

International Student and Scholar Services

Handbook

University of Northern Colorado

2024



HANDBOOK FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS & SCHOLARS

501 20th St | Campus Box 52 | Greeley, CO 80639 | P: 970-351-2396 | unco.edu/global

This handbook is designed to help international students and scholars at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) living, studying, and researching in the United States of America, and on our campus. We, here at the Office of Global Engagement, would like to make your stay with us a productive and pleasurable one.

Living and studying outside of your home country for a single semester, a whole year, or to complete a multi-year degree is both challenging and exciting. You'll experience differences in classroom settings and learn to navigate daily life outside the classroom while adapting to our campus and community and bringing the richness of your own culture and personality to our global Bear community.

This handbook will briefly address several areas of importance to international students and scholars, including a brief review of immigration laws and regulations that affect you and your dependents, some important policies and procedures that affect your everyday performance as a student at UNC, services available on our campus, and various organizations on campus that help you acculturate to UNC life and life in the U.S. The handbook covers some ways to make the best of living in our Greeley community, some customs and mores of American culture, and some important information to help you get started navigating the community.

Your information sources are many. Please do not depend on this handbook alone for answers to every one of your questions. You must develop the habit of consulting as many sources as possible including the university catalog (<https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com>), your academic advisor, the staff at the Office of Global Engagement, your professors, your student handbook, your colleagues and peers, and other helpful personnel at UNC. Members of the UNC community are friendly and want to help you learn your way around and support you while you are here.

Please come by our center and get acquainted with us. We are really glad you are here with us!

OFFICE OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Office of Global Engagement (OGE)

Wilson Hall
(970) 351-2396
global@unco.edu
www.unco.edu/global

Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (except summer, when the university closes at 1 p.m. on Fridays)

If you are stopped or detained by U.S. immigration officials at an airport or land border port of entry, you may call the UNC emergency number +1-970-576-9572. An OGE staff member has the phone 24 hours a day but may not be a Designated School Official or Responsible Officer able to access the SEVIS system. Please leave a detailed message including your name, date of birth, nationality, current location (e.g. specific airport or land border port of entry), and airline and flight number. We recommend that you provide the emergency number to a close family member or friend who can monitor your arrival in the United States and call us on your behalf if you are not able to make any calls during any delay during processing at the port of entry.

UNC Global ISSS Portal login <https://iss.unco.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Security.AngLogin>

Book an appointment with OGE staff online

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/CenterforInternationalEducation1@uncoedu.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>

OGE STAFF:

Olga Baron
Executive Director

Vacant
Director of Education Abroad

Erika Saunders
Assistant Director, International Partnerships and
Business Development

Justin Forrest
Education Abroad Advisor

Jane Borisova
Director of Intensive English Program

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Education Abroad Graduate Assistant

Other staff include ESL instructors, graduate assistants, peer advisors, and other student staff

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) Staff

Kara LaSota
Director of International Student and Scholar Services

Gwendolen (Gwen) Vandenberg
International Advisor & SEVIS Compliance Specialist

Anjulena Bagga
Cross Cultural Graduate Assistant

OGE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS:

Intensive English Program: The Intensive English Program (IEP) is one of the highest-rated and longest-standing language training programs in the country, fully accredited by CEA. It fuses cross-cultural immersion with focused English language instruction to create a unique and distinctive college preparatory experience to ensure our students' future academic success and career readiness.

OGE Newsletter: An electronic newsletter, includes information on international activities, on and off campus issues, and important immigration information.

International Partnerships: Alliances with universities around the world are important for the advancement of disciplinary and professional knowledge and the cultural competence of students, faculty, and staff. Our international partners send us talented students, welcome UNC students in study abroad and exchange programs, and encourage eminent scholars to collaborate with UNC's distinguished faculty in research, scholarships, creative works, curriculum, and instructional methodology. OGE is responsible for managing global partnerships.

Education Abroad: UNC offers education abroad opportunities to all degree seeking students. The Education Abroad team strives to offer every student, in every discipline, the opportunity to participate in a high-quality study abroad program, including degree seeking F-1 students wishing to study abroad in a third country. Our portfolio extends to every continent, and includes semester and year-long programming, as well as summer and winter term options.

U.S. Passport Services: OGE offers passport application assistance to U.S. citizens applying for first time passports.

F-1/J-1 Immigration Orientation: Held prior to the first day of classes for each semester for all new international students and on demand for scholars.

Advising and Problem Solving: OGE staff can help you with any issues related to academic questions and concerns or immigration rules and regulations. We can connect you to other services on campus (and sometimes off campus) when you're not sure where to go for help.

Transition and Cultural Adjustment Assistance: Including connecting students and scholars with help in locating airport transportation, temporary and long-term housing, banking, and any other transition needs.

Programming and Activities: Many events are planned during the year, such as International Education Week, off-campus trips to see points of interest in Colorado, and the **Global Buddies** friendship program, to pair up international students and scholars with domestic students, faculty, and staff for cultural mentoring and friendship. See <https://www.unco.edu/global/events> or Bear Connect <https://unco.campuslabs.com/engage/> for more information or stop by the OGE office for a list of activities planned for each semester.

International Exchange Store: The International Exchange Store offers the loan of gently used donated items like sheets, blankets, and kitchenware to international students and scholars at no cost on a first-come, first served basis. We also have a few warm coats. You are welcome to borrow available items during shorter stays or until you shop for things that you want. In turn, students and scholars (and community members) are encouraged to donate gently used clean items at the end of your stay at UNC to help reduce the impact of global mobility on the environment and reduce costs for future students and scholars.

Work Authorization Assistance: If you are offered employment in the U.S., whether on-campus or off-campus, ISSS can assist you in determining whether you are eligible to take the position, and if so in obtaining a Social Security Number and alerting you to specific restrictions. Assistance with Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT) is available as well.

Scholars on a DS-2019 from UNC may request authorization from the ISSS team for occasional

lectures or short-term consultations incidental to their primary program activities. (Scholars supported agencies, such as Fulbright/HIE must request authorization from the Program Sponsor that issued their DS-2019).

Nonresident Alien Tax Assistance: Anyone who has been in the United States in F or J status during any part of a calendar year is required to file tax forms the following spring, whether or not they have any employment or income in the U.S. OGE's ISSS team provides free access to nonresident alien tax software each spring to assist students and scholars with meeting their U.S. tax filing obligations.

Emergency Grants: Small, one-time emergency grants may be available to international students or scholars experiencing severe and unexpected economic hardship. Emergency awards vary according to available funds and demonstrated need. Emergency funding is provided in the form of a one-time grant, which does not need to be repaid. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, not all applicants will be awarded a grant, and the amounts are small.

NEW STUDENT CHECKLIST

___ Find suitable housing. See the “Settling In” section of this handbook for more information.

___ Check in with the Office of Global Engagement. Please complete your “Check In/Arrival Documentation” request by uploading your passport, I-94, I-20/DS-2019 for you and your dependents in UNC Global ISSS portal.

___ Attend International Student Orientation/Immigration Briefing. Attendance for international student orientation is mandatory for all F-1 and J-1 visa status holders.

___ Get the UNC Mobile App to help find your way around campus, stay up to date with news and events, access grades, see class schedules, social media and more quickly and easily.
<https://www.unco.edu/app/>.

___ Open a bank account. See the “Banking” section of this handbook.

___ Graduate students: Check in with your academic department for orientation and advising information, request a Social Security Support letter (and be sure you have completed the check in process) if you have an assistantship. Attend Welcome Week events as an opportunity to get to know campus.

___ Undergraduate students: Attend orientation online and Welcome Week on campus.

___ Register for classes on-line using URSA (<https://ursa.unco.edu/>). Use your assigned username and password to enter URSA. Make sure you are registered full time:

- **Intensive English Students (IEP)** 9 credits per 8 week IEP term (no online classes permitted)
- **Undergraduates** (including Exchange Students) – at least 12 credit hours (9 of which must be face to face or hybrid)
- **Graduate Students** – at least 9 credit hours (6 of which must be face to face or hybrid)

___ Pay for classes online (on URSA) or at the Bursar’s Office, Campus Commons, second floor. *Flynwire* is the best option for international payments.

___ Arrange health insurance for you and your family members if you are not already covered (See Health Care and Medical Insurance section of this handbook for information). Request an insurance waiver through the Global portal if you need one.

___ Get a UNC ID card in the Card Office (University Center, second level).

___ Purchase your textbooks. Online or at the Bookstore in the University Center. Additionally, students in the USA qualify for 6 months free of Amazon Prime. You can use this to rent or purchase textbooks as well as any other supplies you may need delivered. Please note you will be charged after 6 months if you do not cancel your membership. It is important to make sure you are purchasing or renting the correct edition of any textbook formatting, pagination, and quiz/homework questions change regularly, and the wrong edition could mean failed assignments.

___ Make sure you can access Microsoft 365, Canvas, and BearMail. More information on using Microsoft 365 can be found at <https://www.unco.edu/information-management-technology/students.aspx>.

___ Attend all classes regularly beginning on the first day.

___ Consider joining some UNC clubs and organizations, including Global Buddies. See more opportunities for involvement here <https://www.unco.edu/student-engagement>,

IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

IMPORTANT - It is your responsibility to remain in status with the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations.

This information is very limited in scope, and more information is available on the <https://www.unco.edu/global/> website and in UNC Global's ISSS portal for students <https://iss.unco.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Security.AngLogin>

Who to ask for help: Many international students and scholars coming to the United States in J or F status have friends, family members, professors, or colleagues who have had similar experiences here. While it's fine to ask them for their input or advice, remember that your friends and family do not have access to your immigration record and may not understand the scope of your situation. Please consult with the ISSS team in OGE or a qualified immigration attorney before taking the advice of friends and family. Advice offered with the best of intentions can still be terrible advice and get YOU into serious trouble.

U.S. Department of State: The Department of State (DOS) is responsible for U.S. Consulates and Embassies abroad and issues visas for visitors coming to the U.S. in any category. Consular locations abroad can be found here: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. The Department of State is also the federal (national government) agency responsible for the J-1 Exchange Visitor program. <https://j1visa.state.gov/>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: DHS has overall authority for many U.S. government agencies impacting international students and scholars, including Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). <https://www.dhs.gov/>

CBP: U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the first contact most students and scholars have with DHS agents, and is the agency responsible for immigration inspections at U.S. ports of entry, for the Border Patrol, and for the Customs Service. A CBP officer "inspects" all prospective entrants to the United States and makes a determine whether or not you are eligible to enter <https://www.cbp.gov/> and records each entry and exit in the I-94 Arrival/Departure system.

I-94 Arrival/Departure Record: All non-immigrants are assigned an I-94 number upon entry to the US. Students and scholars should access their I-94 Arrival/Departure Record from the CBP website <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/> as soon as possible after arrival, and verify that the information is correct and complete (data entry errors are not common, but they DO happen, and must be corrected when they do, or you could be in violation of the status you're given on arrival – even if it's wrong)... The printout serves as an official I-94 record for federal and state government-based benefit applications, such as driver's license and social security number, and some applications to USCIS.

ICE: The Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement is responsible for immigration investigations, detention, removal, intelligence, and SEVIS. At the most basic level, ICE is a law enforcement agency related to immigration. <https://www.ice.gov/>

SEVP/SEVIS: As a branch of ICE, SEVP manages schools, nonimmigrant students in the F and M visa classifications and their dependents. The Department of State (DOS) manages Exchange Visitor Programs, nonimmigrant exchange visitors in the J visa classification and their dependents. Both SEVP and DoS use the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) to track and monitor schools; exchange visitor programs; and F, M and J nonimmigrants while they visit the United States and participate in the U.S. education system. <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/>

The ISSS team at UNC accesses the SEVIS system to issue I-20 and DS-2019 support documents and meet reporting and compliance requirements for all students and exchange visitors. Only Designated School Officials (DSO or PDSO) and Responsible Officers (RO or ARO) can access the SEVIS system for reporting or issuing and signing documents. At UNC, the DSOs and AROs are members of OGE's

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) team and the Executive Director of OGE.

USCIS: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration is the federal agency that oversees lawful immigration to the United States, but it also adjudicates many benefits for nonimmigrants like F and J status students and scholars. Some kinds of work authorization for F-1 students and J-2 dependents are adjudicated (decided) by applications to USCIS, as well as F-1 (and dependent) reinstatement to valid F status, changes of status, and other benefits. <https://www.uscis.gov/>

Passport: Your passport is the basic travel document issued by your home country. It identifies you as a citizen of that country and enables you to reenter that country. The passport must be valid for at least the next six months on your entry to the United States, but should not be allowed to expire while you are here. If an extension is needed, contact the consulate of your country having jurisdiction over Colorado. Consular locations are available at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/consularnotification/ConsularNotificationandAccess.html>

Visa: Once admitted to UNC, you will need to apply for a student or exchange visitor visa. A visa is a document that allows you to request entry to the United States to participate in very specific activities consistent with that visa type. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas.html>

After entry into the U.S., visas can expire without penalty; it is not necessary to renew the visa unless you plan to leave and reenter during your program. At this time, visas cannot be renewed inside the United States – but new visas may only be obtained at United States consulates or embassies outside the U.S.

Immigration Status: Most international students at the University of Northern Colorado hold status as either F-1 students (F-1 Visa) or J-1 exchange visitors (J-1 Visa). Most scholars hold J-1 exchange visitor status. While your status on entry usually matches your visa category, your status may change inside the U.S. (application to USCIS) after arrival. You should also verify that you were admitted to the United States in the correct status by checking your I-94 Arrival/Departure record online each and every time you arrive and downloading a copy. I-94 records are required to apply for certain benefits, and to ensure that you are complying with the requirements of your status (if CBP makes a mistake, we need to get it corrected – contact OGE’s ISSS team for assistance). <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>

U.S. Residential Contact Information: All visitors in F and J status must report their residential (living) address immediately on arrival to the U.S. and update the ISSS team within 10 days of any change of living address. Students can submit this information in Ursa. Scholars should reach out to the ISSS team directly to update the information as well as updating Ursa. The address is then updated in UNC Global ISSS portal and SEVIS for students (where you can verify the information) and directly in SEVIS for scholars. It is also important to update us with your U.S.-based phone number if you have it.

F-1 Student: The most common non-immigrant status held by international students at UNC is the F-1, issued for the purpose of attending a specific university. In order to maintain valid status as an F-1 student, you must continue to attend that school, be a full-time student (minimum of 12 hours per semester for undergraduate and 9 hours per semester for graduate students) and make normal progress toward a degree or the completion of an educational objective. Accompanying dependents of an F-1 student are classified as having F-2 status.

J-1 Exchange Visitor: J-1 Exchange Visitor Status is used by a wide variety of students, professors, researchers, and short-term scholars who come to the United States for academic or training pursuits. An Exchange Visitor visa is obtained on the basis of the DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for J-1 Visa) and is issued by the university stating that a student has been admitted or the intended activities of a scholar at the university. J-1 students must maintain full-time status by carrying 12 credit hours per semester as an undergraduate and 9 credits hours per semester as a graduate student. Accompanying dependents of J-1 Exchange Visitors are classified as having J-2 status. J-1 scholars maintain status by participating in the scholarly activities proposed in their application.

F-2 and J-2 Status: Students and scholars wishing to have their spouse and children join them in the

United States are encouraged to consider financial situations carefully before doing so. Students should consider the availability and cost of university and private housing, home government regulations restricting travel of spouses, the general costs of food, medical care, and school facilities for children.

Dependents coming in F-2 status or J-2 status (as opposed to those coming for a short term stay through a B visitor visa or the visa waiver program), must be issued an I-20 (for the F category) or DS-2019 (for J categories) of their own, and apply for the appropriate visa. The primary F-1 or J-1 are required to provide a financial statement or guarantee verifying the means of support for their families. For more details, visit or call OGE. Each category and type of dependent has slightly different rules to follow.

Duration of Status (D/S): Students and scholars entering with an F or J visa (and their F-2 and J-2 dependents) should automatically be granted "duration of status" (D/S) on entry to the United States, allowing them to remain until their programs are complete, plus any grace period, unless they violate their status. If the expected completion of degree program is beyond the duration given on the I-20 or DS-2019, notify OGE to apply for an extension of stay.

Extension of Stay: If you do not complete your course of study or scholarly activities by the expected date indicated on the I-20 or DS-2019, you must apply to OGE. An application for an extension must be made no later than 30 days before the expiration date on your I-20 or DS-2019, but extensions must meet immigration guidelines, and are not guaranteed. Student extension requests are processed through UNC's Global ISSS portal. Scholar extension requests are processed manually with ISSS staff.

If you are changing educational levels (for example, from Bachelor's degree to Master's degree), you must notify ISSS staff of the change. We will create a Change of Level request in the Global ISSS portal for you to complete and submit for a new I-20 or updated DS-2019. Note that new financial documentation is required.

Health Insurance Requirement: All International students and scholars (and all J-2 dependents) must carry a health insurance policy that meets university and U.S. Department of State standards. Students registered for any classes will automatically be enrolled in the university student health insurance plan and the semester premium will be added to your student bill. If you have other comparable insurance, you must submit an online waiver by the 10th day of classes. For information on UNC's health insurance, please see www.unco.edu/ship or contact the Student Health Insurance Program office, Cassidy Hall, 970-351-1915.

J-1 status Exchange Visitors, and their J-2 dependents, must have health insurance for the duration of their EV program which includes all of the following provisions at a minimum (see <https://j1visa.state.gov/sponsors/how-to-administer-a-program/>):

Sponsors must require that all exchange visitors (as well as their accompanying spouses and dependents) have insurance in effect that covers them for sickness or accidents during the time of their exchange visitor program. The Department of State requires verification of insurance because inadequate insurance may be catastrophic for an individual exchange visitor and/or their dependents.

Medical insurance coverage must meet the following minimum benefits [22 CFR 62.14].

Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness

Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000.

Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the exchange visitor to his or her home country in the amount of \$50,000.

A deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness.

Sponsors are to require that their participants (and any dependents entering the United States as holders of a J-2 visa) have insurance in effect during the period of time they are in the sponsor's program. An insurance policy secured to meet the benefits requirements must be underwritten by an insurance corporation with an A.M. Best rating of "A-" or above, an Insurance Solvency International, Ltd. (ISI) rating of "A-I" or above, a Standard and Poor's Claims Paying Ability rating of "A-" or above, or a Weiss Research, Inc. rating of B+ or above. Alternatively, the sponsor may ascertain that the participant's policy is backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the exchange visitor's home country. For other

options, see [22 CFR 62.14].

Program regulations also discuss coverage through HMOs and self-insurance of the above requirements by federal, state or local government agencies, state colleges and universities, and public community colleges, if permitted by law. Refer to [22 CFR 62.14] for additional information.

Employment

Employment: Employment of any kind without authorization is forbidden while you are in F or J status. Regulations governing employment and work for nonimmigrants in the U.S. are *extremely strict*, and include informal employment like monetizing social media, babysitting, the use of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) for international athletes, and anything else that exchanges your time and energy for goods or services as well as actual money. Even some “volunteer” activities are considered employment for immigration purposes and may not be allowed. Your physical location at the time the “work” is performed matters – even working for a company outside the U.S. is not permitted if you are inside the U.S. Please discuss your plans and ideas with an ISSS team member before engaging in any activity that may be considered employment and jeopardize your F or J status in the U.S.

Some common examples of unauthorized employment:

- Sponsored blogging
- Social media promotion of goods or services for which you receive compensation – INCLUDING “free” merchandise.
- Name Image Likeness activities for athletes (opportunities that are available to your American teammates may not apply to you)
- Driving for Uber and Lyft
- Creating goods for sale (making jewelry, etc.)
- Import/export activities, even if your point of sales is overseas.
- Working for a company in your home country while you are physically in the United States
- Working as a “volunteer” in a position that is normally paid.
- Managing an investment property in the U.S.
- Day trading (buying or selling stocks once in a while is fine, but several hours a week or day, becomes active employment)

This article provides helpful insights into the area of authorized and unauthorized employment <https://cbkimmigration.com/employment-based-immigration/e-visas-for-entrepreneurs/faq-unauthorized-employment/>

Social Security Numbers (SSN) are required for legal employment in the United States. If you are authorized for employment and under UNC’s F-1 or J-1 immigration sponsorship, you may request a Social Security support letter through the UNC Global ISSS portal. Please note that once assigned, an SSN is yours for life (even if you leave the United States for years), and you should keep it safe: Carry it **ONLY** when you need it and never email the information– identity theft is very common in the United States. It is difficult to obtain a replacement card, so keep it safe. Having an SSN is not authorization to work. It is merely for tax tracking purposes.

If you have an SSN already, please make sure to provide it to the UNC Registrar’s office (Individual Data Change Request form here <https://www.unco.edu/registrar/forms.aspx>) to track any future payments/scholarships you may receive from UNC. Students who get an SSN as a result of employment at UNC should provide it to Payroll.

Employment for J-1 Students and F-2 and J-2 Dependents: In certain circumstances, J-1 students may obtain authorization for off-campus work. Contact the OGE for information. J-2 dependents of J-1 students may apply for work authorization through US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Contact ISSS staff for information about employment.

F-2 dependents of F-1 students are not eligible for any employment, on or off campus, at any time while in the United States. This includes informal employment like babysitting or social media work as well as any employment for companies outside the U.S. as long as the F-2 is physically residing in the U.S.

Employment that Can Be Authorized:

F-1 and J-1 On-Campus Employment: F-1 and J-1 students who are maintaining status may work part-time on campus while classes are in session. “Part-time” means not more than 20 hours per week. F-1 students do not need special authorization to work on campus; however, J-1 students need written authorization from the responsible officer of their exchange visitor program. During vacation periods and academic breaks, students may work full-time on campus if they are returning to classes the following term.

International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) students must contact the ISEP coordinator at OGE as well as receiving ISEP’s authorization, before accepting on-campus employment.

Find and apply for campus employment through Handshake and the Center for Career Readiness (<https://www.unco.edu/career/>). Note that international students are not eligible for “work-study” or “work study only” positions. Work-study is a form of financial aid for U.S. citizens and permanent residents, and is not available to international students. Request a Social Security Support letter in the Global ISSS Portal after you have been offered employment. Note that a Social Security Number does not authorize you for work.

Off-Campus Employment: Off-campus employment is limited to F-1 and J-1 students in colleges and universities who are pursuing academic studies and is generally limited to employment that directly supports an academic program or individual class. English language students are not eligible for most off-campus employment. Working off-campus requires special authorization and is only available in certain situations. Contact the OGE office for information.

J-1 Academic Training (AT): is a type of paid or unpaid, authorized training, internship, practicum or employment for J-1 students. It may be taken during a student's program, or after the completion of a student's course of study (e.g., for internships, practica, post-graduation employment). AT is authorized by OGE for students with a DS-2019 issued by UNC. If you have another Program Sponsor (ISEP, IREX, Fulbright, etc.), you must seek approval from that Sponsor.

F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT): Curricular practical training (CPT) is work/study, internship, cooperative education, or another type of required internship or practicum in your field of study while enrolled in classes or during a vacation period. You may apply for curricular practical training if:

- you have maintained F-1 status for two semesters (exceptions for graduate students whose programs require earlier participation for all students),
- it is required by your program, and
- you are not enrolled in the Intensive English Program

You should apply for CPT for any off-campus training required for your program, including unpaid activities like student teaching, practicum, and unpaid internships or volunteer work required by your program.

Students who have engaged in full-time curricular practical training for one year are not eligible for optional practical training.

Students in the IEP are not eligible for CPT.

F-1 Optional Practical Training Before and After the Completion of Studies (OPT):

Optional practical training (OPT) can provide an opportunity to gain work experience in your area of study. You may choose to do OPT either before or after you complete your degree for a maximum of one year.

You may be eligible to apply for optional practical training before or after completion of studies if:

- the training is related to your major area of study, and
- after you have maintained full-time student status for two consecutive semesters.

Students enrolled in or completing the Intensive English Program are not eligible for OPT.

F-1 and J-1 Employment Based on Unforeseen Economic Hardship: If, after one year of full time enrollment in your current program, you experience severe and unforeseen economic circumstances based on events beyond your control, you may be able to apply to US Citizenship and Immigration Services (F-1) or OGE (J-1) for off campus work authorization. Contact the Office of Global Engagement for information.

Other Immigration Topics

Transfers: International students in F status, who wish to transfer schools must authorize UNC to transfer their SEVIS record to their new school. You must submit a transfer out request along with an admission letter to the new university through the UNC Global ISSS portal. Students and scholars with J-1 status must check with OGE regarding transfer procedures.

Entry into Another Country: Visa requirements vary from country to country. International students and scholars who intend to visit other countries should check that country's requirements for visitors from their home countries. Returning students and scholars must have a valid passport, a valid visa, and an endorsed I-20 or DS-2019 in order to travel to their home countries or visit other countries.

Re-Entry into the U.S.: To re-enter the United States, international students and scholars (and their dependents) must have an endorsed Form I-20 or DS-2019, valid visa, and a valid passport. The endorsement (sometimes called travel validation or travel signature) is valid for one year (except students on OPT) but may be renewed sooner. Travel validation requests may be made in the UNC Global ISSS portal for students and by making an appointment with an ISSS team member for scholars and their dependents. Transfer students should enter the U.S. on the I-20 issued by the school to which they are transferring.

Grace Periods.: F-1 students and their F-2 dependents have 60 days after completing a program of studies or approved post-completion Optional Practical Training to change level of studies or prepare for departure from the United States. An F-1 student who requests and receives authorized early withdrawal (for immigration purposes) before completing a program of studies has a 15-day grace period to depart the United States.

J-1 Students and Scholars (and their dependents) who completed their programs have a 30-day grace period to depart the United States, but no grace period if they do not complete their programs (so please work with OGE's ISSS Teams to determine appropriate next steps).

Program completion for students generally means the last day of classes in the last term of enrollment and meeting all graduation requirements (if in a degree program), whether or not you actually graduate; OR the expiration date on your I-20 or DS-2019, whichever is *earlier*.

Program completion for scholars is completing your intended research or study objectives or reaching the program end date on your DS-2019, whichever is earlier.

U.S. Tax Filing Requirement: As an international student or scholar in the United States, it's important that you understand the tax requirements of your visa and your filing obligations with the IRS (Internal Revenue Service).

All F- and J- status visitors must file tax forms if they were in the United States during the previous calendar year, and your dependents must also file forms independently. For the first 5 years of your F-

status and first 2 years of J- status, you generally remain a "nonresident for tax purposes." If you did not work or receive any income in the U.S. during 2020, and you are a non-resident for tax purposes, you are legally obliged to file the Form 8843. If you worked or received a stipend, grant, scholarship covering more than just tuition, or allowance in the USA (over a certain amount) you must also file the Form 1040-NR.

If you have been here in more than 5 consecutive calendar years in F status or more than 2 years in J- status, you may have become a "resident for tax purposes" -- even if you are still in F or J status for immigration purposes. If you are a resident for tax purposes, you are taxed on your world-wide income, and file your tax forms the same way an American citizen or legal permanent resident would.

Students with assistantships or scholarships (including athletic scholarships) greater than the amount of tuition and fees, OR scholarships designated for housing/dining will have an obligation pay taxes. While UNC may withhold these funds from payments to your student account, you may still be responsible for paying the balance to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

In most cases, UNC will send an email to you to activate Sprintax Calculus if you have a scholarship, assistantship, fellowship or other potentially taxable income from UNC, and the ISSS team in UNC will provide access to Sprintax tax software each spring for filing tax forms. Calculus can also help determine whether you are a resident for tax purposes. If you think you have a scholarship, fellowship, assistantship or other benefit from UNC, and have not received a Calculus email, please notify Amy Sands (Amy.Sands@unco.edu) in Accounting as soon as possible.

Using Calculus, the UNC Global ISSS team may be able to assist you in applying for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number or ITIN if you need one for tax purposes and do not have or are not eligible for a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN). If you already have an ITIN or SSN in the U.S. please enter that information into your Calculus profile and provide it to the UNC Registrar's office (Individual Data Change Request here <https://www.unco.edu/registrar/forms.aspx>) to get added to your student information.

Drugs, Alcohol, Marijuana and "Controlled Substances": The use of drugs, alcohol, and marijuana carry special risks for nonimmigrant students and scholars in the U.S. An arrest for driving a vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol will result in the automatic revocation of your visa, meaning you may not be able to re-enter the United States at future date. Although many countries allow people under the age of 21 to drink alcohol (either on their own or under the supervision of an adult), it is not legal in the U.S. to use alcohol under the age of 21 or for someone who is over 21 to provide it to someone under the age of 21.

Even though Colorado has "legalized" marijuana, use of pot in any form in any amount – even for medical purposes – is still a federal (national) offense and could jeopardize your stay in the U.S. and ability to return to the United States at a future date. There have been proposals to change federal laws concerning marijuana, but as the law currently stands, international students and scholars should avoid using marijuana recreationally or medically and also avoid working in the marijuana industry.

It is important to tell your ISSS advisor about any contact with law enforcement in the U.S., but especially important that you let us know about arrest involving "controlled substances" because of the potential impact on your immigration status.

Helpful resources

- <https://www.rnlawgroup.com/marijuana-use-and-non-immigrant-status-is-it-still-a-problem-even-if-it-is-legal-in-my-state/>
- <https://www.ilrc.org/warning-immigrants-about-medical-and-legalized-marijuana>
- <https://immigrantjustice.org/know-your-rights/know-your-rights-cannabis-marijuana>

- <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/will-legal-use-marijuana-make-applicant-immigration-benefits-inadmissible.html>

Violations of Status and Next Steps: If you do have immigration problems in the U.S. the OGE International Student and Scholar Services team will provide information on next steps and assist you with attempting to correct your status, if possible. It's important that you reach out to us as soon as possible. We also strongly recommend consulting a qualified immigration attorney.

J-1 Exchange Visitor Program Specific Topics

J-1 EVP Welcome Brochure <https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/EVP-Welcome-Brochure-2022.pdf> The Welcome Brochure from the Department of State covers many J-1 specific topics, contact information, and links. We strongly recommend that you review the information. The Department of State also provides the Exchange Visitor's Rights & Protections brochure – while it is more aimed at J-1 in some of the summer work programs and employment situations, the information applies to all our exchange visitors, and it's important for you to know your rights: <https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/EV-TRIFOLD.pdf> .

J-1 Cultural Participation Requirement: The J Exchange Visitor Program was designed to bring foreign nationals to the United States to gain new knowledge and ideas and to then return to their home countries to share that knowledge and experience in order to increase understanding between peoples and create closer ties between people and countries.

J-1 Exchange Visitors (students and scholars) should plan to attend at least 2 cultural events each term in the following categories, and provide confirmation of participation (in the UNC Global ISSS portal for students):

- UNC Cultural Exchange (table at the Cultural Fair, present at Culture Night, perform at Greeley Multicultural Festival, participate in UNC International Education Week)
- Arts and Culture (theater, art exhibit, dance performance, music concert)
- Sports and Leisure (UNC athletic games, ice skating, swimming, basketball)
- Academic Scholarship and Research (attend lectures; do presentations, engage with fellow students or faculty members on topics of mutual academic interest)
- Be prepared to share culture and speak at various UNC events if invited.

Report events attended in UNC Global or with an email to international.advising@unco.edu
Photos, testimonials, comments and suggestions are welcome, and may be submitted to the Department of State as part of our Annual Report.

J-1 Incident Reporting Obligation: OGE is required to report certain events involving J-1 exchange visitors or their dependents to the Department of State. Situations endangering health, safety or welfare, death, missing person, severe injury or illness, litigation (lawsuits), arrest, charges, law enforcement issues, sexually-related incidents or abuse, negative press, foreign government involvement, natural disasters, civil unrest, violence, etc. must be reported within 24 hours. This is not to punish Exchange Visitors or their dependents, it is because we have a responsibility for your health and safety while you are here. Please reach out to the ISSS team if you experience any difficulties while **you are** here.

J-1 212(e) / 2 Year Home Residency Requirement: To ensure that exchange takes place, a section was written into the Immigration and Nationality Act: INA Section 212(e).

“212(e)” sometimes called the “two year home residency requirement” makes certain exchange visitors and their dependents ineligible to change to another visa classification while in the U.S. and ineligible for

an H, L, or Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) status until they have returned to and been physically present in their last country of citizenship or permanent residence for a minimum of two years after completion of their J exchange programs. This means that a person in either J-1 or J-2 (dependent) status subject to 212(e) cannot reenter the United States in H, L, or immigrant ("green card") status until the two-year requirement has been fulfilled. 212(e) does not affect eligibility for other visa classes such as a B tourist, an F student, or an O outstanding scholar. Nor does it prevent a person from entering again in J status. It only prohibits H, L, or LPR. For example, a person subject to 212(e) may leave the United States and return in F status to pursue a course of study. However, the F-1 remains subject to 212(e) and remains ineligible for an H, L, or LPR visa until the 2-year condition has been met (cumulatively).

ACADEMIC LIFE

Academic Year

The academic year runs from late August or early September through late May or early June. Schools in the USA often run on a semester schedule of fall (August-December), spring (January-May), and summer (May-August). The semester system is the most common, and is the system used at the University of Northern Colorado. Check the academic calendar so that you do not miss important deadlines:

<https://www.unco.edu/registrar/calendars/>

Some universities use other calendars, and students interested in transferring should carefully check dates and deadlines to insure maintenance of F or J status during a transfer.

Catalog (also called University Catalog, College Catalog, or Course Catalog): All institutions of higher education have a detailed book, called a catalog that is compiled by the Registrar's office – some universities have one catalog for all levels of study – UNC has different catalogs for the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Catalog lists all programs, degrees and graduation requirements at the institution. The catalog acts as a kind of legal document for students, faculty and staff in understanding graduation requirements as well as many university policies. UNC's Catalogs are online at <https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/>

Academic Advising

Degree seeking students meet with an advisor online prior to class registration and should discuss ongoing academic plans with their advisor each term. When you first enroll, it is recommended that you:

- Visit with your advisor and plan a general outline for the completion of your degree.
- Obtain a list of degree requirements for your academic program.

During the semester, if problems arise with a particular course, discuss the problems with the professor and/or your academic advisor. Most professors encourage students to discuss any special problems with them. If you are having difficulties, do not delay going to talk with the professor. Professors at UNC have "office hours" for students to come request help or clarification for their classes. -Take advantage of office hours, even if you feel shy. Most professors are thrilled when students come to office hours and really want to help you.

Before selecting your courses each semester, you must consult with your academic advisor in order to receive a PIN number that will allow you to register for that semester. If your major is undeclared, you must consult with the SOAR office to receive your PIN number.

Selecting Courses

Exchange students and first year undergraduate students are encouraged to consider taking University 101 in their first term at UNC. It is an academic program designed to help students successfully navigate the challenges and meet the expectations of being an undergraduate student scholar at a research university and can be a very helpful introduction to American academic

expectations, which can be quite different from what you are used to. It's also a great way to get to know faculty and other students at UNC. For more information, see <https://www.unco.edu/university-101/>

Degree seeking students must receive advising from their academic or Departmental advisor before registering for classes. New and transfer undergraduates should contact their academic advisors. Graduate students should contact their department. Exchange students will work with their home school and the Office of Global Engagement. Intensive English students will register after they have taken English 3 or another assessment.

To register for classes online go to [Ursa](#). Degree-seeking undergraduates must have a “PIN” number in order to register, and will receive it during their advising session.

For information about course requirements and for descriptions of courses, see the [University of Northern Colorado Catalog](#). The [Schedule of Classes](#) for each term is posted several months before the start of each term, and provides the list of classes available for that individual term.

1. To search for offered courses in a specific term, please follow these steps:
From the [Schedule of Classes](#) page click on the **Go to the Schedule of Classes** button
2. Choose the correct term (Ex: Fall 2024) and narrow down choices, the subject (Ex: ANT Anthropology), and mark the checkbox for **Only show courses with seats available**.
3. Click **Run**.

NOTE: Most students coming on a J-1 visa (non-degree-seeking exchange) are not eligible to enroll in online courses in most cases. When reviewing the course lists in the Schedule of Classes, students should check that the course they wish to take is listed as ‘Face to Face’ and not ‘Online.’

All business courses must be approved by the School of Business. Please [contact the Business Advising Center](#) at [970-351-1233](tel:970-351-1233) to register for any classes beginning with a BA.

If you do not know which courses to register for or have problems registering for classes, please contact the International Student and Scholar Services team so we can refer you to the appropriate office.

The Credit System and Grade Point Average (GPA)

The university operates on the semester system; thus, the unit of credit is the semester hour. In most cases, the number of semester hours represents the number of hours per week that a class meets. Labs or other special classes may meet for more hours per week than the semester hours they earn. To receive a degree from the University of Northern Colorado, a student must accumulate a certain number of semester hours of credit, including general education requirements and requirements of the major department. Credit is awarded for satisfactory completion of assigned course work.

The Grade Point Average (GPA) provides a way to measure your cumulative performance on course work attempted at the university. Undergraduate students should maintain at least a 2.00 GPA and graduate students a 3.00 GPA for satisfactory performance on a 4.00 scale. Some specific programs require higher GPAs for students to continue in the program. If your GPA falls below these minimum standards, you may be subject to academic probation through your particular school or college. Semester GPAs and cumulative GPAs are computed by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the number of semester hours. Semester grades and GPA are available on URSA at the end of each semester.

Registration

You will sign up for courses through a process called registration. If you are not registered for a course, you will not receive credit for taking it. In order to register for courses, you must obtain a PIN number from your advisor and register for classes on URSA. Registration dates, the dates on which students may register for courses, are posted on the URSA website under “Determine Your Date to Register.”

Description of the "Student Bill and Bill Payment"

Both students and scholars will have fees charged to their "student account" or "e-Bill". The "e-Bill" is a list of the charges for which you are responsible. Tuition and student services fees, housing and dining, will be the largest sums on this list. There are two types of tuition: "in-state" tuition, for those students who are classified as Colorado residents, and "out of state" tuition for other students. Very few international students are eligible for in-state tuition. Student service fees are used to support the various student services such as the Counseling Center, Career Services, and the Office of Global Engagement.

Pay attention to whether or not you have been charged for UNC's health insurance. It is the policy of the university that all students have health insurance. This means that you must either have UNC's health insurance or show proof of having your own health insurance. If you have your own health insurance, you must submit a waiver request with proof of adequate alternative insurance in the UNC Global ISSS portal before the 10th day of classes.

We strongly recommend using Flywire (<https://www.unco.edu/bursar/pdf/flywire.pdf>) international payments - if you become eligible for a refund, it's much easier to do if you made your payment through Flywire. You can also set up a payment plan called "BearPay" to pay your bill in segments each term.

Note: If you have a financial obligation to the university that is past due, you will be subject to a late fee. In addition, you will not be allowed to register for classes, your transcript and diploma will not be released, and other university services, including placement services, will not be available to you.

Policy on the Payment of Sponsored Student Accounts

All charges applicable to a student are reflected on "My Statement" on the "Financial" tab in the URSA system. The charges for tuition, fees, housing, and other billable items for students who are financially sponsored are transferred to that sponsor's account for billing purposes after the student submits a valid financial guarantee to the Bursar's office. Charges which cannot be billed to a sponsor remain on the student's account and require payment by the student. It is important that you verify that you have a valid Financial Guarantee for each term on file with the Bursar (Bursar@unco.edu).

If you do not submit a valid Financial Guarantee, or your sponsor refuses payment on any or all of your bill, you are financially responsible for any and all charges you incur at UNC.

Schedule Adjustment (Drop/Add)

You have the option of withdrawing from a course after the semester begins. A monetary refund may be available if you "drop" a course prior to the deadlines specified in the online registration calendar found on the Registrar's website: <http://www.unco.edu/regrec/Registrarscalendar.htm> This calendar also specifies dates by which you can add a class to your schedule after the semester begins.

***Note:* You must maintain the required course load of 12 hours for undergraduate students and 9 hours for graduate students. If you do not, or cannot, take the required course load for a given semester, reach out to the International Student and Scholar Services team in the Office of Global Engagement immediately.**

Writing Center

970-351-2056, Ross Hall 1230

For assistance with writing, schedule an appointment with a tutor in the Writing Center. Call 970-351-2056 or schedule an appointment online at <https://www.unco.edu/writing-center/>.

Tutorial Services

970-351-1904, Michener L149

For group or individual tutoring on your specific classes, check out the tutorial services website to schedule an appointment for supported courses at <https://www.unco.edu/tutoring/>.

Math Study Center

970-351-2820, Ross Hall 2239

Access additional assistance with math classes at https://www.unco.edu/nhs/mathematical-sciences/current-students/study_center.aspx.

University 101

One class we recommend at UNC is the University 101 course. There is significant research to show this course helps students succeed academically and personally in the USA. Students in this course learn skills and tools for academic performance as well as tools for navigating campus life. Learn more about University 101 at <https://www.unco.edu/university-101/>.

What to Expect in the American Classroom

The American classroom may seem less formal than you are used to. Creativity, tolerance, and flexibility are in general, valued above tradition and respect for authority in the United States. Teaching styles and attitudes vary widely.

Classes may be taught by professors, associate and assistant professors, as well as lecturers and instructors, or teaching assistants (TAs), who are often graduate students pursuing a master's or doctoral degree at UNC.

Students in American classrooms may do things that seem disrespectful in your country, such as place their feet on the chair or desk in front of them, eat, drink, use a laptop computer for purposes not related to class, or even sleep in class.

Students may interrupt lectures to ask questions or even to raise objections to what is being said. These behaviors are considered acceptable unless done in a belligerent or aggressive manner. While professors may tolerate or even appreciate some behavior you find shocking, professors do note which students are awake, paying attention, asking relevant questions, and otherwise “engaging” in the classroom (making eye contact, nodding, taking notes, or otherwise demonstrating that they are paying attention!).

Attending class every day is expected (and may be reflected on “participation” grades). The first day (and the first week) is especially important, since professors and instructors usually discuss attendance policies and other expectations at that time. You should also carefully read the syllabus for each class, which will have important information about expectations, coursework, deadlines, and grading.

It is important that you ask your instructor for clarification if you do not understand something. You can do this during class, after class by requesting a moment of the professor's time, by communicating through Canvas if your class uses it, or in office hours. There are lots of ways to reach your instructors.

Many courses require a final exam during the last week of the semester that will include information from half or the whole semester. Some courses have a midterm exam that includes information from only the first half of the semester.

Academic Integrity

It is important to cite any information you use in assignments. To not cite information is considered plagiarism and could result in your dismissal from the university. You can learn more about UNC's policies on academic integrity here <https://www.unco.edu/dean-of-students/pdf/Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>.

Part of academic integrity includes using your own words. If you directly copy someone else's words, you must include them in quotation marks with a citation – if you rephrase something, you must still cite the source. Using Chat GPT or other artificial intelligence (AI) apps to generate papers or other assignments may also be a violation of the Bear Code. Make sure you have discussed limitations on AI with your professors before you use it for any assignment.

Relationships with Faculty

When you cannot attend class, contact your professors and inform them of the absence. When the professor is unavailable, the next best thing to do is send a formal email or leave a message with the

department during office hours. In case of serious injury or illness, contact the Dean of Students' office as well as your professors for an extended absence, and contact International Student and Scholar Services if you will need a reduced course load. Use faculty members as sources of knowledge. All professors have office hours during which time the professor will be available to answer questions and help you with your class assignments. If you cannot meet during these times, you can make an appointment by contacting the department or arranging a meeting time with the professor before or after class. Some professors may have online appointment scheduling. Check your course syllabus for this information. Some professors also use Canvas messages as a quick and easy way to communicate.

Computer Usage

There are several computer labs located on campus. Each lab usually has Macintosh and PC equipment in addition to a scanner and printers. Michener Library's also has laptops to loan to students.

Common Academic Language at UNC

- **LAC:** If you are a degree seeking undergraduate student, UNC requires that you complete courses from the Liberal Arts Core or Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC). These will include courses from outside of your major.
- **Add/Drop:** A deadline established by the university after which time students cannot add or withdraw (drop) classes for the semester.
- **Comprehensive (Comp) Exam:** A test covering all material in textbooks and class studied over a period of time, generally the course of a semester or program. A comprehensive exam is usually given at the end of the semester.
- **Graduate Comps:** Graduate students student must pass a comprehensive examinations (often both written and oral) or otherwise show competency in the discipline by successfully completing a specified equivalent that has been approved by the Graduate Council.
- **Faculty Override:** This process is when an instructor allows a student to register for a class that is full or restricted. If an override is approved by the instructor, he or she will enter the student's Bear ID number into the computer system and then the student must go through certain steps to register for the class. Instructions for this process can be found on the Registrar's website: <https://www.unco.edu/registrar/>
- **Finals:** The final examination given in each class at the end of the semester.
- **GPA (Grade Point Average):** The numerical expression of your academic standing calculated by dividing the number of grade points by the number of credit hours.
- **Midterm:** A test given during the middle of the semester to determine mid-semester academic standing.
- **Pop quiz:** A short test (quiz) given with no prior notice.
- **Probation:** Your status if you fail to make the required grade point average.
- **Quiz:** Short test on assigned material
- **Registration:** The process by which you sign up for classes.
- **Student Senate:** Student Senate is a governing body dedicated to serving the students of UNC. Student Senate members serve as advocates for students' voices to the Administration, Board of

Trustees, Shared Governance Groups and other campus groups.

- **Suspension:** In situations where a student may be asked to leave school for a period of time, following a hearing, due to misconduct or policy violations. The student may petition to return at a later date. International students may lose F or J status if suspended, so it is important to reach out to the ISSS team for assistance.
- **Syllabus:** An outline of the courses' objectives and material to be covered and lists due dates for assignments, examination dates, textbooks to be purchased, the professor's name, office location and office hours.
- **UPC:** University Program Council are student representatives who plan concerts, speakers, and programs for all UNC students.
- **Withdrawal:** A student may withdraw completely from the university at any time during the semester. Depending on the withdrawal date, a percentage of tuition and fees will be assessed. Students may also withdraw from a class after the add/drop period; however, this will result in a "W" on your transcript rather than a final grade for the class. A "W" does not affect your overall GPA. International students must have immigration permission before withdrawing.
- **URSA:** UNC uses the URSA online system to track student and employee information. This is the system used for financial aid, registration, and grade reporting. Bearmail and the UNC Global ISSS portal can also be accessed through URSA.
- **Advisor, Academic Advisor, Program Coordinator:** Every student at UNC has at least one advisor – some students have several. International Students and Scholars all have an immigration advisor in the Office of Global Engagement, who primarily provides immigration support and advising and connections across campus (and some limited academic advising for exchange students). Undergraduates have an assigned Professional Advisor and/or Faculty Advisor from their School, College, or Department to help ensure progress towards degree requirements. Dual Degree students have a program advisor and a major or minor advisor. Graduate Students may have a thesis or dissertation advisor in their program, along with the Program Coordinator who helps ensure that all students in that program meet requirements. It is important to coordinate information with all your advisors – and to make sure your academic advisor knows you are an international student and subject to special requirements that American students are not.

ADDITIONAL CAMPUS SERVICES AND RESOURCES

There are many non-academic campus resources available to you as a student or scholar at UNC. While this is not a complete list, these are some commonly used resources for international students and scholars. <https://www.unco.edu/student-support/>

The **UNC Student Health Center** is a walk-in clinic located in Cassidy Hall. All UNC students and employees are eligible to use the Student Health Center and most insurance plans can be billed.

Dean of Students Office: Helps students in navigating difficult situations and connecting with available resources. Visit them on second floor of the University Center or send a message to seek support. <https://www.unco.edu/dean-of-students/>

Bear Pantry assists students in our community who are faced with food insecurity. Bear Pantry supplements the food supply for any UNC students experiencing hunger and struggling to buy food. Bear Pantry hopes to minimize food insecurity while students work toward completing their education. <https://www.unco.edu/bear-pantry/>

Community Standards and Conflict Resolution: develops and enforces standards of student conduct

to promote a safe and respectful living and learning environment. In an effort to foster civility, empathy, and accountability, the student conduct process aims to serve as a learning experience that can result in growth and personal understanding of one's responsibilities and privileges within both the university and the greater community. <https://www.unco.edu/student-conduct-accountability/>

The **Disability Resource Center (DRC) Office** collaborates with the University in its commitment to recognize disability as a valued aspect of diversity and to embrace access to the University of Northern Colorado community as a matter of equity and inclusion. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) offers many services to students needing accommodations. Meetings are a collaborative process with the student and DRC staff to determine appropriate accommodations for each semester.

<https://www.unco.edu/disability-resource-center/>

The **Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC)**, works to build an inclusive academic, cultural and social campus community that supports equitable opportunity for all. OIEC reports to UNC's General Counsel (university attorney) and is committed to preventing and eliminating discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, or political affiliation.

<https://www.unco.edu/institutional-equity-compliance/>

Campus Safety: The University of Northern Colorado is committed to providing the safest possible living, learning and working environment for our students, faculty and staff, including offering police services, and many other safety resources. <https://www.unco.edu/safety/>

Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion promotes an inclusive campus community climate that values diversity, equity and inclusion. DDEI provides trainings, programs, and initiatives that are designed to nurture a community in which all students, staff and faculty are provided with tools that promote equity-minded practices. <https://www.unco.edu/equity-inclusion/programming/>

Housing and Residential Education oversees all the residential “neighborhoods” on campus and provides programming for students and scholars living on campus, as well as some resources for off campus living. <https://www.unco.edu/living-on-campus/>

Dining Services oversees all dining on campus, including “retail” locations like Subway and Starbucks. They also administer meal plans. <https://www.unco.edu/living-on-campus/dining/>

The **Center for Career Readiness** builds bridges between students and the world of work to ensure that UNC students make informed and empowered decisions regarding continued education and career. Career Readiness can provide support with job searches, resume building, and more.

<https://www.unco.edu/career/>

Campus Involvement

We strongly encourage students to get involved on campus. There are many different ways to get involved, and we are listing only a few here. This university wide event calendar can help you find activities that meet your interests: <https://www.unco.edu/events-calendar/events.aspx> .

Global Buddies

The Office of Global Engagement is proud to highlight our Global Buddies Peer Mentorship Program. This structured peer mentoring program, run throughout the academic year, is intended to welcome, support, and integrate new international students. International students signed up for the program will be assigned a domestic peer mentor who will serve as a resource to provide community engagement, social opportunities, and most importantly, a friendly face to connect with. As a mentee, the only requirement to remain in the program is to engage with their assigned mentor and mentorship group and attend Global Buddies events when possible.

For more information on the program, contact the Cross Cultural GA directly at Anjulena.bagga@unco.edu or email globalbuddies@unco.edu.

Another easy way to meet people is by joining a club! See a list of student organizations and clubs here <https://www.unco.edu/clubs-organizations/>

BearCave <https://unco.campuslabs.com/engage/> is the involvement hub of the University of Northern Colorado – a one-stop-shop for students who want to engage in campus life outside of the classroom. This is a tool for accessing the campus involvement scene, and it gives UNC an opportunity to support students as they seek out co-curricular paths.

There are also a number of cultural centers on campus that aim to make campus more equitable and inclusive for all. Learn more about these centers and how to get involved at their websites.

Asian/Pacific American Student Services <https://www.unco.edu/asian-pacific-american-student-services/> A/PASS facilitates education on campus about Asian and Pacific Islander cultures while creating a supportive and diverse Asian/Pacific American Community.

César Chávez Cultural Center <https://www.unco.edu/cesar-chavez-cultural-center/> The César Chávez Cultural Center supports educational attainment and persistence of LaxtinX students and serves as a resource to the UNC community regarding LatinX culture.

Center for Women's & Gender Equity <https://www.unco.edu/center-womens-and-gender-equity/> The Center for Women's and Gender equity honors gender as a central identity and challenges system of inequity by advocating for change related to women's and gender issues.

Gender & Sexuality Resource Center <https://www.unco.edu/gender-sexuality-resource-center/> The GRSC advocates for, educates with and supports all marginalized identities to create a sense of belonging for those who identify across the gender and sexuality spectrums.

Marcus Garvey Cultural Center <https://www.unco.edu/marcus-garvey-cultural-center/> The MGCC promotes the wellness and academic success of UNC students across the African diaspora.

Native American Student Services <https://www.unco.edu/native-american-student-services/> NASS promotes the academic and leadership excellence of Native American Students at UNC while enriching the UNC community through cross-cultural educational programming.

Stryker Institute for Leadership Development <https://www.unco.edu/stryker-institute-for-leadership-development/> The Stryker Institute for Leadership Development supports the personal, social and academic achievement of women from underrepresented groups at the UNC.

Veterans Services <https://www.unco.edu/veterans-services/> Veteran's Services provides services and resources to military-affiliated students.

Another way to get involved on campus is campus recreation. There are many opportunities for recreation on UNC's campus. Learn more about those opportunities include virtual workout classes, gym, pool, and intramural sports at <https://www.unco.edu/campus-recreation/>. You can learn about opportunities for outdoor engagements through Outdoor Pursuits at <https://www.unco.edu/campus-recreation/outdoor-pursuits/>.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Emergency Services

In an emergency, such as a fire, a car accident, medical emergency, or a situation requiring the police, dialing the numbers 911 will connect you to emergency services anywhere in the United States. If you are in the Greeley area, you will be connected to the Weld County Communication Center. This center can send the police, fire department, or ambulance to any address in Weld County. When talking to the operator, describe the emergency and provide the operator with a complete address.

Use 9-1-1 ONLY for situations where it would save a life, to report a fire, or stop a crime that is in progress.

Tips for Calling 9-1-1

- Stay calm
- Call immediately from a safe location
- Give the exact location and type of emergency
- Don't hang up until the person taking the call says to do so

Non-Emergency Phone Numbers in Greeley (these vary by community)

Fire Department: 970-350-9500
Police Department: 970-350-9600
Ambulance: 970-353-5700

UNC Police Department

970-351-2245, Gray Hall

<http://www.unco.edu/police/>

The UNC Police Department is the campus law enforcement agency. This office is responsible for police and security patrol 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Campus and area safety information is available on URSA on the "Safety" tab. We suggest signing-up for emergency alerts on URSA as well. Further information on these can be found here <https://www.unco.edu/alerts/>.

Scams

Unfortunately, there are dishonest individuals who may try to take advantage of you as an international student. They may get your information from a site like Facebook or Linked In, or from other publicly available information. They can be very sophisticated and have a surprising amount of information about you.

We have received reports of phone calls from individuals claiming to be U.S. government agency officials – and even gotten a few ourselves. The specific story may vary, but in general, the caller tells the student that the student has somehow violated U.S. law and to correct the violation, they must immediately pay a large amount of money (often between \$1,000 and \$5,000) or the student will be arrested or deported.

These callers typically demand a specific form of payment such as gift cards, Western Union money order, or wire transfers. They often claim to be with Customs and Border Protection, or the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) – or "Immigration". Using a technique called "Caller ID spoofing," they may even appear to be calling from real government agencies (and sometimes use a real name of a legitimate government agent).

Never give your personal information on the phone to someone who calls you. Never give them any form of payment. U.S. government agencies NEVER ask for any form of payment or personal information over the phone – and they never serve official notice of immigration violation by phone. Occasionally, a real agent will call (your information is in SEVIS), but a legitimate agent will give you their

name, badge number, agency and a phone number to call back when you tell them you want to speak with your international advisor first. A successful scam depends on the victim panicking about being deported and not stopping to think whether the call and the demands are legitimate.

Please report any suspicious phone calls you receive to ISSS and or Campus Police. If you have reason to believe that the call might be legitimate, we can help you find out if it was real and who you need to speak to. In many cases, government agencies also have a method of submitting fraud reports. Share this information with your friends and family.

Social Media

One way scammers gather a lot of useful information is social media. Keep in mind that what you post online is public and lasts forever. Who you like, who you are “friends” with (whether or not you know them in real life), what you know, and the surveys you answer publicly. “Have you ever” and other friendship surveys are fun, but they also provide a lot of personal information about you that makes it easy to steal your identity. Both law enforcement and criminals use social media information as tools – criminals to exploit you, and law enforcement to see if you are following U.S. laws or if you might be involved with criminals yourself. Be careful what information you share online, who you connect with, and what you “like.”

Renters’ Insurance

We strongly recommend students and scholars living on campus or renting an apartment or home off campus consider purchasing renters’ insurance. Renters’ insurance is a form of property insurance designed for people who rent their homes (including apartments and dorm rooms) rather than own them. It provides coverage for personal belongings in case of theft or damage, offers liability protection if someone is injured while visiting your rented space, and can help with additional living expenses if your rental becomes uninhabitable due to a covered event. These costs are almost never covered by the landlord (including UNC). The State of Colorado has information about the benefits of renter’s insurance online <https://doi.colorado.gov/insurance-products/homeowners/renters-insurance>.

For international students in the United States, renters’ insurance is particularly important. It offers protection for their belongings in a foreign country where they might not have other support systems in place. Additionally, it provides liability coverage in the U.S., which is known for its litigious environment. Many landlords also require tenants to have renters’ insurance as part of the lease agreement.

Costs for renter’s insurance varies, but the average cost in the U.S. is \$15 per month, far less expensive than the cost of replacing belongings lost to theft, severe weather, or even a fire. You can find a list of rental insurance providers online by doing an internet search for “renters insurance.” When choosing a renters’ insurance policy and company, it’s wise to start by comparing quotes from multiple insurers to find competitive rates. Pay attention to coverage limits and deductibles to ensure they meet your needs. Look for policies that offer additional benefits, such as replacement cost coverage for your belongings, or coverage during travel. It’s also helpful to read reviews and check the financial strength of potential insurance companies to ensure they’re reliable. Some insurers offer discounts if you bundle renters’ insurance with other policies, like auto insurance, so that’s worth considering as well.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes are fairly uncommon in Greeley and the surrounding areas. The information below will familiarize you with tornadoes and what to do in the event of a tornado warning.

Facts about tornadoes:

- They may strike quickly, with little or no warning.
- They may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms in the funnel.
- The average tornado moves Southwest to Northeast, but tornadoes have been known to move in any direction.
- The average forward speed of a tornado is 30 MPH, but may vary from stationary to 70 MPH.

- Tornadoes can accompany tropical storms and hurricanes as they move onto land.
- Waterspouts are tornadoes that form over water.
- Tornadoes are most frequently reported east of the Rocky Mountains during spring and summer months.
- Peak tornado season in the southern states is March through May; in the northern states, it is late spring through early summer.
- Tornadoes are most likely to occur between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. but can occur at any time.
- *Tornado Watch*: Tornadoes are possible. Remain alert for approaching storms. Watch the sky and stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.
- *Tornado Warning*: A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Take shelter immediately.

What to do *before* a tornado.

- Be alert to changing weather conditions.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio (<http://www.weather.gov/nwr/>) or to commercial radio or television newscasts for the latest information.
- Look for approaching storms
- Look for the following danger signs:
 - Dark, often greenish sky
 - Large hail
 - A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
 - Loud roar, similar to a freight train.

If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

If you are in:	Then:
A structure (e.g. residence, small building, school, nursing home, hospital, factory, shopping center, high-rise building)	Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.
A vehicle, trailer, or mobile home	Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
The outside with no shelter	<p>Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding.</p> <p>Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.</p> <p>Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.</p> <p>Watch out for flying debris, which causes most fatalities and injuries.</p>

(Resource <https://community.fema.gov/ProtectiveActions/s/article/Tornado>)

Summer Heat and Heat Related Illness

Although it's normally closer to 29° C in the summer, Greeley can get quite hot – close to 40° C (104° F). High temperatures can cause heat related illnesses, including heat rash, sunburn, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke (which is a medical emergency) particularly if you do not have air conditioning or are outdoors and engaging in exercise. Colorado's altitude means higher risk of sunburn than in many other places, so careful application of sunblock to protect your skin and hats to protect your scalp are important to prevent short term pain and long-term skin damage.

Additional information on heat related illnesses and what to do can be found on the CDC website <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html>

Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

Heavy snowfall and extreme cold can immobilize an entire region. Even areas that normally experience mild winters can be hit with a major snowstorm or extreme cold. Winter storms can result in flooding, storm surge, closed highways, blocked roads, downed power lines and hypothermia.

These terms to help identify a winter storm hazard:

- *Freezing Rain*: Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees, and power lines.
- *Sleet*: Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.
- *Winter Storm Watch*: A winter storm is possible in your area. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for more information.
- *Winter Storm Warning*: A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.
- *Blizzard Warning*: Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile) are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.
- *Frost/Freeze Warning*: Below freezing temperatures are expected.

Dressing for Winter Weather

- Wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. The outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.
- Wear mittens, which are warmer than gloves.
- Wear a hat.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a scarf to protect your lungs.
- Tight shoes and thin socks will not protect your feet from cold – wear slightly looser shoes with a good tread and thick socks will be much warmer. Sturdy, waterproof boots are helpful in snow. If walking on ice, move slowly, take short steps, avoid standing water, and keep your center of gravity over your feet as much as possible. Ice cleats that can be worn over shoes or boots (one brand is called “Yaktrax”) can be helpful.

During a Winter Storm

The following are guidelines for what you should do during a winter storm or under conditions of extreme cold:

- Listen to your radio, television, or NOAA Weather Radio for weather reports and emergency information.
- Eat regularly and drink ample fluids but avoid caffeine and alcohol.

- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter. If you must shovel snow, stretch before going outside.
- Watch for signs of frostbite. These include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia. These include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the victim to a warm location, remove wet clothing, warm the center of the body first, and give warm, non-alcoholic beverages if the victim is conscious. Get medical help as soon as possible.
- Conserve fuel, if necessary, by keeping your residence cooler than normal. Temporarily close off heat to some rooms.
- Maintain ventilation when using kerosene heaters to avoid build-up of toxic fumes. Refuel kerosene heaters outside and keep them at least three feet from flammable objects.
- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, consider the following:
 - Travel in the day, don't travel alone, and keep others informed of your schedule
 - Stay on main roads; avoid back-road shortcuts

(Resource: <https://www.fema.gov/blog/get-ready-winter-weather>)

Medical Services

- The **UNC Student Health Center** is available for insured students on campus with illness and other health related concerns. Cassidy Hall, **970-351-2412**.
- **North Colorado Medical Center (NCMC), 970-810-4121**, located at 1801 16 St., is a hospital for any medical matters, or in case of an emergency.
- The **UNC Counseling Center, 970-351-2496**, located in Cassidy Hall aids students in dealing with personal problems through individual and group counseling. These services are confidential and free to students.
- The **UNC Psychological Services Center, 970-351-1645**, located in McKee Hall offers free and low-cost individual, group, play, couples, and family therapy to students and the Greeley community. They offer also low-cost psychological assessments.
- The **Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment** provides services that promote community health and well-being. Information can be found at <http://www.co.weld.co.us/departments/Health/index.html> The Weld County Health Department is located at 1555 North 17th Avenue, **970-304-6410**.

Culture Shock or Culture Stress and Mental Health

Culture Shock and Culture Stress occur when cultural differences lead to difficult experiences, such as:

- Feeling lonely or homesick for people and things that seem normal.
- Finding new ideas, behaviors, and choices that seem wrong, overwhelming, or confusing.
- Misunderstandings due to language and customs.

Some signs that you may be experiencing culture shock include:

- Feeling easily angered or upset.
- Withdrawing from people.
- Extreme homesickness or rejection of new culture.
- Overeating or loss of appetite.
- Sleeping too much or not enough.
- Confusion or worry about how to act.
- Making negative judgments about one's own or host culture.
- Physical pains- headache, upset stomach, body aches.
- Feeling sick much of the time.
- Unexplained crying.

- Marital or relationship stress or arguments.
- Loss of ability to work, study, or focus.
- Changes in cleaning habits.
- Doing things they regret.

Culture shock can happen multiple times in your life and for some it can lead to growth. If you are experiencing culture shock or other mental health difficulties, it's important to be aware that this is a very normal and common experience for anyone living away from their home culture and community. There's nothing wrong with you if you experience culture shock, and assistance is available to help you get through it. You can seek counseling and reach out to us for support.

Counseling Resources

Should you find yourself experiencing culture shock, stress, mental health struggles, or needing additional support, we have a number of counseling resources available at UNC.

If you are experiencing a crisis, please call 988 for the national suicide prevention hotline (911 or go to the nearest emergency room if someone is actively injured). You can also access 24/7 crisis services by calling 1-970-351-2496.

Not all international students are comfortable with counseling services -- it may be unusual or carry a stigma in your home country. In the U.S. it's a lot like going to see a doctor if you have a sprained ankle -- if you're hurting, counseling can help (or give you tools to help yourself). It's so normal that the services are free for students. As a UNC student, you can access free individual and group counseling services through the Counseling Center in Cassidy Hall. Information on their services can be found on their website (<https://www.unco.edu/counseling-center/>). You can contact the Counseling Center at 1-970-351-2496 during business hours.

In addition to the Counseling Center, UNC has a Psychological Services Clinic. The Psychological Services Clinic offers individual, group, couples, family, and child therapy on a sliding scale (the cost is based on your income) per semester. The Counseling Center sometimes has a long waitlist and is only available to students.

The Psychological Services Clinic can be a great resource for those additional services or if you are needing support for any family members with you in the USA. More information can be found on their website (<https://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychological-services-clinic/>). You can contact the Psychological Services Clinic 1-970-351-1645 at any time and leave a voicemail to initiate services.

If you have experienced sexual violence, intimate partner violence, or stalking, you can receive additional support through the Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (ASAP) on campus. ASAP can provide after-hours crisis services and support survivors. More information can be found on their website (<https://www.unco.edu/assault-survivors-advocacy-program/>). You can contact ASAP at 1-970-351-1490 during business hours or at 1-970-351-4040 after hours.

Counseling can also be accessed in the community or through some of the cultural centers on campus.

GREELEY COMMUNITY

Visit Greeley's website has lots of helpful information about Greeley for all kinds of visitors.

<https://www.visitgreeley.org/>

Streets and Finding Your Way

Almost all of the streets in Greeley are referred to by a number. Avenues (e.g., 16th Avenue) increase in number from east to west. Streets (e.g. 16th Street) increase in number from north to south. A map of Greeley can be found at <https://www.visitgreeley.org/getting-around/maps/> . Different cities in the U.S. have different naming conventions for streets, roads and avenues – Greeley's system can be a little confusing until you get used to it.

City of Greeley <https://greeleygov.com/>

The City of Greeley website provides important local information on lots of topics, including water quality (tap water in Greeley is safe to drink, unless you receive a notification that there's been a boil order), paying city bills if you live off campus, local laws, snow plow routes, parks and recreation, and local entertainment and festivals, and more.

Public Transportation

Greeley operates an efficient and convenient bus system, called the Greeley-Evans Transit (GET). Buses do not run on Sunday or on major holidays. Your UNC Bear ID card gives you full (free) access to the GET bus system. Schedules are available at <https://greeleyevanstransit.com/>

The UNC Boomerang Shuttle is free for all UNC students, faculty, and staff and operates during fall and spring semesters while classes are in session. Bus service runs Monday through Friday and makes stops at Candelaria Hall and Gunter Hall. Please see https://greeleyevanstransit.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/BoomerangRoute_2021.pdf for the Boomerang route and pick up times.

Transportation to other cities is provided by the Greyhound Bus Lines. The location of the station is 1030 7th Avenue (Housed with Econo Rate Rent A Car), 970-353-5050; <https://www.greyhound.com/en-us/bus-station-830236>

Transportation between Greeley and the Denver airport is available from:
Landline Shuttle, (888) 428-1149; <https://landline.com/denver-airport-shuttle> .

Outdoor Pursuits on campus offers students free bicycle rentals for short periods or the whole semester. You can request one online here: <https://www.unco.edu/campus-recreation/outdoor-pursuits/bike-program.aspx>

Postal and Mail Services

The U.S. Postal Service has two locations in Greeley: 925 11th Ave and 930 39th Ave and an office in Evans at 3344 11th Ave Be sure to notify the post office if you change addresses so your mail may be forwarded to you. Other mailing services are available at:

Mail N Copy, 2032 35th Ave, Greeley (970) 506-9888 (has a DHL drop off location)

Consider it There, 813 8th St, 970-352-9334, www.consideritthere.com

The UPS Store, 3620 W. 10th St, Suite B, 970-353-9655, www.theupsstorelocal.com

FedEx, 3607 W 10th St, 970-356-2664 or 1255 H St, 800-463-3339, https://www.fedex.com/locate/index.html?locale=en_US#

UNC Directory and the White and Yellow Pages

Campus and email addresses and telephone numbers of students, staff, faculty and on campus offices are listed on the UNC website: www.unco.edu, under "Find People."

Telephone directories are divided into a White Pages section and a Yellow Pages section, and alphabetically lists the addresses and phone numbers of people and businesses in Greeley and the surrounding communities. You will receive a telephone directory that includes White and Yellow Pages if you choose to get a land line telephone.

For finding information on most business and services, an internet Google search is often your most useful resource.

Housing

UNC offers several types of on-campus housing. See <http://www.unco.edu/housing/places/index.html> for more information. First-year undergraduate students under the age of 20 are required to live in the campus residence halls. The university also offers apartments which are available at reasonable cost for students and scholars.

Off-campus housing information can be obtained through the *Greeley Tribune* newspaper postings and the UC (in the Student Activities lounge area). Additionally, you can locate off-campus options through other internet resources. Information is also available on the UNC website : <https://www.unco.edu/off-campus-housing/living-off-campus/>

Before renting a room or apartment, check terms of the lease; the amount of the damage deposit and the conditions under which it will be refunded; and whether or not utilities (water, heat, electricity, garbage collection, etc.) are included in the rent. Notify the landlord, in writing, of any damage to the apartment before you move in. Read the lease carefully before signing it, because it is a binding legal document.

If connecting utilities is the renter's responsibility, contact the following companies. Please be aware that a deposit is often required.

Electricity:		
	Xcel Energy, 1500 6 th Ave	800-895-4999
Gas:		
	Atmos Energy, 1200 11 th Ave	970-304-2048
Water:		
	1100 10th Street, Suite 300	970-350-9811
Internet, phone, and cable tv:		
	Xfinity, xfinity.com	800-934-6489

Cell phone, garbage collection, and recycling information can be found online, or may be organized by the housing complex or landlord.

Banking

Finances in the United States can be complicated: determining what amount of currency your funds back home translate to in the US, how to move money internationally, and all of the different banking options available to students.

UNC has an official contract and relationship with Wells Fargo, and we previously had a branch located in the University Center (there is still an ATM machine from Wells Fargo). Students can actually turn their student ID into a Wells Fargo Debit Card if they wish.

American coins come in various sizes and metals: \$.01 or (called penny or one cent) is a copper-colored coin; \$.05 (nickel or five cents) is a silver-colored coin larger and thicker than a penny; \$.10 (dime or ten cents) is a thin silver-colored coin and is the smallest US coin; \$.25 (quarter or twenty-five cents) is a silver-colored coin and is larger than a nickel. There are also some one-dollar coins – but they are not

widely circulated. All US bills are a standard size and can look fairly similar at first glance, although newer bills have special security features. US bills come in only seven denominations: \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100. \$2 bills are so rare, that most people keep them as souvenirs if they're lucky enough to find one.

Most banks have 24-hour ATM banking machines that allow you to make withdrawals, deposits, transfer funds and check your account balance. Banking may be done online as well. Most banks are closed on Sunday and most federal and state holidays. Some banks in Denver exchange foreign currency for American dollars and vice versa.

There are two basic kinds of banking accounts: checking and savings accounts. Checking accounts sometimes have a small service charge for writing checks and other services. Many transactions are done by credit or debit card, but paper checks are also used. A savings account is a good idea for large sums of money because they pay interest on the account balance.

Banks generally will need to see your immigration documents, and proof of your residence location (this can be your UNC Housing contract, or a utility bill in your name sent to your current address) in order to open an account as well as an initial deposit (often around \$25 USD). If you have an SSN or an ITIN, you will need to provide that information to the bank as well.

Dependent Children

Colorado's School Attendance Law requires that every Colorado resident between ages 6 and 21 is entitled to attend public school in the district where he or she is a resident, except for a limited number of circumstances. For general information about Colorado's education laws and opportunities for children, visit the Colorado Department of Education website

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/transitions-enrollment>. Greeley and Evans are part of Weld County School District 6. Information on registering children for school can be found through their website <https://www.greeleyschools.org/>

Laws and cultural expectations regarding raising children vary wildly between countries and cultures. If you are bringing dependent children to the United States, it's important that you understand cultural and legal expectations here, which may be quite different from your home country, especially in terms of expectations around what is considered safe (car-harness requirements, when children can be left alone at home, what forms of punishment are acceptable, or even if they're allowed to play by themselves in a park). While the OGE team can help with basic information, we are not child welfare experts, but a great starting point for information is <https://usahello.org/life-in-usa/family/parenting-laws/#gref>. Note that this website is largely written for immigrant parents, and some suggestions (such as employment and some federal programs) may not apply to you as a nonimmigrant student or scholar.

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/diverse-populations/immigration/working/#resources> is a resource for professionals who work with immigrant families, but understanding what professionals are learning can help you understand expectations as well.

Shopping

The state of Colorado, Weld County, and the City of Greeley charge a total of 7.01% sales tax which is added to almost all purchases in Greeley. Therefore, if an item costs \$1, the buyer has to pay \$1.07. In the USA, it is a general rule to "tip" certain workers between 15-20% of the total bill. These can include waiters/waitresses, transportation drivers, hair stylists, and delivery persons.

Greeley and the surrounding areas have several major shopping areas. Here is a list of different types of stores and what they offer.

- **Supermarkets/Grocery Stores:** Food and non-food items, such as paper products, can be purchased at supermarkets. Many supermarkets are open 24 hours seven days a week. Usually food prices are lower in supermarkets than in small specialty shops, and sales taxes do not apply to all grocery items. The closest grocery store to campus is King Soopers at 6922 W 10th St. Many grocery stores have membership programs you can sign up for that provide discount

coupons for groceries and gas.

- **Drug Stores/Pharmacies:** Medicine can be purchased at drug stores. They also offer magazines, newspapers, snacks, candy, items for personal needs, greeting cards and some grocery items (at a higher price than grocery stores in most cases). The closest to campus is Walgreens at 2600 11th Ave.
- **Department Stores:** Items such as clothing, furniture, household items, bedding, kitchen utensils, toys, hardware, appliances, etc. can be purchased at department stores. The closest option to campus is Big Lots at 2628 11th Ave. However, larger department stores of Walmart (3103 S 23rd Ave) and Target (4400 Centerplace Dr) are also in Greeley.
- **Second-Hand Stores/Thrift/Pawn Shops (Used Items):** Used furniture, clothing and kitchen items can be purchased inexpensively at second-hand stores or thrift shops and pawn shops. A couple of options in Greeley are ARC (2401 27th St) and Goodwill (2510 47th Ave).
- **Laundromats and Dry Cleaners:** Students and scholars living on campus have laundry facilities in their buildings. Coin-operated machines in self-service laundromats provide inexpensive laundry and cleaning for students and scholars living off campus without a washer or dryer included in their lease. Do not leave laundry unattended in the self-service laundromat. Dry Cleaners clean and make minor repairs on all non-washable items. A few options close to campus are Duds ‘n Suds (2460 8th Ave), Squeaky’s (1605 8th Ave), and Nu-Way (2501 7th Ave).
- **Gas Stations:** Gas (gasoline/petrol) or service stations sell gas, oil, and snacks. Some provide repair service for your car.
- **Hardware Stores:** Hardware stores carry tools, nails, electrical and plumbing equipment, paint, and appliances. Closest to campus is Ace Hardware (2626 A 11th Ave).
- **Garage Sales:** Used furniture, household items, etc. can be purchased inexpensively at garage sales. People sell items they no longer need in their homes. These are usually advertised in the *Greeley Tribune* or *Thrifty Nickel* or online in the Facebook Marketplace or Craigslist (<https://fortcollins.craigslist.org/>).
- **Large purchase Items (Automobiles, etc.):** Making large purchases, such as an automobile, can be costly. In addition to the cost of the car, additional expenses such as insurance, gas, and maintenance need to be considered. Always test drive a car first and have a knowledgeable friend inspect it before signing any papers. Some service stations will be willing to inspect a car for you at a small charge.

Off-Campus Appointments

Generally, appointments are required for many off-campus activities such as **doctors, dentists, haircuts, etc. In addition, it is often unnecessary to make** reservations at a restaurant in advance. “Urgent Care” facilities may assist with health care needs that are more urgent when you cannot make a regular doctor’s appointment but are not serious enough to go to the hospital, which generally is for life-threatening conditions.

Computer Usage

There are several computer labs located on campus. Each lab usually has Macintosh and PC equipment in addition to a scanner and printers. Most campus housing buildings have printers at the front desk for student use as well. Anchor Labs and Open Labs on campus are general access for student use. Details on where to find an open lab can be found here <https://www.unco.edu/information-management-technology/technology-rooms-labs/smart-classroom.aspx>

Driver’s License

A non-resident student at the university may temporarily drive in Colorado with a valid international

driver's license. However, if you will be driving, you are encouraged to obtain a Colorado driver's license within 30 days, which is commonly used as a form of identification. It is issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles, 2320 Reservoir Road, Unit A, 970-352-5845. This state office also has manuals to prepare for the written and the driving test. <https://dmv.colorado.gov/new-colorado-another-country>

Be sure you have carefully read and understand the Colorado Driver Handbook if you will be driving here (<https://dmv.colorado.gov/drivereducation>); each state and territory will have a similar handbook online, and the rules can vary by state – know before you go!

Note that rules for interacting with police when driving in the U.S. may differ wildly from what you are used to in your home country. For instance, police here only turn their lights on when they are “on call” or are trying to pull someone over to the side of the road (maybe you), but in some countries the lights are on whenever an officer is on duty. If lights are flashing behind you, pull over. Stay in the car. If approached by an officer, roll down the window, but don’t get out to meet the officer. It can be perceived as threatening behavior. Leave your hands on the steering wheel and explain anything you are going to do (reaching for a wallet or insurance card) before you do it. Traffic fines must always be paid separately, never to the officer who gave you a ticket – and offering to pay them may be perceived as trying to illegally bribe the officer, leading to further charges.

Automobile Insurance

The law requires drivers to have automobile liability insurance to cover the cost of damage to other people or property in the case of an accident. Collision coverage covers the cost of injury to yourself and to your property. Proof of Insurance should be kept in the car at all times.

Did we miss anything? If you have questions that we missed, or information you think we should share with future students, let us know! International.advising@unco.edu .