The Office of International Services (OIS) has created this guide to help you transition to life as a graduate student at NC State University.

This guide contains important information you will need as you prepare to travel to Raleigh, as well as information that will be beneficial to you during your first semester on campus and throughout your studies at NC State. This guide provides a glimpse into the programs and services offered to help international students develop and succeed academically, professionally, and personally. You will have the opportunity to learn more about these valuable resources at the OIS Orientation on August 14th and at the OIS Information Fair and Mini-Sessions on August 15th.

Throughout this guide you will find checklists that will lead you through the steps you need to take to ensure your trip to NC State is a smooth one. It is important that you carefully review all of the content in this guide and contact your Small Pack Leaders or OIS with any questions you may have.

We look forward to meeting you soon. Welcome to the Wolfpack!

- The OIS Staff and Volunteers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visas and Immigration</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunizations and Health History</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health Insurance</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Selection and Registration</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Campus and University Housing</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIS Check-In</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing to Travel to the U.S.</td>
<td>13-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIS Orientation</td>
<td>16-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining your Immigration Status</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances and Employment</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC State Student Support</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellness</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Life</td>
<td>22-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIS Programs</td>
<td>24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC State and Community Resources</td>
<td>26-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Campus Safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Special Accommodations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Transportation &amp; Driving in the U.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIRST STEPS

- Pay the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) fee. (p. 4)
- Obtain your visa and make sure your documents are ready for travel. (p. 4)
- Login to your NC State email account and MyPack Portal (see below).
- Submit your immunization records to NC State’s Student Health Center within 30 days of your admission. (p. 6)
- Enroll or waive out of the Student Health Insurance Plan. (p. 8)
- Contact your academic advisor or Director of Graduate Program (DGP) to register for classes. (p. 9)
- Find a place to live. (p. 10-11)
- Mark your calendar for the mandatory OIS Orientation on Wednesday, August 14th.
- Learn about the welcoming city of Raleigh and the culture of NC State.

Meet your Small Pack Leaders!

Small Pack Leaders (SPLs) are students and community members who have volunteered to help OIS welcome new international graduate students to the Wolfpack! Each new student will be placed in a Small Pack, or small group, with two SPLs and around 20 other new students. Your Small Pack Leaders will be an excellent resource for you throughout the summer and during Orientation. Your SPLs can connect you with campus resources and help you make new friends at OIS Orientation. They are happy to answer any questions you may have except those related to immigration and employment - contact OIS for those inquiries. If you do not receive an email from your Small Pack Leaders by the end of July, email the Assistant Director for Programs, Lauren Ball, at Lauren_Ball@ncsu.edu.

Access your NC State Email Account & MyPack Portal

You will need your Unity ID and password to access a number of resources at NC State including your email account and MyPack Portal, NC State’s student information system. You can find your Unity ID in your NC State Admission letter. Your email address is YourUnityID@ncsu.edu. Your default password is the last four digits of your Campus ID number (printed on your Admission letter), followed by the four digits of your birth month and day. For example, if your Campus ID number ends in 1234 and your birthday is January 31, your default password is 12340131. This password can only be used to create a new, secure password via the Unity Password Change Tool. You can then use your new password to access your NC State email and MyPack Portal. Contact the NC State Help Desk for any problems related to your Unity account.
APPLY FOR YOUR VISA

1 REVIEW YOUR DOCUMENTS
Is all of the information on your I-20 Form (for F-1 visas) or DS-2019 Form (for J-1 visas) correct?
If you believe there is an error (for example the name does not match your passport, your birthday is incorrect, or other), please contact OIS directly at ois@ncsu.edu. Once you have verified that the form is correct, sign on the signature line at the bottom of page 1 of the form in blue or black ink.

What is the expiration date on your passport?
Your passport needs to be valid at least 6 months into the future at all times during the visa application process and during your stay in the United States. If your passport expires in less than 6 months, you must renew it before you can obtain a visa or enter the United States. It might take a few weeks to obtain or renew your passport, so please plan accordingly.

2 PAY THE STUDENT EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEVIS) FEE
You must pay your SEVIS fee ($180 for J-1 students and $200 for F-1 students) with form I-901 at least three days before the date of your visa application. You need to print the confirmation of payment of this fee as you will need it for your visa application. For more information about the fee and how to pay, please visit the Study in the States website. The fee can be paid online on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement I-901 fee web page. NOTE: The SEVIS fee is increasing to $220 for J-1 students and $350 for F-1 students, effective June 24, 2019.

3 APPLY FOR YOUR VISA
- You must have a visa to enter the U.S. (except for students from visa exempt countries, such as Canada).
- Apply for the F-1 visa (with I-20 form) or J-1 visa (with DS-2019 form) at the U.S. Consulate/Embassy.
- Complete the Form DS-160 visa application and pay the DS-160 fee ($160).

Please refer to the Embassy website for detailed information on which documents to bring, and when to visit for your visa interview. For a list of all Embassies, please visit www.usembassy.gov. You can also find information about visas and advice for the visa interview on the OIS website. You may have to prove your intent to return to your home country after completing your studies in the U.S. Your proof of intent to return could be in the form of a letter of employment, possession of property, or other strong ties to your home country.

Canadian Citizens are not required to obtain an F-1 or J-1 visa; however they are required to pay the I-901 SEVIS fee before requesting admission to the U.S. NOTE: this fee can not be paid at the Port of Entry. At the Port of Entry, Canadian citizens must present their I-20 or DS-2019 with their proof of I-901 SEVIS fee payment.

F-1 and J-1 Transfer Students who are currently in F-1 or J-1 status at another U.S. institution must take the following actions upon arrival at NC State to complete the SEVIS I-20 or DS-2019 transfer-in process:

1. Schedule an OIS Check-in appointment (see p. 12) and bring your NC State I-20 or DS-2019 (it may say initial or transfer pending), your previous school’s I-20 or DS-2019, valid passport with visa, and most recent I-94 record.

2. Login to MyPack Portal with your Unity ID and password to complete the OIS Compliance Verification, update your SEVIS local (Raleigh) address, U.S. phone number, and emergency contact information. (p. 5)

Within 10 days of the start of the semester OIS will confirm your full-time enrollment and register your SEVIS record. You must be enrolled full-time (9+ credit hours) in order for OIS to complete this process. Within 30 days after the start of the semester OIS will create a “Transfer Complete” I-20 or DS-2019 and notify you by email when it is ready to be picked up.
IMPORTANT TRAVEL REMINDERS

- New international students are permitted to enter the U.S. up to 30 days before the program start date listed on their I-20 or DS-2019 form. **Do not plan to arrive in the United States more than 30 days before this date!**

- Make sure you have somewhere to stay for your first night in Raleigh and the following days if needed. See page 11 for temporary housing information.

IMMIGRATION REPORTING REQUIREMENT - PROVIDE CONTACT INFORMATION TO OIS

Immigration law requires that you report your Raleigh address, U.S. phone number, and the contact information for someone whom OIS can reach out to in the event of a serious health or safety emergency. You complete this reporting through MyPack. As regulated by federal privacy laws (FERPA) that protect students’ personal information, the emergency contact you provide will never be contacted by OIS or by NC State in regards to your academic standing (grades), student conduct, immigration, or legal status. Contact information must be added in MyPack before you check-in with OIS. And continue to update this information in MyPack, anytime it changes, until you finish your program at NC State.

We understand you may not have all of this information until you arrive in the U.S., but it is important that you provide OIS with this information **before** your OIS Check-in session by completing the steps below. You must keep your information updated for the duration of your I-20 or DS-2019 form. You must also complete the OIS Compliance Verification form in MyPack Portal before OIS Check-in.

COMPLETE COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION FORM

You must also complete the OIS Compliance Verification form in MyPack before OIS Check-in. Log in to MyPack using your Unity ID and password > 1. Click on Main Menu > 2. Student Self Service > 3. Campus Personal Information > OIS Compliance Verification > Save! > Repeat steps 1-3 to enter your SEVIS local (Raleigh) address, U.S. phone number, and emergency contact.

Please check your SEVIS local (Raleigh) address, U.S. phone number, and emergency contact information every semester make sure it is correct. All students are required to inform OIS by updating your SEVIS local address in MyPack Portal within 10 days of any change of your physical address to maintain your immigration status as an F-1 or J-1 student.
Prior to your arrival at NC State, you need to provide information about your health history and submit an immunization record to NC State’s Student Health Services. NC State requires all students to meet the North Carolina General Statute requirements for immunizations prior to studying at NC State. There are strict consequences for failure to meet these requirements such as having your courses dropped and/or having a hold placed on your account, which may prevent you from registering for classes. If you need to finish specific immunizations after arriving at NC State, you will have the opportunity to obtain needed vaccinations at the Student Health Center Immunization Clinic once you are on campus.

1 Prepare Your Immunization Records

There are 2 ways to gather the information that is required to be submitted to NC State Student Health Center.

Option 1 (Preferred): Print and fill out the immunization form with a healthcare provider.

Option 2: Obtain your immunization record from a healthcare provider and make sure the records contain the information listed in the bullet points below. Your records must show that you have all of the immunizations listed in the immunization form and must be in English (or have been translated into English).

- Your Name, Date of Birth, and Campus ID # on all forms/documents
- Medical Provider’s name and the address of Administering Facility OR clinic stamp
- Month/Date/Year are required for all immunizations. **
- Official copies of lab results verifying immunity can be submitted in lieu of vaccination for the following: Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella.
- One dose of Varicella is required for students having a birth date after 4/1/2001.

NOTE: If you need to get some of the immunizations for the first time (such as Hepatitis B), you may not have enough time to get all of the doses prior to your arrival in the U.S. You should start the doses in your home country and will be able to finish them upon arrival at NC State.

** For NC records, documentation must list the dates the doses were given in this format: MM/DD/YY.

2 Enter Immunization Dates and Upload Documents

In HealthyPack Portal, enter the dates you received your immunizations and upload your documents:

- Choose ‘North Carolina State University’ from the drop down menu
- Log in to HealthyPack Portal with your Unity ID and password
- From the Immunization tab, enter dates for your immunizations and click ‘submit’
- From the Upload tab, upload the immunization documents you prepared
  *Note: when uploading documents, only JPEG and PDF file formats are accepted*

The Student Health Center can NOT accept health records via email. Uploading documents directly into HealthyPack Portal is the most secure and preferred method. Avoid submitting duplicate records. You will receive messages from Student Health in HealthyPack Portal (NOT in your email). It is important to check the ‘Messages’ tab in HealthyPack Portal periodically to know the status of your immunization compliance.
3 COMPLETE THE NC STATE HEALTH HISTORY FORM AND TB QUESTIONNAIRE

Log in to HealthyPack Portal using the same credentials as MyPack Portal. Select the “forms” tab to complete your Health History and Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Forms. Print a copy and keep it for your records, but you do NOT need to submit the copy to Student Health Services or OIS.

NOTE: Many international students will have to get a Tuberculosis (TB) Test after they arrive in the United States. Please review the Student Health Center website to determine if this requirement applies to you. The website also contains the specifics of which tests are allowable outside the United States as well as how results need to be recorded to be acceptable. These restrictions are strictly enforced so you are responsible for reviewing this information carefully.

If you need any Tuberculosis (TB) test(s) completed upon arrival, please call 919.515.2563 to make an appointment once you are on campus.

If you receive a TB test at the Student Health Center and have health insurance coverage under the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) or the Graduate Student Support Plan (GSSP), your health insurance policy will cover the cost of the test if administered after the effective insurance coverage start date.

If you have questions or concerns about your immunization records, please secure message the Immunization Coordinator through the Healthy Pack Portal. Use the Message Tab to compose a secure message.
**HEALTH INSURANCE**

All international students on F-1 or J-1 visas are **required** to maintain active health insurance coverage throughout the entire duration of their I-20 or DS-2019 form.

Review the minimum health insurance requirements for J-1 and F-1 students on the OIS website.

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**What are my options?**

NC State University, along with all public colleges and universities in the state of North Carolina, is a participant in the system-wide hard waiver Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP), administered by Student Blue. Students must enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan or waive out by showing proof of a health insurance plan that meets a set of required criteria.

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**What are the benefits of using the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)?**

Most health care services rendered by Student Health Service providers on campus are covered 100% (no co-payment, no deductible). Prescriptions filled by Student Health Pharmacy are covered with a $15 co-payment per prescription or refill. Although the Student Blue policy does not cover dental care, Student Health Services offers a dental discount program.

More detailed information about the Student Blue plan’s benefits and coverage can be found on Student Blue’s website.

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**What about insurance for my dependents?**

The Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) does not offer health insurance coverage for dependents. Alternative health insurance plans that can be used by both F-2 and J-2 dependents are listed on the OIS website.

The Graduate Student Support Plan (GSSP) for students on Teaching and Research Assistantships does offer coverage for dependents. Contact Student Blue directly for inquiries regarding health insurance coverage for dependents.

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Dependents on J-2 visas are required to maintain active health insurance coverage for the entire duration of their DS-2019. Failure to maintain health insurance may result in termination of both the J-1 and J-2 visa holders’ immigration status.

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**How do I enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)?**

Once you have made the decision to use the Student Blue plan, you must enroll in the plan through the Student Blue Portal as soon as possible to ensure your coverage will be active starting **August 1, 2019**.

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**What if I choose not to use the Student Health Insurance Plan?**

You must submit your waiver request electronically through the Student Blue portal no later than **September 10, 2019**, otherwise your account will be charged accordingly for the plan. Because of visa regulations, your preferred plan must meet the minimum requirements in order to be considered for a waiver.

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**What if I’m on the Graduate Student Support Plan (GSSP)?**

Teaching or Research Assistants on the GSSP plan will be automatically waived out of the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP). More information about the GSSP can be found on the Graduate School’s website and on Student Blue’s website.

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**When does my health insurance coverage begin?**

Health insurance coverage for the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) begins on August 1, 2019.

For students on the GSSP, insurance coverage dates are dependent on the department. Please check with your department’s Graduate Services Coordinator to find out when your insurance coverage will begin.

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Be careful about scheduling health care appointments before your insurance coverage begins, otherwise you may be responsible for paying the full cost of the health care services.
When should I register for classes?

Some courses may be in high demand so you should register as early as possible to secure a seat in your preferred classes. You will need to work with your Academic Advisor or the Director of your Graduate Program (DGP) to choose courses. A list of the Directors of Graduate Programs (DGPs) and their email addresses can be found on the Graduate School's website.

SPEAK Tests.

Students who will serve as Teaching Assistants may be required to take a SPEAK Test. To determine if you are required to take a SPEAK Test, please visit the SPEAK Test webpage.

How do I choose which classes to take?

Each college or department has a different advising process, so you will need to contact your Advisor or DGP for your department's specific policies and procedures. Your Advisor or DGP can help you select your classes. Be sure to ask your advisor about your program's requirements for an in-person meeting once you arrive on campus.

How do I register for classes?

Login to MyPack Portal > Click on Main Menu > Student Self Service > Enrollment > Enrollment Wizard. More details about the Enrollment Wizard, including a detailed video tutorial, can be found on the Student Services website. If you have an “advising hold” on your account, you will not be able to register for classes until you contact your Academic Advisor or DGP.

How can I find current students in my program or department if I have other questions?

Check the OIS website for a Departmental Ambassador for your program. Departmental Ambassadors are current international or American graduate students who have volunteered to represent their department and assist new international students with questions they may have about their program, course selection, NC State, etc. NOTE: Not every department has a Departmental Ambassador. If your department has an Ambassador, you can find their email address on the OIS website.

Where can I purchase textbooks for my classes?

Once you are registered for classes, you can find your list of required textbooks in MyPack Portal. Follow the instructions on the NC State Bookstore's website to access your list of required textbooks. Textbooks can be purchased at the bookstore in the Talley Student Union on Main Campus.

Summer Session I classes begin on Wednesday, May 15th and Summer Session II classes begin on Monday, June 24th. Review the Academic Calendar for other important dates.
To find an apartment before you arrive, it is recommended that you consult your Small Pack Leaders, Departmental Ambassadors, and students from your home country for advice on apartments.

Your Small Pack Leaders have a list of on-campus and off-campus housing, and will be happy to share the list with you. Many apartment complexes are close together so you can spend a day comparing apartments before making a decision.

Off-campus housing options include: (a) rooms in private residences, (b) apartments which can be rented by oneself or (c) apartments shared by 2 to 4 students depending on the leasing options of the apartment complex.

It is reasonable to expect off-campus housing to cost between $250 to $800 per month, depending on the number of people sharing the expenses which include monthly rent and utilities (water, sewer, electricity, gas, internet, etc.). A signed lease (contract) and a security deposit, usually one month’s rent, is also required for most off-campus housing. In addition, utility companies may require an advance deposit to activate their services.

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING LEASES

To rent an apartment off campus, you must sign a lease. A lease is a legally binding contract and is usually required for a period of 12 months. Leases obligate you to pay rent for each month of the term of the lease even if you move out of the apartment.

Lawyers at NC State’s Student Legal Services will review your lease for free before you sign it to make sure everything is in proper order. More information about your rights as a tenant leasing an apartment can be found on Student Legal Services website. If you have questions, email studentlegal@ncsu.edu.

TIPS TO AVOID HOUSING SCAMS

- Never make a housing deposit or give out your financial information (bank account number, credit card information, etc.) prior to seeing the property in person.

- Never send money via wire transfer to a person offering housing. No legitimate property management company will ever ask you to wire money to them for an application fee, security deposit, or rent.

- Keep in mind that if something looks too good to be true, it probably is. Check comparable apartment listings to find the average cost of rent. Unusually low-priced apartments are also red flags for scams.

- Review the information on the Federal Trade Commission’s website for more tips to avoid scams.
NC State University Housing is owned and managed by the university. The cost of on-campus housing is usually comparable to off-campus housing and comes with several benefits. NC State offers several apartment-style buildings on campus which are generally better suited for graduate students than the residence halls, where living space is shared. To explore your on-campus housing options, visit University Housing’s website.

**CONVENIENCE:** University housing is steps away from NC State’s classrooms, libraries, labs, dining halls, and the gym. There is no need to drive or ride a bus to campus! University housing buildings are equipped with community kitchens, service desks, laundry facilities, computer labs, and lounges.

**TRANSPORTATION:** University housing is located on major city and university bus routes, making transportation to the areas surrounding campus convenient for students.

**HASSLE-FREE LIVING:** University housing is all-inclusive, meaning your electricity, water, cable, and internet services are included in the price of housing which is paid directly to the university. Most university housing is also furnished, meaning you don’t have to purchase your own furniture.

**COMMUNITY:** University housing staff frequently plan special events to foster a sense of community and encourage residents connect with their neighbors. Living on campus will automatically insert you into a supportive residential community.

**APPLICATION REQUIRED:** If you would like to live in university housing, it is recommended that you apply as soon as possible through MyPack Portal before the deadline. On-campus housing is assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. This means the people that apply first will receive rooms first. If you have been assigned to university housing and have questions about when you can move in to your housing, check University Housing’s website, send them an email at housing@ncsu.edu, or call 1.919.515.2440.

**EARLY MOVE-IN FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:** Early move-in options are available for new international students as early as August 13th. OIS will contact on-campus residents directly regarding the early move-in process.

**TEMPORARY GUEST HOUSING:** Prefer to look for housing after you arrive? If there is a gap between your arrival date and the start date of your university housing assignment or off-campus lease, or if you prefer to search for housing after you arrive in Raleigh, temporary guest housing may be available through NC State’s Guest Housing Services or at a local hotel. Many of the hotels close to NC State offer discounted rates for NC State students and families.
Complete the OIS Compliance Verification Form and enter your contact information in MyPack Portal (p. 5).

Plan to attend the required immigration check-in session based on your start date. Summer Session I check-in will be held on Tuesday, May 14th at 1 p.m. and Summer Session II check-in will be held on Monday, June 24th at 9 a.m. and Friday, June 28th at 1 p.m. You will receive an email from OIS with more information.

Finalize your travel plans and review page 14 so you know what to expect when you arrive at the Port of Entry (the first city in which you arrive in the United States). Raleigh-Durham (RDU) International Airport is the closest to NC State.

Start packing! Wondering what you need to bring? Check out page 13 for tips.

Contact your bank to make sure your ATM card will work in the United States.

Register for a GoPass to ride GoRaleigh and GoTriangle buses for free! (p. 27)

Enroll or waive out of the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) if you have not already done so. (p. 8)

All F-1 and J-1 students are required by law to check-in with OIS after they arrive in the United States.

The OIS Check-in session is separate from the mandatory OIS Orientation. Check-in is required by law to maintain your immigration status. You must check in, in person, and provide the following original documents to OIS:

- Passport with visa. Your passport must be valid at least 6 months into the future at all times during your study in the U.S.
- Original I-20 or DS-2019 (copies can not be accepted).
- A printed copy of your I-94 record (not your travel history) Available online AFTER you arrive in the U.S.
- Confirm your SEVIS local (Raleigh) address, your U.S. phone number, and emergency contact in MyPack Portal BEFORE your Check-in session. See page 5 for details.

You will not be able to complete the Check-in session requirements until you have provided OIS with all of your original documents and contact information. OIS will scan your documents and will return them to you at the end of the Check-in session. Because Check-in is required by law, you must attend the entire duration of the Check-in session - approximately 1 hour.

*For more information visit OIS Check-In page*

Dependent Check-in: If you are bringing a dependent with you, we encourage you to bring them to the OIS Check-in with their documents. OIS provides a separate Check-in for F-2 and J-2 dependents with information specific to their transition to the NC State community. Dependent Check-in is required for J-2 visa holders. Dependent Check-in can be scheduled on the OIS website.

IEP Students who recently completed the Intensive English Program are invited, but not required, to attend OIS Check-in. However, they are required to attend the OIS Orientation on August 14th.
START PACKING

Deciding what to pack when moving to a new country can be overwhelming but do not worry, there are plenty of shopping centers within walking distance of campus and many others easily accessible by bus where you can purchase most items you will need during your time at NC State. If you are craving a taste of home after you arrive, you might be surprised to find there are plenty international grocery stores and restaurants in the Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill area, often referred to as “The Triangle.”

Here are a few tips when you are considering what to bring:

CLOTHING: Students (and even some professors) tend to dress informally in the U.S. Students often wear jeans, shorts, t-shirts, and sweatshirts around campus and in class. The weather can be very hot and humid in the summer with occasional thunderstorms, so you may want to bring an umbrella and a good rain coat to stay dry. Winter weather in Raleigh is fairly mild (we may have snow once or twice a year), but you will need a warm coat for cold days and the rare snowstorm. You may also want to bring a formal outfit for special events, on-campus career fairs, and job interviews.

ELECTRICAL ITEMS: The U.S. uses 120v electrical current. Many small electrical items like hair dryers and electric razors are inexpensive in the U.S. so you may want to purchase those items after you arrive. Plug adapters can be used for electrical items you may prefer to bring from home, such as laptops and cell phones.

LINENS, TOWELS, AND TOILETRIES: You should bring at least one set of linens and towels, as well as enough toiletries, to last for several days in case you are not able to go to a store for a few days after you arrive. Bed linens, pillows, blankets, towels, and toiletries can be purchased inexpensively at local stores.

MEDICAL ITEMS: If you plan to bring any prescription medications, they must be labeled and in their original container. The name on the container must match the name on your passport to avoid any problems entering the U.S. Also bring a copy of any prescription you will need, using the generic name of the medication in English.

MONEY: Contact your bank to make sure your ATM card will work in the U.S. before you leave. Be sure to ask your bank about their policy for foreign transaction fees. Make sure you have immediate access to enough funds to cover housing and tuition upon your arrival in the U.S.

Visa and Mastercard are the most widely accepted types of credit cards in the U.S. Discover and American Express are also accepted by some businesses. It is recommended that you bring at least $300 in hard currency to cover immediate expenses during your first several days in Raleigh. You can change your money at local banks close to campus. There may be a conversion fee, but it will likely be less than the fees to exchange money at the airport. As the official banking partner of NC State, representatives from PNC Bank will be at the OIS Info Fair on August 15th to help students apply to open a bank account if you choose to bank with PNC. See page 16 for more information about the OIS Information Fair and other OIS Orientation activities.
TRAVELING TO THE U.S.

THE PORT OF ENTRY is the first city in which you arrive in the United States. You will be asked to show your immigration documents to be given permission to enter the country.

You will need to carry the following documents with you in your carry-on bag, NOT in your checked bags:
- Your valid passport with your F-1 or J-1 visa.
- Original I-20 or DS-2019 form.
- The supporting documentation you showed to United States Embassy to obtain your visa.

YOU HAVE ARRIVED is a short video produced by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) that explains what to expect at the Port of Entry. NOTE: International students are not eligible to use the Global Entry system.

YOUR I-94 ARRIVAL RECORD will be created by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) when you enter the U.S. The I-94 is an electronic record of arrival, so you will not receive an actual copy of it at the Port of Entry. As soon as possible after you arrive in the U.S., you will need to retrieve and print your I-94 record from the CBP website. Carefully review the I-94 to be sure the information is correct. NOTE: Your I-94 record may not be accessible until 48 hours after your arrival. If your record is not found or if there are any discrepancies, notify OIS.

You will need to print a copy of your I-94 to bring to OIS check-in. You should also print a copy to keep for your records, as well as a copy to give to your employer if you decide to work on campus.

EMERGENCIES: 911 is the emergency services number in the United States. Calling 911 from anywhere in the U.S. will connect you to an operator who can send the local police, fire department, or ambulance services to you depending on the emergency.

If you have an emergency while traveling and need to reach OIS, call 1.919.515.2961 during regular office hours: Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. EST. If outside of these hours, contact NC State’s University Police at 1.919.515.3000. University Police will contact and connect you with the OIS staff member on call for emergencies.

RALEIGH-DURHAM AIRPORT INFORMATION DESK
If you need assistance locating your baggage or transportation when you arrive at RDU, please visit the information desk located in the baggage claim area of both terminals. The RDU information desks are staffed 5:30 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. every day. Their staff will be happy to assist you.

SHARED TRANSPORTATION (SHUTTLE) SERVICES
The cost of using shared transportation to get to NC State starts at around $20, but may vary depending on your drop-off location and the number of passengers.

TAXIS
A taxi ride from RDU to NC State is around $30-$35. There are several taxi companies in the Raleigh area that service the airport. Taxis can be found on the lower level of the airport directly outside of baggage claim.

GOTRIANGLE RALEIGH-AIRPORT RTC #100 BUSES can be used for transportation from the RDU Airport directly to NC State’s main campus (Hillsborough St. & Brooks Ave.). A single, one-way trip from RDU to NC State will cost $2.25, which must be paid in exact cash. After arriving on campus you can take the Wolfline buses (free), or the GoRaleigh buses ($1.25 for a one-way fare) to nearby on-campus housing and apartment complexes.

DIRECTIONS TO NC STATE UNIVERSITY
If you choose to take a taxi or shuttle from the RDU Airport to campus, make sure you ask the driver to take you to NC State University in Raleigh, not the University of North Carolina - that’s a different university in Chapel Hill, about 40 minutes from NC State!

TRANSPORTATION FROM OTHER PORTS OF ENTRY
If you arrive at another Port of Entry outside of Raleigh, Amtrak train and Greyhound bus services are available to Raleigh from various Ports of Entry into the U.S. The nearest Amtrak train and Greyhound bus stations are located in downtown Raleigh, 5-10 minutes by taxi from the university. Please note that basic safety precautions need to be taken when at train and bus stations. Pay close attention to your money and personal belongings.
GETTING SETTLED

☐ Let your family know when you have arrived safely!

☐ Get some rest, and then explore! Check out the area around your housing to find the closest grocery store, pharmacy, dining options, and bus stop.

☐ Pick up your GoPass to start riding GoRaleigh (city) and GoTriangle (regional) buses for free. (p. 27)

☐ Open a bank account. PNC Bank will have representatives at the OIS Information Fair on August 15th to help you apply for an account. (p. 16)

☐ Choose a mobile phone plan. There are several phone companies to choose from including AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, Verizon, and more. Most companies offer month-to-month plans without a contract.

☐ Attend your OIS Check-in session.

*Required by law to maintain F-1 or J-1 status*

☐ Visit the Talley Student Union to get your free NC State Student ID, the Wolfpack One Card. You will need the ID to access important resources on campus including library lending services and the Carmichael Gym. Go before OIS Orientation to avoid long wait times.

☐ Schedule an Immunization Clinic appointment to have your immunization record reviewed for completion. You will be able to complete the TB test requirement at your immunization appointment. (p.17)

☐ Attend the mandatory OIS Orientation on Wednesday, August 14th from 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

☐ OIS Information Fair & Mini-Sessions on Thursday, August 15th. (p.16)
OIS ORIENTATION

1  OIS INFORMATION FAIR
AUGUST 15th | 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.  
Tally Student Union

New students are encouraged to attend to meet with several important campus offices, student organizations, and community organizations, including local banks. The Information Fair is a great place to discover several of the valuable resources NC State has to offer in one, easy-to-access location. The Information Fair is optional, but recommended.

2  OIS MINI-SESSIONS
AUGUST 15th | 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.  
Engineering Building II

OIS Mini-Sessions are short, conference-style sessions that will provide new students with more details about NC State and community resources. Topics will include: Getting Around without a Car, Driving in North Carolina, Practical (Consumer) Matters, University Recreation and Intramural Sports, Student Legal Services, the City of Raleigh, and more! The sessions are optional, but recommended.

A detailed schedule will be posted on the OIS by August 1st.

3  OIS ORIENTATION | AUGUST 14 | 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. | Tally Student Union

All new international students, including transfer and former IEP students, are required to attend OIS Orientation at the beginning of their first semester at NC State. The mandatory OIS Orientation is organized by OIS and the International Student Orientation Team. OIS Orientation will introduce new students to several important campus resources that will be valuable to your success as a student at NC State. It will address information specific to international students which will help you in your transition to the university.

NOTE: A mandatory orientation fee of $145 will be assessed to all new F-1 and J-1 international graduate students. The fee will billed directly to you by the Cashier’s Office; please do not send payment to OIS. This fee covers OIS Orientation, OIS Information Fair, Welcome Party, ongoing OIS Programs, and other events OIS will hold for international students throughout the semester and academic year.
4 IMMUNIZATION CLINIC
Student Health Center

Student Health Services will offer immunization clinic appointments, specifically for new international students from High Risk Countries to administer Tuberculosis (TB) tests, administer additional vaccinations if needed, and review your medical records for completion of the requirements. **Appointments are required.** Call 1.919.515.7107 on or after August 1, 2019 to schedule an appointment.

6 DEPARTMENTAL ORIENTATIONS

Several departments hold orientations to provide their new students with information and resources specific to their department. Contact your Academic Advisor or DGP to find out if your department will host their own orientation.

5 NC STATE GRADUATE SCHOOL ORIENTATION | AUGUST 19
McKimmon Center

New graduate students are also required to attend the Graduate School's Orientation. This orientation will address information different from the OIS Orientation and will cover topics specific to new graduate students.

Have questions? Visit the Graduate School’s website or contact the office directly with any questions regarding their orientation.

7 OIS WELCOME PARTY
August 23rd | 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. McKimmon Center

All new international students are invited to join their Small Pack Leaders and other new students for a night of fun and friendship! The OIS Welcome Party is open to new students, dependents, and OIS invited guests only. More details will be announced at OIS Orientation. We hope to see you there!
MAINTAINING STATUS

**MAINTAIN FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT**
F-1 and J-1 students must maintain continuous full-time enrollment during the fall and spring semesters to maintain their lawful non-immigrant status. The minimum requirement for graduate students is 9 credit hours for each semester.

**WORK ONLY WHEN AUTHORIZED**
F-1 and J-1 students are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours per week on campus while school is in session. **NOTE:** J-1 students must have on-campus employment authorization in writing from the organization which issued the DS-2019 form before they begin employment. All off-campus employment for F-1 and J-1 students requires advance written employment authorization. International students who work without authorization — that is, they work more hours than permitted by law, or without written permission if it is necessary, or the employment is otherwise not permissible — will risk their visa status. **The university is required by law to terminate the SEVIS record of any student who engages in illegal employment.**

**MAINTAIN A VALID I-20 OR DS-2019**
The I-20 form for F-1 students and the DS-2019 form for J-1 students specify a date by which the program of study will be completed. If you need an extension of your program beyond the date listed on the I-20 or DS-2019 form, you must apply for the extension at least one month prior to the expiration date listed on your I-20 or DS-2019 form.

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**REVIEW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
It is very important for non-immigrant students to understand their legal rights and responsibilities as well as the requirements for maintaining their lawful status. Please consult an OIS advisor with any questions. Immigration information by any other source (friends, OIS volunteers, etc.) is not valid. More information and procedures are explained in detail on the I-20 or DS-2019 and in your OIS Check-in session.

**STUDENTS’ RESPONSIBILITIES**
- Immediately upon arrival, students must physically report to OIS for Check-in to have their SEVIS record registered. Check-in is done by appointment only. See page 12 for more details and to register.
- Enroll for and attend classes full-time (9 credit hours)
- Maintain full-time enrollment and make normal academic progress towards completion of program.
- Do not engage in unauthorized employment.
- Keep your passport valid for at least six months into the future at all times during your study in the U.S.
- Report any changes of your physical address in MyPack within 10 days of the change.
- Check your SEVIS local (Raleigh) address, U.S. phone number, and emergency contact every semester to make sure it is correct.
- File timely requests for program extension, change of status, transfer, Optional Practical Training (OPT), Curricular Practical Training (CPT), and other benefits.
- Obey all state and federal laws including laws regulating domestic disputes, child endangerment, sexual assault, driving while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances, etc.
- Read and obey NC State University’s **Code of Student Conduct**.
FINANCIAL AID AND ASSISTANTSHIPS

International graduate students may receive aid in the form of teaching assistantships (TAs) or research assistantships (RAs) which are only awarded by individual departments. **OIS is not involved in the process of awarding any assistantships.** For information on assistantships, contact your Director of Graduate Program (DGP).

ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

There are many types of on-campus employment at NC State. However it is competitive and you have to contact each department individually after you arrive to learn about their job opportunities. Students often find employment at the NC State Libraries, University Dining, NC State Bookstores, ARTS NC State, University Recreation, and the Talley Student Union. You can not apply to work on campus before you arrive. Also, you may not begin on-campus employment more than 30 days before the first day of classes.

BANKING

You are strongly encouraged to open a bank account upon arrival in Raleigh. With a bank account, you will receive an ATM (debit) card, which allows you to withdraw cash from your account 24-hours a day. Services and fees vary, but most banks in the area offer special accounts with low monthly charges for students, so be sure to ask about student accounts when you are comparing options. You will need your passport and I-20 or DS-2019 form when you open a bank account. If you plan to bring a large amount of money with you, you may also wish to open a savings account as they earn interest. Banks also offer additional services such as checks, loans, credit cards, and safe-deposit boxes at lower cost to students.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SCAMS

OIS has been made aware of scams targeting international students in which the caller claims to work for a government agency (FBI, USCIS, IRS, even 911) and demands immediate payment due to a problem with the person’s immigration record or some other false violation.

These calls are COMPLETELY FALSE! If you receive a suspicious phone call, hang up and notify OIS and University Police immediately.

**Red Flags to Identify Scams:**

- No government agent will threaten arrest or deportation because of non-payment.
- No government agency will call you to demand immediate payment for “international fees” or taxes.
- No government agency will demand one type of payment; you will be given several options to pay, usually with a link to a secure government website. Check the web address to be sure it is legitimate.

**Tips to Avoid Scams:**

- Never provide any personal, financial, immigration, or other sensitive information over the phone, even if the caller already seems to know a lot about you.
- Do not share personal details on social media, LinkedIn, or other websites. Remove your phone number and address from any posted resume or work history. Leave only your email address.
- Carefully review the information on the OIS website for additional details about scams and more tips on what to do if you receive a suspicious phone call.
NC State is recognized as a top institution driving innovation and supporting economic prosperity. With access to world-class faculty who are top experts in their fields, state-of-the-art laboratories, and a collaborative research community on Centennial Campus, NC State students have countless opportunities to Think and Do the extraordinary! NC State consistently ranks among the top 10 for key technology transfer metrics among U.S. universities without a medical school (see below). NC State was also recently ranked in the top 20 U.S. universities for graduate employability by Times Higher Education. Check out the NC State Statistics and Strengths website for more information about NC State rankings.

# 2 in Commercialization of Research in the U.S.
# 3 in North America in Increasing Research Publications
Top 10 for Key Technology Transfer Metrics in the U.S.
# 2 in Licenses & Options Executed
# 3 in Startups Launched (100+)
# 5 in Invention Disclosures Received

ACADEMIC & CAREER SUPPORT

Graduate Writing Center
- Writing consultations at any point in your writing process
- Reviews of assignments, grant proposals, dissertations, job materials, and more

Thesis & Dissertation Support Services
- Workshops
- Writing Retreats
- Thesis & Dissertation Institutes

Career Development Center
- Cooperative Education Program
- Professional Development Workshops
- Internship & Job Search Assistance
- Resume Reviews & Practice Interviews
- On-Campus Career Fairs

NC STATE LIBRARIES

Fast Facts
- 5 Locations across Campus
- 2,300,000 Visitors / Year
- 5,100,000 Print Volumes
- 1,003,000+ E-Books
- 91,000 Serial Subscriptions
- Alt-Textbook Project - Free or low-cost alternatives to expensive textbooks

State-of-the-Art Facilities
- Makerspaces with 3D printers
- Digital Media Creation Labs
- Free Workshops - Research, Visualization, Makerspaces, Digital Media, and more
- Technology Lending Services
- Large-scale, high-definition visualization spaces
NC State was the first institution in the nation to complete the Healthier Campus Initiative, encouraging healthier options among the more than 40,000 students, faculty, and staff on campus.

University Dining offers a wide range of healthy options to satisfy a variety of dietary needs, including vegetarian and vegan. In 2016, NC State was listed in the Top 50 Best College Dining Experiences.

NC State’s Student Health Center was ranked #1 in student health services in North Carolina by the Princeton Review. As part of tuition and fees, the health fee at NC State covers routine visits with highly qualified professionals.

4 Interfaith Prayer & Meditation Rooms can be found in central locations throughout campus - providing safe, semi-private spaces for spiritual and religious activities.

60+ student organizations that support students of a variety of spiritual and religious beliefs.

International Tea Time - NC State’s Counseling Center offers a weekly space for international students to meet peers, learn about different cultures, relax and support each other. All students are welcome to attend.

GET INVOLVED!
NC State has numerous student organizations for diverse academic, social, and cultural interests.

700+ student organizations
80+ cultural or international focus
20+ represent specific cultures

UNIVERSITY RECREATION
32,500 sq. meters of fitness space
100+ group fitness classes / week
70 intramural and club sports

If you enjoy sports and working out, you will enjoy University Recreation’s facilities and fitness programs! Students have access to the Carmichael Gymnasium and Recreation Center, the aquatic center, and more than 100 weekly group fitness classes for free with their Wolfpack One Card.

Students can also join intramural sports teams, club sports, and other student organizations for a variety of interests such as skiing, sailing, and more.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES
The Outdoor Adventures program reaches far beyond the limits of NC State to give students an opportunity to participate in a variety of affordable outdoor trips across the state. Some examples of adventure trips include rock climbing, kayaking, mountain biking, and backpacking.

The Outdoor Adventures program also offers a variety of outdoor equipment rentals and bicycle rentals through the WolfWheels bike program.
Although your studies are very important, we encourage you to take some time to have fun while you are at NC State! You will find there are numerous ways to get involved on campus and in the community. The university offers more than 700 student organizations, a variety of intramural sports, as well as a Crafts Center, Theatre, and Dance program for those interested in the arts. Getting involved on campus is more than just having fun; it is an opportunity to develop valuable communication and leadership skills that will contribute to your success in both your academic and professional careers.

**NC STATE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

With more than 700 student organizations, NC State offers numerous opportunities to get involved and gain valuable experience outside of the classroom. You will find a variety of student organizations for social, ethnic, religious, artistic, professional, and academic interests. Want to meet people from all over the world? Check out the Global Pack student organization!

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GROUPS**

Several national and regional associations can be found at NC State. They promote cultural and educational learning opportunities for the university community and can sometimes help you locate housing and connect to other valuable resources. You are encouraged to make connections with an appropriate association and become involved as a representative of your country and culture. More information about international student organizations can be found on the Get Involved website and on the OIS website.

**ARTS NC STATE**

If you enjoy the arts, there are many events you can attend and participate in including theatre, dance, and musical performances. All students are welcome to participate in these events regardless of major! Check out the University Theatre’s website to learn more about how to get involved, or to find more information about upcoming events. NC State also has a Crafts Center on campus where students can take non-credit bearing courses in ceramics, photography, painting, drawing, woodworking, and more. Classes fill up quickly so register early!
INTRAMURAL AND CLUB SPORTS

If you enjoy playing sports, NC State has 70 intramural and club sports teams you can join. Intramural teams only play other NC State students, while club sports teams compete against other universities at the local, state, and national levels. Intramural and club sports are a great way to have fun and meet new friends. You can even organize your own group of friends and make a new team. University Recreation organizes intramural and club sports teams including Soccer, Cricket, Basketball, and even Quidditch! For a complete list of sports offered and to sign up, check out the intramural sports and club sports websites.

WOLFPACK WELCOME WEEK (WWW)
AUGUST 16-24

Wolfpack Welcome Week is a time for new students to get acquainted with the Wolfpack community and learn more about NC State. Through WWW events all over campus, you will be introduced to university traditions as well as the numerous ways get involved and build your community of new friends at NC State.

Packapalooza, NC State’s free annual street festival, is a highlight of WWW. The full-day bloc party is a great way to start the academic year with great music, fun activities, performances, and more (including fireworks!).

NC STATE PACK ATHLETICS

Even if you do not participate in any sports, Pack athletic events are a lot of fun and a great way to learn more about the Wolfpack community. All NC State athletic events are free for students. Tickets for football and men’s basketball must be reserved using the online student ticketing center. Simply show your Student ID for free entry to other athletic events.
OIS PROGRAMS

OIS sponsors numerous unique and exciting programs designed to foster cross-cultural exchange within the campus and Triangle communities. OIS Programs range in time commitment to fit any student’s schedule. Each program provides opportunities to interact with Americans outside of the classroom and learn firsthand about American culture. Together, they promote a more fulfilling experience at NC State. International students and their families members are encouraged to participate and take advantage of OIS programs during their time at NC State.

CULTURE CORPS is a unique program at NC State University that sends international students, scholars, and dependents out into the Raleigh community to share information about their cultures. Through their participation in presentations, demonstrations, display tables at festivals, etc., internationals are able to serve as ambassadors for their countries. Learn more and sign up on the OIS website.

ISSERV - INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS & SCHOLARS ENGAGED IN REACHING OUT & VOLUNTEERING is a program designed to encourage NC State’s international students, scholars, and dependents to volunteer in the Raleigh community. By volunteering, internationals interact with community members and learn more about American culture while also sharing their own culture. Learn more and sign up on the OIS website.
BREAKING BREAD is a meal-hosting program that offers an opportunity for international students, scholars, and their family members to spend time inside a local family’s home and interact with Americans on a cultural level. Hosts are matched with international guests to share a meal at a time and date convenient for everyone. If you would like to participate, please complete the Breaking Bread application.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLUB is a relaxed place to practice English language listening and speaking skills. International students are paired with native English speaking volunteers to practice English in small, informal group discussions. English Conversation Club (ECC) meets three times a week with meetings on Main Campus and Centennial Campus. Specific meeting times and locations can be found on the ECC website. No application or registration is required for ECC. Students can choose to attend any meeting that works with their schedule.

IMOM - International Moms or Mates is a group for spouses of international students and scholars at NC State University. IMOM is a great place to make friends from all over the world! For more information, visit the IMOM website. No registration is required and children are welcome! Childcare is provided for children 5 years of age and under.
CAMPUS SAFETY

The NC State Police Department is responsible for maintaining a safe and pleasant environment in which to live and learn. Concerned with the protection of life and property, Campus Police officers enforce both the laws of the state of North Carolina and regulations of the university. Emergency blue light telephones have been placed around campus for your safety. These phones are distinctly marked with a red phone box attached to a white pole with a bright blue light bulb on top. When activated, you will be in immediate voice contact with a Campus Police Officer. The officer will receive a digital readout pinpointing your exact location.

Emergency Number: Always dial 911 for emergencies. To reach the Campus Police directly call 919.515.3000.

Safety Escort Service: The NC State Police Department provides a safety escort service to protect students, faculty, and staff on campus between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. as long as weather is safe for operation. In the hours prior to 10 p.m., the police department encourages anyone traveling on campus to walk in well lighted areas with groups of people or to use the Wolfline bus service.

To request a Safety Escort, call 1.919.515.3000. A security guard will meet you at your location and will provide a safety escort to anywhere on campus including outer areas such as, but not limited to the Vet School, the Avent Ferry Complex, and Centennial Campus during the 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. time period.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have any special needs for accommodation in terms of physical access, or you have a learning disability or other circumstance that requires our special attention, please let us know. You may be able to benefit from some of the campus resources dedicated to helping all students succeed. For further information about disability accommodation and resources please contact an OIS staff member or the Disability Resource Office at NC State.

Speech-to-Speech (STS): This service provides communication assistants (CAs) for people with difficulty being understood by the public on the phone. The Speech-to-Speech access number for North Carolina is 1.877.735.8261.

Text Access: Text access translates auditory information into text to be read on a computer or other display device. Visit the Disability Resource website to learn more about Text Access at NC State.

Assistive Listening Devices (ALD): For persons with hearing aids or who have difficulty hearing, the Disability Resource Office can provide assistance for your use during class. Visit the Disability Resource Office’s website to learn more about the use of ALD on campus.

Accessible Classrooms & Buildings On Campus: NC State upholds strict regulations regarding building and classroom accessibility. More information can be found on the Disability Resource Office website.
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND GOPASSES FOR STUDENTS

The NC State bus line, called the Wolfline, is free for anyone in the community. After obtaining a GoPass from University Transportation for a $5 fee, students can also ride the GoRaleigh/CAT (city) buses and GoTriangle (regional) buses for free. Without a GoPass, the cost of one-way fare is $2.25 for GoTriangle buses and $1.25 for GoRaleigh buses.

To track buses in real-time you can check the Transloc website or download the TransLoc Rider app.

NOTE: You must complete the registration form to receive a GoPass. University Transportation can not mail the GoPass to an international address. If you do not have a permanent Raleigh address, you may have your GoPass mailed to a friend in Raleigh (be sure to ask for their permission first!) or pick it up at the University Transportation office after you arrive. Your GoPass will be delivered to the address you provide 2 weeks after completing the registration form.

DRIVING IN NORTH CAROLINA AND THE UNITED STATES

If you plan to drive in the U.S., you are permitted to drive with a valid license issued by a government agency from your home state or country for up to 60 days after your arrival date. After 60 days, you are required by law to have a North Carolina Driver’s License if you wish to continue driving in the U.S. A list of documents needed to apply for a North Carolina Driver’s License can be found on the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) website. For more information about driving in NC, visit the OIS website and the DMV’s website.

PURCHASING A CAR AND CAR INSURANCE

If you plan to purchase a used car in the U.S., carefully review the important used car information on NC State’s Student Legal Services website. It is required by law for all North Carolina drivers to purchase car insurance. It is recommended that you bring a certified letter from your car insurance company confirming your driving record in your home country. Such a letter might reduce high car insurance rates from American companies.

If you do not plan to purchase a vehicle and will not need car insurance you may still apply for a license, but a restriction will be placed on your driver’s license. This restriction limits you to only driving “fleet vehicles” and rental cars. To remove this restriction, you will have to pay a $13 duplicate fee and present proof of financial liability.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS - DRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

- New international students can not apply for a driver’s license until 10 business days after you have completed the OIS Check-in process.

- When driving in the United States, you must have a valid driver’s license with you at all times.

- The “International Driver’s License” is not valid in the state of North Carolina, however it may be a helpful English translation of a license issued from your home country if it is not in English.
NC State University is dedicated to equality of opportunity. The university does not condone discrimination against students, employees, or applicants in any form. NC State commits itself to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, NC State welcomes all persons without regard to sexual orientation.