

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

Spring 2021 Orientation
Handbook



International Student Life
Student Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Welcome to University of Georgia!

Greetings from International Student Life!

On behalf of the University of Georgia, we would like to extend a warm welcome to UGA, Athens, and the United States! We hope that you will find this information helpful as you prepare to enter UGA this semester. In this handbook, you will be able to find information about the following topics:

- Frequently Asked Questions about International Student Orientation
- Registering for International Student Orientation
- Temporary Orientation Housing
- Permanent Housing Advice & Tips
- Arriving to Athens
- Transportation during Orientation
- University Contact Information
- International Student Resources
- AlcoholEDU & Haven - Required
- Immunizations
- Cell Phones & Bank Accounts
- International Student Life Student Organizations

We are busily working to prepare this year's orientation program to welcome you and the incoming class of international students to the University. Throughout the week of orientation, you can expect to have the chance to tour campus, meet other campus offices that can assist you with your transition, as well as interact with other students from around the world beginning their educational journey at the University of Georgia. Our office has a specially-trained group of students known as World Leaders, who serve as orientation leaders for the international student orientation program. You can expect to hear from your World Leaders via email during the summer, once you have registered for orientation.

As you begin to prepare for your arrival to the University, we encourage you to please keep in touch and let us know if you have any questions. We are here for you! Our office is open Monday through Friday, 8AM to 5PM Eastern Standard Time. We can be reached via email at isl@uga.edu, via phone at +1 706 542 5867, or online at isl.uga.edu.

We look forward to welcoming you to campus and wish you safe travels as you begin your journey to Athens. Go Dawgs!

All the best,

ISL Staff



Frequently Asked Questions:

- **What is International Student Orientation?**

International Student Orientation is a program especially designed to meet the needs of incoming international students to the University of Georgia.

In spring 2021, the orientation program will be held online. All undergraduate (including transfer students) and exchange students will be automatically enrolled to the international student orientation system.

Graduate students, once you decide to attend UGA, please request access to the orientation system by completing the form at <http://isl.uga.edu/orientation>.

- **When is International Student Orientation?**

Orientation will be held online for spring 2021. You will be able to access orientation information via UGA's eLearningCommons (eLC) portal beginning in early December.

On Thursday, January 7 and Friday, January 8, ISL will host a number of live sessions about important information for new international students. You can indicate which you plan to attend in the orientation registration form.

- **How can I get updated information about Orientation?**

Visit our website at isl.uga.edu/orientation, email isl@uga.edu, and be on the lookout for messages coming from ISL throughout the summer.

Why should I attend International Student Orientation?

- **KNOWLEDGE:** By the time you complete the international student orientation program, you will be equipped with helpful information and resources to prepare you for success at UGA and in the United States. You will learn about all sorts of topics related to being a UGA student, life in the United States, and how to succeed as an international student. From immigration & visa policies to buying a car in the USA, social security to health insurance, cultural and academic differences, how to register for classes, UGA sports, and transportation and shopping in Athens, you will be equipped with all of the knowledge necessary to have a successful transition to Athens.
- **SUCCESS:** Attending International Student Orientation gives you the opportunity to adjust to the time, cultural, and academic differences with a group of other students encountering the same adjustment - which will make you more successful during your time at UGA!

Permanent Housing Options

Many international students find it difficult to secure off-campus housing from overseas because oftentimes they would like to see what is available, what is cost effective, etc. It is our hope that you will have more time to explore your housing options before classes begin.

Off-campus housing information is available online at isl.uga.edu/resources. Many graduate students live off campus or within University Village, managed by University Housing, if space available.

For more information about University Village Housing, please visit housing.uga.edu or email housing@uga.edu.

For off campus housing, you can expect to pay anywhere from \$400 - \$1,000 or more per month, depending on the location, amenities, and size of the apartment. When searching for off campus housing options, the rent cost for the apartment will likely not include utilities. Required utilities would include water/sewer service, electricity, water, and possibly gas, depending on your unit. Optional utilities would include cable television or internet. Make sure when you are searching for off campus housing options, you ask what if any utilities are included in the monthly rent payment. Most apartment complexes lease units for a period of 12 months, and leases are legally binding documents.

You may wish to research apartments online before you arrive; the following sources may be helpful.

- Apartment Finder - www.apartmentfinder.com/Georgia/Athens-Apartments
- Flagpole Magazine, classifieds section - flagpole.com
- Red and Black Student Newspaper, classified section - redandblack.com
- Apartment List - www.apartmentlist.com/ga/athens#map

At times, private landlords or property owners may reach out to ISL with vacancies in different apartments or homes in Athens. Feel free to email us at isl@uga.edu to see if we have any information to pass along.

Your rent payment will be significantly less if you choose to live with a roommate. Please visit our website to learn more about selecting and successfully living with a roommate: https://isl.uga.edu/content_page/international-student-resources-content-page.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE ISL OFF-CAMPUS LIVING GUIDE](#)

ISL has published an off-campus living guide for students who will be searching for accommodation off-campus. This guide includes a map of common places many students choose to live, price points, how to inspect a property, the elements of a lease in the United States, how to set up apartment utilities, how and where to purchase furniture, and much more. This guide is updated as we receive more information from off-campus housing providers.

Please note that this guide is not all-inclusive and prices/rates may have changed since the most recent update. This is not meant to be an all-inclusive guide but will be a great starting point in your off-campus housing search.



Getting to Athens

When you fly to the United States, the closest airport to Athens is Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport (ATL). Once you arrive in Atlanta, you have several options to consider for getting to Athens.

Groome Shuttle	MegaBus	Private Car/ Uber/ Lyft
<p>Many students choose to use the Groome Transportation Shuttle service to get from Atlanta to Athens. A one-way ride costs \$39 (subject to change) and depart for Athens multiple times per day.</p> <p>To purchase a Groome Shuttle ticket, please visit their website: http://athens.groometranspotation.com.</p> <p>For students who want to be dropped off on campus, you should indicate your drop-off point as the 'Georgia Center'.</p>	<p>The MegaBus service offers affordable bus rides from Atlanta. MegaBus has strict restrictions on the amount of luggage that passengers can carry. More information can be found here: http://us.megabus.com/luggage-allowance.aspx.</p> <p>For departure locations, times, and costs, please visit http://us.megabus.com.</p>	<p>This option is generally not used by students and ISL does not recommend it due to cost.</p> <p>To take a private car service, taxi, Uber, or Lyft to Athens, it could easily cost over \$100.</p>

What to Expect from Online Orientation

- You will receive the same information that you'd receive in person from important campus offices and services that are critical to your success. This includes health and wellness, safety on campus, academic honesty, student conduct, campus involvement, taxes, immigration, and health insurance, among many others.
- World Leaders and ISL staff will offer virtual webinars and meetings in early January to deliver to you, live, important orientation content and information that will help you adjust to life in the United States and prepare you to be a successful UGA student.
- ISL staff and World Leaders will provide opportunities for you to connect with current and new students virtually to meet other students and connect with others beyond the virtual orientation program
- You will be provided information about how to obtain a SIM card and open a US Bank Account as a part of international student orientation.



University Contact Information

<p>Universtiy Housing Housing Assignments Office</p> <p>Phone: +1 706 542 1421 Email: housing@uga.edu Web: housing.uga.edu</p>	<p>International Student Life For all non-immigration questions</p> <p>Phone: +1 706 543 5867 Email: isl@uga.edu Web: isl.uga.edu</p>	<p>Graduate Admissions For all graduate student admissions questions</p> <p>Phone: +1 706 543 1719 Email: gradadm@uga.edu Web: grad.uga.edu</p>
<p>University Health Center AlcoholEDU/Haven, Immunizations</p> <p>Phone: +1 706 542 1162 Web: uhs.uga.edu</p>	<p>Immigration Services - Office of Global Engagement (OGE) For all immigration questions</p> <p>Phone: +1 706 542 2900 Email: immigration@uga.edu Web: international.uga.edu</p>	<p>Undergraduate Admissions For undergraduate admissions questions</p> <p>Phone: +1 706 542 8776 Email: adm-info@uga.edu Web: admissions.uga.edu</p>

International Student Resources

ISL is pleased to offer an online library of resources to assist you with your transition to the United States. Below, you'll find a list of resources available for you to use and download online at isl.uga.edu/resources. These resources and topics will be discussed at greater detail during international student orientation.

- Academic Honesty
- Athena & Registering for Classes
- Banking in Athens
- Buying a Used Car
- Cross-Cultural Adjustment: Culture Shock, American Customs, Educational Differences
- Financial Aid Tips for International Students
- Food - Local Stores & Dining Halls
- Getting Around Athens
- Getting Connected - Phones and Mail
- Georgia Driver's License - How to Apply
- Identity Theft & How to Prevent It
- Immigration Services
- Opportunities for Learning English (ESL)
- Roommate Tips
- Social Security Card Application Information
- Student Health Insurance
- Studying & Being Academically Successful at UGA
- Tax Resources for students classified as a NON-RESIDENT for tax purposes
- Tax Resources for students classified RESIDENT for tax purposes
- UGA Important Phone Numbers
- UGA Sports & Sports Culture
- Writing a Check in the United States

AlcoholEDU and Sexual Assault Prevention

As part of our comprehensive health and safety program, UGA REQUIRES each member of the **first year undergraduate class AND incoming transfer students** to complete *AlcoholEdu and Haven*. Whether you drink or not, *AlcoholEdu* will empower you to make well-informed decisions about alcohol and help you better cope with the drinking behavior of your peers. *The Haven: Understanding Sexual Assault* program will address the critical issues of sexual assault, relationship violence and stalking, which impact as many as 1 in 4 college women during their time in higher education.

You **MUST** complete Part 1 of AlcoholEDU and Sexual Assault Prevention by the following deadlines. AlcoholEDU and Sexual Assault Prevention can be found online here: uhs.uga.edu/alcoholedu/intro.

Semester Starting At UGA	Dates Available	Required Completion Date
Spring 2021	December 4, 2020	Part 1 - January 10, 2021 Part 2 - March 15, 2021

Immunizations

In order to be a UGA student and register for classes, there are certain immunizations that all students on campus must have. If you are able to obtain these in your home country prior to arriving at UGA, please bring a copy of your medical records, in English, to confirm your immunization. You can also obtain these immunizations once you arrive to Athens at the University Health Center. *The required vaccines are listed online with the University Health Center here:* uhs.uga.edu/info/immunizations. Additionally, you can view the required forms for incoming students related to the Health Center at uhs.uga.edu/info/forms.

Cell Phones & Bank Accounts

We know that one of the biggest concerns when you arrive to the USA is how to set up a mobile phone/SIM Card and a bank account. ISL is happy to provide resources to obtain a SIM card as a part of the virtual orientation program. Additionally, you will be able to receive further information about bank accounts and schedule appointments with a local bank to complete your bank account application once orientation ends.



International Student Life Student Organizations

International Student Life advises a collection of student organizations on campus, many of which are culturally-based. All student organizations are open to any UGA student regardless of cultural background or affiliation. For more information about ISL student organizations, please visit isl.uga.edu/site/student_orgs.