



**Cultural Handbook for International Students 2016-2017
America, Cincinnati and the University of Cincinnati**



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WELCOME

Welcome To **CINCINNATI**

Dear International Students,

Thank you for choosing to enroll at the University of Cincinnati!

It is our pleasure to welcome you into the UC and the Cincinnati (UC) community. This booklet is intended to help you to make a smooth transition into campus life and will provide information on many of the university's policies and services.

We hope you will agree that you have made a smart choice for your education because UC offers an academic experience that is not only rigorous but also relevant. Our programs make a point of tying classroom theory into real-world experiences. UC also ranks among the top 10 percent of universities in the nation, with 11 programs in the top 10 as rated by U.S. News & World Report and 34 placing in the Top 50. Our academic excellence is also defined by world-class faculty and state-of-the-art campus facilities.

Your presence in the life of our university helps to make UC a truly multi-cultural and global university. International students like you come to us from over 110 countries around the world.

While your academic experience is the highest priority, we encourage you to take part in activities outside of the classroom. UC offers a diverse mix of over 400 student-run organizations as well as over 1,000 performing arts and sporting events each year so that you can learn more about life outside of books.

We look forward to seeing you on campus in the months ahead. Once again, welcome to the UC family!

Best Wishes,

UC International Services Staff



WELCOME

UC International Services

The University of Cincinnati (UC) is a diverse campus in an urban setting. Our students, faculty, and staff come from more than 110 countries. We are truly a diverse community!

As a UC student, you are now a "Bearcat". The [Bearcat](#) is our University Mascot. Adopting a mascot is a university tradition in the USA. Now when people call you a bearcat, you'll know what they are talking about!

Cincinnati is located on the southern Ohio border with Kentucky to the South. The Ohio River separates the two states; Kentucky is to the south, and Ohio is to the north. Kentucky is easily accessible by bus. The airport that you will most likely be connecting to will be the CVG airport. This airport is located in Northern Kentucky.

Cincinnati is the home of many multi-national corporations, including Procter & Gamble. Its metropolitan area is home to more than two million people. The small-town aspects of the city include beautiful parks, easy commuting, and an accessible downtown. Our international airport makes Cincinnati an easy commute from your home country. We have professional sports teams like the Cincinnati Reds baseball team and the Cincinnati Bengals (American football team), world-class museums and art galleries and a vigorous, diverse economy with opportunities for co-op employment (Cooperative Education that allows students to work various semesters and receive experience and competitive wages), internships and



UC International Services

7148 Edwards Center One
(513) 556-4278
international.students@uc.edu

uc.edu/international

Hours of operation:
Monday through Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m

Office Staff

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Program Coordinator, On-boarding and Check-In.....	Janice Adams
Program Coordinator, Special Events....	Lorri Blanton
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Advisor.....	Janet Schneider
Receptionist.....	Dave Schroer
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PREPARING FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

What to Pack

Linens, Bedding and Room Furnishings

Blankets, towels, and room furnishings are things you might bring with you if you have space for them in your luggage. However, remember that you can buy anything you need in the U.S., and that University housing offers furnished apartments and rooms. You should not attempt to bring food, plants, or anything that can be interpreted as being drug paraphernalia, such as pipes or tobacco rolling papers. These will most likely be confiscated from you at the port of entry.

Clothing

The climate in Cincinnati changes with the seasons. In the spring, temperatures are moderate, although it can still be quite cool, particularly in March and April.

Temperatures in the summer can get rather high. Summer is hot and humid. Temperatures of 90°F (33°C) and above are not unusual. You are advised to bring some light clothing for this season.

Fall (beginning of the school year) is pleasant with its bright colors and moderate temperatures.

Winter can get very cold, icy and snowy. Temperatures are often as cold as 10°F/-12°C. It is recommended that you bring warm clothing with you, such as a hat, scarf, gloves, snow or rain boots, sweaters, and a warm winter coat. However, winter clothing is available in Cincinnati at reasonable prices.

In short, Cincinnati has a wide range of weather. It is important to bring cool clothes for the summer (August arrival) and warm clothes for winter (January arrival). Getting supplies your first week in Cincinnati will be challenging, since you will be very busy. Please plan ahead!

Winter Weather Health Tips

Coping with the extreme winter weather conditions can be challenging. Here are some tips that will help make the weather conditions more tolerable.

Wear layers of clothing. You will be much warmer if you wear several layers of clothing rather than one heavy shirt and a coat. Benefits to wearing layers are that you can remove some of them if you get too warm indoors, or you can add more if you are still too cold.

Wear a hat! Between 35-50 percent of body heat is eliminated through the head. If you want to use that heat to stay warm, cover your head!

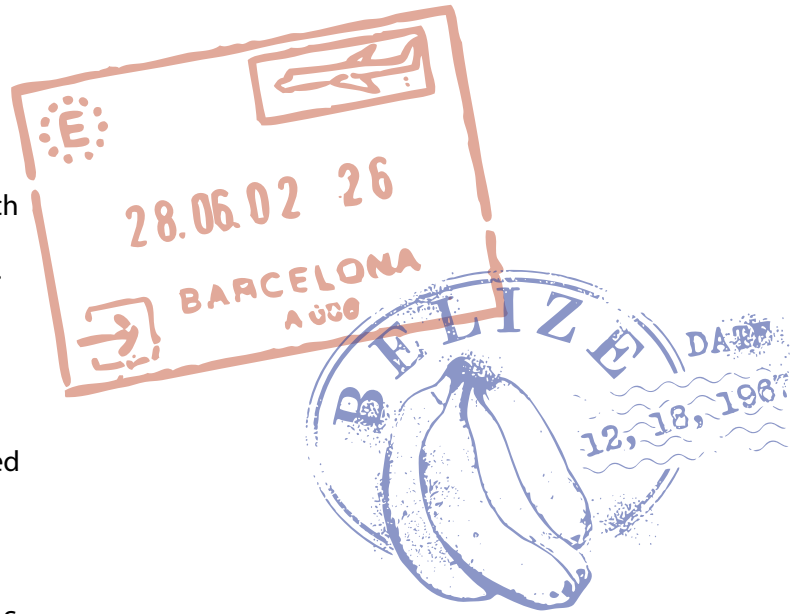
Keep your socks dry. If you have had your socks on all day, your feet will have perspired some. If you've walked a lot, they will have perspired more. In rain and snow seasons, it's a good idea to change into a clean, dry pair of socks before you go back outside, especially if you have to be out for very long.



PREPARING FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

Tips on Travel

1. Travel with your passport, visa, and original DS-2019 in your carry-on luggage. Your documentation will be inspected at the port of entry before you claim your checked baggage.
2. Arrange for a family member, friend, or colleague to meet you at the airport, or plan to take a taxi from the airport to your destination.
3. Take some of the things that are important to you such as prescription eyeglasses, a bilingual dictionary, and medication etc., and keep them in your carry-on luggage.
4. To avoid unnecessary delays, make sure your ticket is confirmed at least one month before the day you are required to arrive.
5. Government-sponsored students and those sponsored by private organizations should work together with their sponsors every step of the way.
6. Shop around for airfare and check for baggage regulations before deciding which airline to take to the U.S.
7. Arrive at the airport about three hours before the intended flight.
8. Make sure your schedule allows sufficient time for connecting flights.
9. Carry sufficient money for unexpected expenses or events, such as missing your flight. You may also want to carry an extra change of clothing in your carry-on luggage in case of unexpected delays.



PREPARING FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

Finances (Money)

Before beginning your travel to the University of Cincinnati, please remember that your initial expenses here will be considerably higher than those you will incur later. Therefore, it is necessary for you to bring at least \$2,000 in United States currency or travelers' checks to cover these expenses.

Even if you are going to receive financial support from UC, your first check will not be available upon your arrival. UC issues paychecks on the first of the month for work performed in the previous month. For example, if arriving in September, it will be at least October 1st, and possibly November 1st, before you receive your first stipend check!

Before you can expect any money from UC, you may need to pay for health insurance, make a security deposit on your apartment, pay the first month's rent, or buy food and other necessities! You must figure your finances carefully and plan on these expenses without help from UC.

To prepare to meet your financial needs for the entire year, you should make the necessary arrangements with your government, your sponsor, and any banks in your country to ensure that these funds will be available to you. Remember that checks drawn on foreign banks will require several weeks to clear, and therefore, you will not have access to those funds right away! In order to have money available upon arrival, many students find it easier and

safer to load funds to a foreign travel card and withdraw cash using a PNC ATM or branch Cash Advance machine to fund their bank account. This is safer than carrying cash and quicker than waiting for an international wire transfer to arrive.

Banking in the U.S.

PNC's Tips for Banking in the U.S

1. Always ask questions.
2. When traveling, limit the amount of cash you carry.
3. Avoid sharing account numbers, PINs or passwords with anyone.
4. Be cautious about doing business with people you do not know.
5. Keep the bank updated on changes to your contact information.

Managing your finances is one of the most important and challenging aspects of an enjoyable academic experience. This section introduces you to a few of the basic banking options available. When selecting a bank, you should compare services, service charges and bank locations before making your decision.

When you open an account with a bank, you will need two pieces of identification, such as your passport and UC ID.

There are several banks near the campus. PNC offers the convenience of banking on UC's campus with a full service branch, offering individualized service in Tangeman University Center, Level 3, with language line translation services, and 10 ATMs on campus.

PNC Bank also offers an option to link your Bearcat Card/UCID (which you will receive upon your arrival) to your PNC account, so you can use your ID to get cash with no fee at any PNC ATM. PNC also offers Virtual Wallet Student which features the benefit of one free incoming international wire transfer per statement period. To learn more, go to pnc.com/uc, call 513-569-4190, or stop by the branch in TUC to meet Ron Colyer, the Branch Manager.



PREPARING FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

Finances (Money), Continued

Banking Terms & Definitions

Bank Cards: Many banks issue cards that enable you to deposit and withdraw money 24 hours a day by use of an Automated Teller Machine (ATM). These machines, which are frequently located outside the bank, are very convenient. By using a bank card, customers avoid waiting in line at the bank and have access to cash after the bank closes. Banks that are members of a national ATM network allow you to access your funds with your bank card at selected ATM's throughout the country. There are many ATM's located on campus. In some instances, there may be small fees associated with ATM use.

Savings Accounts: A savings account enables you to save money and accumulate interest on your savings. Interest is paid either monthly or quarterly. The difference between a savings and a checking account is that you cannot write checks from a savings account.

Checking Accounts: Banks offer different types of checking accounts designed to fit individual needs. The cost of checking varies from bank to bank. Some banks charge per transaction, some have a basic monthly fee, and others offer free services if you maintain a certain minimum balance in your account at all times. A list of all the account activity for the preceding month, and in some cases your cancelled checks will be mailed to you in a monthly statement, or will be available to you online. Be careful to keep an accurate record of every check you write in order to avoid having checks returned due to insufficient funds and incurring additional charges. "Bouncing" a check (writing a check for more money than you actually have in the account) is illegal and can cost you time and money. Through some banks, you can apply for a line of credit attached to your checking account that provides overdraft protection.

Cashing checks: To cash a check, you will need to endorse it by signing your name on the back. In addition, you will be asked for personal identification in the form of a driver's license, a State of Ohio ID card, or a UC ID card.

Credit Cards: Credit cards may be useful to help you establish and build a credit history in the U.S. Building a credit history is important for many reasons, but mostly if you intend to take out loans in the future for schooling, purchasing a car or purchasing a home. It's important to understand how to responsibly use a credit card, to avoid paying high interest rates and potential fees. The purchases that you make with your credit card should fit within your monthly budget and you should pay them back as soon as possible. Additionally, there are usually basic requirements when applying for a credit card such as having a Social Security Number, proof of income and in some cases an established history of banking and/or paying bills in the U.S. It's best to consult with a bank representative to fully understand the terms, risks, rewards and obligations of using a credit card and discuss how to use the card responsibly.

Debit Card: A debit card, also known as a check card, allows you to withdraw or deposit money to your bank account using an automatic teller machine (ATM) and to make purchases at stores that accept the card. Some debit cards carry a credit-card logo (such as MasterCard or Visa), and can be used in place of a check or credit card. Debit cards are not credit cards, however, and they can be used only to the extent that you have funds in the account to which they are linked.

Foreign Currency: If you deposit a check drawn on a foreign bank in your U.S. checking account, it may have to go through a collection process. This means that the money is not available to you until the U.S. bank has collected it from the foreign bank. It may take several weeks before the money is credited to your account.

In countries with restrictions on foreign exchange, you may need to provide your sponsor or your family with certification of enrollment in order to receive money from your home country. The certification letter eForm is available in iBearthGlobal. Please allow five working days for processing.

Flywire: This allows you to pay securely from any bank, typically in your home currency. You can pay by international bank transfer or international credit and debit cards. To set up an account and learn more visit: UC.Flywire.com

PREPARING FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

Housing

Temporary Housing

Temporary Housing is available July 30 through August 9, 2016 in Calhoun Hall. The cost will be \$26.00 per person (adult) per night for a multiple occupancy room, with linens included. To reserve a room, you must go to <http://bit.ly/29bdofL>. To check in, go directly to your designated hall to obtain your keys. You must return your key when checking out or you may be charged for the days you did not stay. You may cancel your reservation in writing by email, fax, or mail 48 hours in advance of the reservation date to receive a full refund.

Contact Information

Conference & Event Services
University of Cincinnati
PO Box 210031
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0031
Phone: 513-558-1810; Fax: 513-861-6816

Email: Event.Services@uc.edu

Off-Campus Housing

The Off-Campus Graduate and Family Housing Office has a comprehensive list of off-campus apartment buildings and homes in the neighborhoods surrounding campus. This office is located on the lower level of Stratford Heights Pavilion (2634 Stratford Avenue, Building 16). There is also an Off-Campus Housing website for people that wish to move off campus and find safe, reliable landlords.

On-Campus Housing

At UC, students have the option to live either off campus or, if available, on or near campus in UC-owned and leased residence communities. All on-campus rooms are fully-furnished for each person. Rooms include air conditioning, heat, high-speed Internet access, one micro-fridge unit and cable TV service. All halls feature a laundry room, study lounge, snack vending machine, full fire protection system and 24-hour security. All on-campus communities are non-smoking environments. No alcohol is permitted.

Residence hall community options include Calhoun Hall, Campus Recreation Center Housing, Dabney Hall, Daniels Hall, Morgens Hall, Schneider Hall, Scioto Hall, Siddall Hall, Stratford Heights, Turner Hall and University Park Apartments. Additional housing may be available in off-campus apartment communities.

For more information about pricing and availability, visit: www.uc.edu/housing.

Lease Agreements

When you rent a room or an apartment off campus, you will be required to sign a lease. A lease is a written contract between you and the landlord (the owner of the rental property). When you sign a lease, you agree to pay a certain amount of money each month and to follow certain rules in exchange for the right to occupy the rental property for a set period of time. Most lease agreements require that you pay a security deposit which is usually equal to one month's rent. This security deposit will be returned to you if you fulfill all the terms of the lease. Read the lease carefully and be sure you understand it before signing it.

PREPARING FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

Housing, Continued

Key questions to ask any landlord when considering an apartment:

- How many minutes does it take to get to UC walking and driving?
- Is there a bus line close by?
- What type of housing is it? A house? An apartment complex?
- How many bedrooms does it have?
- How much is the rent per month?
- Is a security deposit required?
- What type of lease is offered (monthly, 6 month, 9 month, yearly)?
- Is Internet access available?
- Are children allowed?
- Are pets allowed? Is an extra security deposit required for pets?
- What kind of heat is used (gas, electric, oil, etc.)?
- Who pays for utilities (heat, electric, water, Internet, etc.)?
- Is the apartment furnished or unfurnished?
- What type of flooring is there (carpet, hardwood, tile)?
- Is there a stove? Refrigerator? Air conditioning? Laundry facilities?
- What type of parking is available (garage, off-street parking, on-street parking)?
- How soon will the apartment be available?

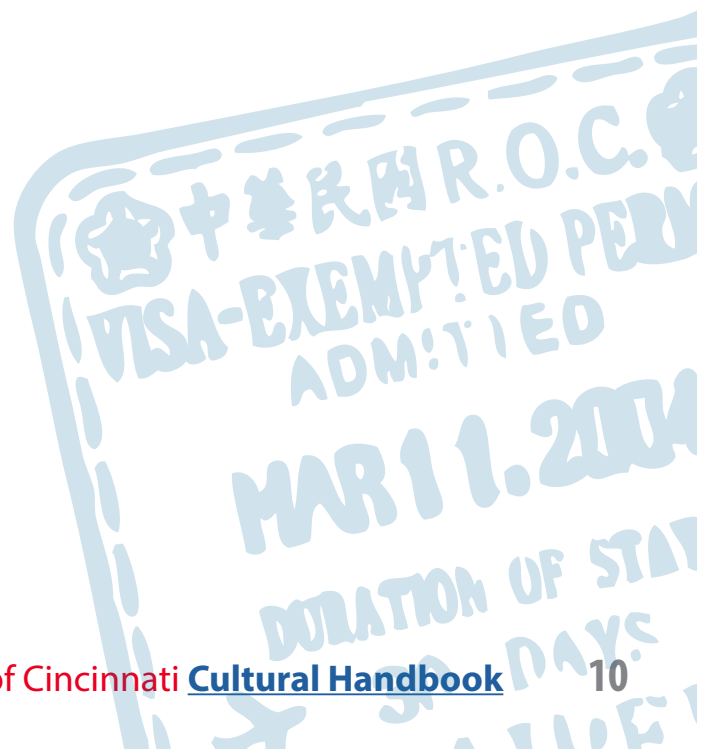
Utilities

When you rent an apartment off campus, you will be expected to call Duke Energy to turn on the electric/gas and Greater Cincinnati Water Works to turn on the water. This is not something a landlord will do for you. Resources for the specific steps for obtaining utilities are included on the grad and family housing Web page: <http://www.uc.edu/housing/graduate-family.html#resources>.

Once you have moved in, your main responsibilities are to pay rent on time and keep the property in a clean and safe condition. Landlords may expect tenants to pay rent by check or online with a credit card or e-check; do not pay with cash. Determine the expected method of payment before signing a lease. Although you have responsibilities to pay rent and keep the property in good condition, your landlord has responsibilities too. If you believe the landlord is treating you differently than he would treat an American, or if the landlord is not keeping the property in working condition, be assertive. Do not accept negligence from your landlord. Demand that the apartment is in a safe, clean, livable condition. Otherwise, you may be inviting the landlord to take advantage of you.

If you have problems with your landlord, it is a good idea to photograph the contested areas of the apartment which are in disrepair. In addition, put all of your complaints in writing, send your landlord a copy, and keep a copy of your complaints for your own files. If the problems are not resolved, consider taking legal action.

UC International Services maintains a list of trusted apartments and landlords off campus. If you have any questions, please ask us in person or at international.students@uc.edu.



Campus Services



Convenience Store

The ExpressMart in TUC offers a variety of essentials. They are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday-Friday (with varied Saturday and Sunday hours).

Market on Main

This is our larger convenience store, and also serves as our campus grocery with fresh produce, everyday items, frozen meals and beverages. Located at the Campus Recreation Center, Market on Main is open from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. Monday-Friday, plus Saturday and Sunday hours.

UC Bookstores

The UC Bookstores, with the main store located in the south wing of Tangeman University Center, is the single source for all required course materials. Shop in-store or online at uc.edu/bookstore.

The UC Bookstores offer text rental, digital books, and the largest selection of used books, in addition to new ones. The UC Bookstores offers an interface that allows you to order your books online from the UC Bookstores directly from your class schedule. By creating a text rental account, you can rent books from the UC Bookstores. This is a one-time sign-up process. Renting textbooks can save you on average more than 50% off the new book price. To sign up for a rental account, you will need a valid credit card, email address, and driver's license or state ID.



You can purchase hardware and software at educational discounts at the UC Bookstores, too. The Microsoft Office suite is a free download to students via their Office 365 student e-mail account. As long as you are a student at UC, you will be able to use the software free of charge.

In addition to books and software, the Bookstore features a wide array of UC clothing and gifts, supplies, greeting cards, and features a Technology Center that services Apple computers.

The Medical Bookstore on Level 3, of CARE/Crawley on the medical campus, features textbooks, lab gowns, white coats, various instruments, and supplies. uc.edu/bookstore

Bearcat Card

The Bearcat Card is the debit feature of the UC ID and features flex dollars that can be used on campus at 60+ locations including all food locations and off campus at more than 80 locations. Deposit funds online to your Bearcat Card at uc.edu/bearcatcard or at the MainStreet Connection Center (information desk on Level 3 of Tangeman University Center), or you can manage your account online. The dollars on your account will transfer from semester to semester or you can get a refund of the balance at the end of the school year. Students get a 10% discount in beverage vending machines throughout campus when they use their Bearcat Card. uc.edu/bearcatcard. You will have a chance to get your Bearcat Card at International Student Check-in.

On-Campus Dining, Attractions and Services

Meal Plans

Residential Meal Plans are designed for students living in campus residence communities, although students who live off-campus are also eligible to purchase these plans. Campus Dining Passes have been created for non-residential students, upper-class residents, and faculty and staff to take advantage of the dining centers at a cost savings. For more information about meal plan pricing, visit <http://www.uc.edu/food.html>

On-Campus Dining

Students may choose from a number of quick and full-service dining facilities housed on campus. Visitors are also welcome in the CenterCourt and MarketPointe@Siddall dining centers.

Tangeman University Center (TUC): TUC has a food court which includes Chick-fil-A, Papa Johns Pizza, Taco Bell, Greens to Go with KumaNeko Sushi and Burger King. Mick & Mack's is a full-service restaurant located in TUC on level 2. Quick Mick's and Catskeller have food items that can be purchased quickly.

Student Life Center: Adjacent to Tangeman University Center, the Student Life Center houses Starbucks Coffee and Subway sandwiches.

Starbucks: Located in Emery Hall (CCM), Steger Student Life Center and Langsam Library on the main campus and in CARE/Crawley on the medical campus. Offers Starbucks coffee, pastries, bagels, soups and sandwiches.

CenterCourt and MarketPointe@Siddall: One price - all you care to eat: homestyle entrées, grill, salad and deli bar. Menus include American favorites, ethnically-inspired cuisine, and vegetarian selections.

StadiumView Café: Offers a variety of food options including deli-styled sandwiches, burgers and pizza. Located between Nippert Stadium and the Campus Recreation Center, above CenterCourt.

Other cafés offer a variety of food options:

- College of Business in Lindner Hall
- Teachers in Teachers/Dyer
- DAAP in Aronoff Center
- CampusView in University Hall

MainStreet Cinema: Located in TUC. Showing recently-released, independent and international films. Tickets cost \$2 dollars with your UC ID.

Catskeller: Located on the first floor of TUC, the Catskeller Campus Pub features pool tables and 11 HD televisions.

Mail

The nearest U.S. Post Office is located on Vine Street. Its hours of operation are weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The telephone number is (513) 751-4384.

The U.S. Postal Service will ship packages both within the U.S. and overseas. However, there are private companies which can ship packages; some will provide overnight guarantees. United Parcel Service (UPS) and Federal Express (FedEx) are two examples.



University Health Services & Insurance

If you have a health question or problem, you should go to University Health Service (UHS). The doctors at University Health Services are the same faculty who teach and train doctors at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. From sore throats to sprained ankles, University physicians are here for you.

You can receive personalized attention at University Health Services. Services provided include:

- Primary care services
- Women's health
- Dermatology
- Mental health services
- Preventative health care
- Health education
- Wellness promotion

Additional speciality services include a pharmacy, x-ray and laboratory services.

University Health Services is open daily during the week for your convenience. Appointments are required. There is also a doctor "on call" 24 hours a day to advise you, should you have an emergency when the Campus Health Center is closed.

All international students are required to carry the University Student Health Insurance policy unless they can prove coverage equal to or greater than the University policy. Foreign-based policies WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Insurance fees will be included on your tuition bill as soon as you are registered. The fee is \$1,161 per semester (\$2,322 for the year). Students are responsible for paying this fee each semester they are registered.

Summer coverage is free for students who pay during Spring Semester. Students who qualify for a waiver of the policy must follow the guidelines established by the Student Health Insurance Office for obtaining a waiver. Unless you register for 6 credit hours or more you will not be charged for the University Student Health Insurance policy. However, you MUST go to the Student Health Insurance office and enroll to get it. If at any time while registered for classes, international students change their F or J Visa status, register for classes from outside the United States, or transfer to another institution, they must contact the UC Student Health Insurance Office immediately. Failure to do so will result in their responsibility to reimburse the University for the student health insurance premium. Student health insurance fees are subject to change without notice.

For more information on Student Health Insurance please visit the website: <http://www.uc.edu/uhs>



Security

Security at the University of Cincinnati is provided by the Department of Public Safety, which includes the West Campus Division and the East Campus complex. Each division employs full-time, trained, state-commissioned officers who carry full arrest powers. Their jurisdiction extends to all state-owned University property, which includes all University facilities and parking areas. They work with the city police to provide service to the University and surrounding communities.

On the West campus, students should report all emergencies and crimes to the dispatcher at **(513) 556-1111 (non-emergency)** or 911 (emergency only). Officers will be dispatched immediately to assist.

For the East Campus complex, which consists of University Hospital, Medical Sciences Building, Barrett Center, Medical Arts Building and all Outpatient Clinics, Holmes Hospital, College of Pharmacy, College of Nursing, Healthcare Professionals and Kettering Laboratory, students should contact the East Campus Police Division at **(513) 558-1111 or (513) 558-4900 (non-emergency) or 911 (emergency only)**.

In an effort to make the students' environment as safe as possible, the police need all the assistance that students can provide. Therefore, reporting crimes and unusual activities immediately to the dispatcher is essential to ensure a safe campus.

The Department of Public Safety also provides a Crime Prevention Information Center. This center disseminates information on methods of resisting threats of crime in the home and on the street. For information on Crime Prevention Programs offered by the Center, call (513) 558-4900 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. weekdays. For additional information on campus security go to <http://www.uc.edu/pubsafety/>

Nightride

In addition to the above services, Student Activities and Leadership Development (SALD) also provide a free nighttime shuttle service to the UC Community. It is similar to a cab company and will take you within a one mile radius of campus. Call 556-RIDE (7433) for assistance.

Emergency Assistance

If you need assistance for any reason, pick up any of the Help Phones located throughout campus marked by a blue light and a sign. No need to dial; you'll be connected immediately with the UC Public Safety Office.



Ways to Get Involved on Campus

UC is unlike any other University in the region in that there is so much to do and so many ways to get involved on campus! Explore your options, make new friends, and try new hobbies. An active and balanced social life will help you to be successful in the classroom!

Stay Connected with UC International

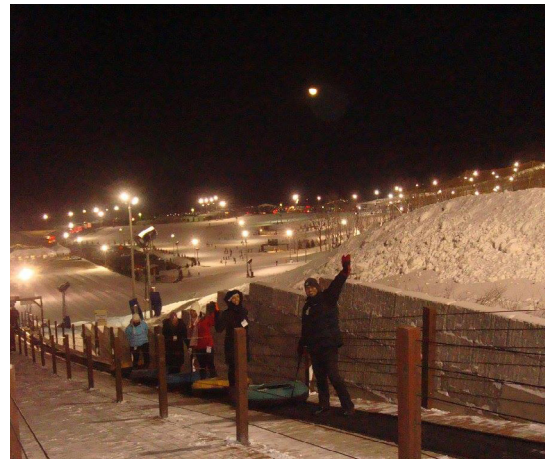
In addition to providing assistance to you, in regard to visas and other important documents, UC International has a team dedicated to making sure that you enjoy your time here at UC. We encourage you to be successful inside and outside of the classroom.

UC International will host a variety of events for students, scholars and their families. These events will be little cost to you. We want to make sure that you see what Cincinnati has to offer both on and off campus. We will encourage you to participate in all events that we host. Our events are fun, you will meet fellow international students as well as domestic students, and they are of little cost to you!

Some example of these events include:

- Groups of students attending baseball, football and other sports games (both college and professional level)
- Cultural dinners and conversations about any experiences you are having on campus
- Social gatherings: coffee hours and social hours (we love a good pizza party!)
- Traditional holiday meals (American style!)
- Halloween and other holiday celebrations (very popular!)
- Religious celebrations
- We will teach you about American football if you teach us about a sport in your home country!

We encourage students to become as active as possible while they are on campus. A strong, stable social network will help you inside the classroom, so prepare to make many new friends here at UC!



Ways to Get Involved on Campus Continued

There are many ways you can stay connected to UC International so that you can keep up-to-date with all of these events:

Facebook: “Like” our page at “UC International”
<https://www.facebook.com/ucinternational/?fref=ts>

Join our listserv! A listserv is a way that we communicate with a group of people about a particular topic. For example, you can sign up to receive emails about our office events, and only those that sign up will receive notifications about these events.

Go to <https://listserv.uc.edu>, search “UCIS” and click “Join Listserv”. It’s very easy!

UC International Event Staff

Expect to receive weekly emails from the UC International’s event and programming team. A team of six people work to plan events for international students and scholars to aid in their transition into UC and Cincinnati. Most of these events are free or of little cost to you.

You will first meet the event staff at International Student Check-in, which is when you have your documents checked by our Immigration Advisors. Please introduce yourself to all of our staff. We are excited to help you and answer any questions that you have!

Alternatively, if you have any questions or if you need any guidance, we encourage you to email us at international.students@uc.edu. This account is monitored during business hours, M-F from 8am-5pm.

International Partners and Leaders (IPALs)

IPALs are students interested in helping our international population feel welcome at UC. They are here to answer your questions, connect you to campus, learn about Cincinnati, or make friends.



The IPAL Help Desk is open each semester and is a place where international students can come to ask questions, play games, or simply talk in English.

Help Desk Hours

Monday thru Thursday 4-5pm, Swift 709
Email: ipals@uc.edu

IPALs also host small events for international students throughout the semester, so be on the lookout for those. We have a lot of fun!

UC Sports: Department of Athletics Recreation/Exercise

Sports that participate in UC Athletics include: baseball, men's basketball, women's basketball, cross country, football, golf, soccer, swimming and diving, track and field and volleyball.



All UC Students are encouraged to come out to UC Athletics events and support your fellow Bearcats! UC Students are admitted FREE with a valid Student ID to all BEARCATS Athletics home games.* Scholars and family members can purchase tickets for these games and events.

*Tickets are required for Football and Men's Basketball.

FOR TICKETS:

1. gobearcats.com/students
2. Ticket Office: Richard E. Linder Center Suite 480
Open Monday-Friday, 9-5pm
3. 1-877-CATS-TIX

For information regarding Cincinnati Athletics, visit <http://www.gobearcats.com/> for all 19 sports in the American Athletic Conference.

There are two recreation/exercise facilities on campus. One is available at CARE/Crawley on the medical campus. The Campus Recreation Center (CRC), located in the heart of main campus, is a state-of-the-art fitness and recreation facility. With over 200,000 square feet of recreation space, the CRC offers UC students, employees, and friends of UC a wide range of exercise and fitness opportunities, including:

- Free group fitness and climbing wall access
- Three pools
- 6 gymnasium courts and 7 racquet courts
- Suspended indoor track
- 40-ft climbing and bouldering wall
- Over 200 cardio and weight machines
- Intramural sports including soccer, football, softball and more
- Discounted rates on swim lessons, personal training and nutrition coaching

Students enrolled full time (12+ credit hours as an undergraduate student or 10+ credit hours as a graduate students) on the Uptown Campus are assessed the full Campus Life Fee, which includes Campus Recreation Membership. Part-time students, scholars and family members can use the facilities by paying a monthly fee. Visit <http://www.uc.edu/campusrec> to learn more.



TRANSPORTATION

Getting Around Campus

Parking

Parking for a fee is available in the following locations:

- Calhoun Garage
- Campus Green Garage
- CCM Garage
- Clifton Court Garage
- Corry Garage
- Eden Garage
- Kingsgate Garage
- Stratford Garage
- Stratford Lots
- University Garage
- Woodside Garage

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.uc.edu/parking/>

Shuttle Bus Service

UC provides campus shuttle buses Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. There is also shuttle service now available to Newport on the Levee. Schedules and routes are posted on their website at <http://www.uc.edu/af/facilities/services/shuttle>.

University of Cincinnati Bearcat Bike Share

The Bearcat Bike Share provides free bicycles to anyone with a valid UC ID. The bike share works like a library; riders can check out the bikes to use on or off campus. Free bike at UC work to increase health, wellness and community, while decreasing carbon emissions, traffic and parking issues.

The Bearcat Bike Share is located on UC's Uptown Campus, at the Campus Recreation Center (West Campus) and the Fitness Center at CARE/Crawley (East Campus).



Eventually, the program may expand to other campuses and will interface with the proposed City of Cincinnati bike share program. https://www.uc.edu/foundation/giving/giving_opportunities/campus_wide/bike_share.html

The transportation system in the United States is quite different from that in most other countries. Most Americans own cars, which are the most common form of transportation. The rail and bus systems are not as extensive as those of many other countries.

TRANSPORTATION

Getting Around Cincinnati & Beyond

Metro

Greater Cincinnati's public transportation system, Metro, offers discounted bus service in Hamilton County and portions of Butler County and Clermont County for UC students and scholars every day of the year. For complete route, schedule and fare information, check <http://www.sorta.com> or <http://www.go-metro.com>; call Metro at 513-632-7528 (TDD Ohio RelayService 1-800-750-0750), weekdays 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.; or visit Metro Center's information office at 120 East Fourth Street, open weekdays, 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Metro is now offering an online directory of services with connecting bus routes to accommodate the needs of Cincinnati's visiting international students. The International Student Connections is designed to help our guests get around town while experiencing familiar tastes of home: <http://www.go-metro.com/riding-metro/international-student-connections>

Air Travel

The Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Airport is the city's international airport. Flight and other travel information is available on their website.

www.cvgairport.com.

Taxicabs

There are many taxicab companies in Cincinnati. The Yellow Cab Company (241-2100) is reliable and experienced, but there are also many other taxicab companies. You must call to be picked up; taxis do not cruise around town like in many other big cities.

Uber & Lyft

These are transportation services whose apps connect you with a reliable ride. Payment is automatic through the app, and fares are typically cheaper than a taxi.

Train Services

The Amtrak train station is located at 1301 Western Avenue, Queensgate. Routes may be limited. For more

information call 1-800-872-7245, 651-3337 (local), or a travel agent. <http://www.amtrak.com>

Out-of-Town Bus Service

The Greyhound bus station is located at 1005 Gilbert Avenue, downtown Cincinnati. Call 1-800-231-2222 (out of town) or 352-6012 (local) for schedule and fare information. Bus fares are reasonable and riding the bus is a great way to see the United States.

<http://www.greyhound.com>

The Megabus also has a bus stop on campus at West University Avenue and Commons Way. Megabus tickets are available to and from Chicago, Indianapolis, Columbus and Pittsburgh.

<https://us.megabus.com/Default.aspx>

Zipcar

Members can reserve Zipcars online or by phone at any time, immediately or up to a year in advance. Zipcar members have automated access to Zipcars using an access card, which works with the car's technology to unlock the door, where the keys are already located inside. Zipcar also offer an iPhone or Android application that allows members to honk the horn to locate a Zipcar and unlock doors. Zipcar charges a one-time application fee, an annual fee, and a reservation charge. Fuel, parking, insurance, and maintenance are included in the price. Cars are available on campus.

<https://www.zipcar.com/universities/how>

The City of Cincinnati's Red Bike Share Program

Cincinnati is making bicycling an integral part of daily life. The Red Bike Share Program allows members to rent and ride bikes throughout the city, connecting campus to the downtown area. There are many conveniently located bike rental states on UC's campus.

<https://www.cincyredbike.or/how-it-works/>

Obtaining an Ohio Driver's License

If you have a valid International Driver's License or a valid driver's license from another U.S. state, you may drive a car in Ohio for up to one year from the date of your arrival in the U.S. Your DS-2019 must have been issued for a duration of time that exceeds one year in order to obtain an Ohio Driver's license. However, if you purchase a car and register it in your name, or if you do not have a valid driver's license from Ohio, the procedure for obtaining an Ohio Driver's license is as follows:

1. Get a copy of the Digest of Ohio Motor Vehicle Laws from any Bureau of Motor Vehicles.
2. Visit the nearest Deputy Registrar Office to get a temporary permit application packet. There is a small fee for this. You will need to bring identification with you.
3. Go to the nearest Bureau of Motor Vehicles license exam station to take a vision test and a written test on Ohio motor vehicle regulations and traffic signs. After you pass the written test, you will be issued a temporary instruction permit which authorizes you to practice for your road test only when there is a licensed driver seated in the front seat.
4. When you have developed your driving skills well enough, contact the nearest exam station to schedule a road test.
5. In order to be issued a license, a foreign national must present:
 - a. Valid passport;
 - b. U.S. visa;
 - c. I-94 card;
 - d. One of the following: An I-20, or a DS-2019, along with an original letter from UC International Services stating that you are affiliated with UC.
 - e. The foreign national must show he or she will reside or has resided in Ohio for 12 months, which can normally be proved using the above documentation; and
 - f. Each applicant must state whether a permanent Social Security number has been assigned. However, a permanent Social Security number is not required to be issued a driver's license.

As stated previously, foreign nationals who will not reside in Ohio for more than 12 months can drive on an international driver's license. More detailed information about getting an Ohio driver's license and license plates can be found in the Digest of Ohio Motor Vehicle Laws. Please make sure you purchase auto insurance. It's against the law to drive without it!

Driver's License Exam Stations and Deputy Registrar's Offices:

10940 Hamilton Avenue, Seven Hills, OH
11177 Reading Road, Sharonville, OH
(513) 674-7830; (513) 769-3047

Additional information is available at <http://www.dmv.org/oh-ohio/departments-motor-vehicles.php>.

Auto Insurance

If you choose to get your own means of transportation, you will need automobile insurance as required by federal law:

In order to obtain license plates for a car, you will be required to show proof that you have auto insurance. It is illegal to drive without car insurance. Many companies offer a variety of auto insurance policies, so you should "shop around". When you have selected a policy, read it carefully before signing any documents. The following companies offer auto insurance.

AAA 1-855-729-3931
<http://www.AAA.com>

Allstate Insurance 1-800-255-7828
<http://www.allstate.com>

Geico Direct 1-800-861-8380
<http://www.geico.com>

Great American 1-800-545-4269
<http://www.greatamericaninsurancegroup.com/>

Progressive Insurance 1-800-669-6877
<http://www.progressive.com>

State Farm Insurance 1-513-531-7063
<http://www.statefarm.com>

US American Culture

Social Culture in the USA

Interacting With Your Peers and Colleagues

The ability to successfully interact with your peers and colleagues and supervisor can greatly impact your stay at UC and enhance your professional and social networks. Please keep in mind that it is acceptable and even desirable in American culture to be proactive and introduce yourself in new social situations. Even with people with higher rank (e.g. deans), it is perfectly acceptable to introduce yourself to him or her before he or she comes to you.

If you are invited to, or if you see a notice for, a general department social event, be sure to attend and participate. These can be wonderful opportunities to get to know some of your colleagues better and strengthen your professional and social network in the U.S. Additionally, if you are interested in meeting researchers and faculty from another department, let your supervisor know that and see if he or she can introduce you to someone or give you a contact name.

In some cultures, it is common to give a small gift when meeting new colleagues. This is generally not part of American academic culture, although it is not a culture "mistake" if you do decide to give a small gift. Please understand, though, that if the person who receives the gift does not reciprocate with a gift for you, you should not interpret this negatively; it is simply a cultural difference.

Social Events

When invited to a social event, please consider what would be appropriate for you to wear. Oftentimes, social events will be "business casual," meaning that you do not wear old sneakers, jeans, or athletic clothing. We recommend that you follow the guidelines below:

Male guests should wear dress pants and a nice shirt; a jacket and tie are optional.

Females should wear a nice dress or pants and a blouse.

Luncheons

If you are invited to a luncheon, it means that food will be provided. The main point of a luncheon is to discuss a particular topic. Some people also refer to this as a "working lunch"

Pitch-ins/Pot Lucks

At these events, everyone attending is expected to bring a food item ("dish") to share with everyone. Oftentimes, there will be a list on which people will write down what they will bring (to avoid two people bringing the same dish). If the event is at UC, you should avoid bringing alcoholic beverages.

Social Invitations

While you are here, we hope that you will meet and spend time with Americans and their families. These experiences may help you feel more comfortable when you are invited out. Typically, when you are invited somewhere, the invitation is for you only, unless your hosts specifically invite your family or friends. Bringing guests of your own without asking your host's permission usually is considered impolite. A written invitation will include the date, time, place, and description of the occasion. You should always answer a written invitation, especially if it says R.S.V.P. (*Répondez s'il vous plaît*; French for "please respond"). You may respond by telephone or by email; prompt notice is appreciated.

Never accept an invitation unless you really plan to go. If you must decline an invitation, it is enough to say, "Thank you for the invitation, but I am unable to attend". If an unavoidable problem makes it necessary for you to change plans, be certain to tell the host as soon as possible before the time when you are expected.

When accepting an invitation for a meal, be sure to explain to your host if there is anything you are not supposed to eat. This courtesy will help the host to plan for food and beverages that everyone can enjoy. If you must refuse something after it has been prepared, refuse politely. If you would like a certain food on the table, ask: "Would you please pass the rolls?", since asking for more food is considered to be a compliment to the host.

Being on time is very important in American culture. Make sure you get directions to the place where the event will be held.

Social Culture in the USA Continued

Understanding and Handling Culture Shock

Culture shock is part of cultural adjustment: the process of understanding and learning how to function in a new cultural environment. This process is common to most international employees, scholars and students coming to the U.S., as well as to U.S. employees, scholars and students going abroad. Research (see Levine, Adelman, and Hess) suggests that cultural adjustment often occurs in several stages. Below are suggestions for how you can handle culture shock:

- Introduce yourself to people in your academic department, residents, etc. Churches, social clubs and organizations are also often an excellent way to meet people and learn more about the culture.
- Understand that “culture shock” is a normal stage-consider what differences an American might encounter in adjusting to your culture. Ask questions about things you don’t understand. Talk to people from your home country who have been here for awhile and might be able to offer you some insight.
- Upon your departure, reflect on how your feelings about your new environment have changed since you first arrived. What do you now understand better? What helped you understand that and adjust to your new environment?

Personal counseling services are available for those experiencing difficulty with the transition abroad. Please see p. 28 for more information.

Hygiene Standards in the USA

Americans tend to put a great deal of emphasis on personal cleanliness. Most Americans are very sensitive to the smells and odors of the human body, especially someone else’s. For this reason, most Americans bathe once a day, sometimes more during hot weather or after strenuous exercise. They use deodorants and antiperspirants, and they wash their clothes frequently. Most Americans are also very concerned about having clean hair and fresh breath.

Individualism and Privacy

It is important to understand American individualism. From childhood, most Americans have been trained to consider themselves as separate individuals who are responsible for their own situations in life and their own destinies. They have not been trained to see themselves as members of a close-knit, tightly interdependent family, religious group, tribe, nation, or other collectivity.

Closely associated with the value they place on individualism is the importance Americans assign to privacy. Americans typically assume that people need some time to themselves or some time alone to think about things or recover their spent psychological energy.

Directness and Assertiveness

Americans generally consider themselves to be frank, open and direct in their dealings with other people. They will try to do so in a manner they call “constructive”, that is, a manner which the other person will not find offensive or un-acceptable. If they do not speak openly about what is on their minds, they will often convey their reactions in nonverbal ways (without words), through facial expressions, body positions, and gestures. Americans are not taught that they should mask their emotional responses. They are much less concerned with avoiding embarrassment to themselves or others than most cultures. To Americans, honesty is very important.

Friendship and Dating

While many Americans are fairly open and warm people who are quick to make new acquaintances, their mobility and sense of individualism mean that their relationships are often casual and informal.

Women’s Rights

Comparatively, women in the United States are generally less inhibited than women from other countries. They are not usually shy with Americans or international visitors. Their relaxed and more independent attitude may be misunderstood by people whose native culture is more restrictive of women’s activities. It is not unusual, for example, for unmarried women to live by themselves, to share living space with other single women, or to go to public places unescorted.

Academic Culture in the USA

Cultural Difference in the Classroom

In many cultures, there is a great difference in status between students and professors. Students show their respect for their professors by listening quietly. They do not question what the professor says. In the United States, it is quite acceptable for students to ask questions and to engage in discussions with the professor. This is not disrespectful. In fact, professors view participation in class discussions as a sign of interest in the subject matter.

During the first class meeting, your professors will inform you of their office hours and when and how they can be reached. If you have a problem with the material presented in class, do not hesitate to see the professor during office hours and ask for help. Even if you do not have a problem, it is a good idea to drop in and talk to your professor. It gives both of you a chance to get to know each other. This may be particularly important if you have trouble understanding the professor, or he/she has trouble understanding you. Often, all it takes is a little time to get used to the other person's style of speaking.

At the time of the first class meeting, your professor will specify "due dates" for various assignments. These dates are quite firm, and you must hand in your assignment by that date in order to get full credit. If you know that you cannot meet a deadline for an important reason, contact your professor before the deadline and try to work out an arrangement that is mutually agreeable.

One thing you need to know about studying in the U.S. is that speaking and learning in English will be exhausting and frustrating, particularly in the beginning. Sometimes, international students have to spend much more time than their American counterparts to complete the same assignments. This can lead to stress and a feeling of inferiority.

The most important thing you can do to improve your level of success in the classroom is to improve your English skills. Your English will not improve if the only people you talk to outside the classroom speak your native language. You should try to speak to Americans whenever possible, watch television, listen to the radio, and read newspapers and magazines in English. Interacting with U.S. culture will greatly enhance your ability to understand your colleagues and professors on an academic level. The more proficient you become in English, the more likely you will also be successful in the classroom.

If you are feeling pressure, you have to take the initiative and ask for help. You must ask to join study groups or ask professors questions. No one will approach you to ask if there is anything you do not understand. However, classmates and professors are usually willing to help if they know you are having problems. Be prepared to do whatever it takes to help yourself. Remember how much effort it took to get the opportunity to study at the University of Cincinnati, then put twice as much effort into your work to make the most of your stay here.

Academic Culture in the USA Continued

Additional Notes on the Classroom

- Students are expected to participate in class (e.g. ask the instructor questions, even during a lecture). Often a student's grade is partially dependent on class participation. When a student speaks in class, he/she typically does not need stand up while speaking.
- Instructors are expected to hold office hours during which students may come to them to discuss assignments, ask questions on course material, etc. Some instructors invite the students to address them by their first name.
- At the first class session, instructors should provide a syllabus which outlines course policies (e.g. number of absences allowed), schedule of assignments, instructor office hours and contact information, and how the final grade is calculated (e.g. 25% participation, 25% tests, 20% oral presentation, 30% final project).
- Instructors should not publicly criticize students or their work. This is not common in American academic culture.
- Romantic relationships between students and instructors who have influence over their grades are in violation of the Code of Academic Conduct.
- Students are expected to attend class regularly and arrive to class on-time. Some instructors take attendance and will allow a certain number (e.g. 3 per semester) of absences without a grade penalty. This is particularly true for undergraduate courses. Such policies should be clearly explained in the beginning of the semester and outlined in the course syllabus.
- Smoking is never permitted in the classroom; however, instructors may allow food and/or drink.
- Traditionally, student dress is casual. Shorts, t-shirts, jeans, even pajama-like clothes (especially for undergraduates) are common and not meant as an insult to the instructor.
- Students will expect clear instructions for their

assignments, as well as feedback (comments, etc.) on the quality of their assignments.

- Undergraduates particularly may ask for opportunities to improve their grade by revising and correcting their assignment (this is often the case with papers and essays) or asking for extra-credit opportunities. Extra-credit assignments are additional assignments that students can do to improve their grades.

The Student Code of Conduct and Academic Dishonesty

When students come to UC, they are given a copy of the Student Code of Conduct, Rights, Responsibilities. The Code clearly states that academic dishonesty is a violation punishable by the University. Penalties may range from a warning to expulsion from UC.

The Code is available online at http://www.uc.edu/conduct/Code_of_Conduct.html

Academic dishonesty includes cheating on a test or assignment, assisting another student cheat on a test or assignment, committing plagiarism (claiming another's work as one's own), and trying to use one assignment for credit in two courses.

Specifically, the definition of plagiarism includes quoting or paraphrasing (expressing in different words) another's words, ideas, statistics, or illustrations (graphs, charts, etc.) without giving credit to the original source. Just as with print 2-D material, information gained from speeches and electronic sources, as well as the Internet must cite its original source.

US AMERICAN CULTURE

Definitions of Important Terms

Academic Year: The academic year at the University of Cincinnati is divided into two semesters (fall and spring) of approximately 16 weeks each. Typically, awards such as scholarships and assistantships cover two semesters (fall and spring). At the end of each semester, there is a final exam period. There is a short break between each semester.

Audit: By auditing a course, the student receives no course credit or grade, but attends the course to learn the subject. The instructor determines the extent to which the student may participate.

Assignment: Out-of-class work required by a professor; for example, reading books, writing papers, or doing a lab report. Your professor will expect the assignment to be finished by a certain date.

Credit Hours: The quantity of work a student does at UC is measured in credit hours. The number of credit hours a course is worth is usually based on the number of hours it meets each week. To complete your degree, you must have a specific number of credit hours. See your departmental handbook for details.

Drop: If a student decides not to take a class, but has already officially registered for it through the Registrar's Office, he/she must officially drop the class.

Final: An exam given at the end of a semester, usually on all the academic material covered in class. The final exam schedule is published in the Learning Opportunities Bulletin each semester.

Grades: The quality of a student's academic work is measured by letter grades; A (excellent), B (above average), C (average), D (lowest acceptable), F (failing). Under certain circumstances, letters such as IP (in-progress), N (no grade), S (satisfactory), or U (unsatisfactory) may appear in grade reports. These letters are not grades and are not included in the calculation of a grade point average.

Major: The field in which you are trying to get your degree. In addition to the courses required by the major, students can take other classes, known as electives.

Mid-Term: A test given around the middle of each semester.

Quiz: A short test given during the semester, sometimes unannounced.

Transcript: A University document, outlining a student's dates of study, courses taken, and grades received. Students can print out unofficial transcripts through OneStop. They can obtain official transcripts from the Registrar's Office for a fee.



US American Culture

American Holidays

Below provides an overview of American holidays. UC will be closed on all federal holidays. This means that a holiday is recognized by the US Government. Most businesses, including schools, banks, etc., are closed on federal holidays. The following units never close under any circumstances: College of Medicine, Hoxworth Blood Center, University Police, Office of Residence Life/Housing units, utility plants, emergency maintenance operations, any research unit where the integrity of the research must be preserved, and service units that routinely operate on a seven day per week, twenty-four hour per day service schedule.

New Year's Day - January 1: Federal holiday for schools, offices and banks. Stores are open. New Year's Eve, December 31, usually is more important to Americans than New Year's Day. Everyone gathers with family and friends to celebrate the new year at midnight.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday - Third Monday in January: Federal holiday that began in 1986. Martin Luther King, Jr. organized and led the civil-rights movement in America during the 1960s.

Valentine's Day - February 14: Not a federal holiday. Celebrated by sending cards and giving candy or flowers to loved ones.

Saint Patrick's Day - March 17: Not a federal holiday. St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland, and this holiday was brought to America by Irish immigrants. People celebrate this holiday by wearing something green and getting together with friends to party and sing Irish folk songs.

Easter - Date varies: Not a federal holiday (March/April). A religious holiday for Christians who believe that on this day Christ rose from the dead. Many folk traditions are now connected with Easter, including the decoration of brightly colored eggs.

April Fool's Day - April 1: Not a federal holiday. As in many other countries, this day is marked by the custom of playing practical jokes on friends and colleagues.

Mother's Day - Second Sunday of May: Not a federal holiday. On this day Americans honor their mothers by sending flowers and buying small gifts.

Memorial Day - Last Monday in May: Federal holiday. Memorial Day is the day on which Americans remember those who died in military service to their country. Many families visit graves and decorate them with flowers.

Father's Day - Third Sunday in June: Not a federal holiday. Americans honor their fathers with cards and gifts.

Independence Day - July 4: Federal holiday. Independence Day commemorates the day the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776. The country celebrates with picnics, political speeches, and fireworks.

Labor Day - First Monday in September: Federal holiday. This holiday was established in recognition of the labor movement's contribution to the productivity of the country. This day is the last holiday of the summer season.

Rosh Hashanah Date varies (September); **Yom Kippur** - Date varies (September/October): Not a federal holiday. Rosh Hashanah, which commemorates the beginning of the Jewish New Year, is the first of the Ten Days of Penitence, which ends with Yom Kippur, the most solemn of Jewish holidays.

Halloween - October 31: Not a federal holiday. This was originally a religious holiday, but its religious character has been lost in the United States, and it is now celebrated mostly as a children's holiday. Traditions include carving pumpkins, dressing up in costumes and going around the neighborhood to receive treats. When people come to the door, children say "trick or treat", meaning, "If you don't give me a treat, I will trick you."

Thanksgiving Day - Fourth Thursday of November: Federal holiday. The first Thanksgiving Day was celebrated by the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts in 1621 to give thanks for the bountiful harvest and their triumph of survival over the wilderness. Now it is a time when Americans give thanks for the good life they enjoy. They celebrate by getting together with family and friends to enjoy foods like turkey, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin pie.

Hanukkah - Date varies (December): One of the less solemn of the Jewish holidays, but one widely observed even by nonreligious Jews. Hanukkah celebrates the victory of Jewish Maccabees over their Syrian rulers in 167 B.C. Hanukkah is marked with parties, games, gifts for children, and the lighting of the eight candles of the menorah.

Christmas - December 25: Federal holiday. Many people regard Christmas as the most important holiday of the year, with the holiday season extending from a few days before Christmas to New Year's Day. Although its origins are religious in nature, it is a holiday celebrated by almost everyone in the country. Families gather together to exchange gifts and share a traditional dinner. They also typically decorate a Christmas tree.

Kwanzaa - December 26-January 1: This week-long celebration honors African American heritage, culminating in a feast and gift giving.

General Legal Counseling

General Legal Counseling

If you are having trouble with anything on or off-campus and need general legal counseling, contact Legal Aid at (513) 241-9400. Call this number for any legal concerns you may have. This service is provided free of charge to low-income individuals in Cincinnati. If Legal Aid is unable to help you, they will advise you and refer you to other services.

For all immigration and tax issues, contact UC International Services at (513) 556-4278 or international.students@uc.edu. Advisors also can offer referrals to other legal assistance.

University-Related Conflict or Issue

If you are having a university related conflict or issues, contact the Office of University Ombuds, located in 607 Swift Hall. Call (513) 556-5956 to set up an appointment with the UC Ombuds to discuss your problem. The Ombuds is available to all members of the University community for CONFIDENTIAL discussion of your problem. This is not legal advice, but you will be presented with University policies and your options. The Ombuds may serve as an informal mediator and will also refer you to other services, if needed. You can also visit their website at <http://www.uc.edu/ombuds/>

Personal Counseling

Getting used to a new culture can be challenging. The Counseling Center provides assistance with a wide range of issues, including cultural adjustment, to all students. No concern is too small or too large for The Counseling Center to help you. If they cannot be of service, they will help you find the right place for the information or assistance you need. All consultations are strictly confidential.

Counseling Center is located in Crosley Tower (2600 Clifton Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45220): (513) 556-0648; <http://www.uc.edu/counseling.html>

