tax regulations for non-residents are complicated and will be addressed in detail during orientation, including information about applying for a U.S. Social Security Number [3]. Additional information about U.S. tax obligations can be found here [1]. In addition, you will find helpful information on at the website of the Yale International Tax Office [4].