

International Student Handbook



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The Basics

Communication

BY POST

Where to mail a letter or package:

Clinton Post Office: 202 Elizabeth St.
864-833-2433

Student Mailroom: Springs Center
Monday – Friday: 10am-2pm
Monday- Thursday 3pm – 6pm



Mailing a Letter

When writing an international letter, address your letter with the return address in the upper left corner. This should include your name, street address, box number, city, state, postal code, and country. Place the person's name that you are mailing the letter to in the middle of the envelope, followed by the address, city, country, and any other postal codes needed for your country. Domestic rate for a letter is currently \$0.46. International rates vary by destination. The Administration Mailroom can offer you some general assistance with mailing packages and letters.

Joe Student Box #5xxxx 403 S. Adair St. Clinton, SC 29325	Postage
Name Address City, State, Postal Code COUNTRY	

Note: You can write the address you are mailing the letter/package to in the native language of the country you are sending it to, but remember to write the name of the COUNTRY in English so that it can get there.

BY COMPUTER

Harrington-Peachtree 212
Located on the first floor, not
basement

Jacob Halls 201
Located upstairs in Jacobs Hall

Richardson Hall 109
On the ground level of the Richardson Science
Hall

Carol International House Lab
Four computer stations available to residents of
CIH and guests.

Note: Homework and papers take precedence over social use of computers. Please be respectful to other students working on projects and papers.

Obtaining an Email Account

Prior to your arrival, you should have received a packet with information about Moodle, Banner Web and your PC email account. Please refer to this information when accessing your account for the first time. If you have any difficulties, please contact ResNet (ResNet@presby.edu) for assistance.

Borrowing Laptops

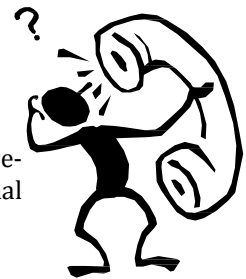
All Presbyterian College students may borrow wireless laptop computers for use in the Library from the front circulation desk. All laptops have regular computer software as well as printing and file saving capabilities.

BY PHONE

On-Campus Phones

Students wishing to make long-distance calls must obtain their own telephone credit cards from a long-distance carrier of their choice using their home telephone number to establish credit, if needed, or purchase pre-paid calling cards.

Campus telephone numbers cannot be used to obtain long-distance credit cards or pre-paid calling cards from any telephone service provider nor can students order additional services or telephone lines to be installed on college property with the exception of students residing in the Scottish Arms apartments.



NOTES: Upon arrival, you may use the phones in the International Programs Office to call your family and let them know you got here safely.

Cell Phones

Contract Plans are best for degree seeking students that will be staying for longer than a year:

- Monthly fee + overage fees
- 1-2 year signed contract
- Require good credit score or deposit
- Verizon Wireless is the closest location (Laurens), AT&T, T-Mobile, Sprint, etc. Located in Greenwood/Greenville

Pay-As-You-Go is deal for short-term/semester exchange students:

- One-time start-up fee
- Buy minutes/texts as needed
- Large variety of phones and cell phone services located in Wal-Mart

Transportation

BY PLANE

Regional Airports

Greenville/Spartanburg International Airport (GSP).

Columbia Airport (CAE)

Charlotte Douglas Airport (CLT)

Airline Reservations

There is not a travel agent in Clinton that handles airline reservations. You can use the websites listed below to book your travels. If you prefer to go through a travel agent to get your tickets, please visit the Office of International Programs for assistance.

Kayak.com
Expedia.com
Hotwire.com
Priceline.com
Orbitz.com
Booking.com

Travelocity.com
STAtravel.com
Travelcuts.com
StudentUniverse.com
Skyscanner.com

BY TRAIN

AMTRAK Ticket and Station Information

www.amtrak.com

Greenville
1120 W. Washington St.
Greenville, SC 29601

Columbia
850 Pulaski St.
Columbia, SC 29201

Spartanburg
290 Magnolia St.
Spartanburg, SC 2930

BY BUS

GREYHOUND Bus Ticket and Station Information

www.greyhound.com

Greenville
100 W McBee Ave
Greenville SC 29601
(864) 235-4741

Columbia
2015 Gervais St
Columbia SC 29204
(803) 256-6465

Spartanburg
100 North Liberty St
Spartanburg SC 29306
(864) 582-5814

BY CAR

Driver's Licenses

A South Carolina driver's license is required after 90 days residency. You may drive with your international license during the first 90 days. If you will live in South Carolina for less than a year, you may maintain your home country or international license. Before applying for a South Carolina driver's license, you should obtain a copy of the South Carolina Driver's Manual to familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations.

Persons who have a foreign license and who do not have US citizenship, will be required to show proof of

BY BIKE

Renting a PC Bicycle

You are able to rent bikes from OIP for two days at a time. Bikes must be checked out from a staff member and returned between the office hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Bikes should always be locked to a bike rack when not in use. If the OIP bikes are all checked out, additional bikes are available for rent to students for one day from Springs Student Center.

Renters are responsible for returning the bike to OIP on time and in the same condition it was in when rented. Renters are responsible for the lock and key as well as the bike. ***If any of these items are broken, lost, or stolen the renter will be responsible for paying for any loss or damage to any rented bicycle or related item/equipment. There will be a fine of \$5.00/day for bikes that are late.***

Money Matters: Banking & Finances

Banks in Clinton:

Arthur State Bank:	205 Jacobs Hwy 864-938-6166
Park Sterling Bank	198 Jacobs Hwy 864-938-1000
TD Bank	819 S Broad St 864-938-2635
Wells Fargo	203 S Broad St 864-833-0340
The Palmetto Bank	101 W Carolina Ave 864-833-7761

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

The Office of International Programs provides an opportunity for International students to speak with a representative from Wells Fargo at orientation. There are a variety of good reasons to open a bank account in the Clinton area. For the majority of people, it is the best way to manage their funds while at college. There are two main types of accounts that are of greatest interest to students: Checking and Savings.

Checking Accounts

At most banks in Clinton, students can open an interest free checking account. This means that you will not collect any interest on your money being held in the bank, but you do not have to keep a minimum amount in your account at all times either. Upon opening your account, you will receive a packet of starter checks and later a debit card in the mail to use to access money in your account at stores and ATM machines.

Although you do not have to keep a minimum balance in the account, you do have to have enough funds in the account to cover any checks or debit card charges you make. If you spend more money than is in your account, you will be charged an extra fee called an overdraft fee (\$30 to \$40) for each transaction that you make when there is not money in your account. Checking accounts also can have a flex amount, which means that they will cover a certain amount that is charged over what is in your account.

ADVICE:

- Use the check register that you received in your starter check packet to keep your own running balance of the money in your account and balance your account every month.
- **DO NOT RELY ON ATM OR ON-LINE ACCOUNT BALANCES!** It can take a few days for even debit card transactions to go through your account. Checks will not be updated in your balance until the person cashes it.
- If you do overdraft a charge take care of it **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. Charges can add up quickly, as soon as you receive the notice that it has occurred, go to the bank and take care of it.

Savings Accounts

Savings accounts a place to store a larger amount of money for a longer period of time. You will earn interest on a savings account, but there is usually a minimum balance that you have to maintain.

This is good for degree-seeking students as they can put money allocated for their college expenses in an account and gain interest on them. Banks may also let you tie your savings account to your checking account, so that if you do overdraft, money will be pulled from your savings account to cover the charges. If you are here for only a year, this may not be the most appropriate account for you.

Be sure to read all the information that the bank provides so that you understand the responsibilities of your accounts in order to prevent mistakes and errors that could end up costing you a great deal of money.

USING YOUR HOME ACCOUNT IN CLINTON

You may find that it is easier for you to not open an account in Clinton, but to use your home bank account. Most ATMs are on the Plus or Cirrus systems and will accept a debit or credit card from your home bank (foreign or domestic). However, most charge a fee for this service so make sure to take note of these fees to deduct them from your account. Your home bank may also charge a fee so keep this in mind. Due to these fees it may be better for you to withdraw larger sums of money less frequently. If your bank is in a country other than the U.S. you will also want to pay attention to the exchange rate. The rates that you will get at an ATM are comparable to those that you will receive in a bank, but make sure that you are converting properly when deducting it from your account at home.

You may also be able to use your bank or credit card at most stores in Clinton. Again, pay attention to charges you make (and the exchange rate if applicable) so that you do not run into issues later.

Services in Clinton

GROCERY STORES

These stores carry a variety of food items. A limited amount of international foods can be purchased at either store in Clinton, but a larger selection and harder to get items can be found in at specialty food stores in Columbia or Greenville.

Bi-Lo
927 S. Broad Street
833-7339

Ingles
312 Jacobs Hwy
833-4173

GENERAL/ CONVENIENCE STORES

Fred's
105 Jacobs Hwy

CVS Pharmacy
194 Jacobs Hwy

Dollar General
1203 S Broad St

Wal-Mart in Laurens
922 E Main St

SALONS, HAIRDRESSERS & BARBERSHOPS

Beautees Creations
208 Musgrove St
833-1906

Creations Unlimited
106 Hazel Dr
833-4828

Design Systems
1012 S Broad St
833-5686

Empress Salon
327 W Main St
833-3667

Hair Biz
515 N Broad St
833-4392

Hair Flair
123 E Main St
833-0024

Hair Unlimited
319 W Main St
833-4701

Jus Nip It
S Carolina 308
833-4736



Right Touch Beauty Salon

110 N Broad St
833-6908

Styles by Sherry
308 W Walnut St.
833-4702

Taylor Made for You
100 N Livingston St
833-6222

Uptown Day Spa
105 Musgrove St
833-0544

Burton's Barbershop
706 W Main St
833-6203

Carnes Barbershop
27800 Highway 76 E
833-2211

Cofield Barber Shop
206 Enterprise St
833-2792

Foggie's Barbershop
112 N Broad St
833-5531

PLACES OF WORSHIP

The three closest places of worship are listed for each denomination by proximity to PC.

AME

Mount Pleasant AME Church
973 Ridge Rd
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-6548

Friendship AME Church
104 S. Bell St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-0130

New Bethel AME Church
318 New Bethel Church Rd.
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-6352

Apostolic

Greater Faith Apostolic Church
543 Coleman Rd
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-1903

Assembly of God

First Assembly of God
110 Henry St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-3960

Baptist

Lydia Baptist Church
Palmetto-Lydia Mill
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-2884

Calvary Baptist Church
702 N Sloan St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-2118

Davidson Street Baptist Church
400 Davison Street
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-1058

Buddhist

Ganden Mahayana Buddhist Center
2740 Devine St
Columbia, SC 29205
(803) 256-0150

Catholic

St Boniface Church
403 N Main St
Joanna, SC 29351
697-6745

Holy Spirit Catholic Church
1040 W Main St
Laurens, SC 29360
984-2880

Church of Christ

603 N Broad St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-2919

Church of God

Church of God
313 Elizabeth St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-1183

Miracle Church of God in Christ
205 Hampton Ave
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 938-9102

Church of God in Prophecy
200 Jackson St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-6787

Episcopal

All Saints Episcopal Church
505 Calvert Ave
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-1388

Jehovah's Witness

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's
Witnesses
100 Old Colony Rd
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-4421

Jewish

B'Nai Israel Temple
146 Heywood Ave
Spartanburg, SC
(864) 582-2001

Temple Of Israel
400 Spring Forest Rd
Greenville, SC 29615
(864) 292-1782

Beth Israel Synagogue
425 Summit Dr
Greenville, SC 29609
(864) 232-9031

Hindu

Hindu Temple
1130 Fairview Church Rd
Spartanburg, SC 29303
(864) 599-7048

Hindu Temple & Cultural Center of
SC
5704 Bush River Rd
Columbia, SC 29212
(803) 772-9650

Islamic

Islamic Center Of Columbia
1929 Gervais St
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 254-7242

Masjid Noor-Ul-Huda
517 Winmet Dr
Columbia, SC 29203
(803) 754-2632

Muhammad Mosque #38
5646 Farrow Rd
Columbia, SC 29203
(803) 691-6751

Lutheran

St. John's Lutheran Church
1009 S Broad St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-1072

Pentecostal

First Pentecostal Holiness Church
403 Academy St.
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-3336

Lydia Pentecostal Holiness Church
661 Poplar St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-2783

Zion Hill Pentecostal Church
165 Airport Rd
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-3132

Presbyterian

First Presbyterian
Church (USA)
410 E Carolina Ave
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-1062

Westminster Presbyterian Church
(PCA)
1387 Hwy 56 S
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-1275

Southern Baptist

First Baptist Church
301 S Broad St
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-2579

United Methodist

Broad Street United Methodist
Church
310 S. Broad Street
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-0177

Springdale United Methodist Church
851 Springdale Dr.
Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-129

Regional Attractions

Due to its small size, there are not a lot of attractions in Clinton outside of special events. However, there are several cities that students can easily visit on weekends or breaks.

Greenville

Greenville is around forty-five miles northwest of Clinton. It is the closest large city. There are two mall shopping centers in Greenville, two large movie theatres, and numerous places to dine out and shop. The downtown district of Greenville is home to the Bi-Lo Center and the Peace Center which bring in concerts (rock and art), plays, and various other attractions. Most college students are able to get discounts to these events. There is also a local zoo and a minor league baseball team, the Greenville Drive. Greenville is the local connection to Amtrak Railways and also contains the regional airport. Greenville has two large and beautiful parks, Falls Park and Cleveland Park. Falls Park has an impressive suspension bridge and Cleveland Park is located along the Reedy River with tennis courts, softball fields, playground areas, a fitness trail and picnic shelters. The official city website, <http://www.greenvillesc.gov/>, highlights the variety of attractions. A Cost Plus World Market is located at 1125 Woodruff Rd #500. They have food and products from all over globe. Greenville is the perfect place for a mini-getaway!

Charleston

Located nearly 3 hours south of Clinton, Charleston has often been called the jewel on South Carolina's Crown. The City of Charleston is one of the oldest cities in South Carolina. Common attractions are Rainbow Row, The Market, The Battery, and Fort Sumter where the Civil War began. You can also take a unique ghost tour. Charleston also features several beautiful public access beaches.

Myrtle Beach:

This is a popular beach and tourist destination for people from all across the East Coast. Barefoot Landing, Alabama Theatre, Dixie Stampede, and Broadway are common attractions for tourists. Myrtle Beach is the home of the South Carolina version of Swing dancing known as Shag.

Atlanta, Georgia:

Atlanta is the closest major city. It is about three hours away, and many students are from there. There are tons of attractions in Atlanta including historic sites such as Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthplace. There are other cultural attractions such as the World of Coca Cola, Fernbank Museum, the High Museum of Art, and the Woodruff Arts Center, home to the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. There are also many rock concerts held at the Phipps Arena and Chastain Park. Atlanta is home to several professional athletic teams such as the Braves (baseball), the Falcons (football), the Hawks (basketball), and the Thrashers (hockey). Six Flags theme park is an attraction for thrill seekers that love roller coasters. Six Flags White Water is a water park that provides a great escape from the southern heat.

- ✓ Be sure to take your PC ID with you when you visit other cities, as many attractions offer student discounts!
- ✓ Ask your fellow PC students, professors, or OIP staff for other travel suggestions!

Campus Life

STAY CONNECTED

Social Media

The best way to stay in the loop and make plans with your fellow international students is to join the Facebook group, PC International Students 14-15. You should also friend us @ PcIntlPrgrms. Additionally, you can Skype with us or chat with us @ PC_OIP !

PC Events Calendar

This can be found at <http://www.presby.edu/events/>. This calendar outlines all the ways that you can be involved on campus, including all sports events, weekend activities, club and religious meetings, and much more. This is the perfect place to look if you are in need of something to do or a way to make new friends! Pay attention to announcements posted around campus or sent to your PC e-mail account as well.

Carol International House (CIH)

Many special cultural events will be held by the students living in Carol International House throughout the year. CIH programs have included events such as tapas night , salsa dancing, reggae night, Mardi Gras, and more!, Both international exchange students and American PC students live in CIH, which is a living-learning community dedicated to engaging the Presbyterian College community in experiencing, understanding, and celebrating world cultures. CIH gives students the opportunity to build relationships with students of different perspectives and experiences, taste foods from around the world, and to participate in a global community. Be sure to check out CIH events!

SERVICES

Campus Dining

As a PC student, you will receive a meal plan to use to purchase meals on campus. Your meal plan works at the main, buffet-style Greenville Dining Hall (GDH) as well as Springs Food Court, which contains options such as coffee, smoothies, and sandwiches. For more information visit <http://www.presbydining.com/index.html>.

Greenville Dining Hall Hours

Monday - Friday

Breakfast.....7:00am - 9:15am

Lunch11:00am - 1:30pm

Dinner (M-TH)5:00pm - 7:00pm

Friday Dinner 5:00pm - 6:00pm

Saturday

Brunch.....11:00am - 1:00pm

Dinner.....5:00pm - 6:00pm

Sunday

Brunch.....11:00am - 1:00pm

Dinner.....5:00pm - 7:00pm

Springs Food Court Hours

Monday - Thursday7:30 a.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Friday7:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Sunday7:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

Springs Student Center

Springs Student Center houses PC's fitness center, basketball court, billiards table, and table tennis table. The fitness center offers several fitness classes such as Zumba and Spin as well. All PC students, faculty, and staff can use these facilities. Bring your PC ID for access and equipment rental. Intramural sports teams are also offered. For updated hours and more information visit <http://www.presby.edu/campus-life/recreation/springs-student-center/>.

Health in Clinton, SC

Wellness Center

The Wellness Center is located on campus at 120 East Calhoun Street. This building is directly behind Jacobs Hall. To schedule an appointment or to speak with the nurse, call 864-833-8400.

Students having health concerns, sickness, or injuries after hours may go to the Family Health Center for treatment, call 864-833-5986 or 911 for emergencies only.

Available Services Include:

- Acute Illness / Urgent Care Management
- Laboratory Services *
- Diagnostic Service Referral
- Immunizations
- Flu Vaccines
- Athletic Physicals
- Health Education Resource center
- Prescriptions by Nurse Practitioner *
- Sexually Transmitted Disease Testing *
- Campus Counseling Referral
- Mental Health Referral
- Sexual Assault and Abuse Referral
- Treatment for Injuries
- Sexual Health Education (including emergency contraception)
- Eating Disorders
- Pap Smears
- Nutrition Counseling Referral
- Chaplain Referral
- Services provided by the part-time and consulting staff of the Family Health Care Center

It should be noted that student health services will need to be satisfied by insurance or some other method of payment. Please bring your insurance card with you when you visit the Wellness Center.

Wellness Center Hours:

Medical Services:

Monday – Friday 11:00AM- 1:30 PM

Counseling Services:

Note: Counseling services patients should make an appointment to see the counselor ahead of time unless it is an emergency.

Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

OTHER TYPES OF DOCTORS

There may be an occasion where you need or wish to obtain the services of a dentist, optometrist, or other specialized professional. Please be sure to check with your insurance first to see if they will cover such a visit & if there are particular doctors that you must see in order for your insurance to be accepted. If your insurance does not cover you & you wish to see a doctor, please contact the Health Center or Director of International Programs for assistance in finding an appropriate doctor to meet your needs.

Emergency Care & Insurance

You may need to seek medical treatment at a time when the Wellness Center is closed. If you are ill during the night and want to see a doctor, the only option available is the emergency room at a local hospital. Medical treatment in the emergency room can be very costly. If you go to the emergency room for something that is not an emergency, your health insurance will probably not cover all of the costs. Please familiarize yourself with the following information regarding treatment at an emergency room.

Please remember that most insurance companies will only pay for a hospital emergency room bill if the reason for going is life threatening, could seriously harm bodily functions, or could seriously reduce the function of a body organ or body part. The list below will help explain when to go to the hospital.

LOCAL HOSPITAL INFORMATION

Laurens County Memorial Hospital
22725 Hwy 76
Clinton SC 29325
864- 833- 9100

REASONS TO VISIT THE EMERGENCY ROOM

- Loss of consciousness
- Intolerable and uncontrollable pain
- Severe shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Uncontrollable bleeding
- Poisoning (NOTE: If possible, call your poison control center first and ask for immediate home- treatment advice)
- A major injury, such as head injury or broken bone
- Severe or worsening reaction to an insect bite or sting, or a medication, especially if breathing is difficult
- Stupor, drowsiness, or disorientation

REASONS NOT TO VISIT THE EMERGENCY ROOM

- Earache
- Minor laceration (cut) where bleeding is controlled
- Minor dog bite where bleeding is controlled
- Possible strain
- A blistered sunburn, or minor blistered cooking burn
- Bee or insect sting, or delayed swelling (if there is breathing difficulty go directly to the Emergency Room)
- Rash
- Fever (if there is a convulsion, go directly to the Emergency Room)
- Sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- Sore throat or flu
- Cold
- Cough

The Presbyterian College Wellness Center is not an emergency department or a trauma center. If you have a serious medical emergency, you should call 911.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

On Campus:

Dial **864-938-3949**

Fire, Ambulance, or Police assistance.

Off Campus:

Dial **911**

Fire, Ambulance, or Police assistance.

Remember to use 911 **ONLY** in case of an emergency!

If you need other assistance, please call:

Liz Dille

Viet Ha

Office: 864-938-3705

Office: 864-833-8193

If you are ill or have been seriously injured in an accident, call 911 for an ambulance to take you to the emergency room at the hospital. Please have someone at the hospital call the Director of International Programs immediately.

Call the International Programs immediately if you have any problems involving the police or the sheriff's department. In the past, some international students have been embarrassed or did not want to bother anyone. By trying to take care of the problem alone, they made the problem worse or had to spend time in jail when jail time may have been avoided.

HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY

All international students (F-1 or J-1 visa holders and J-1 dependents) must have adequate health insurance while enrolled at Presbyterian College. Presbyterian College participates in the Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) health insurance plan for international students. **It is required that you purchase this insurance plan for the duration of your stay.**

Minimum coverage will provide:

- Medical benefits of at least \$50,000 per accident or illness
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000
- Expenses associated with medical evacuation to student's home country in the amount of \$50,000.
- Emergency flight for family member \$1,500
- No deductible if first treatment happens at the PC Student Health Center
- Coverage for entire length of stay

Living & Learning in America

Culture Shock

American cultural differences are puzzling to many students from abroad. After the student has developed an understanding of American culture and how to relate to people, he or she can usually relax and enjoy the experience more. Most international students experience some form of **culture shock**, which is feelings of frustration or anxiety while becoming accustomed to a different culture. Research has shown there are five stages to culture shock.

STAGES OF CULTURE SHOCK

Arrival Fascination

The students who have recovered from initial exhaustion are soon busy getting acquainted with new people, registered in their classes and oriented to the campus. They are caught up in the excitement of the experience.

Culture Shock

Immediately following the initial excitement is the frustration with college bureaucracy, academic pressure, and the weariness of speaking and listening to English or the accents of the region every day.

Adjustment / Isolation

Adjustment occurs after a few days (or a few weeks) of culture shock when the students can understand lectures and textbooks somewhat better. They make a few friends and learn to manage the size and complexity of the campus. Isolation can happen when students devote most of their time to studies. If students have problems with English, this may isolate them further, and they may cling to a friend who speaks the same native language.

Adjustment/Acceptance

This stage is realized when the student finally feels at ease with the language, university, and peer groups. The students will be better able to handle any differences with friendship at this time, and relationships can mature.

Return Anxiety

As the student draws near completion of their studies and the time to return home draws closer, some new anxieties may be felt. It is difficult to leave new friends and an environment that has become familiar. The students may realize how much they have changed since leaving home and wonder if it is possible to bring these changes home with them. This feeling may be compounded if they are aware of changes in their own country and culture that have occurred during their stay in the U.S. Friends can be of help to students experiencing any of these feelings by just listening.

GETTING THROUGH CULTURE SHOCK

Students should remember that culture shock is a normal process in the transition from one's home culture to a new culture, and most people experience some degree of "shock" in this transition. It may help to talk about negative feelings with both American friends (who can explain aspects of American culture) and international friends who have had similar experiences.

Staff in the Office of International Programs should be consulted when these problems arise, to assist the student in coping with his or her problems in adjustment. While it is something that most, if not all people experience while living abroad, it can be difficult to get through it on your own and there are people here who can help you work through it. You should also feel free to talk with your Community Advisor about what you are going through. They may not understand what you are experiencing completely but knowing that you are having problems adjusting; they can offer suggestions to make the transition easier for you. In some cases they may want to meet with Susan Gentry-Wright, Director of Counseling Services, who can also help you work through these issues. You can reach her at 864-833-8100.

Living in American Society

Because social relations and customs change so frequently, it is difficult to provide a completely “accurate” guide to culture in America. Freely expressing one’s opinion and openly questioning the system are typically encouraged in US society, however there is a stronger tendency in the South to maintain the appearance of comfortable interaction and it may take a little more time for students to get to know you before opening up about their feelings on particular issues. It is also important to remember that Americans may differ in sensitivity to certain aspects of life, such as appearance and manners. For this reason trying to understand what social customs are observed and attempting to find a comfortable way to act and live in this environment can be quite perplexing. A brief introduction to some basic attitudes may be helpful in understanding American social customs and patterns.

Americans place much emphasis on individuality and personal identity. This often results in a large degree of informality in appearance, interpersonal relationships, and method of communication. As long as one does not infringe on the rights of others, he or she is permitted a great deal of flexibility in his/her personal expression.

GREETINGS & TITLES

Both men and women usually smile and shake hands when they are introduced to someone. When greeting someone for the first time, Americans will commonly say, “Nice to meet you”, or “How do you do?” During introductions that are more casual a “Hello” or “Hi” is common. After meeting someone, first names are used in the U.S. between friends and peers, but adults in society are often referred to as Mr., Mrs., or Ms., unless the individual is more comfortable with using his or her first name. It is appropriate to refer to professors by their title (the use of Dr. is gender neutral and does not require a Mr. or Mrs. Before it).

MAKING FRIENDS

Americans are curious people. They will ask you many questions. Some of their questions may appear ridiculous, uninformed and elementary, but try to be patient in answering them. You may be the first foreign person of a particular country whom they have met, and they will probably have little understanding of life in your culture. Most Americans are sincerely interested in learning more about you and your culture. It is also important to understand that Americans may form relationships differently than many cultures. Be sure to notice the differences in the things people may say or do toward each other. For dating or other more intimate relationships, take the time to understand how Americans differ in things like manners and physical contact. It’s important to communicate with the person and keep an open mind.

DATING

In the United States, relationships between men and women tend to be informal and vary between maintaining one exclusive relationship to dating many people with no commitment to any one person. The expectation that someone will be faithful after a couple of dates has caused many international students to become disillusioned about dating Americans. Going to social events together, while indicating that one’s company is enjoyed, does not guarantee emotional attachment.

The amount of physical contact between men and women varies greatly, often depending on the amount of affection they have for each other. A large amount of touching, even at a superficial level, occurs between men and women. Therefore, while casual hugging or holding hands with someone of the opposite sex may appear to be an invitation to greater intimacy, it often is not.

Men still tend to initiate invitations to parties, movies and other evening events, but women may also do so often. Studying together, going to a special lecture or other everyday activities also provides a way for getting to know someone. Because few students have a great deal of money, many students go on dates where each person pays his or her own way.

CONCEPT OF TIME

Life in the U.S. may at first seem rather rushed to you. Americans are usually time conscious and being on time is very important. When you accept an invitation or when you make an appointment, you are expected to arrive within five minutes of the appropriate time.

SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

You may receive invitations in person, over the phone, or by email. Most are informal but should specify time and place. A casual verbal invitation, such as “come and see me sometime” or “drop in” is usually given with the understanding that you will call and make more specific plans before coming over. When you accept an invitation over the telephone be sure that you understand where and when the event is to be held and that you know how to get there. If you do not have a car, tell the person who invites you so that transportation can be arranged.

If you receive an invitation in the mail with the letters RSVP in the lower corner, this means that your host expects you to reply and say whether or not you will attend. Some invitations ask for an RSVP “for regrets only”, that is, if you cannot attend. If you must refuse, give a short reason explaining why. Most invitations for large public events do not require a reply.

If you accept an invitation to a person’s home, it is important to keep the appointment. The host expects the guest to call ahead of time if he/she cannot come. Most Americans do not have domestic help, and it is important for them to know in advance the number for whom to prepare. Do not accept an invitation if you do not plan to honor. Americans are more offended by the guest who accepts an invitation and then fails to appear than by a person who refuses an invitation.

There are a few rules to what you wear to certain events. Generally, dressier clothes are worn to a nice dinner party at someone’s house or out on the town. Casual clothes are worn to class or a day time event. Pajamas are generally not accepted in the classroom, but exercise attire is fine. If you are not sure about what to wear, ask your hostess or someone else whom you know is attending the same event.

It is unnecessary to bring a gift when invited to dinner. It would be a lovely gesture and accepted graciously, however, should you do so. Overnight house guests usually DO bring a small gift to the host. A souvenir from your home country, for example, would be quite suitable and appreciated.

Before leaving, tell the host and hostess something nice about the event and thank them for inviting you. Compliments on the meal are always appreciated. It is not necessary to write a thank-you note for every invitation, but it is thoughtful to send a note of thanks for an overnight or weekend visit in someone’s home, or after the first time you are invited to someone’s house for a meal. A note is always acceptable and pleasant to receive from a guest who feels a host or hostess has been particularly kind or has done something to make the guest happy.

TYPES OF PARTIES

Receptions are for large groups of people and vary widely. As guests arrive they are greeted by people who are being honored or who are hosting the party. Light refreshments are served. People usually stand or walk around and talk with other guests. It is proper to introduce yourself to someone who is near you. People come, eat and visit for awhile, and leave during the allotted time.

Dinners are a complete meal. A dinner party is usually in the late afternoon or evening, but some families will have special dinners at mid-day. If you have food restrictions, tell your hostess when you accept the invitation. If the food and service are strange to you, watch your host or hostess for an example to follow. Usually guests leave an hour or two after the evening meal is finished. If there are activities planned to follow the meal, leave soon after the activities are finished. However, it is not unusual for the host and her guest to relax and talk after a dinner party.

Pot Lucks are meals for school or other large groups where food is provided by those attending. The invitation or announcement will tell what will be provided by the committee planning the meal and what each family or guest should bring. Usually each family brings a big dish of food and table service (plates, forks, cups for each family member). All the food is placed on a table and people serve themselves. There is usually a wonderful mix of dishes and desserts to sample.

B.Y.O.B (Bring Your Own Beverages) generally refers to parties where guests are asked to bring what they would like to drink. Food may be provided by the host, or guests may be asked to bring something. It is a time for visiting, eating and drinking. There may be dancing or games.

Picnics are informal meals eaten outside in a yard or park. Some of the food may be prepared at the picnic area (grilled). Games and other outdoor activities may be played.

R.S.V.P. To R.S.V.P. to an event is to inform the host whether or not you will come.

Fraternity Parties The fraternities here at PC throw parties at their houses most Friday and Saturday nights during the year. Some parties may be private, but most are open to all students. Students will get dressed up and “go to the houses” around ten o’clock. Students bring their own beverages, socialize with their friends, and dance to whatever music is being played in each house. Some fraternities will sometimes have live bands and theme parties, or costume parties, as well. It is required that you bring an official ID with your date of birth and Student ID to the check-in table to get a wristband according to your age.

Tailgating is the gathering before a football game. This can take place at a fraternity house, an apartment, or someone’s room. It usually involves finger food, dips, and hamburgers and hot dogs. Everyone wears the colors of their favorite teams. The term comes from fans that do this in parking lot outside of their favorite stadium before the game starts. They sit on the “tailgate” of their truck, or the door that folds down from the bed of the truck. At PC, you will see many students and families tailgating football games on Saturdays.

A NOTE ABOUT HYGIENE

You may notice that Americans place a great deal of importance on outward appearance. Americans are offended if a person smells of sweat or has bad breath. Showering daily, as most Americans do, is not considered sufficient to prevent body odor. Because Americans are so sensitive to odor, they use deodorant, brush their teeth at least twice a day, and use breath fresheners when they believe their breath smells. Clothes, especially shirts and blouses, are washed after one or two wearings, even if they appear to be clean. Americans are also very sensitive to comments on their personal appearance. For example, if someone is looks poor one day or is overweight, it is considered very rude to comment negatively on their appearance.

Academic Culture

In the United States, it is acceptable and often expected for students to ask questions and discuss topics with each other and the instructor. During the first class meeting, your teachers will give you a syllabus, which lists office hours and when and how the professor can be reached. If you have a problem with the material presented in class, it is expected that you will see the teacher during office hours and ask for help. The syllabus also tells when assignments are due. Dress is informal in U.S. classrooms. Smoking is not permitted in classrooms or in university offices. Some professors permit students to have food and beverages in the classroom.

PARTICIPATION

You are generally expected to talk in class discussions. How often? A good rule to follow is to raise your hand to ask a question or to make a comment each week. If a professor calls on you to answer a question, you should say something — you could even say that you do not know the answer. In most classes, it is acceptable to give a wrong answer. Participation may be included in your grade.

MISSING CLASS

You are expected to go to class on time, to notify your teacher ahead of time if you will be absent and to participate in class discussions. It is better to be late to class than to skip class entirely. If you must miss class because of illness, you may need a doctor's excuse, especially if you have a long illness and you must miss several classes. Ask your professors for their policies on missing class. Those policies may also be included in the syllabus.

CHEATING

In many cultures, it is common for students to collaborate on papers and tests. In the United States, it is forbidden to do so unless the professor states that the paper or project is to be worked on in groups. This could include the following:

- Providing or receiving information during quizzes and examinations
- Falsifying, fabricating or dishonestly reporting research results
- Taking the place of another student or enlisting another student to take your place in an examination
- Plagiarizing

PLAGIARISM

In the United States, ideas are considered the property of their author. It is considered stealing to use the ideas of another in a paper or presentation without giving credit to the originator of the idea. When using the ideas of another person, give that person's name and the publication in which the ideas were published. If you have any questions about this, contact your instructor. Types of plagiarism include the following examples:

- Word-for-word copying of someone else's work without attributing the source (this would include using the words of an author or another student without indicating that they are not your own)
- Changing a few words of someone else's work but not acknowledging that the ideas are not your own

Immigration Issues

Essential Rules & Regulations

GENERAL IMMIGRATION GUIDELINES

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has established certain rules and regulations which you are expected to understand and follow:

1. Attend the school you were authorized to attend. Enroll in and complete a full course of study during the academic year (12 credit hours for undergraduate students.) Always consult with the Office of International Programs before you drop course load to part-time or withdraw from all of your courses.
2. Maintain a valid passport at all times.
3. Do not accept employment off campus without authorization from the USCIS. With permission from OIP, students may work up to 20 hours per week when classes are in session and full-time during the break periods.
4. Report any change of address to the Office of International Programs within 10 days of moving.
5. Leave the U.S. by the anticipated completion date on Form I-20. If studies are not completed within the allotted period of time (see explanation below), apply for an extension of stay to the Office of International Programs by the date on Form I-20.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

Please keep us informed of your current address and phone number. It is imperative that any change of address and telephone number be reported to International Programs. It is essential that we know where to contact you in case of an emergency.

IMPORTANT IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS & PROCEDURES

Passport

It is your most important piece of identification, and you need to keep it valid (6 months beyond your projected date of departure from the U.S.) You cannot renew your visa unless your passport is current, nor can you leave the U.S. without a valid passport.

Visa

The stamp in your passport which is issued by a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad, allowing the bearer to enter the United States. Visas can only be obtained or renewed outside the U.S.

I-20

Certificate of eligibility for non-immigrant **F-1 Student Status**. This form is issued to you to attend PC initially. Having accepted the I-20, you are required by immigration to attend PC for at least one semester before transferring. Whenever you travel outside the U.S. you must carry an up-to-date I-20 endorsed by the Office of International Programs. You must also check visa requirements of those countries through which you will travel. **You should keep page 3/4 of your I-20 at all times. It serves as a record of all transactions about your status.**

DS-2019 Form

Certificate of eligibility for non-immigrant **J-1 Exchange Visitors**. This document certifies that the person has been accepted under the Exchange Visitor Program, which is approved by the USIA in Washington, D.C. Under this program, students, researchers and professors come to the United States on a temporary basis for the purpose of educational exchange. The terms of the appointment and the financial support of the program are indicated on the IAP-66. Uses of the DS-2019 correspond to those of an I-20 form. The program sponsor endorses the IAP-66 for overseas travel.

Duration of Status

Duration of status (D/S) is defined as the period during which a student pursues a full course of study in any educational program and any period of practical training plus **60** days to depart from the United States.

Employment. International students on F-1 visas are not permitted to work off-campus. However, you may apply for on-campus jobs (including work-study jobs that have not been filled by U.S. citizens.) You are allowed to work on-campus up to 20 hours/week during the academic term and a maximum of 40 hours/week during the vacation periods.

In the case of economic necessity due to unforeseen circumstances which arise **after your first year in the U.S.**, you may seek permission to work off-campus. Contact the OIP (938-3777) for information on these regulations and application procedures.

Students holding a J-1 visa should consult the OIP regarding regulations for off-campus employment provided by their sponsor.

Optional Practical Training is a period of up to one year during which a student is permitted to work in a position relevant to his/her field and can be used before or after completion of studies. Students remain in F-1 status with the college, although they can accept employment anywhere within the United States. Contact the OIP for details and application forms. **The application for practical training must be received by BCIS within 60 days of completion of your degree requirements.**

I-538

Certification by Designated School Official (foreign student advisor) used to process program extension, off-campus employment permission, curricular practical training, and optional practical training.

I-765 Form

Application for Employment Authorization Document (EAD.) For F-1 students, this form is used to request optional practical training; off-campus employment under the sponsorship of a qualifying international organization; or off-campus employment due to severe economic hardship. This is also the form the J-2 dependent must file to request work permission. The I-538 is certified by the Director of International Programs.

Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

A laminated card with photo issued to some non-immigrants by USCIS indicating how long work is authorized.

Useful Resources

CONVERSION CHART

SYMBOL	WHEN YOU KNOW	MULTIPLY BY	TO FIND	SYMBOL
LENGTH				
in	inches	25.4	millimeters	mm
ft	feet	0.305	meters	m
yd	yards	0.914	meters	m
mi	miles	1.61	kilometers	km
AREA				
in²	square inches	645.2	square millimeters	mm ²
ft²	square feet	0.093	square meters	m ²
yd²	square yard	0.836	square meters	m ²
ac	acres	0.405	hectares	ha
mi²	square miles	2.59	square kilometers	km ²
VOLUME				
fl oz	fluid ounces	29.57	milliliters	mL
gal	gallons	3.785	liters	L
ft³	cubic feet	0.028	cubic meters	m ³
yd³	cubic yards	0.765	cubic meters	m ³
MASS				
oz	ounces	28.35	grams	g
lb	pounds	0.454	kilograms	kg
T	short tons (2000 lb)	0.907	megagrams (or "metric ton")	Mg (or "t")
TEMPERATURE				
°F	Fahrenheit	(F-32) x 5 / 9 or (F-32) / 1.8	Celsius	°C
ILLUMINATION				
fc	foot-candles	10.76	lux	lx
fl	foot-Lamberts	3.426	candela/m ²	cd/m ²
FORCE and PRESSURE or STRESS				
lbf	poundforce	4.45	newtons	N
lbf/in²	poundforce per square inch	6.89	kilopascals	kPa

RADIO STATIONS

88.5	Religious	98.9	Contemporary
88.7	Folk/Bluegrass/Americana	100.5	Country
89.3	Christian Contemporary	101.5	Classic Rock
89.7	Christian Contemporary	101.9	R & B
90.1	National Public Radio	102.5	Easy Listening
91.1	Religious	103.5	Contemporary
92.5	Country	104.3	Country
93.3	Top 40	104.7	Top 40
93.7	Oldies/Hit	105.9	Religious
94.1	80's	106.9	Christian Contemporary
94.5	Classical	107.3	R & B
97.1	WPCX – Presbyterian College radio	107.9	Hard Rock
97.5	Older Country		

PC TELEVISION STATIONS

The list of TV channels available through PC's free cable service can be found here: <http://www.presby.edu/campus-life/pc-television-channels/>.

FOREIGN EMBASSIES

Refer to this website to contact your embassy in the U.S. <http://www.embassy.org>.

CURRENCY CONVERSION

Refer to this website for currency conversions <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>.

ACADEMIC TERMS DICTIONARY

academic year: the academic year is divided into two semesters (fall and spring); at the end of each term, there is a final exam period and then a break

assignment: out-of-class work required by a professor is called an assignment — for example, reading books, writing a paper or completing a lab report. Be sure to turn in assignments by the due date.

course load: International students in F and J non-immigrant status are required to carry a full course load (12 credit hours for undergraduates). Not doing so can cause you to lose your legal immigration status in the U.S.

credit hours: Each course is measured in credit hours, which are based on the number of hours the course meets each week.

final exam: a test given at the end of the semester, usually an important part of your grade. Always check with the instructor for the time and place of the exam. (This information is usually stated in the syllabus.)

hold: A hold is a block on a student's account that prevents him or her from registering

for courses, receiving grades at the end of the semester, receiving a diploma and/or requesting transcripts. A hold is usually placed when a student has failed to meet an obligation to the university, such as if the student owes money to some unit at the university. If the hold is in place when the student uses the web registration system, he or she will be told who has placed the hold and warned that the obligation must be cleared by a given date or the student will not be scheduled for the courses requested. Students should take care of holds as soon as possible.

major: The concentration of study for undergraduate students

midterm: One or more tests given around the middle of the semester.

syllabus: The most important document in an American college course is a syllabus. The syllabus contains a list of due dates for all assignments, your professor's name and office hours and an explanation of the way your grade will be calculated.

transcript: the official record of courses taken and grades received by a student

American Holidays

The following is a list of some of the special days celebrated in the United States. The list is not inclusive. Shading over the date indicates that post offices and banks are closed on that day.

January 1 New Year's Day	Celebration of the first day of the year.
Second Monday in January Martin Luther King Day	A day to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for all he did to combat racism and prejudice in the United States.
Third Monday in February President's Day is observed	Celebration of the birthday of the first President of the United States.
February 14 Valentine's Day	Originally for sweethearts, it is now a day to send cards to loved ones. Red hearts are symbolic of this day, and cards, flowers and chocolates are traditional gifts. Young school children make and exchange Valentine's Day cards.
March 17 St. Patrick's Day	This day commemorates Saint Patrick and the arrival of Christianity in Ireland. In the US, you will see everyone wearing green. It is tradition here to be pinched by others if you aren't wearing green.
April 1 April Fool's Day	A day for playing harmless jokes or pranks on others.
Mid April, Easter	Today recognizes the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the Christian faith.
Second Sunday in May Mother's Day	A day to honor mothers and grandmothers.
Last Monday in May Memorial Day	A day to honor the memory of the dead. People often decorate the graves with flowers. Military services honor those who have died at war. This day also marks the beginning of the summer season.
Third Sunday in June Father's Day	A day to honor fathers and grandfathers.
July 4 Independence Day	The birthday of the United States of America. The day on which the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress, July 4, 1776. Traditional colors of this day are red, white and blue.
First Monday in September Labor Day	A day to honor the working people. Labor organizations sponsor various celebrations. It also symbolizes the end of the summer season.
October 31 Halloween	Children dress up as ghosts, witches, etc., and go "trick or treating", a custom of going from house to house with a paper sack. They ring the door bells and are offered a piece of candy to protect the householder from a "trick". Some of the children will also collect donations to support UNICEF. Adults also throw costume parties.
November 11 Veteran's Day	A special day to honor the courage and patriotism of all the men and women who have served in the U.S. armed services.
4th Thursday in November Thanksgiving Day	A day for families to give thanks with feasting and prayer for the blessings they have received during the year. Thanksgiving dinner often includes turkey, pumpkin pie, and other traditional foods. This day also marks the beginning of the holiday season which lasts until New Year's Day.
December (date changes every year) Hanukkah	An eight-day holiday celebrated by Jews to commemorate the rededicating of their temple in ancient days. Today gifts are exchanged between family members.
December 25 Christmas Day	A holiday celebrated by Christians to observe the birth of Jesus Christ. A spirit of good will pervades and gifts and cards are exchanged among family and friends.
Late December Early January Kwanzaa	The celebration honors African heritage in African-American culture, culminating in a feast and gift-giving