College of Charleston
International Student Handbook
Your Guide to Studying Abroad at the College of Charleston
# College of Charleston

## International Student Handbook

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Welcome:

Dear student,

Welcome to the journey of a lifetime! On behalf of the Center for International Education (CIE), I am delighted to welcome you to the College of Charleston. We are excited that you have chosen the College of Charleston as part of your educational experience. As you begin your journey, I want to remind you that the staff at CIE are here to assist you with all matters pertaining to your integration and success at the College, including immigration issues, housing, classes, event programming and general advising, among others. I am confident that you will take advantage of the services offered to meet other U.S. and international students and learn about Charleston and American culture.

At this point you have completed many important steps for arriving in the U.S. as an international student. This guide is designed to help you as you prepare to depart for the U.S. and to direct you to resources pertinent to the College of Charleston campus and the greater Charleston community.

Best wishes and good luck with your first semester at the College of Charleston!

Prof. Andrew Sobiesuo, Ph.D.
Associate Provost and Director
Center for International Education

A Brief History of the College

Founded in 1770, the College of Charleston is the oldest educational institution south of Virginia, and the 13th oldest in the United States. On March 19, 1785, the College of Charleston was chartered to "encourage and institute youth in the several branches of liberal education." Several of the College's founders played key roles in the American Revolution and in the creation of the new republic. Three were signers of the Declaration of Independence and another three were framers of the U.S. Constitution. The College graduated its first class in 1794, which consisted of six students. By 1824, the College offered a curriculum broad enough to regularly grant degrees.

During the Civil War, many students and faculty left to serve the Confederacy. Despite dwindling student numbers and a long-running siege of the city by Federal troops, there was no suspension of classes until December 19, 1864, two months before the city was evacuated. Classes resumed on February 1, 1866, and over the next four decades, the College weathered several financial crises, Reconstruction, hurricanes and the devastating earthquake of 1886.

Student enrollment remained at about 500 students until the College became a state institution in 1970. According to the 1970 legislative decree that incorporated the College of Charleston into the South Carolina system, the College was given a mandate to develop flagship programs in academic areas that capitalize on the unique natural and cultural strengths of Charleston and the Lowcountry, especially marine biology and fine arts.

Today, the College of Charleston is embarking on a new strategic planning process designed to ensure that the important traditions in the liberal arts and sciences are retained while the institution responds to the needs of its evolving student population with cutting-edge academic programming and state-of-the-art facilities. (Source)

Also steeped in tradition at the College are our official colors; maroon and white and our official mascot you will see at basketball games and other events on campus: Clyde the Cougar. The mascot will be seen in various capacities all around campus and has lent its name to offices and services here as well, such as your "Cougar Card" college ID and our student buddy program, the Cougar Ambassadors.
The Center for International Education (CIE) and its staff

CIE is the primary point of contact for international students studying at the College of Charleston. We serve as the general resource for international matters and are here to help you with issues pertaining to immigration; enrollment; on-campus services; and referrals at CoFC and the greater Charleston community. In addition to supporting international students, the CIE works with international faculty and staff as well as study abroad students. Through our programs and support services for international students, CIE fosters a climate that allows students to engage with and learn from global experiences and perspectives.

We are located at 207 Calhoun Street, in the Multicultural Center, at the intersection of Calhoun and Pitt Streets.

Physical Location
207 Calhoun Street
Charleston, SC 29401

Mailing Address
College of Charleston
Center for International Education
66 George Street
Charleston, SC 29424 U.S.A.

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Immigration:
It is each international student’s responsibility to understand and follow the U.S. immigration regulations that apply to him or her. Please make sure to read this information carefully and ask the CIE staff if you have questions.

SEVIS:
SEVIS is the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System that has been used by all colleges and universities in the U.S. to electronically report to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security information about F-1 and J-1 students, as well as visiting scholars since January of 2003. Your DS-2019 (for J-1 exchange students) or your I-20 (for F-1 degree-seeking students) is a print-out of some of your SEVIS record.

Documents
- **Passport**
  Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months into the future. Keep your passport in a safe place and contact your country’s consulate or embassy in the U.S. to renew or replace a lost or stolen passport.

- **DS-2019 or I-20 Certificate of Eligibility**
  Once a student’s academic, language and financial abilities are certified and s/he has been admitted to the College, the Center for International Education will issue an I-20 or DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility). This is the immigration document that proves you have been accepted and details your plans at the College. Form DS-2019 is the J-1 exchange visitor certificate and the form I-20 is the F-1 student certificate. This document is to be taken to a U.S. Embassy or Consulate to apply for a nonimmigrant student visa. Upon arrival to the United States, you will need to present your I-20 or DS-2019 to the Port of Entry Official so that you can be admitted in the correct immigration status. Once you arrive in the U.S., it is very important to keep this document in a safe place as you will need it for various reasons, including travel, during your stay. Students are responsible for maintaining legal status with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security during their studies.

- **Visa**
  Your student visa is the document you applied for at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your home country. This document permitted you to apply for admission into the U.S. It is a sticker placed inside your passport.

- **I-94 Arrival Record**
  Form I-94 is the official government documentation of your arrival in the United States. Prior to the spring of 2013, it was a paper card that was given to an international visitor upon arrival. Now, it is an electronic report that each person is responsible for printing out after they arrive in the United States. This document records the date and place where you entered the U.S., as well as your immigration status (or visa type) and authorized period of stay.
  
  Obtain your I-94 record. Make sure the information is correct before printing out your I-94. If you need assistance in this process or notice any incorrect information, please visit the CIE. Please check your I-94 record each time after you enter the U.S.!

Maintaining your student status
- Keep your passport valid for at least 6 months into the future at all times.
- Report to the CIE for SEVIS registration and present required immigration documents.
• Maintain full-time enrollment. Undergraduate students must be enrolled in 12 hours to maintain status during the fall and spring semesters. Graduate students must be enrolled in 6 hours during the fall and spring semesters. Enrollment is not required during the summer term as it is considered a vacation term for immigration purposes. F-1 students may only take one online course per term.
• Report any changes to your local address or phone number via MyCharleston or to the CIE within 10 days of moving or changing addresses or phone numbers.
• Report any changes of major or program of study to the CIE.
• If you will not finish your program by the program end date listed on your DS-2019 or I-20, you must notify CIE immediately so that your records can be updated before expiration.
• Leave the U.S. within the time allotted (grace period) for your student visa:
  o J-1 visa holders have 30 days after their program end date to leave the U.S.
  o F-1 visa holders have 60 days after their program end date

If you plan to leave the U.S. during holidays or other school breaks and return for the completion of your studies, you must:
• Carry a valid passport with a valid F-1 or J-1 visa. There are some exceptions to the valid visa requirements if you are traveling to Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean. Please contact the CIE for more details.
• Verify that you have a valid travel signature on your I-20 or DS-2019. Travel signatures appear on the 2nd page of the I-20 and on the 1st page of the DS-2019. Signatures are valid for one calendar year except for F-1 students on OPT (Optional Practical Training). Please see the CIE if you need a travel signature.
• Carry proof of current enrollment or registration for the next semester and proof of funding (recommended).

**Course Load Reductions**
A reduced course load can be requested via CIE if medical or academic reasons require student to reduce academic commitments. A full course load at the College is generally 4-5 courses or 12-15 credit hours per semester. To be considered a full-time student you must be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours and no more than 18 credit hours. Course load reductions must be granted by CIE BEFORE a student drops below full-time. Otherwise, international students are required to enroll full-time to maintain their immigration status during the fall and the spring semesters. Students are not required to be enrolled during the summer term.

**Grace Periods**
Students must leave the U.S. after their program end date, within the time allotted for specific visa type.
• Those with an F-1 visa who complete an academic program or OPT have a 60 day grace period after end of program to leave the U.S.
• Those with a J-1 visa who complete an academic program or AT have a 30 day grace period after end of program.

**Student Employment**

**On-Campus Employment**
International students, except for students in the English Language Institute (ELI), can work on campus up to 20 hours per week while classes are in session. J-1 students must report this employment to the CIE so it can be updated in their SEVIS record.
If you need help finding employment, please see the CofC Career Center website or call 1.843.953.5692

**Off-Campus Employment**

J-1 Students are eligible for Academic Training (AT) for work off-campus related to their field of study both during their studies and afterward.

F-1 students are eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for off-campus internships related to their field of study, after nine months (an academic year) of studying full-time in a valid immigration status.

F-1 students may also apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) which is normally used after graduation and gives the student 12 months of work authorization in the United States after the completion of each degree. Students in STEM fields are also eligible for an additional 17 months of work authorization.

**Additional Immigration Resources**

- Study in the States
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
- U.S. Department of State
- SEVIS Fee Payment
- U.S Embassies and Consulates Abroad
- I-94 Number Retrieval
- Department of Homeland Security
Preparing for your arrival to Charleston & What to Expect:

**What to Pack**

The Office of Residence Life at the College of Charleston provides a list of unauthorized items for incoming students to be sure not to pack.

Please keep in mind that Residence Hall rooms do NOT come with any bedding (no pillow, bed sheets or blankets). This means that you will not have any of these items to use on your first night in Charleston, unless you bring them with you or order them ahead of time. The CIE has contacts with stores in the area and most of these items can be purchased ahead of time and shipped to campus. Please contact the CIE for more information on placing bedding orders before your arrival to the US.

**Clothing:**

- The typical CoC student wears casual clothing to class and around campus. Mainly seen are shorts, t-shirts and athletic shoes in the warmer months and long pants or jeans plus a sweater as the days get cooler. Generally speaking, wearing layers helps for all seasons as it may be cool in the mornings and evenings and warm during the day.

**Cellular Phones**

There are many options when it comes to the type of cell phone, the plan and the company that will provide your cell phone service in the U.S. The main options are: buying a pre-paid phone once you arrive in the U.S. or bringing an unlocked cell phone with you and purchasing a SIM card once you arrive. What is not recommended is buying a phone in the U.S. that requires you to sign a contract, as these contracts can lock you into paying for a number of years for a service you will not need once you return home.

- Pre-paid (or “No-Contract”) phones allow you to talk to others domestically in the U.S. Companies like Boost Mobile offer multiple “no annual contract rate plans”. Free wi-fi available on the College of Charleston campus enables you to communicate to your friends and family overseas via programs like Skype and FaceTime (an app you can download to a smart phone). You can also download WhatsApp to message others at no cost. WhatsApp is available for iPhone, BlackBerry, Android,
Windows Phone and Nokia. You can purchase pre-paid phones in the U.S. at many stores, like T-Mobile, AT&T, Best Buy and Target.

- SIM cards can be purchased at stores in the Charleston area (AT&T, Best Buy, T-Mobile, and Target) to provide coverage for an unlocked phone you have brought with you to the U.S. or purchased once you arrive.

Cell Phone Store Locations

Boost Mobile Store

- 472 Meeting Street Suite C
  Charleston, SC 29403
  (843) 577-8851

Target:

- Citadel Mall, 2070 Sam Rittenberg Boulevard Charleston, SC 29407
  1.843.763.0756

Best Buy:

- 1987 Sam Rittenberg Boulevard Charleston, SC 29407
  1.843.763.4338

T-Mobile:

- 1836 Ashley River Road Charleston, SC 29407
  1.843.766.2031
- 1175 Folly Road Suite I, Charleston, SC 29412
  1.843.406.7577

AT&T:

- St. Andrews Shopping Center, 975 Savannah Highway #301 Charleston, SC 29407
  1.843.556.7611

Port of Entry

Upon arriving to the U.S., you will be checked in by a U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer who will determine whether you can enter the U.S. Find information and more resources on what to expect during this phase of entry and on the topic.

Arrival Checklist

- Contact your family back home to let them know you arrived safely
- Submit copies of your immigration documents to the CIE
- Print your student schedule and locate your classrooms
- Take your passport to the Cougar Card Office to be issued your “Cougar Card” (Student ID card)
- Order your textbooks
- Attend International Student Orientation
Starting at CofC:

**International Orientation**

CIE hosts a new international student orientation each semester. Here, we advise students on American university classroom standards, academic issues and calendars, immigration requirements, cultural adjustment, aspects of American culture as well as facets of everyday life in the “Lowcountry”.

Numerous campus offices also attend the orientation and present on the student services they offer. You can expect to meet representatives from the Center for Student Learning and the School of Business as well as Campus Recreation Services, Dining Services, Residence Life, Student Health Services, and Public Safety. College of Charleston student volunteers will lead you through the navigation of MyCharleston and show you how to access a variety of student portals that will serve as great resources while you are studying in Charleston!

College of Charleston student volunteers will lead you on a tour of campus and we will all visit the student favorite Liberty Fresh Food Company cafeteria for lunch together. After the interactive orientation presentation, refreshments will be served for social hour where students will have the chance to meet one another and ask CIE staff any additional questions.

**Our orientation for the Spring 2017 semester will be held on Tuesday, January 10th from 9am-5pm in the Alumni Center located in the Teacher Education Center on the corner of Wentworth and St Philip Street. Students can arrive at 9am.**

**CofC Cougar Card: Your Student ID**

The Cougar Card is your official College of Charleston identification card. To be issued your Cougar Card, you must go to the Cougar Card Services Office, located at 162-A Calhoun Street, in person with your passport. Your picture will be taken and you will get your card on the day of your visit to Cougar Card Services. You should carry your Cougar Card at all times to identify yourself as a College of Charleston student. Take care of your Cougar Card. Do not lend it to anyone, leave it unattended or carry it next to your mobile phone.

If you have a meal plan or have added Cougar Cash or Dining Dollars to your student account, your Cougar Card’s magnetic strip is how you access those funds. Participating retailers on campus will swipe your Cougar Card just like a credit card. Your purchases will be deducted from your account (if applicable). Your first card is free. You will have to pay $10 for each replacement card.

**YOUR COUGAR CARD IS YOUR KEY TO CAMPUS EVENTS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES. YOU WILL NEED THE CARD TO:**

- enter your assigned residence hall
- check items out of the library
- use fitness center and recreational facilities
- access your meal plan and Dining Dollars account
- attend athletics events
- purchase discounted tickets for campus events

**COUGAR CASH**

You can use your Cougar Card as a personal debit card to make purchases in the College of Charleston Bookstore (Barnes & Noble), at all food service locations on campus, and at Market 159. Cougar Cash is accepted at parking services, mail services, health services, the Copy Center, Addlestone Library and in select soft drink and snack machines across campus. You may also ride the CARTA bus line free of charge by showing your Cougar Card. There are no monthly service charges or minimum balances required.
• EASY
   It’s easy to start a Cougar Cash account! Simply make a deposit of $50 or more online by accessing the payment screen of MyCharleston and using a major credit card (we do not accept Visa) or eCheck (from a U.S. bank account); the funds will be available for use in two hours. You may also make a deposit of $10 or more in person at Cougar Card Services and you can use the funds immediately. A third option is to make a cash deposit of $1 or more in the Addlestone Library at the Card Value Center, located to the right of the interior Starbucks entrance. Detailed instructions can be found here.

NOTE: Deposits made through the Web are not subject to a convenience fee.

As mentioned, it is possible to add Cougar Cash to your Cougar Card online, via your MyCharleston account. Online deposits are subject to a two hour delay before they will be available for use so please plan ahead before using this option. Deposits made in-person in Cougar Card Services are available for immediate use.

Electronic checks and all major credit cards, except Visa, may be used for online deposits (Visa is accepted in-person at Cougar Card Services). An eCheck (from an American bank account) returned for insufficient funds will result in the loss of the eCheck deposit privilege.

Instructions for Online Deposits:

1. Go to “My Accounts” tab on MyCharleston
2. Select “Log onto Student eBill Account” (located at the bottom left of page) and click on “Open my eBill Account”
3. Select “eDeposits” tab at the top of the screen
4. Select current Term
5. Select deposit account (Cougar Cash or Dining Dollars)
6. Add payment amount and click on continue
7. Select payment method (eCheck or major credit cards except Visa)
8. Submit payment
9. Once payment is submitted a confirmation will display and may be printed for your records.

View detailed screenshots of the process.

• SAFE
   Carrying the card is safer than carrying cash, checks, ATM and other cards.

• AUTOMATIC
   Transaction time is fast and your funds roll over from semester to semester and year to year. You can check your balance and 60 days of your transaction history on MyCharleston

• SAVE MONEY
   You receive a discount when you use your card to make copies at the Addlestone Library.

COUGAR CARD SERVICES
   Joe E. Berry Jr. Residence Hall
   Corner of Calhoun and St. Philip streets - Entrance on Calhoun Street
   HOURS:
   Monday–Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
   PHONE:
   1.843.953.1100
   After business hours contact:
   PUBLIC SAFETY:
   1.843.953.5609
   Cougarcard.cofc.edu
Health Care and Health Insurance

The College of Charleston has its own international student health insurance plan that all international students will enroll in and pay for, which will provide coverage for the duration of studies at the College of Charleston. If you have an existing Health Insurance plan that you feel has similar or better coverage, you can request to be waived out of this health care plan. Once a student is admitted to the College, incoming student data will be uploaded to the insurance company who will then issue student accounts. The Center for International Education will be in contact with each student prior to the start of the semester to provide instructions on how to purchase health insurance or apply to be waived out of the College’s plan. We highly recommend using the College’s plan as it is compliant with the requirements mandated by the U.S. Department of State. In many cases, travel insurance policies issued from countries outside of the U.S. do not meet these requirements and students who purchased those types of plans are therefore required to also purchase the College’s plan.

As of May 15, 2015, these are the requirements of the J-1 visa (The College requires all J-1 and F-1 students have health care coverage that meets or exceeds these requirements):

- Medical Benefits of at least $100,000 per accident or illness
- Repatriation of Remains in the amount of $25,000
- Expenses associated with any medical evacuation to the home country in the amount of $50,000
- A deductible not to exceed $500 per accident or illness
- J-1 students may also be subject to the requirements of the Affordable Care Act

Additional highlights of the CofC plan:

- Spring semester coverage will last from January 1, 2017 until May 15, 2017 and will cost approximately $509.00 USD. For those students attending one semester only, this is the plan you would enroll in. If you begin in the Spring semester, but will continue to Fall 2017, the Spring + Summer plan would be required. Those coverage dates are January 1, 2017 - August 14, 2017 and the cost is approximately $851.00 USD. Prior to the beginning of Fall 2017, CIE will communicate details on how to enroll for Fall coverage.
- Provide similar benefits found in the Affordable Care Act (ACA or sometimes known as Obama care) including no cost for preventative care.
- If you use a preapproved doctor or care facility (“in-network”) the deductible is $100/policy year. This is the amount you have to pay for services before the insurance company will begin paying for your medical care. After that, the plan will cover 80% of the preferred allowance and the out of pocket maximum will $6,350. Please refer to this video for more information.
- The fee for your health insurance, that will cover you for the entire length of your program of study, will be due when you enroll in the plan and payable to the insurance company. Associated costs and how to enroll can be found on the PGH website and in the policy brochure. You will need your current health insurance policy to complete your waiver request. If your waiver is granted, you must also submit your personal health insurance policy to the CIE to keep on file and it must be in English. It can take some time to receive documentation in English from your insurance company, so you may want to request this documentation before departure.
For current students, the College of Charleston offers the professionally staffed Student Health Services to provide treatment for basic medical conditions. They do not, however, conduct major surgery, treat major illnesses or provide overnight care. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You need to call Student Health Services first thing in the morning for same day appointments at 1.843.953.5520.

24-hour care is available at several nearby hospitals and treatment centers. Please keep in mind that hospital emergency rooms (the “ER”) are very expensive and are best used as a last resort. For life-threatening emergencies on-campus, dial 1.843.953.5611 on any telephone. If you are off-campus, dial 911 on any telephone.

American health insurance programs and the healthcare system can be difficult to navigate and understand, especially as an international student. For an overview of the U.S. healthcare system, as it pertains to international students, please refer to this helpful online video. NOTE - the following videos provide helpful information on healthcare in the U.S. The College of Charleston maintains no association with this company. Please disregard the company’s name and contact information. Furthermore, please do not follow the links at the end of the videos.

Please refer to this video for more information on mental health and counseling treatment in the U.S.

**Driver’s Licenses**

Driver’s Licenses issued by another country are valid in the U.S. for up to 90 days after arrival. Then, you will need a U.S. driver’s license issued in your name to be able to drive legally. It is recommended that you begin the process of getting your S.C. driver’s license before your foreign license expires (if applicable) so that you can rent a car for the mandatory South Carolina driving test. You must take a car with you to complete the driving portion of the test at the Department of Motor Vehicles and you will not be able to rent a car without a valid driver’s license.

- International students are not eligible for a Social Security Number unless they have a job offer. However, they are still eligible to apply for a driver’s license. Social Security Numbers are issued by the U.S. government to people who are born in the United States or non-immigrants who have obtained permission to work in the United States.

**To obtain a SC driver’s license without a Social Security Number:**

- First, request two enrollment letters from CIE - one to take to the Social Security Office and one to the DMV.
- Visit the Social Security Office for an official letter explaining why you are ineligible for a Social Security Number. They will know what this letter will need to say.
- Documents needed at the Social Security Office: Passport, Visa, I-94, DS 2019 or I-20, Enrollment letter from the CIE.
- Once all of your documents have been submitted, the Social Security Office will write the letter for you to take to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).
  - Social Security Office Location: 1463 Tobias Gadson Blvd, Charleston, SC 29407
  - Hours:
    - Monday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
    - Tuesday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
    - Wednesday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
    - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
    - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Before you visit the DMV to take your driving test, please be aware that if you have a foreign license, you will need to complete the Translation Form 4030. CIE can assist you in finding an accredited translator to verify your foreign license. If you do not have a foreign license, you do not need this form.

Visit the DMV (3790 Leeds Ave. location only) to take a written test and driving test. A fee of $12.50 applies.

Documents needed: Passport, Visa, I-94, DS 2019 or I-20, Enrollment letter from the CIE, the Social Security letter issued, as well as the Translation Form and your foreign license (if applicable)

- DMV location: 3790 Leeds Ave, North Charleston, SC 29405
- Hours:
  - Monday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  - Tuesday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  - Wednesday 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  - Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  - Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

To obtain a SC driver’s license with a Social Security Number:

- Request a letter of enrollment from the CIE
- Proceed directly to the DMV for testing (written and driving; $12.50 fee).
- Before you visit the DMV to take your driving test, please be aware that if you have a foreign license, you will need to complete the Translation Form 4030. CIE can assist you in finding an accredited translator to verify your foreign license. If you do not have a foreign license, you do not need this form.
- Documents needed: Passport, Visa, I-94, DS 2019 or I-20, Letter from School re: enrollment & term, Social Security Number verification/documentation, as well as the Translation Form and your foreign license (if applicable)
  - DMV location: 3790 Leeds Ave, North Charleston, SC 29405
  - Hours:
    - Monday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
    - Tuesday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
    - Wednesday 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
    - Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
    - Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

SC driver’s license expiration date is based on the program end date on your DS-2019 or I-20, except for students on OPT in which case it is the OPT end date. Please note that your driver’s license will probably expire before your grace period ends.

Documents generally required to rent a car:

- A driver’s license issued in the United States
  OR
- A legible, unexpired driver’s license from home country (‘International License’ not required); legible, unexpired passport, and a major credit card.
To renew a driver’s license, or to change the local address on an existing SC license, the following documents must be presented to the SC Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV):

Student Visa Holders

- Passport, visa, I-94 print out, and I-20 or DS-2019
- Enrollment letter from CIE which lists student’s current local address.
- Social Security card or letter from the Social Security Administration indicating the applicant is not eligible for a Social Security number. (CIE will write you a letter to take to the Social Security Administration).

Spouse/Dependent Child of Student Visa Holders

- Passport, visa, I-94 print out, and I-20 or DS-2019 of F-2 or J-2 dependent
- Certificate of Enrollment at the College for the F-1 or J-1 student which lists the student’s current enrollment
- Certificate of Identification of spousal relationship and current local address (available at the Center for International Education)
- Social Security card or letter from Social Security Administration stating that individual is NOT eligible for a Social Security number (can only be issued with presentation of previous 4 documents)
- Please contact CIE with any questions relating to these required documents

Car Rental and Car Insurance

Enterprise Car Share at the College of Charleston

Enterprise Car Share offers our students an alternative method of transportation, so you can go where you want, when you want by renting a vehicle from the collection of vehicles on-campus. Enterprise Car Share is available to anyone 18 years or older with a valid driver’s license. Vehicles can be reserved by the hour, the day, or even overnight for one all-inclusive rate, and are parked conveniently on-campus.

You must join the program to become a member and there is a $35 annual membership fee.

Membership includes:
- One low, hourly rate that includes all fuel costs and physical damage/liability insurance
- Online access to vehicle reservations
- Vehicles available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week
- Access to vehicles in convenient, designated parking spots

Find more information and sign up.
Websites like Hotwire.com offer Rental Car Damage protection at $9 per day to go along with car rentals and feature vendor pick-up locations close to campus.

Things to know about driving in the U.S.

- You are required by law to have automobile insurance and should carry documentation with you.
- Seat belt use is mandatory.
- It is illegal to drive without a valid driver’s license, proof of automobile insurance, proof of car’s registration, and valid license plates.
- In many states, it is illegal to text and drive. In some states, it is also illegal to talk on the phone and drive.
- **IMPORTANT:** If you are stopped by police while driving, stay in your seat, with your seatbelt fastened. The officer will ask you to show your driver’s license and proof of insurance. **Do not get out of your car unless the officer tells you to do so.**

Car Insurance:
The State of South Carolina requires all persons holding a driver’s license be insured by an automobile liability policy. For more information on state regulations, please visit the Department of Motor Vehicle’s website.

Students who need to buy a car insurance policy for a car they will own while in the U.S. can obtain coverage with providers such as Nationwide, Progressive, or Esurance.

The College of Charleston does not endorse or affiliate with any insurance companies listed.

Academics:

The Honor System

The Honor System of the College of Charleston specifically forbids:

1. **Lying:** knowingly furnishing false information, orally or in writing, including but not limited to deceit or efforts to deceive relating to academic work, to information legitimately sought by an official or employee
of the College, and to testimony before individuals authorized to inquire or investigate conduct; lying also includes the fraudulent use of identification cards and fabrication of data, endnotes, footnotes and other information related to academic work.

2. Cheating: the actual giving or receiving of unauthorized, dishonest assistance that might give one student an unfair advantage over another in the performance of any assigned, graded academic work, inside or outside of the classroom, and by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to fraud, duress, deception, theft, talking, making signs, gestures, copying, electronic messaging, photography, unauthorized reuse of previously graded work, unauthorized dual submission, unauthorized collaboration and unauthorized use or possession of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information. The term cheating includes engaging in any behavior related to graded academic work specifically prohibited by an instructor in the course syllabus or class discussion.

3. Attempted cheating: a willful act designed to accomplish cheating, but falling short of that goal.

4. Stealing: the unauthorized taking or appropriating of property from the College or from another member of the college community. Note also that stealing includes unauthorized copying of and unauthorized access to computer software.

5. Attempted stealing: a willful act designed to accomplish stealing, but falling short of that goal.

6. Plagiarism:
   6.1. The verbatim repetition, without acknowledgement, of the writings of another author. All significant phrases, clauses, or passages, taken directly from source material must be enclosed in quotation marks and acknowledged in the text itself and/or in footnotes/endnotes.
   6.2. Borrowing without acknowledging the source.
   6.3. Paraphrasing the thoughts of another writer without acknowledgement.
   6.4. Allowing any other person or organization to prepare work which one then submits as his/her own.

7. Penalties (Sanctions) for Violations of the Honor Code

7.1. XF - Transcript Notation
   a) The grade of XF means failure due to academic dishonesty. If a student is found responsible for an act of “serious” academic dishonesty, the Registrar’s Office will insert the XF grade for that course after notice from the Dean of Students. The XF remains on the student’s official transcript for a minimum of 2 years. After 2 years, the student can petition the Honor Board for removal of the X. The F grade will remain on the transcript.
   b) Instructors, with assistance from the Dean of Students if requested, will assess whether the behavior of the student falls into one of three classes:
      - Class 1 - act involves significant premeditation; conspiracy and/or intent to deceive, e.g., purchasing a research paper. Penalties: XF and either suspension or expulsion assigned if student found responsible by Honor Board.
      - Class 2 - act involves deliberate failure to comply with assignment directions, some conspiracy and/or intent to deceive, e.g., use of the Internet when prohibited, some fabricated endnotes or data, copying several answers from another student’s test. Penalties: XF and other sanctions assigned if student found responsible by Honor Board.
      - Class 3 - act mostly due to ignorance, confusion and/or poor communication between instructor and class, e.g., unintentional violation of the class rules on collaboration or the rules of citation. Penalties: The instructor sets the penalty and discusses it with the student.
Both the instructor and student sign a form. The form is forwarded to the Dean of Students. See “Class 3 Report and Resolution Form” on the Honor System website.

7.2. Other penalties for violations of the Honor Code range up to and include expulsion from the College. Other penalties may be combined with the XF. Attempted cheating, attempted stealing, and the knowing possession of stolen property shall be subject to the same punishment as the other offenses. Because the potential penalties for an Honor Code violation are extremely serious, all students should be thoroughly familiar with the above definitions and be guided by them.

Additional information can be found here.

**Ordering your textbooks**

Renting:
- Renting textbooks saves you on average 50 percent when compared to a new, printed textbook.
- Many of the textbooks assigned by professors at CofC are available to rent from the bookstore.
- The list of Textbook Rentals is posted on the bookstore website and in the bookstore. Plus if you’re shopping in the bookstore, look for signs in the book aisle. Online, it’s really easy - if the bookstore is renting a textbook, the “Rental” option will display in your book list alongside “New” and/or “Used” (if available). Just check the box and follow the instructions.
- You can return your rented textbooks at the end of the semester to the bookstore or by mailing them in.

Purchasing new textbooks:
- Some textbooks are available to buy new or used. To find your textbooks, simply search by Term (semester), Department (for example: Political Science), Course (the specific class you have registered for) and Section (listed next to your Course).
- Locate your course materials.

**Academic Resources**

MARLENE AND NATHAN ADDLESTONE LIBRARY

As a College of Charleston student, you’ll spend much of your time in the Addlestone Library. It is open more than 110 hours per week, and 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at the end of each semester when students are studying for exams. The library will give you access to millions of books, articles and original source materials, and our friendly and knowledgeable librarians will help you find exactly what you need. There are several ways to get started.

*Library Services*
- First floor: 260 computers
- Second floor: group study rooms, the periodical collection and the book collection
- Third floor: Special Collections (rare books and original manuscripts), additional group study rooms

MARLENE AND NATHAN ADDLESTONE LIBRARY

205 Calhoun Street
Corner of Calhoun and Coming streets
PHONE: 1.843.953.5530
FAX: 1.843.953.6319
library.cofc.edu
MARINE RESOURCES LIBRARY
The cooperative Marine Resources Library at Fort Johnson (located on James Island) is made up of the combined marine science holdings of the College of Charleston, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and the NOAA/NOS/CCEHBR Charleston Laboratory.

AVERY RESEARCH CENTER FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE (ARC)
This facility is located in a historic building at 125 Bull Street. It houses an archive, research library, small museum and cultural center for public programming. Its archival collections include more than 167 manuscript collections, 800 artifacts, 4,000 photographic images and a large number of audio and video recordings that preserve and exhibit the unique historical and cultural heritage of African Americans in the South Carolina Lowcountry from Colonial America to present day.

JOHN RIVERS COMMUNICATIONS MUSEUM
At the Rivers Communications Museum (58 George Street on the corner of St. Philip Street), you can trace the history of communication. The collection includes telegraphs, telephones, radios, televisions, magic lanterns, projectors, and phonographs, thousands of sound recordings, a stereoscope and a Theremin, as well as documentary videos.

After you find the materials that are required for your courses, you will be able to see whether or not they are available for rental.

OAKS
OAKS is the College’s learning management system, which allows professors to post content, administer quizzes, foster discussion, grade assignments, display grades, etc. all in a secure online environment. Students can then access the course materials through OAKS during and after class, participate in class discussions and contact other students in their courses. In order to access OAKS, internet access is required. You can log into OAKS on- or off-campus.

Logging into OAKS

- Through MyCharleston
  - Using a web browser, navigate to MyCharleston
  - Login to MyCharleston using your Cougar Login ID and password.
  - In the upper right corner, click on the OAKS icon

- Or you can login to OAKS directly
  - Login using your Cougars Login ID and password (this is the same username and password you use to login to MyCharleston)

For problems with logins or OAKS access issues, please contact the CofC Helpdesk at helpdesk@cofc.edu or (843) 953-DESK (3375).
OAKS: My Home Page

My home is the first page you will see when you login to OAKS:

- Courses
- News
- User Settings
- Help

If you would like to go back to your “My Home” page when you are inside a course, click on the My Home link in the upper left-hand side of the screen.

Getting Started Module

Student Computing Services recommends the following basic tools to get you started with OAKS:

The OAKS 10.3 Student Tutorials Playlist provides a single point of access to all the new tutorials.

The OAKS Overview for Students - Logging in and Course Navigation (v10.3) tutorial contains instructions for logging in to OAKS, a navigation overview, and a brief description of the tools featured in the OAKS version 10.3 upgrade. Topics covered include My Home, My Course pages, and Navigation Bar tools. Information on where to find additional student tutorials on how to use OAKS and resources/contact information for finding assistance when experiencing difficulties with OAKS is also included.

Subsequent tutorials in this playlist include detailed instructions for using the various features and tools in OAKS.

- OAKS Overview for Students - Course Content (v10.3) - Topics covered include viewing, bookmarking, downloading, and printing course content.
- OAKS Overview for Students - Communication Tools: Chat, Classlist, Discussions (v10.3) - Topics covered include viewing the Classlist, sending email from OAKS, composing and replying to Discussions, and subscribing to Discussions via email and text.
- OAKS Student Overview - Grades Tools: Checklist, Dropbox, Grades, Quizzes and Surveys (v10.3) - Topics covered include viewing a Checklist, downloading and submitting assignments using the Dropbox, viewing the grade book, taking and submitting a quiz using the Quizzes tool, and viewing the Surveys tool.
- OAKS Student Overview - Management Tools: Attendance, Calendar, and Groups (v10.3) - Topics covered include viewing Attendance Registers, viewing and adding tasks to the Calendar, viewing groups, and self-enrolling in Instructor created Groups.
Life at CofC:

**Tobacco Free CofC**

Please keep in mind that the College of Charleston is a smoke-free campus, meaning smoking is prohibited on campus grounds and in Residence Halls. More information can be found [here](#).

The historic campus of the College of Charleston is home to some very old and uneven sidewalks. Please be mindful when using the sidewalks and wait until you reach a crosswalk before crossing the streets. It is courteous to say ‘excuse me’ if you pass closely by someone. Sometimes you might hear a person behind you say ‘on your left’ or another indication that they are approaching you. It is best to step to the side and allow them to pass so that you can help avoid a collision.

**What is provided by the College of Charleston?**

The College of Charleston DOES provide the following:

- Free Wi-Fi on campus
- Free use of campus computers (there are over 250 available to use in the Library alone!)
- Free use of Residence Hall washing machines (for student residents)
- Free use of CARTA public bus transportation to CofC students with your Cougar Card
- Access to the [Bike Share](#) program where you can use a bike for a day! Please note that to sign up for the program you must first watch a safety video and sign a waiver

The College of Charleston does NOT provide the following:

- Bedding (blankets, pillows, sheets)
- Room necessities, such as lamps, rugs, curtains, coat hangers (CIE will take students to a store at the beginning of the semester for these items)
- Textbooks (these must be bought by the student)
- Laundry Detergent (washing machines for students living on-campus are free, but you must provide the soap)

**Recycling at CofC**

The College of Charleston has committed to become a Zero Waster Institution! Please help the cause by sorting your waste (trash or garbage) items accordingly.

- Follow all signage posted around campus, it’s there to help you out!
- Coffee cups CAN’T be recycled! Empty remaining liquids, put the lid in co-mingled recycling, the sleeve in the paper recycling and the cup in the landfill. Or better yet, buy and use a reusable mug. Starbucks and most other coffee shops offer a discount!
- CofC composts! Look for compostable items and make sure they get in the compost stream (green bag). If you can’t compost them, put them in the landfill.
- Use our specialty recycling bins to properly (and legally!) dispose of electronics, batteries and printer cartridges.
- Find answers to your [questions](#)!
**CWID**

“CWID” stands for College Wide Identification Number and is a unique number issued to each student admitted to the College of Charleston. This number is very important as it is what you will use to access your MyCharleston account and student record. You will receive your CWID via email upon your acceptance to the College and well before your arrival to the U.S.

**MyCharleston**

MyCharleston is a secure internet site which serves as the gateway to the College’s online services. Admitted students must first use the customized link in the invitation email that is sent out to students. This email includes your login information and specific instructions on how to login to your MyCharleston account. If you did not receive this email, or need additional instructions on logging in, please contact the CIE. After you have set up your account for the first time and have created your permanent username and password, you can log into MyCharleston directly.

**CMail**

CMail stands for Cougar Mail email. CMail is your student email account issued to you by the College. It is where your professors and the staff at the CIE will send ALL of your emails. It is very important to check your CMail account every day. New students will have a CMail account automatically created for them when they enroll at the College.

**Logging In:**

Login to CMail using just your username and password.
Alternately, you can login at gmail.com using your entire email address and username.

What services are included with my CMail account?

- Google Apps includes a full range of applications for getting work done, in the classroom and among students. Calendar, document (word processing, spreadsheet, and more), forms for surveys or other input, website creation and publishing, video sharing, and group communication are all integrated into Google Apps. Video, voice, and IM chat are also built right in. You can use all of these services or just what you want - it’s up to you.

Sports

Our students have long been passionate supporters of Cougar basketball. Now, that same spirit has spread to other sports as well. Throughout the orientation process and in the first weeks of school, information will be available to new and returning students about how to show their Cougar Pride - on-campus, at TD Arena and Patriots Point Athletics Complex, and even on the road.

BECOME A FAN

Our intercollegiate athletics program offers students the opportunity to enjoy NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Division I team play at its best. There are different divisions (levels) of sports at universities around the U.S. Division I is the highest level. There are 22 varsity men’s, women’s and co-ed teams, plus cheerleading, at the College.

TICKETS

Bring your valid Cougar Card with you to any sports venue and, as space allows, support your favorite Cougar teams for free. For more information, please go to cofcsports.com and click on the tickets button.

ATHLETICS AND SPORTS

TD Arena
301 Meeting Street
TICKETS: 1.843.953.COFC (2632)
On-Campus Housing

If you have chosen to live in one of our residence halls (dormitories), you can look forward to participating in activities and events that will help you meet new people and become an active member of the campus community. Before you move in, you should read through the Guide to Residential Living. This important resource will give you information on residence hall programs, policies, services, rules of conduct, disciplinary actions, fire and life safety violation assessment and the administrative structure of residence life and housing.

Each floor of every Residence Hall has what is called a Resident Assistant. These are College of Charleston students and you will hear them referred to as RAs. These students are there to offer you support services as they pertain to your living arrangements. If you have any questions or concerns, they are there to help you. It is therefore beneficial for you to find and introduce yourself to your assigned RA once you move onto campus.

LAUNDRY FACILITIES
Free washing machines and dryers are located in all major residence halls and designated houses. Only students who live in a residence hall or historic house are allowed to use them. Please note that students will still need to purchase their own laundry detergent.

LIVING WITH A ROOMMATE
Maybe you have shared a bedroom with a sibling. And maybe you haven’t. Either way, having a roommate – and sharing the same residence hall with a few hundred other students – is probably going to be a new experience for you. You’re about to live in close quarters with someone you may meet for the first time on
move-in day! Your respective cultures, religions or belief systems, habits, lifestyles or customs may take some getting used to. Most likely, you will get to know your roommate and suitmates first. And, through residence hall events and programs, you will get to know others on your floor and in your building. As long as you are considerate of other people’s space, possessions and feelings, you should do fine.

**WHO WILL BE THERE TO HELP YOU?**

Upperclassmen who have received training, graduate students and residence life professionals also call the residence halls home. They are there to help you enjoy community living and resolve any issues. The 140 staff members who live 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the residence halls include:

- **Desk Assistants (DA):** Undergraduates who staff the information desks which are located near the entrance to most residence halls. They can answer general questions, refer you to the appropriate resources on campus, and they check guests in and out of the building.
- **Resident Assistants (RA):** Upperclassmen who live on each floor or in the historic houses. They serve as advisors and guide you through conflicts, help build community and refer you to appropriate resources on campus.
- **Residence Hall Directors (RHD):** Graduate students who live in each residence hall and supervise the resident assistants and desk assistants. They also can help you with conflict resolution, community development, adjustment issues and crisis management (should that ever become necessary).
- **Area Coordinators (AC):** Full-time professional staff members who live in the residence halls. They supervise the RHDs, select and train staff, and manage the finances, programming and administration for their area.
- For more information about On-Campus Housing, please check the [2016–2017 Guide to Residential Living](#).

If you live on-campus, and will only be staying for one semester, you must notify Residence Life at the time you plan to leave the College of Charleston so that your room can be made available for other students. To do so, please turn in your key to your Resident Assistant (RA) at the end of the semester and sign cancellation paperwork. If you do not have an RA, please visit the Office of Residence Life at 40 Coming St. (number 72 on the campus map).

**Meal Plans and Dining On-Campus**

The College offers many meal plan options for dining at the many locations all over campus. Please visit Dining Services [website](#) for the list of meal plans offered by CofC.

Meals refer to the amount of times you can use your Student ID (or Cougar Card) to access the two all-you-can-eat cafeterias per week. Meals are only valid at the two participating locations of City Bistro and Liberty Fresh Food Company. Between these two locations, you can eat breakfast, lunch and dinner every day of the week.

- **Please Keep In Mind:** The meals in your meal plan WILL EXPIRE at the end of every semester, so make sure to use them all before the dining halls close for Winter or Summer break.

Dining Dollars can be used at any on-campus dining location. One Dining Dollar is equal to one U.S. dollar. At the end of each semester, the Dining Dollars you did not use will be transferred to the next semester.

**DINING ON-CAMPUS**

Between classes, work, meetings and your social life, there’s no time to prepare great food. Relax. You do have options! College of Charleston has eight on-campus locations that feature everything – from all-you-can-eat dining to food courts. We can satisfy any of your cravings – breakfast, lunch, snack, dinner or even late-night snacks, because we have it all, right here on campus!
WHERE TO EAT

- **LIBERTY STREET FRESH FOOD COMPANY (LFFC)**
  
  **Intersection of St. Philip and Liberty Streets; at 300 St Philip Street**

  This “all-you-can-eat” campus restaurant features great exhibition cooking, authentic ethnic dishes, flame-grilled entrees, a vegetarian station, freshly baked bread, homemade desserts and a great variety of healthy options. This location accepts meal plans, Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit.

  Hours during the semester:
  - Monday-Thursday: 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
  - Friday: 7:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
  - Saturday: Closed
  - Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

- **MARTY’S PLACE**
  
  **Jewish Studies Center, 96 Wentworth Street**

  Marty’s Place will have vegan and vegetarian dishes with a kitchen that follows kosher dietary laws for students who choose a vegan and/or vegetarian lifestyle for a variety of ethical, social, and religious reasons. This location accepts meal plans, Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit.

  Hours during the semester:
  - Monday-Thursday: 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
  - Friday: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
  - Saturday and Sunday: Closed

- **CITY BISTRO**
  
  **Berry Residence Hall, St. Philip Street**

  City Bistro is another “all-you-can-eat” restaurant offering an upscale, rotating menu consisting of delicious seafood, brick-oven pizza, a salad bar, sandwiches, desserts and smoothies. This location offers our reusable to-go program, which allows you to take your meal with you. In addition to meal swipes, you can use Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit.

  Hours during the semester:
  - Monday-Friday: 11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
  - Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
  - Sunday: Closed

  For both dining halls, Liberty FFC and City Bistro, you can see the weekly menus at the Dining Services website, or download the CampusDish app that allows you to view the menu right on your phone!

- **EINSTEIN BROS. BAGELS**
  
  **McAlister Residence Hall, St. Philip Street**

  This is the perfect spot for buying gourmet bagels, sandwiches and salads, and delicious pastries and desserts – plus Darn Good Coffee! Accepts Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit at this location.

- **STERN CENTER FOOD COURT**
  
  **Stern Student Center**

  Looking for a quick snack or a leisurely meal with friends? The Stern Center Food Court features Chick-fil-A, Burger Studio, Jolé Molé, Boars Head Deli, fresh sushi, and a variety of snacks and beverages, including a Milkshake Machine. Accepts Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit at this location.

- **STARBUCKS**
  
  **Addlestone Library**

  This Starbucks is located on the first floor of Addlestone Library. The menu includes amazing coffees from around the world, and other drinks for you to discover and enjoy. Pastries and sandwiches are also
available and made with high-quality, simple ingredients. Enjoy your drink and meal while you work or socialize in their comfortable atmosphere. Accepts Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit at this location.

- **MARKET 159**
  **College Lodge Residence Hall, Calhoun Street**
  This on-campus convenience store carries essentials such as milk, cereal, bread, frozen entrees, health and beauty products, fresh fruit, snacks, cleaning supplies and more! Market 159 also has a great selection of organic and gluten-free options. Accepts Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit at this location.

- **P.O.D. EXPRESS**
  **Education Center; St. Philip Street**
  This convenient location offers a wide variety of snack and grab-and-go options, such as sandwiches, salads, fruit cups and fresh yogurt parfaits! P.O.D. also features Starbucks Coffee! Accepts Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit at this location.

- **CHICK-FIL-A**
  **Berry Residence Hall, Calhoun Street**
  This Chick-fil-A serves a full menu including breakfast, the spicy chicken sandwich and Chick-fil-A milkshakes! Accepts Dining Dollars, Cougar Cash, cash and credit at this location.

**All Meal Plans are managed by the Cougar Card Office. Please contact them to make any changes to your Meal Plan or to add dining dollars to your account.**

The office is located in Berry Hall – 162A Calhoun St.
Email: cougarcard@cofc.edu
Phone: 1.843.953.1100

**Paying your student bill**

Student bills are managed by the Treasurer’s Office. For more information, please visit their official CofC website.

Students view and pay their bills electronically through “eBill” which can be accessed through your MyCharleston account or by logging in here. This service is offered to students and their families for viewing bills, making payments and managing student accounts. Your student account features include ways to:

- Check your balance
- Make a payment toward your balance
- View your payment history

eBill is also where you go to set up a payment plan so that you can pay your student bill in smaller payments over the course of the semester(s) you are enrolled at the College.

- To enroll in a payment plan, login to MyCharleston, and select the payment plan tab.
- Follow the prompted steps until you have received confirmation that the payment plan has been set up properly. The payment plan will divide the remaining balance into payments and add a one-time $40 fee. Find more information about payment plans.

eBills are available exclusively through My Charleston. Students can login using their username and password. Authorized users can also access the student bill in eBill using the unique username and password. The online bill reflects the student’s current registration and billing information. The eBill system is live and students can verify that all fees are satisfied before the payment deadlines.
Bills are due before classes start. The CIE will communicate with you as to specific deadlines for the semester(s) you are taking courses at the College or you can view them on the Treasurer’s website. The College of Charleston will accept international wire payments for student bills. If you wish to send a wire payment, please contact the CIE.

Campus Clubs and Organizations

What’s your sport, your art, your greatest talent or your latest curiosity? College of Charleston students are interested in everything from movies and music to the environment and volunteering. We’ve formed more than 200 student clubs and organizations where you can make new friends, learn from others, serve the community, share your talents, and, best of all, try something totally new. Some of the most prominent CofC organizations include:

CISTERNYARD MEDIA
CisternYard Media consists of four distinct student media organizations and two supporting marketing departments. Each group offers unique ways for students to become involved, meet people from diverse backgrounds, and gain practical training in various media.

- **CISTERNYARD NEWS**, the student-run newsroom, updates cisternyard.com, the flagship website for student media, and produces *The Yard*, a quarterly feature magazine.
- **CISTERNYARD RADIO** (CYR) is the official, independent, student-operated web-only radio station. Streaming live 24/7 during the school year, CYR puts the spotlight on local and regional music. Tune in at CisternYard.com or download the TuneIn app.
- **CISTERNYARD VIDEO** is the student-run production group, which presents a range of content in news, sports, comedy and entertainment. Video segments are available at CisternYard.com, as well as on YouTube.
- **MISCELLANY** is an annual, student-produced, national-award-winning literary-arts journal. Students submit their visual arts, prose and poetry for consideration each Spring.
- **CISTERNYARD SALES** is responsible for the advertising efforts of all the media groups and works specifically with CisternYard News.

COUGAR ACTIVITIES BOARD (CAB): Stern Student Center room 411

- CAB is the primary, campus-wide programming body at the College. They put on events that are of interest to a broad range of students, and work with other organizations to help ensure that their
events are of the highest quality and reach the largest number of students possible. Offerings include: live bands, films, world-famous speakers and other exciting activities such as CAB’s annual Casino Night and Cougarpalooza. Students who lead the Coffee House, Community Issues, Films, Fun Fridays and Special Events committees make up CAB’s governing board. By getting involved, you’ll have the opportunity to influence what type of entertainment comes to campus!

**GREEK LIFE:** 97 Wentworth Street Annex; phone: 1.843.953.6320

- College of Charleston is home to 26 nationally recognized fraternities and sororities. Membership in any of these chapters will provide you with academic support, leadership opportunities, service learning and career-development resources - and lifelong friendships. Recruiting processes for the organizations within each of the three Greek Councils (IFC, Panhellenic and National Pan-Hellenic) vary. For more information about recruitment - and each chapter - call the Office of Greek Life or visit the Greek life website.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA):** Stern Student Center room 401

- SGA is the official, undergraduate student government association. Every student who enrolls automatically becomes a member. Each year, the student body elects the SGA officers who provide a strong voice in articulating student concerns, and take an active role in enhancing student life at the College.

**INTERNATIONAL CLUB:**

- Are you interested in meeting and befriending students from around the world? Did you study abroad and return missing a more culturally diverse atmosphere? Are you an international student interested in meeting more local American students on-campus and around Charleston? If so, then **join the International Club!**
- **The International Club** was created to bring American and international students together through bi-weekly hang outs and various events throughout the year. Anyone is welcome to join!
- **You will need your CofC email address set up in order to access the Facebook page.**

**The College of Charleston Religious Life Council**

The College of Charleston recognizes the significance of the development of spiritual values among its students, faculty and staff as a part of their educational experience. There are a variety of religious organizations on campus, each offering a vast array of activities and spiritual development opportunities. More information can be found [here](#).
Safety

CougarAlerts

In case of an emergency, the College of Charleston can notify students, faculty, staff and parents of a campus crisis within minutes. The CougarAlert system will only be used in the event of a campus crisis or emergency, and it will let the College communicate through: voice messages to home, work and cell phones, text messages to cell phones, written messages to email accounts, or messages to teletypewriters and telecommunication devices (TTY/TDD) for the hearing impaired. Sign up for this notification service here.

Emergency Call Boxes

Throughout the campus, you’ll see orange call boxes that will connect you directly to campus police in an emergency. However, you can use the boxes if you need routine assistance such as a flat tire or you’ve locked your keys in the car, etc.

Campus Police

Campus police officers provide public safety services at the College of Charleston. These professionally trained men and women are on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, monitoring the flow of traffic, enforcing parking regulations and patrolling the grounds and buildings.
Emergency Telephone Numbers

- College Emergency Notification Line 1.843.725.7246
- Residence Hall Information 1.843.953.5523
- Charleston Police Department 1.843.577.7434
- Crime Action Line 1.843.953.4998 (voice-recorded line)
- CofC EMS 1.843.953.5611
- Fire and Life Safety FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY 1.843.953.5611
- CofC Public Safety (Emergency) 1.843.953.5611
- CofC Public Safety (NON-Emergency) 1.843.953.5609
**Safety Tips**

- Try to use ATMs only during daylight hours.
- Have your key ready when you approach your car. Before getting in, look underneath your car and check inside to make sure no one is hiding there.
- If you feel you are being followed, drive to the nearest well-lit, public area and call the police.
- Do not give out your credit or debit card information or your Social Security Number (if you have one) over the phone to someone that you do not know.
- Always ask service people to identify themselves before you allow them to come into your room/home.
- LOCK YOUR DOOR when leaving your room.
- LOCK VALUABLES in the trunk of your vehicle.
- LET SOMEONE KNOW YOUR WHEREABOUTS at all times. Learn your new friends’ full names, not just their nicknames.
Resources

Here are some helpful resources to assist our new and current international students during their stay at the College of Charleston and in the U.S.:

Information about CofC and Charleston, SC
- About the College of Charleston
- About Charleston, SC
- English Language Institute at the College of Charleston

International Student Clubs & Interests
- Center for International Education on Facebook
- College of Charleston International Club

Manage your Money:

Banking

While you are in the U.S., you can set up an American checking account to help you manage your money. This account will enable you to make deposits and withdrawals, as well as give you access to a debit card, which will pull funds directly out of your checking account and will also allow you to take money out of your account at nearby ATMs. There are two banks in downtown Charleston with convenient locations for CofC students:

Wells Fargo Downtown Charleston Office:
177 Meeting Street
1.843.727.2969
ATMs both inside Stern Center on CofC campus and outside the CofC Bookstore on Calhoun Street

Once you have set up your checking account you can have funds transferred to your U.S. account from your home country account. Wiring Information for International transfers to Wells Fargo Bank:

- Routing ABA number: 121000248
- Swift BIC number: WFBIUS6S
- Name: Wells Fargo bank N.A.
- Address:
  420 Montgomery
  San Francisco, CA 94104
- Your 10 digit account number must be included
- The name as it appears on your Wells Fargo statement

Bank of America Downtown Charleston Office:
200 Meeting Street
1.843.723.6819
ATMs located inside Stern Center on CofC campus, and at the Meeting Street office

To open a checking account with Bank of America, please proceed to the Meeting Street location and take the following items with you:

- Passport and visa, and your student ID card (Cougar Card).

Opening a checking account is free with your Cougar Card. If you are under 23 years of age there may be a fee; the banker you work with to open your account will instruct you on how to proceed.
Once you have set up your checking account, you can have funds transferred to your U.S. account from your home country account wiring information for international transfers to Bank of America:

- Routing ABA number: 026009593
- Swift BIC number: BOFAUS6S
- Name: Bank of America N.A.
- Address:
  100 North Tryon Street
  Charlotte, NC 28255
- Your 10 digit account number must be included
- The name as it appears on your Bank of America statement

For more information on American banking terminology, please visit the Bank of America online resource.

Employment

International students on F-1 or J-1 visas are permitted to work up to 20 hours, on-campus, while school is in session.

Please visit the Career Center to find employment opportunities:

  - **Location:** Lightsey Center, Room 216 (160 Calhoun Street)
  - **Phone:** 1.843.953.5692
  - **E-mail:** CareerCenter@cofc.edu

Use CISTERNonline to find jobs – this is where the Career Center posts part-time jobs (on- and off-campus), full-time post graduate job opportunities, and internships for students and alumni.

The Career Center also offers:

  - Resume and Cover Letter Information and Critiques
    - By appointment or during drop-in hours, Monday-Thursday, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
  - Career Counseling and Career Decision Making Resources and Assistance
  - Career Events and Career Fairs
  - And much more!
Social Security Number

In the U.S., a Social Security Number (SSN) is issued to citizens and non-resident aliens with work authorization to track earnings over a worker’s lifetime. F-1 and J-1 student visa holders who are employed in the U.S. must apply for a Social Security Number. In order to apply, you must show evidence that you are eligible to work in the U.S., that you are a full-time student, and that you have received a formal offer for on-campus employment or have been authorized for Curricular Practical Training, Optional Practical Training or Academic Training. The Social Security Administration will also verify your immigration documents and status before issuance of a Social Security Number takes place.

Application process for F-1 students with on-campus employment:

1. Apply in-person at the Social Security Office. Be sure to have the following with you:
   - Completed and signed Social Security Verification Form from the CIE
   - Form I-20
   - Valid passport and visa
   - A print-out of your I-94
   - Application Form SS-5

Application process for J-1 students with on-campus employment:

1. Apply in-person at the Social Security Office. Be sure to have the following with you:
   - Form DS-2019
   - Valid passport and visa
   - A print-out of your I-94
   - Completed and signed Social Security Verification Form from the CIE
   - Application Form SS-5

Social Security cards are free – you will not be charged. Processing time can take up to 4 weeks or more. You will receive a letter from the Social Security Office saying that you have applied for a number. You will need to take this letter to the Career Center to show that you have applied in order to start working. The College will not be able to pay you, however, until you receive the card with your number.

Taxes

It is your individual responsibility to understand and meet your tax obligations. Generally, tax returns are due every April 15th based on earnings from the previous calendar year.

While employers in the U.S. do deduct money from your paycheck throughout the year and send it to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service - a U.S. federal agency), it may not equal the exact amount owed at the end of the year. If too much was taken out of your paychecks, you may be eligible for a refund. Or, if too little was taken out, you will owe more. Salary from a job is not the only kind of earning taxed; many types of income are taxable.

International students who have worked or earned wages in the U.S. will need to file one or more tax forms. Please note that receiving a scholarship from the College of Charleston may be considered taxable income. Therefore, even if you have not worked in the U.S., if you receive a scholarship, you may need to pay taxes and/or file tax paperwork. Tax laws that apply to internationals are not the same as those that apply to U.S. citizens and/or permanent residents. International students who are filing tax forms for the first time often find it to be a very confusing process. While we are not tax experts, we do want to assist you with this responsibility. If you have not received income then you do not have to pay taxes, but you do have to file a Form 8843.
Federal Forms and Resources

F-1 students can file either Form 1040NR or Form 1040NR-EZ. Form 1040NR is 5 pages long and can accommodate all types of income and expenses. Form 1040NR-EZ is only 2 pages long and is limited to specific situations.

- Form 1040NR – U.S. Nonresident Alien Income Tax Return
- Form 1040NR-EZ – U.S. Income Tax Return for Certain Nonresident Aliens
- Form 8843 - all F-1 students must file this form each year regardless of whether or not you earned income in the U.S.

What you need to fill out the forms (Please have the following items/information ready and available):

- Visa/immigration status (see Form I-94)
- U.S. Entry and Exit Dates (see Form I-94 and Passport)
- Form I-20, if F-1 status
- Social Security or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)
- Address Information (i.e. current U.S. and permanent foreign address)
- Academic Institution Information
- Forms W-2, 1042-S and/or 1099 (if any wages were earned or if you received any scholarships). These forms are provided to you by your employer or the College.

Resources

Internal Revenue Service and Tax Payer Assistance Center

- Local Office:
  1 Poston Road, Suite 200, Charleston, SC 29407
  Phone: 1.843.566.0209
  Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 8:30 – 4:30

State of South Carolina Department of Revenue

- Local Office:
  Charleston Service Center
  3 South Park Circle
  Suite 202
  Charleston, SC 29407
  Phone: 1.843.852.3600

IRS Publications

(Please note that most of these publications are revised each tax year; therefore please be sure to check the main IRS Publication listing to make sure you are consulting the latest information.)

- Tax information for Visitors to the U.S.
- Withholding of Tax on Nonresident Aliens and Foreign Entities
- U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens

Remember to keep a copy of everything you submit to the IRS.

Note: Staff members of the Center for International Education are not tax professionals. While our office offers help to our students, we cannot provide individual tax advice.
Experience Charleston:

Weather
Because of its subtropical climate, Charleston is a year-round tourist destination. The best weather comes in the Spring and Fall when temperatures are consistently moderate. Summers are hot and humid, but that only makes the area's beaches more appealing! Winters are usually mild. It's not uncommon to have 70-degree Fahrenheit (21-degrees Celsius) days in December and January.

Charleston experiences A LOT of rain. This can be especially challenging for students who might have classes all day and will need to walk through campus multiple times. Rain boots are highly recommended! Campus and surrounding streets are known to flood, so please be wary when waiting to cross the street as oncoming traffic can cause large splashes of water thus getting passersby wet!

Transportation
Charleston Area Regional Transit Authority (CARTA)
The Charleston Area Regional Transit Authority (CARTA) provides city bus service throughout the Charleston metropolitan area. CARTA also offers express shuttle services with fast and direct routes between key locations throughout the Charleston area and downtown. Visit the CARTA website for more information about buses and shuttles.
The College of Charleston has partnered with CARTA to provide free service to all College of Charleston students and employees on all CARTA buses, including the Downtown Area Shuttles (DASH) and the Express for commuters.

**DASH (Downtown Area Shuttles)**
The DASH shuttle buses provide the easiest way to get around downtown Charleston.

**DASH Routes:**
- **210 - Aquarium / College of Charleston** - Travels by the College, the S.C. Aquarium and the Visitors' Center
- **211 - Meeting / King** - Travels down King St., along the Battery, up Broad St., down Meeting St. to the Visitors' Center
- **212 - Aquarium / Waterfront** - Travels between the S.C. Aquarium, Waterfront Park, and the downtown Market area

**Taxi Companies**

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<td>Express Cab Co.</td>
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<td>Safety Cab Co.</td>
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<td>Yellow Cab</td>
<td>1.843.577.6565</td>
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<td>Charleston Black Cab</td>
<td>1.843.216.2627</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flag-A-Cab</td>
<td>1.843.554.1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston Green Taxi</td>
<td>1.843.819.0846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston Black Cab Co.</td>
<td>1.843.216.2627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston Bike Taxi</td>
<td>1.843.532.8663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston Rickshaw Company</td>
<td>1.843.723.5685</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bus Lines**

Greyhound
1. 843.744.4247
www.greyhound.com
Dorchester Rd, North Charleston, SC 29405

**Airline Flights**

Charleston International Airport
1.843.767.7000
www.chs-airport.com
5500 International Blvd., Charleston, SC 29418

**Food & Groceries**

**CVS Pharmacy**
59 George Street
1.843.720.8523
Go down St Philip’s Street. CVS is on the corner of St Philips and George, on CofC’s campus.

**Walgreen’s Pharmacy**
380 King Street
Corner of King and Calhoun, across from Marion Square
1.843.714.6243

**Harris Teeter**
290 East Bay Street
1.843.722.6821
Take Calhoun Street towards the Aquarium, turn right onto East Bay, Harris Teeter will be ahead on the left at the end of Wentworth street.

**BI-LO Grocery**  
445 Meeting St  
1.843.722.2766  
Take Calhoun St towards the aquarium. Turn left onto Meeting Street and then left into the parking lot.

**H&L Asian Market**  
5300 Rivers Avenue, North Charleston  
1.843.529.9596  
You will need to take a taxi or bus

**Saigon Vietnamese Supermarket**  
7671 Northwoods Blvd., North Charleston  
1.843.818.1238  
You will need to take a taxi or bus

**Jalisco South and Latin American Market**  
5335 Dorchester Rd., North Charleston  
1.843.767.9611  
You will need to take a taxi or bus

**Euro Foods Market**  
1727 Ashley River Rd., #3  
1.843.571.1451  
You will need to take a taxi or bus

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**Shopping & Dining**

Charleston has become one of the top destinations in the southeast U.S. to enjoy a fantastic culinary experience. There are a large variety of restaurants located on the peninsula; ranging from economical to expensive. The average meal cost at lower cost restaurants is $8.00 - $10.00 for lunch and $10.00 - $12.00 for dinner. The Charleston City Paper is a free publication found all over Charleston and is a great way to stay informed about the happenings around town. Here is a link to their best restaurant choices currently in the area. The Charleston City Paper also has information on Charleston Restaurant Week, a week-long event in which many restaurants around Charleston offer three-course meals at a discounted price. This is a great time to check out restaurants that you don’t normally get to. The event takes place once in the Fall (usually in September) and once in the Winter (usually in January). Keep up with the City Paper to learn more about Charleston Restaurant Week.

**Restaurants in Charleston serving ethnic dishes:**

**Lee Lee’s Hot Kitchen**  
218 President Street  
This authentic Chinese restaurant features family recipes from owner, Lily Lei along with modern dishes. An eccentric and trendy environment make Lee Lee’s Hot Kitchen a great place to gather with friends.

**Gaulart & Maliclet “Fast and French”**  
98 Broad St  
A quaint restaurant on one of Charleston’s most historic and beautiful streets, Fast and French is a great lunch spot offering artisan sandwiches, soups, salads, coffee, and more at a reasonable price.

**Old Towne Grill and Seafood**  
229 King Street
This family-owned, authentic Greek restaurant is conveniently located close to campus on Charleston’s famed King Street. Try their Greek gyros or one of their fine seafood dishes.

Leyla
298 King Street
This Lebanese restaurant is right on the edge of campus and offers affordable lunch and dinner options. The menu offers a variety of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern dishes, so there is something for everyone!

Santi’s
1302 Meeting Street
Santi’s features an authentic Mexican and Southwestern cuisine. Free chips and salsa with every meal make this a nice off-the-beaten-path place to gather with friends. It is a little bit further from campus but the food is worth it!

O-Ku
463 King Street
This hip and classy Asian restaurant is known for its sushi and is a College of Charleston student favorite for their half-priced sushi special on Wednesday evenings from 5-7pm. O-Ku is modern and upscale, making it slightly pricier…all the more reason to enjoy the half-priced sushi special!

Basil
460 King Street
This is another College of Charleston student favorite with raved about Thai dishes and a trendy dining environment. The menu is reasonably priced which makes this spot great for lunch, dinner or even take-out!

Xiao Bao Biscuit
224 Rutledge Ave
With select dishes from China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam, Xiao Bao Biscuit is a great dinner spot. The restaurant is a renovated gas station, making it a unique and eccentric dining environment.

Shopping in Charleston:
Delightfully different shopping is a hallmark in Charleston. You’ll find the work of local artisans, unique specialty shops and antiques galore – plus, a wide variety of well-regarded national retailers, including Brooks Brothers and Urban Outfitters. Generally speaking, the large national retailers open early and close late (for example, Target is open from 8:00am - 10:00pm Monday - Saturday). Reduced hours at these stores are most often seen only on Sundays and national holidays.

Downtown Market Area
Wander through the open-air market for daily shopping or to watch local artists make sweetgrass baskets. Stroll up and down Market St. and visit the unique shops.

King St. Fashion District
Historic King Street’s center section is all about fashion. There are handbags and shoes straight from the red carpet as well as European lingerie, top designer fashions and jewelry.

King St. Antique District
Voted No. 1 for antique shopping by the readers of Travel + Leisure magazine.

Towne Centre Shopping Mall
This shopping center, located at I-526 and Highway 17 in Mount Pleasant, is home to over 65 national and local retail stores carrying clothing and apparel, shoes, skin care and makeup and hosts the Palmetto Grande movie theater.

- **Shopping Center hours:**
  Monday - Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
  Sunday: 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- **CARTA Route 40 bus goes to Towne Centre; it is stop number 4. Find more information on CARTA route 40 stop 4 schedules.**

**The Citadel Mall**

Located in West Ashley, the Citadel Mall is home to a variety of department stores and national retail stores, including Target.

- **Mall hours:**
  Monday - Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
  Sunday: 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- **CARTA Route 30 bus goes to The Citadel Mall; it is stop number 6. Find more information on CARTA route 30 stop 6 schedules.**
- **The CARTA Mt Pleasant – West Ashley Express Route 2 also runs to the Citadel Mall at peak hours during the weekdays, from multiple locations downtown.**

**Tanger Outlet Mall**

The outlet center hosts over 100 stores carrying discounted, name-brand items!

- **Outlet Mall Hours:**
  Monday - Thursday: 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
  Friday and Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
  Sunday: 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- **The CARTA NASH Express Route 4 picks up from the Visitor Center in downtown Charleston and drops off directly at Tanger. Find NASH schedules and stops.**

**Best Buy**

This national retail store sells electronics such as cell phones, television sets and small appliances. Also located in West Ashley, across from the Citadel Mall; you can use the same CARTA bus to get to it as you would the Citadel Mall and Target. You will have to cross Sam Rittenberg Blvd., a busy street, so please be careful.

- **Store Hours:**
  Monday - Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
  Sunday: 11:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
  Phone number: 1.843.763.4338

**Things to See & Do**

**OUTDOORS**

- Bike across the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge and prepare for the Cooper River Bridge Run (10K)
- Run to the Battery at sunrise/sunset
- Play Frisbee in Marion Square
- Picnic at White Point Gardens
- Visit the Angel Oak tree on Johns Island
- Check out the local beaches (Folly, Sullivan’s Island, Isle of Palms)
- Shoot a round of golf at Kiawah and Seabrook islands
Kayak, paddleboard or climb the rock wall at a county park

SPORTING EVENTS
- Charleston RiverDogs baseball
- S.C. Stingrays hockey
- Charleston Battery soccer
- Family Circle Cup tennis

THE ARTS
- Spoleto Festival U.S.A. or Piccolo Spoleto
- Music Farm concerts
- Theater 99 comedy shows
- Gibbes Museum of Art
- MOJA Arts Festival

HISTORY
- Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum (U.S.S. Yorktown and U.S.S. Laffey)
- The Charleston Museum – America’s first museum
- Fort Sumter – the Civil War began here
- Old Exchange Building and Provost Dungeon
- Plantations (Boone Hall, Drayton Hall, Middleton Place, Magnolia Plantation, Charleston Tea Plantation)
- Charles Towne Landing (circa 1670, the original site of the first permanent English settlement in the Carolinas)
American Culture:

Names
Americans tend to use a person’s first name almost immediately. Some visitors see the use of the first name as signifying a level of intimacy. Therefore, this cultural aspect is less formal in the U.S.

Americans who have earned a professional degree are often given an occupational title. Some instances where this is seen is in the medical field (Dr. John Smith, M.D.), religious figures, such as priests (Father Joseph) and professors (Dr. Ann Cummings, Ph.D.)

Pay attention as to how others introduce themselves to you, as this is most likely how they wish to be addressed. In the classroom some professors want students to address them by their first names, while others wish to be addressed more formally as Dr. or Professor. If you feel uncomfortable calling a professor by his or her first name, you may use the more formal title.
Friendship

In many countries “friend” is a term reserved for a few close individuals with whom you have a very close relationship. In America, a friend can be almost anyone with whom a person has friendly interactions with.

Cultural Values

Many Americans have a great deal of pride in their country – this is referred to as patriotism and you may see many displays of it while you are in U.S.

Personal space of a distance about arm’s length is the standard norm in American culture when speaking to others outside of family or romantic relationships.

Americans are most often on-time for set events, like class meetings, social interactions and professional appointments. There is an unspoken five minutes in which it may be okay to be late, but it is best to be on-time, especially to class. Many professors do not allow late students to join class and some deduct points from your final grade if you do not arrive at the time it is scheduled to begin.

While arriving to class on-time is expected, it is also understood that in the classroom students will challenge a professor and engage in open debate. Americans have been taught since early childhood to question, search and analyze, even if that means challenging authority.

Religion and politics are sensitive topics; unless it is someone you know very well, you may want to avoid these topics.

Cultural Adjustment

Many international students, after arriving to the United States, experience culture shock on some level. At first, you may feel that Charleston and life in the U.S. are completely perfect. Then after a couple of months, you might begin to miss home, your family and friends. This is a perfectly normal part of the adjustment process and can help deepen your appreciation for your life in your home country.

There are many steps one can take to help reduce the effects of culture shock and home sickness:

- Get adequate rest and exercise and maintain a healthy eating pattern. It is important that you take care of your physical being while you are transitioning mentally to your new surroundings.
- Proactively seek out opportunities to connect with other students on campus. Since you will most likely be living on the College of Charleston campus, take advantage of the many student-focused programs and events, or become a member of a student organization to enjoy meeting other students with similar interests!
• Remember yourself and your preferences as you adjust to life in the U.S. Your own culture and background are just as important as the one you are learning about. Infusing your experience here with your own perspective and beliefs can help make the time you spend here more rewarding.

• If your feelings of culture shock or homesickness become overwhelming or do not improve, please seek outside help. A good place to start is the Center for International Education. The professionals who work there are experienced with these issues and often times know how to help. They can also refer you to other resources on campus that may be better equipped to provide solutions. The most important step is the first: to reach out when you are having difficulties. Whether it is due to academic issues, cultural matters, or feelings of missing home; as a student of the College of Charleston, our campus is here to provide support services.

American Conversion Charts

**Fahrenheit to Celsius**

![Fahrenheit to Celsius Chart](https://www.threadless.com/product/2425/37_Celsius_98_6_Fahrenheit)

**American Coin Currency**

![American Coin Currency Chart](https://prezi.com/nxhfnkshmzbd/copy-of-money-counting-money-for-kids/)
American Paper Currency

http://www.littletoncoin.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/Display%7C10001%7C10001%7C-1%7C%7CLearnNav%7CSmall-Size-US-Paper-Money.html

American Clothing Size Chart

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<tr>
<th>Standard Size Chart</th>
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<td>Euro Size</td>
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<td>UK Size</td>
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</table>

*Note: Foot measurement. A extra 2 1/2" length will be added for floor length dresses as height.

http://www.outerinner.com/blog/tag/measurements/
American Shoe Size Chart

How to enter today’s date in U.S. format:

- When recording today’s date in the U.S., the format is: Month, Day, Year. For example, the fifth day of October in the year 2015 would be recorded as: 10/5/15.

Holidays noted with ****, you may find that banks, post offices, and some shops may be closed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday or Observance</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Day****</td>
<td>U.S. Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</td>
<td>U.S. Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valentine’s Day</td>
<td>U.S. Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>President’s Day****</td>
<td>U.S. Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Patrick’s Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easter Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passover</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning of Ramadan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Day****</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence Day****</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eid al-Adha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Day****</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving****</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mawlid al-Nabi</td>
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<td>Christmas Day****</td>
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