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Dear International Student:

On behalf of the Center for International Education, welcome to Columbus State University! For those of you that are returning, welcome back! We have been looking forward to your arrival, and we hope to establish a positive learning and living environment for you throughout your academic career.

As the International Student Coordinator, I am available for cultural and personal counseling; general academic counseling as it relates to understanding the United States system of higher education; and for advising on immigration matters. Throughout the year, a variety of programs will take place that are social, educational, and cultural in nature. We will of course inform you of those as the year progresses. A great way for you to get involved on campus is through the International Club, Action International, or the Global Village.

Overall, the Center for International Education promotes a greater awareness of the international arena, coordinates and develops study abroad programs, cultivates the international curriculum across academic disciplines, and serves as an international resource for interested groups and individuals in the Columbus community.

Please visit us! I look forward to getting to know each one of you, so please stop by the office, even if it is just to say hi. I will have regular weekly walk-in hours throughout the year where I will always be available for you. However, you can always stop by or set up an appointment. I hope I will be able to assist you in becoming an active participant and student leader on the Columbus State University campus.

The purpose of this International Student Handbook is to provide you with information about the United States (US) culture, Columbus State University (CSU), Columbus, immigration matters, and other important facets of your life as an international student. Know that this handbook is not a comprehensive collection of information, but is intended to serve as a guide for you as you make the US, CSU, and Columbus home. Please give us feedback on how to improve it for next year. Also, please consult the CSU Catalog and Student Handbook for more detailed information about academic and community life. They are available in Enrollment Services and Student Life respectively.

Warm regards,

Amy Nyland
International Student Coordinator



THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION (CIE)

CIE is here to help you with all aspects of your international education. We provide services for you as international students, such as support and assistance with matters related to adjusting to life on campus, in the community, and in the US, as well as immigration regulations. We also offer study abroad and exchange opportunities to students and faculty. We are located in the International House (corner of University Avenue & Clearview Circle) and are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Please visit our website to familiarize yourself with all the services we provide: <http://cie.colstate.edu>. You can also visit <http://cie.colstate.edu/internationalstudenthomepage.asp> to find information pertaining specifically to international students. You can reach our offices by calling (706) 565-4036.

There are several faculty and staff members who work in CIE.

Dr. Neal R. McCrillis, Mildred Miller Fort Foundation Distinguished Chair of International Education, Director of the Center for International Education, Associate Professor of History

Dr. Julie A. Ballenger, Assistant Director of the Center for International Education, Associate Professor of Biology

Ms. Amy Nyland, International Student Coordinator

Ms. Christine Murphey, Administrative Coordinator



UNITED STATES CULTURE INFORMATION

Culture Shock

Most international students will experience some degree of culture shock – the process of cultural adjustment. The unique experiences that one has when traveling and being immersed in a different culture may also bring changes in emotions in terms of how the host country and the home country are viewed. Some of you have gone through some, or all of these phases already; others may be going through them for a second time; and for even others, this is all new.

There are several stages of cultural adjustment:

Pre-departure phase – This is the preparatory stage before traveling. It is what you go through in your home country before you leave to come to Columbus. This includes deciding to leave home, choosing CSU, and making arrangements for your sojourn.

Honeymoon phase – Everything about the new country is exciting, interesting, and wonderful. You often feel like a spectator in this stage as you observe the US cultural patterns.

Hostility phase – The stark differences between your home country and the host country are overwhelming, and everyday tasks may become a hassle. The differences are no longer exciting, but instead are hard to handle and make you feel frustrated, angry, or resentful. People in this stage of adjustment often feel homesick and long for the familiar.

Humor phase – Gradually, the annoyances seem less so, and things that you found frustrating are now mere inconveniences or just “different.” Your sense of humor returns, and things seem to be much more bearable.

Effective adjustment phase – You are fully integrated into the host culture and no longer notice the differences or new ways of doing things.

To combat culture shock and prevent it from getting you down, try the following tactics:

- **Stay busy.** Explore the campus, city, and surrounding area.
- **Do not call home too often.** A short call home upon your arrival to verify that you have arrived is fine, but prolonged calls with friends and family can initially make you long for home.
- **Exercise.** Reduce stress and make yourself feel better by doing something that gets you moving.
- **Do not allow yourself to just socialize with international students.** After a while, US students will assume you have your circle of friends and you do not want to get to know anyone new. Do not limit yourself like that. Use your fellow international students as a support base, but do not fail to get to know people from the country whose culture you came here to learn.
- **Learn all that you can about CSU.** Become acquainted with all the facilities, and organizations that are available on campus. Take advantage of all the opportunities you have at your disposal.
- **Do not be too hard on yourself.** Recognize that adjusting to a new culture is very challenging. Keep in mind all the new things you have mastered since your arrival. Learn to laugh at your mistakes, and learn from them.
- **Take advantage of the Counseling Center.** Free, confidential counseling is available, so utilize the expert guidance and help.

Cultural Norms

People in the US attach a lot of importance to the ideal of equality for all. Although this dream has not been achieved yet, respect for individuals regardless of occupation, handicap, sex, race, or religion is expected. All individuals you meet deserve the same consideration and courtesy, whether they are professors, students, doctors or janitors. People in the US tend to be rather independent and tend to think for themselves. The concept of individual rights is important, especially the right to free speech.

Also, freedom of religion is a basic tenet of US society. People tend to be involved in their community, which usually involves the local church, mosque, synagogue, or other place of worship. Churches often organize recreational activities and also perform a wide array of services for the local community-dinners, tutoring, free English lessons, etc.

US culture is increasingly more informal. The way people dress, act, and treat each other is generally considered to be relaxed, informal, and not rigidly structured. Certain occasions are more formal than others, so take your cue from other people until you feel comfortable gauging just how formally to act, dress, or speak.

Your own cultural norms may conflict with accepted behavior in the United States. When a clash in beliefs, values, or traditions occurs, please try to understand the distinction in culture. Keep in mind that no one culture is right or wrong; they are simply different from one another. Observing the behavior that is happening around you is a good way to learn some of these generally accepted US norms.

If you have any questions about any of the US social customs described below, do not hesitate to ask a fellow student, or CIE staff. Social customs tend to be vague, especially compared to other countries where the social life is more structured. It is not unusual to be confused at first, so please ask for explanations or help.

Manners

People in the US tend to be friendly, patient, and polite, and they expect the same treatment from others. "Please," "Thank you," "Excuse me," and "I'm sorry" are used frequently. Also, phrases said in casual passing, such as "How are you?" do not necessarily mean that the person wants to know how you are feeling. It is usually meant as another way to say "Good morning," or "Hello." An appropriate response is saying "Fine, thank you. How are you?" When departing, phrases such as "See you later" and "Let's get together sometime" are often meant as a casual goodbye rather than an actual invitation. When in doubt, please clarify whether it is an actual invitation or not.

People in the United States tend to wait in lines, wait their turn, and usually give others at least an arm's length of "personal space." Eye contact is also important.

Generally, it is considered impolite to make phone calls before 10:00 a.m. and after 10:00 p.m., though these times can vary depending on a person's schedule (a fellow student may have a different bedtime than your professor).

Introductions

When meeting someone for the first time, a handshake is standard behavior, and many people introduce themselves rather than waiting for a formal introduction by someone else. “Nice to meet you” or “Pleased to meet you” is the standard response either after someone has been introduced to you, or after someone has introduced himself or herself. It is always better to address someone as Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Dr. at first rather than by their first name, especially if they are older than you—they can always tell you to call them by their first name if they feel that this form of address is too formal. Be prepared to explain where you are from and, if necessary, repeat your name several times and explain how to pronounce it.

Invitations

You may be invited to certain events by personal invitation, which can be printed, handwritten, or verbal. If you are invited and you cannot attend, you may politely turn down the invitation. However, accepting an invitation and then failing to show up is inconsiderate. If you are not sure whether or not you can attend, say so and if possible, call to indicate your plans. If you are invited to someone’s home for the first time, it is customary to bring the person a small hospitality gift, such as flowers, a small token from your home country, or some other inexpensive item. If you are unsure about what type of gift may be appropriate, ask. If you are invited to a meal or refreshments and you have special dietary restrictions, it is considered polite to inform your host of these restrictions in advance, preferably at the time you accept the invitation. When expressing thanks to a host, a short letter or card is sufficient.

Dating

The norms and traditions of dating in the United States are difficult to explain. To date a person implies that you would like to know him/her better. Going to social events together indicates an enjoyment of the other person’s company rather than implying a serious commitment.

US women and men are generally treated equally. As a result, dating norms and acceptable behavior are subtle, implied, and constantly changing. Many students prefer to go out in groups or date casually, often meeting for a date in a pre-determined location and sharing the cost of the date. The person who does the asking is generally expected to be the person who pays for the date, though it is polite to offer (once, without insisting) to pay your share and see if your offer is accepted.

Smoking

Smoking in the United States has continued to fall out of favor, with the exception of college and university campuses. Smoking is banned in most public places such as restaurants, hospitals, stores, and schools. If you smoke, it is always appropriate to ask if, and where, you are permitted to smoke. If you are at someone’s home, it is generally customary to smoke outside, unless your host is also a smoker and indicates that smoking indoors is permitted.

Alcohol

Purchase, possession, and consumption of alcohol in the United States is restricted to individuals who are 21 years old and older. Also, you cannot be in a public place (street, park, etc.) with an open container of alcohol. This law applies to everyone, even for those over 21 and also includes having an open container in a car driven by a non-drinking driver. Violations

involving alcohol can lead to arrest or fines. It may also lead to sanctions by the university. When purchasing alcohol, you will likely be asked to “show ID” (show the store clerk proof that you are at least 21 years of age). An acceptable form of ID is your passport, your driver’s license, or your state ID card.

Please do not drink and drive, keeping your own and others’ safety in mind, and do not accept a ride from someone who has been drinking. Drinking and driving is a serious offense in the US and will result in hefty fines, suspension of your driver’s license, significant legal trouble, and imprisonment. Please call a taxi or a friend who has not been drinking if you must have a ride home.

Time

The concept of time is very important to most people in the US. Classes, plays, concerts, public meetings, dinners, and other events begin as scheduled. Being late is generally not accepted and is considered rude behavior, as if the person being made to wait is less important than the person keeping them waiting. Setting appointments or scheduling a specific time to meet is common practice. If you know that you will be late to a meeting or appointment, a phone call to explain your tardiness is generally expected along with an apology. “Late” is being more than 5 or 10 minutes behind your scheduled time. If your appointment is with a dentist, medical doctor, or other professional, arriving more than 10 minutes late generally indicates that you have skipped your appointment, and you will likely be charged a fee for failing to call to cancel or to inform the receptionist of your anticipated late arrival.

Hygiene

People in the US are very much aware of their personal hygiene. They tend to shower daily, and deodorants are universally used. Clothing is worn one day and then a different outfit is worn the following day. Many people also change from one type of outfit to another, depending on the activity that will be taking place later that day (you may wear a t-shirt and shorts to class, but you would put on khakis and a more formal shirt to go to a party or to dinner at your professor’s house).

Shopping

In the US, prices are fixed, so trading and bargaining do not work, except when you are purchasing a car. Bartering with the salesperson may be effective in this circumstance.

Generally speaking, there is an abundance of stores in the US and comparing prices at several stores before buying is a good practice. When shopping, use the shopping cart or basket that the store provides. Also, keep receipts so you can return unused or unwanted items. Generally, you can return items up to three months after purchasing them; however, some stores prohibit you from returning items that were bought during a sale.

There is a sales tax in Georgia on most items sold. The tax in Columbus is currently 7% of the cost. Therefore, if an item costs \$1, you pay the seller \$1.07. In most countries, sales tax is already included in the price, but in the US this tax is levied when you make the actual purchase.

Tipping

Tipping is a prevalent custom in the United States. In restaurants, customers are expected to tip the waiter or waitress between 15% to 20% of the total amount of the bill. If your car is parked by a valet attendant, you should generally give him or her a dollar or two. The attendant who checks your coat at a restaurant or other event should also receive a dollar or two. When you get a haircut, you are generally expected to tip your stylist 10% to 15% of the cost of the haircut. Bellmen in hotels and airport skycaps generally receive one dollar per bag, unless they are extraordinarily helpful and go out of their way to assist you. Room service attendants should generally receive a 15% to 20% tip, and the pizza delivery person should also receive a tip of at least 10% to 15% of the price of the pizza. Taxi drivers should be tipped approximately 10% to 15% of the cost of the fare.

Clothing

What people wear in your home country may be different from what people wear in the United States. Generally, people in the US are fairly casual in their dress, with the exception of formal occasions. If you are invited by written invitation to a party, generally, the invitation will include some information about dress. If no information is included with the invitation, you may be able to guess the attire based on the activity. Generally, a suit or jacket and tie are reserved for semi-formal occasions, a tuxedo is reserved for very formal occasions, and a nice pair of pants with a collared shirt or sweater is acceptable casual wear. Jeans are very informal and khaki pants are less informal depending on the type of shirt they are paired with. For women, there are various types of pants, skirts, or dresses that are appropriate for any occasion. Shorts or casual pants are worn for informal occasions.

Clothing Sizes

Women's Clothing

Japanese	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21
US	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
British	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44
Continental	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50

Collar Sizes, Men's Shirts

Japanese	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
US	14	14.5	15	15.5	16	16.5	17
British	14	14.5	15	15.5	16	16.5	17
Continental	36	37	38	39	40	41	42

Men's Suits, Overcoats, and Sweaters

Japanese	S		M		L		LL
US	34	36	38	40	42	44	46
British	34	36	38	40	42	44	46
Continental	44	46	48	50	52	54	56

Women's Shoes

Japanese	23	23.5	24	24.5	25	25.5	26
US	6	6.5	7	7.5	8	8.5	9
British	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5
Continental	36	37	38	38	38	39	40

Men's Shoes

Japanese	24.5		26		27.5	28	29
US	5.5	6.5	7.5	8.5	9.5	10.5	11.5
British	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Continental	39	40	41	42	43	44	45

Weights and Measures

Though a few things are measured using the metric system in the United States, most are not. Below are some common Metric equivalents to standard US measurements:

Temperature

32° Fahrenheit (F) = 0°C (32° F is freezing)

40° F = 5°C

50° F = 10°C

60° F = 16°C

70° F = 21°C

80° F = 27°C

90° F = 31°C

100° F = 38°C

212° F = 100°C (212° is boiling)

Length

1 inch (in.) = 2.54 cm

1 foot (ft.) = .31 m

1 yard (yd.) = .91 m

1 mile (mi.) = 1.61 km

[12 in. = 1 ft.]

[3 ft. = 1 yd.]

[5280 ft. = 1 mi]

Volume

1 teaspoon (tsp.) = 5 ml

1 fluid ounce (fl. oz.) = 29.6 ml

1 pint (pt.) = .47 l

1 quart (qt.) = .95 liter

1 gallon (gal.) = 3.79 l

3 tsp. = 1 Tsp.

[16 Tsp. = 1 cup]

[4 cups = 1 pt.]

[2 pt. = 1 qt.]

[4 qt. = 1 gal.]

Weight

1 ounce (oz.) = 28.4 g

1 pound (lb.) = .45 kg

[16 oz. = 1 lb.]

Area

1 square foot (sq. ft.) = .093 m²

1 acre = 4046.48 m²

1 square mile (sq. mi.) = 2.59 km²

[1 sq. ft. = 144 sq. in.]

[1 sq. yd. = 9 sq. ft.]

[1 acre = 4840 sq. yds.]

Speed

1 mile per hour (mph) = 1.6 km/h

Electric Current

The standard US current is 110 volts, 60 cycles alternating current (A.C.). Appliances running on 220-240 volts will not work in the US. Most appliance or hardware stores will carry current-conversion kits that will work on appliances.

For a conversion calculator, please visit <http://www.sciencemadesimple.net>



GENERAL INFORMATION

Finances

Paper money is available in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, and higher. Coins are available in denominations of \$.01 (the penny), \$.05 (the nickel), \$.10 (the dime), and \$.25 (the quarter). There are also a few types of \$1 coins that are easily confused with quarters, but these are not in wide circulation.

You will want to open a bank account within a few days of your arrival. There are several types of accounts available. Checking and savings accounts are the two most common ones. A checking account allows you to deposit money and then write a check or use a debit card to pay for your purchases. A checking account may or may not have a monthly fee or service charge, and some checking accounts require you to maintain a certain minimum balance. Also, some checking accounts are interest bearing and others are not. A savings account is a good place to store funds that you do not need to access on a daily basis. Ask your bank clerk for a complete explanation of the types of accounts that are available.

Your bank may also offer other services, such as foreign currency conversion, travelers' checks, bank drafts, and money orders. Money deposited in banks is generally insured for the amount of the account, up to \$100,000. For good resources on banking, budgeting and finances, visit <http://www.themint.org>. To find a local bank, visit <http://www.yellowpages.com>

Automated Teller Machines, or ATM's, dispense cash, allow transfers, and accept deposits 24 hours a day. ATM's are accessed by the account holder's debit card. This debit card allows you to withdraw money directly from your account. If you use an ATM that is not affiliated with your bank, you may be charged a fee for using this service. See <http://themint.org/spending> for more information.

You may wish to open a credit card account, but be sure to read the fine print, and pay attention to the interest rates that the credit card company will charge you for any unpaid balances. Credit cards allow you to make purchases even if you do not have any money available for that purchase, which means that you are essentially borrowing money from the credit card company. As a result, credit card debt is a big danger, so be careful to keep track of your expenses, and try to pay the balance in full each month. Be aware that it is sometimes difficult for international students to acquire a credit card issued by a US bank. You may receive unsolicited mail from credit card companies informing you that you have been pre-approved to receive a credit card, but most of these credit card companies require US citizenship or permanent residence status to qualify. See <http://themint.org/owing> for more tips and helpful information.

Housing

You may choose to live on-campus or off-campus. CSU has a number of housing options, to include Courtyard I, Courtyard II and the Riverpark Housing. Riverpark housing is located in downtown Columbus and is most convenient for music, art and theatre majors. For more information about living on-campus, please refer to the Columbus State University Information section.

Living in an apartment or house off-campus requires that you make a security deposit and sign a lease or rental agreement. A security deposit is usually equivalent to one month's rent. Paying a deposit means that you have expressed interest in the property and intend to live there. It essentially "holds" the property for you until you move in. The security deposit will be returned to you when you move out, provided you leave the apartment in good condition. When you move into the apartment, you sign a lease or rental agreement. This is a binding legal contract between you and the landlord. When you sign a lease, you are obligated to pay the landlord monthly rent for the duration of the lease. Therefore, before you sign you should be reasonably sure that you can live with your decision for the duration of your lease. Never sign a lease unless you are completely satisfied with the apartment and surrounding property. Sign only when you understand all the terms of the lease. When you sign, you also agree to be responsible for any damages that occur while you live in the apartment or house. You must give 30 days notice to your landlord before you move out, in writing, and you will need to remove your name from the lease.

As soon as you have confirmed where you will live, it is a good idea to immediately contact the local utility providers to set up service for your telephone, water, electricity, gas, and cable or DSL service. In some cases, hook-ups can take up to two weeks, so be sure to take care of this immediately. Utility companies usually charge a fee for connection of services and may also require a deposit, so be sure to ask about any charges or deposits that will be associated with your service. Usually, you will have to make an appointment and be present in your apartment or house when the utility providers arrive to initiate service. If you are not present, the provider will not connect your utility, and you will have to reschedule and be present at a later time in order to have your service connected.

When you vacate the apartment, it should be left clean, including the refrigerator and oven. At the time you vacate, do not leave anything behind and surrender your keys immediately. When you vacate, you must call each utility company and order the service disconnected or be responsible for usage after you leave. You must give a forwarding address for final bills, or go in person to close these accounts.

Renter's insurance will cover your possessions in the event of theft, fire, flood, or other disaster. This insurance is available for any type of room or apartment you rent, including your apartment in Courtyard I or Courtyard II. When you purchase this insurance and something happens to your belongings, the insurance company will provide you with full or partial replacement value for your possessions depending on the situation. This insurance is optional, so you might want to weigh the risks and benefits of purchasing this type of insurance. If you have expensive equipment, many valuables, or would rather be "safe than sorry," you may want to consider purchasing renter's insurance. This insurance will bring some peace of mind when unforeseen circumstances occur. To find a local insurance provider, you may use <http://www.yellowpages.com>

Telephones

If you want to call your friends and family, using a calling card is probably the most financially savvy way to do so. You can buy calling cards in the CSU bookstore, most grocery stores, and convenience stores. There are also several websites where you can purchase calling cards. The websites <http://www.callingcards.com> and <http://www.phonecards.com> usually have very good rates for dialing internationally. When purchasing a calling card, follow the instructions. These will tell you the number to call and the authorization number to enter. The time used talking on

the phone will be deducted from the card. After each call, you will be told how much money and time is left on your card.

If you want to call collect, dial “0” and the operator should assist you. The option of calling collect is not available to most countries. You may also want to establish an account with a long distance company, so you can dial directly. You may choose any long distance carrier to provide this service to you. Shopping around and calling different carriers may pay off to find the best rate to your country. The following is the procedure for making a direct international call:

1. The international access code is 011
2. The country code (listed in the telephone book)
3. The city code
4. The local telephone number

For domestic long distance calls, dial 1+the city code+ the local telephone number.
For calls in Columbus, dial the city code and the local telephone number. Local calls are free.
For calls on campus, you only dial the last four digits of the number.

If you wish to purchase a cellular phone, there are various calling plans, service providers, and options available. Be sure to carefully compare plans before you sign up because most plans require a year-long service contract, so once you have signed up for service you will not be able to change until your contract expires.

To find out more about long-distance rates and cellular providers, see the following Web sites: <http://www.tollchaser.com>, <http://www.lowermybills.com>, or <http://www.smartprice.com>.

Safety and Legal Issues

Police in the United States are trustworthy and fair about enforcing laws and procedures. As an international student, you are subject to the laws of the federal US government and the Georgia state government, and are expected to be aware of those regulations. You are also entitled to the same protections as US citizens. If you break the law, you are expected to know your rights and responsibilities. You may want to read and become familiar with the advice offered by the American Civil Liberties Union, available at the following Web site: <http://www.aclu.org/issues/criminal/bustcardtext.html>.

Though most safety tips are common sense, it is important to be aware of your surroundings at all times. Always lock your apartment or car door. Always let roommates know where you are going, what you are doing, how long you plan to be gone, and who is accompanying you. Avoid walking alone at night. Avoid carrying large sums of cash or valuables with you. Do not open the door to strangers. Do not divulge personal information about yourself or where you live to people you do not know. Walk briskly and purposefully when in unfamiliar areas and do not act lost, even when you are. When a situation makes you uneasy or uncomfortable, do not ignore your instincts.

To report an emergency where someone needs immediate help, dial **9-1-1**. This number will connect you with emergency services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Tell the emergency dispatcher the exact nature of the emergency, and do not hang up the phone until instructed to do so. Calling “911” will dispatch the police, fire department, or a hospital ambulance. If you

need to reach the local police in the event of a non-emergency, simply dial “0” and an operator will connect you. To reach the University Police, dial 2022. Dialing “911” as a joke or prank is illegal and can result in fines or even criminal prosecution.

Transportation

Bicycles can be bought new or used through advertisements in the school or local paper, or through local stores.

Some students choose to purchase automobiles. They are a great convenience, but can be very expensive. It is wise to compare base prices, additional costs, and get advice from experienced people not involved in selling cars. Consumer Reports magazine is a good reference on most US and foreign cars and is available at newsstands and libraries.

Used cars are less expensive than new cars, but the buyer must be willing to take the risk of car trouble and repair costs. Any reputable person selling a used car will allow you to take the car to a garage mechanic to be thoroughly checked before you decide whether or not to buy it. Mechanics will charge for this service, but having the car checked is a wise precaution to avoid buying a car in bad condition.

Plan your purchase before you visit a car dealer: the age and type of car you want, price, down payment, and terms of financing. You should make a note of the Blue Book value of the car, which is available at most banks and on-line at <http://www.kbb.com>. When you visit the car dealer, explain to the salesperson that you do not intend to buy a car now, but that you plan to shop around and compare prices. Do not permit the salesperson to urge you to make a quick decision.

There is a public bus service that runs throughout Columbus, however, service is somewhat limited. In general, buses run from 4:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The price of fare is \$1 for students. You can also purchase a Student 31-Day Trip Card (gives you unlimited rides for the month) for \$20.00. Please visit <http://www.columbusga.org/Metra/> for bus routes, schedules, and further information.

CSU also operates a bus shuttle service between the main campus and the downtown campus. Please see the Columbus State University Information section for more information.

Taxis are also available in Columbus, however, these are not the best choice financially. In Columbus, it is hardly possible to hail a taxicab, so calling a taxi company is necessary. When calling, please be prepared to state the exact address from where you wish to be picked up. Please visit <http://www.yellowpages.com> to find local taxi companies.

Driving

You must have a driver’s license to operate a motor vehicle in the United States. Your international driver’s license authorizes you to drive in the US, but local laws and driving procedures may be very different from those in your home country. You may wish to obtain a Georgia driver’s license.

If you already have a driver's license, you will be asked to surrender your home country license before a Georgia license is issued. Please contact your country's embassy or consulate to ask them what the procedure is for retrieving your driver's license or applying for a new one when you leave Georgia. Please visit <http://www.embassy.org> for a listing of embassies and consulates in the United States. If you do not have a license, you will need to take a written test and a driving test in order to obtain your Georgia driver's license.

To apply for a driver's license there is a \$15 fee, payable in cash only (or \$8 if you volunteer to be an organ donor). You must also show proof of identification (passport, I-20 or DS-2019, and I-94 card) and proof that you reside in the state of Georgia by showing a utility bill or bank statement, and a copy of your rental contract/lease agreement. For more information on required documents, go to www.gpc.edu/~gpcisaa/gaie/dds.PDF If you do not have a driver's license and do not wish to get one, you may apply for a Georgia ID card. This card has the exact same information as a driver's license. In order to get a state ID, you need to show the same proof of identification and residency as you would to get a driver's license. The cost of a state ID is \$20 for five years or \$35 for a card valid for 10 years. State IDs and driver's licenses serve as an official form of ID in the US, and they are helpful to have when wanting to open a bank account or conduct other personal business matters.

You can apply for a driver's license or state ID at the Department of Driver Services, located at 8397 Macon Road. The office is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with no testing taking place after 4:00 p.m. The office phone number is (706) 569-3033.

If you purchase a car, you must register it and purchase a tag. To do this, you need to go to the Columbus Motor Vehicle Registration office, which is located in the East Wing of the Government Center, 2nd Avenue at 100 10th Street. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The phone number is (706) 653-4208.

In order to operate a car in the US, you need to have car insurance. Georgia requires all drivers to have liability insurance, however, if you limit your coverage to this type of insurance, only the car of the other party with whom you might be involved in an accident is insured. It does not cover the damage to your own car. For this type of coverage, collision insurance must be purchased. Please let your insurance company advise you on what coverage is best for your vehicle and situation. There are many car insurance companies, and you should shop around to get the best rates. To get a better insurance rate, it is helpful to have a Georgia driver's license rather than one from your home country. To learn more about car insurance, please visit <http://www.carinsurance.com>. To find a local insurance provider, you may use <http://www.yellowpages.com>

All drivers are responsible for knowing the driving regulations of the State of Georgia. You can find out all driving rules in Georgia by downloading the 2007 Driver's Manual, which is available online at <http://www.dds.ga.gov/FormsandManuals/index.aspx>.

If you break the law and are spotted by the police, the police officer will indicate that you need to pull over by turning on a siren and by flashing the car's blue lights. As soon as you can do so safely, pull over to the right side of the road without impeding the flow of traffic or turn into a parking lot. Park the car, but do not get out. Roll down the window when the officer approaches, and be courteous, even if you are angry or puzzled about why you were pulled over.

You will need to provide the officer with your driver's license, proof of auto insurance, and the car registration. If you are issued a ticket, you will probably be subject to a fine, and you may be required to appear in traffic court. If you are issued a warning, you will not need to appear in court or pay a fine, and you should thank the officer for only issuing you a warning.

If you are involved in an accident involving another car, call the police immediately and alert them to the need for an ambulance if you or other passengers are injured. It is best to avoid a confrontation with the other driver, so it might be a good idea to avoid speaking to the driver until the police officer arrives.

Health Insurance

Health insurance in the United States is essential. Unlike many countries around the world, medicine is not socialized, so the government does not pay for doctor's visits, visits to the hospital, or any other type of medical care. Since an accident or illness can be very expensive, adequate insurance coverage is required. CSU requires all international students on an F-1 visa to carry medical insurance through Pearce & Pearce, Inc. Payment is due along with your tuition and fees each term that you are enrolled. About two weeks after you pay your fall insurance premium, your insurance card will be mailed to the Center for International Education. You will receive a notice that you may come and pick up your card from the CIE. You must carry this card with you at all times in case you encounter an emergency and need to see a doctor. For the 2007-2008 academic year, the insurance premium will be \$358 for the fall term and \$472 for the spring and summer terms. To learn more about your benefits go to www.studentinsurance.com and select Columbus State University. Also, by going to this website you will be able to set-up your student account, print a temporary ID card, waive coverage, and do a network provider search.

Your insurance does not cover expenses related to vision and dental health. There are various independent vision care centers that can offer eye exams, glasses, and contact lenses for a fairly reasonable price. A visit to the dentist for a cleaning and check-up typically costs less than \$100, but any sort of dental work (fillings, crowns, extractions) is very expensive. Purchasing a separate dental insurance policy may be a worthwhile investment. To find out more about the details of the medical insurance that you must carry and the optional dental insurance that you may buy, please visit www.studentinsurance.com. Also, please be aware that the Pearce and Pearce, Inc. insurance contracts with certain, but not all local doctors and clinics. Please visit the website and perform a "Network Provider Search" to find out which doctor and clinic you may visit.

Illness

In the event that you become sick, it is advisable that you visit the Student Health Clinic as soon as possible. The staff there will evaluate your illness and refer you to a doctor or to the hospital emergency room depending on the seriousness of your illness. An ambulance should be summoned for any life-threatening emergency, but all other sicknesses should first be evaluated by the Student Health Clinic.

Academic Integrity

Academic standards and practices are influenced by culture. What is considered appropriate academic behavior in your home country might be different from what is appropriate in the US. The US definition of academic honesty is based on the cultural values of individualism, fairness,

the idea that individuals must work independently, using original thinking, creativity, and invention. This means that plagiarism and cheating are not allowed. Plagiarism is defined as copying the work of someone else and not naming this person as your source. In the US, this will be perceived as an attempt to utilize the ideas or words of another person as your own. Plagiarism is one of the most serious violations of academic conduct standards in the US. Of course, when you are writing a paper you research many sources and then present or summarize other people's ideas. But you must name your sources and identify them when you are using their words and ideas. This also applies to the work of other students. Discussing ideas for a paper with friends is okay, but it is not acceptable to hand in papers that are the same as your friends', or to let someone else write your paper for you, even though the ideas are yours. Cheating is defined as copying someone else's work or taking prohibited information or tools to an exam. Be sure that the work you complete is always your own, and be sure to ask about proper citations and references if you do not yet fully understand how to use them.

Class Expectations

Your instructor will give you a course syllabus, which contains all the information relevant to your course-expectations, required texts, suggested texts, assignments, exam dates, and additional course requirements. This syllabus is considered to be an implicit contract; by enrolling in the course, you accept the information and schedule that are outlined in the syllabus. Most instructors tend to follow the schedule printed in the syllabus, so generally you can count on the assignment and test dates listed on your syllabus.

Class attendance is usually required and often affects your final grade. It is important that you make every effort to attend class. When you cannot, try to obtain any notes and handouts that were missed during your absence. It may also be a good idea to meet with your professor during his or her office hours after an absence for any material you missed.

Adequate class preparation ensures that you can participate actively and productively in class on a voluntary or compulsory basis. Your professors should be addressed as "Doctor" or "Professor" followed by their last name unless they inform you otherwise. Though lively debate is sometimes the norm in classes that involve considerable class discussions, interrupting someone else while he or she is talking is considered rude, especially if the person you interrupt is your instructor. Looking someone in the eye when you speak to him/her or when he/she speaks to you is important; avoiding eye contact makes people uncomfortable and gives the impression of indifference.

All professors have scheduled office hours during which students can go talk to them to ask questions or discuss problems. Professors encourage students to visit them during their office hours. If you need additional time, you can also make an appointment to meet with your professor outside office hours.



COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

The Columbus State University Creed

The community of scholars at Columbus State University is dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Membership in the community obligates each person to a code of civil behavior.

As a member:

I will practice personal and academic integrity;

I will respect the dignity of all persons;

I will respect the rights and property of others;

I will celebrate diversity, striving to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions;

I will demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their need for support in their work and development.

Allegiance to these ideals obligates each person to encourage behaviors which enhance freedom and respect for all Columbus State University community members.

Institution Information

Nestled in Georgia's Chattahoochee River Valley approximately 100 miles southwest of Atlanta, Columbus State University offers comprehensive learning opportunities to about 7,500 undergraduate and graduate students.

Columbus State University considers itself, above all else, a teaching university. Four stellar off-campus centers bolster this mission with rich learning opportunities: The Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center, the Coca-Cola Space Science Center, the Rankin Arts Center, and the RiverCenter.

A member of the University System of Georgia, CSU is approved to offer more than 50 undergraduate programs and more than 35 master's or specialist programs. Students in all majors have opportunities to go beyond the campus boundaries and enhance their traditional learning through internships, clinical experiences, cooperative education, and field research. Additional educational opportunities are available to CSU students, such as the Honors Program, the Servant Leadership Program, and the study abroad curriculum.

Academic Calendar

Fall 2007

Classes begin	August 16
Labor Day Holiday	September 3
Fall Break	October 11-12
Thanksgiving Holiday Break	November 22-25
Classes end	December 7
Final Examinations	December 10-14
Grades due	December 18
Graduation Ceremony	December 15

Spring 2008

Classes begin	January 7
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	January 21
Spring Break	March 3-9
Classes end	April 28
Final examinations	April 29-30, May 1-3, 5
Grades due	May 7
Graduation Ceremony	May 10

May Session 2008

Classes begin	May 12
Memorial Day Holiday	May 26
Classes end	May 30
Final examinations	June 2
Grades due	June 6

June Session 2008

Classes begin	June 9
Independence Day Holiday	July 4
Classes end	July 23
Final examinations	July 24-26, 28-29
Grades due	July 31

For more information and updated calendars, please visit:

<http://academics.colstate.edu/calendars/index.asp>.

Tuition and Fees

International students on F-1 and J-1 visas have to be enrolled full-time to maintain their visa status. For undergraduate students, this means enrolling for a minimum of 12 semester hours and for graduate students, this means enrolling for a minimum of 9 hours. Below is an outline of the expected tuition and expenses per term for fall 2007 and spring 2008, assuming full-time enrollment. For more information and updates, please visit:

<http://registration.colstate.edu/tuition>.

Undergraduates

Tuition:	\$5,736
Activity fee:	\$55
Athletic fee:	\$136
Health fee:	\$35
Access fee:	\$16
Technology fee:	\$42
Parking deck fee:	\$39
Total cost:	\$6,049

Graduates

Tuition:	\$5,121
Activity fee:	\$55
Athletic fee:	\$136
Health fee:	\$35
Access fee:	\$16
Technology fee:	\$42
Parking deck fee:	\$39
Total cost:	\$5,444

International students are classified as nonresident students, and thus pay the out-of-state tuition rate. Students that are dependents of career consular officers whose home countries operate on the principal of educational reciprocity with the US, or active duty military personnel stationed in Georgia qualify for the in-state tuition rate. CSU and The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia do provide a limited number of Non-Resident Fee Waivers.

Essentially, this is a scholarship that waives the difference between the out-of-state tuition rate and the in-state tuition rate. Every year, a very small number of these waivers are made available to international students. To apply for this waiver, a letter needs to be written addressed to the Director of Admissions. See the International Student Coordinator for more details about this process.

Most courses require books and other supplies. Your professor should give you a list of the requirements for the course during the first class. The campus bookstore should provide all the necessary supplies and textbooks.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

CSU now offers a scholarship specifically for international students called the International Student Service Scholarship. The ISSS is open to qualified undergraduate and graduate international students on an F-1 visa and is available to a limited number of international students who have been accepted to CSU, or are presently attending CSU. For more information about the scholarship, please visit <http://cie.colstate.edu/internationalstudentscholarships.asp>.

Other than the ISSS, there are a few other scholarships that international students may apply for. A list of scholarships is available on the Financial Aid office website, <http://finaid.colstate.edu/scholarships>. When reviewing scholarship opportunities, it is important to check for eligibility. Some scholarships require US residency, US test scores, or a US GPA. International students may also be eligible for some loans. Please visit the Financial Aid office website for more details, <http://finaid.colstate.edu/index.htm>. Additionally, you can visit CSU's International Student Website for a list of privately offered scholarships that may interest you. Please go to <http://cie.colstate.edu/internationalstudentscholarships.asp> to view the entire list. International students also may be eligible for on-campus as well as off-campus employment. Please refer to the Immigration Information section for details.

On-Campus Housing

Housing is available on campus in the Courtyard I and Courtyard II apartments. Courtyard I apartments consist of four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a full kitchen, and a living room. All traditional-aged freshmen are required to have this option unless otherwise approved by the Director of Residence Life. Courtyard II apartments vary from one to four bedrooms with shared and private options. Students may apply for on-campus housing through the Residence Life Office, and a \$300 damage deposit which includes a \$25 non-refundable application fee, must accompany the housing application. \$200 of the damage deposit is refundable if the Residence Life Office receives cancellation at least 30 days prior to the first day of classes. This fee, minus deductions for damages or special cleaning, is also refunded when a resident leaves housing and follows prescribed checkout procedures. The other half of the damage deposit is nonrefundable unless the student is not admitted to the university.

Below are the costs for housing for the 2006-2007 academic year. The listed price includes local phone service, internet/e-mail access, extended cable TV, all utilities, and basic furnishings.

Courtyard I

Private bedroom/shared bath	\$2,200
Private bedroom/private bath	\$2,475

Courtyard II

Shared bedroom/shared bathroom	\$1,900
Private bedroom/shared bathroom	\$2,200
Private bedroom/private bathroom	\$2,475
Private unit	\$3,000

If you are unable to travel home during the winter holiday, you may remain in your apartment, however, you need to notify Residence Life, and the cost for staying is \$100. During the summer term, you may only stay on-campus if you are enrolled in classes.

For more information on the office of Residence Life, please <http://life.colstate.edu/>.

Dining Services

When residing in Courtyard I or Courtyard II, students are required to have a meal plan, except during Maymester. Below are descriptions and prices for the different meal plans that are available for the fall and spring term during the 2005-2006 academic year.

8 meals per week plus \$180 Cougar Cash	\$1010
10 meals per week plus \$200 Cougar Cash	\$1,210
Senior Plan - 5 meals per week plus \$300 Cougar Cash (Available for Seniors w/90 + hours and Graduate students)	\$840

There are three dining facilities available on campus: the Davidson Marketplace, the Patio Grille, and Blimpies. The Davidson Marketplace offers an "All You Can Eat" meal. They have several different serving stations, and one price gives you unlimited access to the foods and drinks that are served. The Patio Grille offers the Pizza Hut Express, Grille Works, and Cougar Smoothies. They also offer unlimited breakfast for one Meal Plan meal. Both of these dining facilities are located in the Davidson Student Center. Blimpies offers sandwiches, salads, wraps, cookies, coffee, and sodas. It is located in Howard Hall. For more information on the dining facilities, hours of operation, and menus, please visit <http://aux.colstate.edu/cafeteria>.

Academic Advisor

Academic advising is an integral part of the educational program. Academic advisors are faculty members who help you think about academic, personal, and career goals, so you can plan a program of study that will enable you to achieve these goals. The advising process allows a student to understand the educational and career options available to him/her. The advisor approves specific courses required to complete the degree of the student's choice. The student maintains communication with the advisor throughout the academic career. Almost all academic departments have designated an academic advisor specifically for international students. Designated advisors are informed on important information regarding the F-1 and J-1 visa regulations and limitations and therefore are better equipped to advise international students during the academic career. See below for a list of designated advisors available in the different departments. If your department is not listed, you can determine who your advisor is by visiting your enrollment record in ISIS.

Communication Department – Dr. Richard Baxter, Arnold Hall 212

Counseling, Education Leadership and Professional Studies – Dr. Tom Hackett, Jordan Hall 103

Nursing Department – Dr. Judy Davidson, Illges Hall 307

Political Science – Dr. Tom Dolan, FOB 333

Teacher Education – Dr. Spencer Garrad, Jordan 349

Computer Science – Dr. Wayne Summers, CCT 453

Environmental and Health Science – Tara Redmond, Clearview II 104

Language and Literature – Dr. Alyce Cook, Woodall 164

History – Dr. Doug Tompson, FOB, 203

Biology – Dr. Julie Ballenger, Lenoir 154

Art – Trish Ramsay, SAB 110

Grades

Assessment, evaluation, and grading will typically be explained in your course syllabus. A letter grading scale is the norm for universities in the US. CSU uses the generally established 4.0 grade point system.

A= Excellent	4 on a 4-point scale
B= Good	3 on a 4-point scale
C= Average	2 on a 4-point scale
D= Poor/Passing	1 on a 4-point scale
F= Failing	0 on a 4-point scale

Your grade point average (GPA) is based on a 4-point scale. Your GPA is computed by first taking the grade you receive for a course and multiplying its numerical value by the number of credit hours for the course, then totaling the points earned by all courses and dividing by the total number of credit hours.

Depending on the course and the instructor, the grading scale may differ. For example, in some courses having a 90% or higher will earn you an A, whereas in some others, a 93% or higher will earn you an A. It is important to familiarize yourself with a course's evaluation process as described in the syllabus. For more information on grades, and GPAs please visit: http://academics.colstate.edu/catalogs/2006-2007/acaregs_undergrad.htm#grades

Regents' Test

All degree-seeking undergraduate students attending any University System of Georgia school must pass the Regents' Test, an exam consisting of two parts: a reading test and a writing test. Students are required to take the exam in their first semester after earning 30 credit hours. Students who have not passed either or both parts of the test or who have not taken the test and have accumulated 45 hours of academic credit are required to enroll in the appropriate Regents' remedial classes every semester of attendance thereafter until they pass both parts of the test. The test requirement is waived for students who have earned a recognized bachelor's degree.

Scores on nationally administered standardized tests may also be used to fulfill the Regents' requirements. For more information, please visit http://academics.colstate.edu/catalogs/2007%2D2008/acaregs_undergrad.htm#testing

CougarOne Card

Your CougarOne Card is your student identification card. It is sent to your local address after you register for courses at CSU for the first time. This card allows you to use your meal plan, checkout library books, attend campus events, use the recreational complex, and use student life facilities. You may also use this card as a debit or credit card. For more information, please visit <https://www.csucougarone.com/>

Mail

Only students who live in either Courtyard I or II can receive mail on-campus. Student mailboxes are in the Davidson Center. Mailboxes are assigned when students move into their apartment. Students that are receiving mail on behalf of a student organization may pick this up in the assigned organization box in the Student Government Association office.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all University facilities, athletic stadiums, and vehicles. Smoking is prohibited within 20 feet of any building entrance or exit. This includes the covered entrances and walkways.

Bicycles

If you ride your bike onto campus, please be aware that it must be locked and chained to a bike rack. Chaining your bike to stairs, trees, or handrails is not allowed.

Motor Vehicle Permits

All motor vehicles that are parked on campus must have a motor vehicle permit sticker, which is called a decal. University decals may be obtained at the University Police Department. Please bring your ID, car registration, and license plate number. Decals for Courtyard I & II residents may be obtained at the Residence Life office in Courtyard I. Permits are issued for the school year and must be renewed each fall semester. Students are allowed to park in the parking lots that are designated as student parking (please refer to your campus map). If you do not park in anything other than a student designated parking spot you will receive a ticket from the University Police.

Shuttle Bus

CSU operates a shuttle bus service that runs from the main campus to the RiverCenter in downtown Columbus. Generally, the shuttle runs Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. You can pick up a shuttle bus service schedule in the University Police office or visit <http://students.colstate.edu/busschedule.asp>.

Student Activities

Student activities are an important part of your complete university education. Students may participate in the numerous clubs and organizations available at CSU, including academic clubs, intramural sports, honor societies, performing arts, special interest groups, and fraternities and sororities. Many international students are active in the International Club and Action International, two organizations that focus on international activities on campus and in the community. Also, many international students choose to live in the Global Village, an international living community that is comprised of several apartment units in Courtyard II. Your involvement in student activities depends on your interest and free time. Participation in these activities helps to maximize the full potential of your studies in the United States. It is the easiest way to meet fellow students and make friends!

Department Information

Below is a listing of select departments on campus and descriptions of their activities. All of these departments provide important services for international students.

Campus Recreation

*Health and Safety Center, Room 207
(706) 568-2273*

Campus Recreation offers a wide range of team and individual coeducational intramural programs for students, faculty, and staff. Current programs include volleyball, softball, tennis, bowling, basketball, golf, chess, and checkers. Outdoor adventure trips include whitewater rafting, canoeing, backpacking, and snow skiing. In addition to scheduled activities, the tennis courts, gymnasium, fitness center, handball courts, and an intramural field are available for free play. Hours of operation are posted each semester in appropriate locations. For more information, visit their website at <http://sa.colstate.edu/campusrec/>.

Career Center

*Davidson Center, Room 147
(706) 569-3198*

The Career Center provides students and alumni with career information, current employment, and experiential education opportunities, and assists in the development of effective job search skills. The Career Center is open Monday and Tuesday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Wednesday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, visit their website at <http://career.colstate.edu>.

C.H.A.T. (Computer Helpdesk and Tutorials)

*First Floor, Center for Commerce and Technology
(706) 568-5130
helpdesk@colstate.edu*

The C.H.A.T. Team is available to help students with the most common software programs on campus. The C.H.A.T. Team can help resolve problems associated with campus software only. The Team is available Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Computer Lab (Computer Information and Networking Services, C.I.N.S.)

First Floor, Center for Commerce and Technology

The C.I.N.S. Computer labs provide computers for students for academic use, including completing class work, subject-matter tutorial programs, academic research, and electronic communication with faculty and peers. When classes are in session, the lab is open Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Counseling Center

Davidson Center, Room 146

(706) 568-2233

The Counseling Center offers a variety of services to all students, staff, faculty, and alumni. The counseling staff consists of mental health professionals who are trained and experienced in facilitating personal development. A confidential atmosphere is provided where personal, social, and academic concerns may be discussed. These concerns include, but are not limited to, the following: homesickness, loneliness, anxiety management, interpersonal relationships, depression, academic difficulties, and career decisions. The Counseling Center is open Monday through Wednesday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Thursday and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, visit their website at <http://counsel.colstate.edu/>.

University Police

Health and Safety Center, Room 208

(706) 568-2022

The department has 19 sworn police officers who are responsible for life and property safety, parking enforcement, and enforcement of state and local laws. The officers secure campus buildings, assist motorists with battery jump-offs and keys locked in vehicles, and patrol the university campus on foot, bikes, and marked patrol cars. The officers are approachable, friendly, and willing to help. For more information, visit their website at <http://sa.colstate.edu/univpolice/>.

Student Government Association

Davidson Center, Room 207

(706) 568-2403

The Student Government Association represents the interest and welfare of students through its elected officials and representatives. Student government has as its purposes the encouragement of student participation in university affairs and the promotion of understanding among students, faculty, and administration. The student forum advises the university administration on student issues, recommends students to serve on university student-faculty committees, and administers programs and services consistent with the privileges granted in its constitution. For more information, visit their website at <http://clubs-orgs.colstate.edu/sga/>.

Student Health Clinic

Health and Safety Center, Room 114

(706) 568-2039

Student Health Services provides health services to students. A family practice physician is available to see students during scheduled clinic hours at no cost to the student. After hours, students may receive assistance from the University Police Department. For more information, visit their website at <http://sa.colstate.edu/health/default.asp>.

Student Newspaper

Davidson Center, Room 207

(706) 568-2405

The student newspaper, *The Saber*, offers a wide variety of opportunities for interested students to gain experiences in writing editorials, reporting, photography, layout, and business management. It reports and interprets news of interest to the campus community and expresses opinions on significant matters. For more information, visit their website at <http://saber.colstate.edu/>.

Student Life

Davidson Center, Room 271

(706) 568-2273

The Student Life Staff would like to encourage all students to make the most of their college career by getting involved on campus. There are 90 recognized organizations on campus including Greek Life, Special Interest Groups, and Academic/Professional organizations. There is something here for everyone. If you want to create an organization that suits your interest, you can do that too! For more information, visit their website at <http://studentlife.colstate.edu/>

Student Activities Council

Davidson Center, Room 259

(706) 568-2273

The purpose of the Student Activities Council is to contribute to the social, recreational, cultural, and educational development of the university community through programs and services. A program of concerts, lectures, films, and other entertainment is provided through a portion of the student activities fee paid by students at registration. Student admission is free or at reduced rates. For more information, visit their website at <http://clubs-orgs.colstate.edu/sac/>.

Tutorial Services

First Floor of Tucker Hall

(706) 568-2330

Tutorial Services offers free tutorial assistance to students enrolled in learning support and many core curriculum courses. Free seminars and workshops provide information and strategies that assist students in making satisfactory progress in their chosen fields of study. For more information, visit their website at http://uc.colstate.edu/tutorial_services.htm.

Writing Center

Woodall Hall, Room 116

writing_center@colstate.edu

The Writing Center offers free, confidential tutoring for writing assignments in a variety of disciplines. Students can brainstorm ideas for assignments, bring in outlines or rough drafts, or ask for help with particular grammar or punctuation concerns. The Writing Center can also assist students with preparation for the writing section of the Regents' Test. Peer tutors help writers by conversing with them about the project at hand, asking students to articulate their intentions and concerns about the project, and drawing upon students' own knowledge to enhance and extend their practices of writing. For more information and hours of operation, visit their website at <http://langlit.colstate.edu/writingcenter>.

For contact information and descriptions of activities for other departments, please consult the CSU catalog, student handbook, and the CSU website.



COLUMBUS INFORMATION

Climate

The temperatures below are an average of low to high temperatures throughout the year in Georgia. These temperatures are in Fahrenheit.

January	35-56
February	37-61
March	45-68
April	52-77
May	61-84
June	68-90
July	71-91
August	71-91
September	66-86
October	66-77
November	57-68
December	48-58

Information taken from <http://countrystudies.us/united-states/weather/georgia/columbus.htm>

Places to Visit

Chattahoochee Riverwalk

Downtown Columbus

1-800-999-1613

Coca Cola Space Science Center

701 Front Avenue, (706) 649-1470

<http://www.ccssc.org>

Columbus Museum

1251 Wynnton Road, (706) 649-0713

<http://www.columbusmuseum.com>

Cotton, Clay & Coca-Cola

(Historic tours of Columbus)

708 Broadway, (706) 323-7979

The Infantry Museum

396 Baltzell Avenue, Fort Benning, (706) 545-6762

<http://www.infantry.mil/museum/index.htm>

Port Columbus Civil War Naval Center

1002 Victory Drive, (706) 327-9798

<http://www.portcolumbus.org>

For more information, please visit the following websites:

<http://www.columbusga.com>

<http://www.visitcolumbusga.com>

Theater

Springer Opera House

103 10th Street, (706) 324-5714

<http://www.springeroperahouse.org>

The RiverCenter

900 Broadway, (706) 256-3600

<http://www.rivercenter.org>

Sports

Baseball: <http://www.columbuscatfish.com>

Football: <http://columbuslions.net/>

Hockey: <http://www.cottonmouths.com>

Please visit the following website for more information about sporting and other events:

<http://www.columbusciviccenter.org>

Cinemas

Carmike 15

5555 Whittlesey Parkway, (706) 571-0858

Hollywood Connection Ritz 10

1683 Whittlesey Road, (706) 321-8286

Peachtree 8

3131 Manchester Expressway, (706) 322-7704

Places to Shop

Columbus Park Crossing

Intersection of J.R. Allen Parkway & Veteran's Parkway

Peachtree Mall

3131 Manchester Expressway, (706) 327-1578

<http://www.peachtreemall.com>

Places to Eat Downtown

Country's Uptown Barbecue

1329 Broadway, (706) 596-8910

Fountain City Coffee

1007 Broadway, (706) 494-6659

Houlihan's
800 Front Avenue, (706) 653-1898

Locos Amigos Cantina
1030 Broadway, (706) 660-9738

The Rankin Quarter
21 10th Street, (706) 322-8151

Royal Café
600 11th Street, (706) 322-9149

Scruffy Murphy's: Irish Pub and Eatery
1037 Broadway, (706) 322-3460

Places to Eat Close to CSU

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill
3229 Gentian Boulevard, (706) 563-6116

Ezell's Catfish Cabin
4001 Warm Spring Road, (706) 568-1149

Lucky Dragon
5120 Warm Springs Road, (706) 565-0594

Ruby Tuesday
3431 Manchester Expressway, (706) 327-2203

Spices from the Caribbean
4022 University Avenue, (706) 568-3104

Sushiko Japanese Restaurant
3461 Macon Road, (706) 568-4626

Waffle House
3455 Macon Road, (706) 561-1029



IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

International Students

All students who are neither citizens nor permanent residents of the United States are categorized as international students, regardless of their visa classification, by the Department of Homeland Security's U.S Citizen and Immigration Services (UCIS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The US Department of Homeland Security regulates the activities of “non-immigrants” in the US, which includes international students. It is the responsibility of the International Student Coordinator to advise international students on how to remain in compliance with immigration rules and regulations. However, it is the responsibility of each international student to become familiar with the regulations that apply to his/her particular visa status and to keep immigration documents updated and valid. Always keep the International Student Coordinator informed about any travel you are planning and any actions you may need to take concerning your immigration status. Students should also consult the International Student Coordinator when questions or problems regarding immigration matters arise.

The most common non-immigration status for international students is the F-1 visa, which is obtained on the basis of Form I-20 issued upon admission to CSU. An F-1 student is admitted to the US for the purpose of attending a specific school and obtaining a specific degree. It is extremely important to keep the International Student Coordinator informed of your current address, email, and telephone number. Failure to report a change of address could jeopardize your valid immigration status, so be sure to report any change within 10 days.

The other non-immigration status for international students is the J-1 visa, which is obtained on the basis of the DS-2019 form. This classification is used by students who come to the United States for educational or training purposes under the sponsorship and supervision of a designated agency. At CSU, most J-1 students are studying for a semester or a year through one of our exchange programs. J-1 visa holders must carry out the program described on the DS-2019 form issued by the sponsor.

F-1 & J-1 students must register for a minimum of 12 undergraduate credit hours or 9 graduate credit hours each term. He/she must be enrolled every semester that they are in the US. Students should consult the International Student Coordinator before dropping classes if doing so would reduce their course load below 12 credit hours.

F-1 & J-1 students should not leave the United States without the proper documentation necessary for re-entry. F-1 students that are planning to travel should have a valid signature from the International Student Coordinator on their I-20. This signature cannot be more than one year old upon re-entry. J-1 visa holders should contact their sponsors to obtain travel authorization. For more information, please contact the International Student Coordinator.

An F-1 student who wishes to transfer from one US institution to another to either continue his/her degree or start a new degree program must be released by CSU in order for his/her immigration record to be transferred. Please contact Sherry Brinson in Enrollment Services to better understand this process.

For more information about visa rules and regulations, please visit the official US Citizenship and Immigration Services website: <http://www.uscis.gov>

Important Documents

Your passport is the basic international document that identifies you as a citizen of your country. The spelling of your name as stated in your passport should be used for all records while you are in the United States. If you need to extend the validity of your passport, contact the nearest consulate or embassy for instruction and procedures (<http://www.embassy.org>). When you enter the United States, your passport should be valid for at least another six months. Always keep a copy of your passport in a safe place, and use the copy to provide documentation if you send your passport in for renewal or in the unforeseen circumstance that it is stolen.

A US visa may be a stamp or sticker in your passport. It can only be obtained from a US embassy or consulate outside the US, and it indicates your status upon entry to the US. After you enter the US, the visa is unimportant unless you leave and wish to re-enter. You cannot enter the US with an expired visa, even though your I-20 or DS-2019 may still be valid. Also, before you make plans to travel home or outside of the country, please scrutinize your visa to check whether it is marked for single or multiple entries into the US. The International Student Coordinator can explain this distinction to you in further detail.

When you enter the US, you receive an I-94 form that will be placed with your passport. This form contains two valuable pieces of information: the eleven-digit admission number in the upper portion and the Duration of Status (D/S) in the right hand corner. Your I-94 form is your official departure record, so it must not be lost during your stay, and it must be handed in before leaving the country. Usually airline personnel will remove it from your passport when you check in for your flight, however, if they do not, it is your responsibility to make sure they remove it.

Employment

Students in F-1 status are permitted to work on-campus up to twenty hours per week while school is in session and forty hours per week when school is not in session, including the annual summer term if not enrolled in courses.

Not all on-campus student jobs are available for international students. Many jobs on campus are managed under the “work-study” program funded by the United States government, and international students are not eligible for these jobs because they are funded by federal government money. However, international students are eligible for jobs that are funded by state money, so-called student assistantships. International students are also eligible to work in positions on campus where that work provides a direct benefit for students. For example, you may take a job at one of the food services on campus since it provides a service for students. If you are interested in finding a job on-campus, please visit the Career Center. The Job Room will have a listing of currently available student assistant openings. They can also provide you with a job application that you must take to the department that is hiring. From there, you will be in contact with the department and when you are hired, the Human Resources department.

F-1 students are not permitted to work off-campus without special authorization. If you are interested in working off-campus, it is important that you come to see the International Student Coordinator to discuss your options and find out more about the application procedures. To be eligible, students must have maintained their immigration status.

For F-1 students, there are three options available to work off-campus – Curricular Practical Training, Optional Practical Training and Severe Economic Hardship. In order to be eligible for any of these options, students must have been in F-1 status for at least one academic year (9 months).

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

F-1 students can be authorized to work off-campus through an internship program that is an integral part of the established curriculum (full-time when not enrolled in classes or part-time during the academic year). To qualify, students must receive academic credit for this experience, obtain a recommendation from their academic adviser, and obtain authorization from CIE. Students who have received one year or more of full-time CPT are ineligible for Optional Practical Training.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

F-1 students have the opportunity to obtain up to 12 months of practical experience in their field of study either during or after their degree program. Most students apply to take the full 12 months of OPT for after graduation, but students can use some or all of the 12 months of OPT while they are enrolled in school (full-time when not enrolled in classes or part-time during the academic year). Students must apply to CIE and UCIS to obtain a work permit for OPT before their graduation date. The application process can take up to three months, so it is extremely important to submit an OPT application up to three months before your program completion date.

Severe Economic Hardship

F-1 students who have experienced severe economic hardship after their arrival into the US may apply to CIE and BCIS to obtain a work permit. There is no guarantee that students will be granted work permission. They must document that the economic hardship arose from circumstances beyond their control after they came to the US. Examples of such circumstances are substantial fluctuations in the exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and/or living costs, loss of sponsorship, and medical bills. The application process can take up to three months.

If you hold a J-1 visa, you must have written authorization to work from your sponsoring agency. You may engage in academic training off-campus or part-time on-campus employment. Contact the International Student Coordinator for more details.

Employment not authorized by CIE or UCIS is not allowed under any circumstances, and it will jeopardize your ability to remain in the United States. Do not even think about it, even if people you know do it or have suggested it to you! If you are experiencing financial difficulties, contact the International Student Coordinator for advice on possible solutions.

Social Security Numbers

In the US, the term social security number refers to an identification number given to individuals by the federal government. In order to be eligible to work, you will need a social security number.

Students on a F-1 visa need an offer of employment to apply for a number, and they can apply for a number after they have been in the US for two weeks. A social security number application consists of a Form SS-5, passport, I-94 card, I-20, CSU student ID card, a letter from the hiring department, and a letter from the Director of the Center for International Education. After you have applied, it will take between 2-4 weeks to receive your number in the mail.

Students on a J-1 visa also need an offer of employment before they can apply for a number. They must contact their sponsor to inquire whether they are eligible for employment. If so, their sponsor will issue a letter verifying this information. A form SS-5, passport, I-94 card, DS-2019, and a CSU student ID card are also needed to process the application for a social security number.

Students on F-1 and J-1 visas do not qualify for Social Security benefits which means they do not need to pay Social Security or Medicare taxes. Please inform your employer that you are exempt from these taxes under the regulations of your student visa. Also, please scrutinize your first pay stub carefully to make sure you are not paying these taxes. Please consult the International Student Coordinator for further details.

You must apply for a number in person at the local Social Security Administration, which is located at **The Market Place #19, 3604 Macon Road**. The phone number is (706) 494-6100. The Social Security Administration is open from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please plan to spend approximately 2 hours at the Social Security Administration.

Your number will come in the form of a small card and it is very important that you keep this card in a safe place. If there is any information on the card that is not correct, you need to have the changes corrected. Please consult the International Student Coordinator for details about this process.

Social security numbers are often used in the US as a form of identity verification and you may be asked for your number when opening a bank account, buying a cell phone, or getting a driver's license. If you are not working on-campus and thus do not have a social security number, please see the International Student Coordinator before conducting these personal business matters. A letter will be furnished to you explaining the reason why you cannot have a social security number and the documentation that should be accepted in lieu of this (passport, I-20/DS-2019, I-94).

Taxes

The collection of taxes is done in many different ways throughout the world. The US government operates under a tax system where it places the responsibility of proper tax payment on the taxpayer. In order to fulfill your tax responsibility, you have to report your income annually to the US government and the Georgia state government.

If you have any source of income from the United States (a scholarship, assistantship, or income from employment) you must file a tax return. Even if you have no source of income (wages or scholarship) you are still required to fill out Form 8843 each tax year you are in the US. You must fill out and send all tax return documents by April 15 of each year for the previous calendar year; for example, if you arrived in the US or earned income in calendar year 2006, you have to report this in calendar year 2007. At the beginning of each calendar year you will receive the appropriate forms you need to be able to fill out your tax return. These forms include the W-2

(Wage and Tax Statement) and the 1042-S (Report of Scholarship). You will be classified as a nonresident for US tax purposes unless you have been in the US for more than 5 years as a student. After taxes are filed, students who have overpaid taxes throughout the previous year will receive a tax refund. Other students may have to pay taxes if their total income is higher than the withholding limit. More information about filing taxes will be forthcoming in the spring semester. Every spring semester the International Student Coordinator holds a series of tax workshops to help students correctly fill out their tax documents.





RESOURCES

Below are some general websites that are helpful for international students. They provide information about the US, academic life, visa regulations, travel, and much more.

<http://www.edupass.com>

<http://www.internationalstudent.com/>

<http://www.foreignborn.com>

<http://www.istudentcity.com>

<http://www.columbusgeorgiaonline.com/>

GLOSSARY OF ACADEMIC TERMS

Academic Calendar: The formal schedule of academic year events. Includes examination periods, registration periods, and school holidays.

Academic Year: The period of time during which formal instruction is offered, lasting from September to May. The period from June through August is not generally considered part of the academic year, even though summer sessions are held.

Alumni: Those who have graduated from an institution.

Bachelor's Degree: A degree awarded by a four year-college or university.

Catalog: A book describing an institution's majors and courses, entrance and other academic requirements, tuition and fees, faculty, scholarship and financial aid information, and general regulations.

Class: This word has several definitions. It can refer to a course of instruction (i.e. English class); it can refer to a group of students taking a particular course together (i.e. a class of biology students); or it can mean all the students who are in the same year of study (i.e. the freshmen class).

Commencement: The ceremonies held upon completion of a student's studies. Also called graduation.

Essay: A test that requires the student to write about the subject matter. Essays can be a paragraph to 20 or more pages long, depending on the instructor's requirements and test format.

Examination: A test that covers material presented in the course.

Curriculum: The course of study offered.

Drop/Add: Dropping a class or changing classes during the term. See the CSU handbook for specific information regarding drop/add procedures.

Faculty: The group of professors and instructors who make up the teaching staff of an institution.

Final exam: An exam at the end of the semester.

Freshman: An undergraduate student in his/her first year of study.

Full Course Load: The minimum number of credits a student must take to be considered a full-time student. For undergraduate students this is 12 credits; for graduate students this is 9 credits.

GALILEO: Georgia's web based collection of more than 150 electronic databases, available on public workstations in the library's reference area. You can also access it from the library's website.

Graduate: Graduate can refer to the level of study beyond the baccalaureate. Graduate can also refer to a person who has successfully completed high school or higher.

ISIS (Integrated Student Information System): Online system where students can register for classes; view grades, academic records, and financial aid information; and change and update personal information.

Junior: An undergraduate student in his/her third year of study.

Major: The field or subject that a student has chosen as his or her principal area of study, i.e. mathematics, economics, art.

Master's Degree: A degree awarded by a university for study beyond the Bachelor's level.

Mid-Term: An exam that takes place halfway through the term.

Prerequisite: A course that a student must complete before being permitted to enroll in another course.

Quiz: Short test, sometimes given without advance notice.

Registration: The process of choosing a program of courses for the semester, having it approved by the advisor, and enrolling.

Senior: An undergraduate student in his/her fourth year of study.

Sophomore: An undergraduate student in his/her second year of study.

Take-Home Exam: This type of test resembles homework; students are given a question or a number of questions to answer within a specific number of days.

Transcript: The official record of a student's courses and grades.

Undergraduate: A student aiming to complete a bachelor's degree.

WebCT: Online learning system used for web based courses.

Withdrawal: Exiting a class before the end of the term; see the CSU catalog regarding the process for withdrawal.