

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

M|I|C/A

MARYLAND INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF ART

2016-2017

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Office of International Education

Please use this handbook along with other MICA handbooks as you become settled in Baltimore.

Visit the Office of International Education with any questions, or if you are not sure where to find help on campus. Check our events calendar for special workshops for F-1 students.

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Walk In Hours: Monday-Friday 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Tuesdays 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Location: Bunting Center, Room 200
Phone: (410) 225-2243
Fax: (410) 225-2548
Email: internationaleducation@mica.edu
www.mica.edu/internationaleducation

Please make appointments for immigration paperwork and issues at least two weeks in advance.

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Visit us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/mica.internationaleducation

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WELCOME!



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Arrival and Orientation

The first few days in the U.S. can sometimes feel overwhelming for students who arrive from different countries. That is why MICA organizes a special orientation program for international students.

All international students with F-1 visas are required to attend the International Student Orientation. During the orientation, we will help you settle in and become more familiar with MICA and Baltimore.

Carry the following items with you when you travel to the United States:

- Passport and Visa
- Form I-20
- Proof of SEVIS fee payment
- Copy of the financial documents used to obtain your I-20 and F-1 visa
- Copies of any previously issued I-20s or other immigration documents
- Traveling funds

F-1 students may arrive in the U.S. as early as thirty days before the program start date on your I-20. It is very important to enter the U.S. using your F-1 student visa, not your tourist visa or through a visa waiver program.



Academic Services

Bunting, 2nd Floor

Located on the second floor in Bunting Center, the Student Services center is the place to go for academic advising, assistance with registration for classes, reporting address changes, and requesting transcripts. Please allow three to five business days to receive an official transcript. You may view and print an unofficial transcript using the MICA portal.

F-1 students must register for 12 or more credits per semester. Visiting exchange students should consult with the International Education Office about changes to their schedules while at MICA.

Emergency Dispatch: (443)423-3333

Non-Emergency: (410)225-2355

Campus Safety officers patrol the MICA campus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. There are security guards and student monitors at Campus Safety desks near the entrances of most campus buildings.

If you are a victim of a crime or witness a crime or other emergency (accident, fire, medical, etc.), report it to Baltimore City Police/Fire/Ambulance (911) and then notify MICA Campus Safety. To reach Campus Safety, go to a staffed lobby Security Desk or call (410)225-2355.

MICA has an emergency notification system called Rave Guardian, which is free for all students, faculty, and staff. When you press a panic button on your cell phone, Rave Guardian will send an emergency notification to Campus Safety. To register, go to <http://www.getrave.com/login/mica>.

Campus Safety provides a 24 hour walking escort service to help you reach home safely. To request an escort, call Campus Safety.



Career Development

Gateway, 2nd Floor

The Joseph Meyerhoff Center for Career Development strives to help students and alumni succeed in their chosen career paths by offering a variety of programs, services, and resources.

The staff offers individual career counseling appointments, coordinates weekly workshops and special programs on a variety of professional development topics, and advises students and alumni seeking postgraduate study, grants, and other career-related opportunities. The Career Development website has links to helpful handouts, videos, and databases, including www.MICAnetwork.com, a comprehensive list of jobs, internships, and calls for entry.

Follow Career Development on Facebook & Twitter and read their weekly newsletter to get the latest updates about professional development events and opportunities.



Counseling Center

Wellness Center, 1501 Mt. Royal Avenue (410)225-2367

MICA's Counseling Center offers the following free services: individual, group, family and couples counseling, and stress reduction through meditation, guided imagery, exercise and nutrition. Counselors are highly trained and experienced and are able to help students with adjustment disorders, clinical depression, anxiety, eating disorders, bipolar disorder, drug and alcohol problems, and crisis intervention.

Student Counseling is open Monday through Wednesday from 9 am to 6 pm and Thursday and Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Please call to make an appointment.

Dining Services

MICA has four dining facilities:

- *Meyerhoff House Dining Hall:*
Lunch and Dinner Monday-Sunday
- *Cafe Doris* (first floor of the Fox Building):
Mon-Thurs, 8 am to 10:30 pm, Friday, 8 am to 5:30 pm
- *Java Corner* (second floor of Bunting):
Mon-Fri, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
- *Founders Green Grill* (in Glace Hall):
Mon-Sun, 5 pm to 12 am

A variety of meal plans are available. First year students who live on campus are required to purchase a meal plan. Students may change, add, or drop meal plans during the first two weeks of each semester. Visit MICA's Student Accounts office on the second floor of Bunting to purchase or make changes to your meal plan.

MICA Fitness

1501 Mt. Royal Avenue

(410)225-4951

fitness@mica.edu

MICA Fitness is a place which brings together students, staff and faculty. Drop in for a workout on our cardio and strength equipment, indulge in one of our group fitness classes, join a sport or recreation student organization, and keep an eye out for promotions throughout the semester. Registration information, hours, and class schedule are available online.

Decker Library

Bunting, First Floor and Lower Level

The Decker Library contains over 84,000 monographs and 300 periodical subscriptions, over 120,000 e-books, over 5,000 DVDs and video tapes, nearly 1.5 million digital images, and provides online access to more than 5,500 full-text journal titles, and hundreds of digital reference sources in art and other subjects. The Library also has Macintosh and PC computer workstations and a self-service Copy-Print-Scan center.

Residence Life

(410)225-2398
residencelife@mica.edu

Sharing classroom experiences with peers, meeting new people and forging your path at MICA are an important part of your first year. Founders Green, home to the largest green space on campus, a late night eatery, studios, multi-use performance space, lecture hall and multiple student lounges, supports your transition to college by offering various ways for you to get involved and interact with one another outside the classroom.

Throughout your time at MICA, the Office of Residence Life is a good resource to help you connect with the MICA Community.

MICA Shuttles

(410)462-7575
MICA provides Evening Shuttles 7 days a week.

The MICA Evening Shuttle is a van service that operates on a route between campus buildings. The Evening Shuttle also offers transportation from campus buildings to nearby off-campus student homes. Use the Tap Ride app to call an evening shuttle, or request a pick-up by calling (410)462-7575.

MICA also offers regular shopping shuttles for students to pick up supplies. Seasonally, MICA offers shuttles to the Farmer's Market and to BWI Airport.

MICA Store

1200 Mt. Royal Avenue
(410)225-2276
store@mica.edu

The MICA Store is a nonprofit dedicated to providing students, artists, and the general public with quality art supplies and books at very competitive prices. The funds raised through the store are used for scholarships and improvements to the College.

You may find a list of the required and suggested textbooks for your courses using the MICA portal. For studio courses, your instructors will provide a list of required and suggested supplies on the first day of class.



MICA Student Health Center

1501 Mt. Royal Avenue, 2nd Floor

(410)225-4118

healthservices@mica.edu

Visit MICA Student Health by Chase Brexton Health Care to meet with a doctor. Call ahead of time to schedule an appointment, or visit daily walk-in hours for more urgent concerns.



Technology Systems and Services (TSS)

(410)225-2201

Art Tech Center Building

1208 Mt. Royal Avenue

TSS services include the Help Desk, AV equipment checkout, and the Digital Print Studio. If you have a question, concern, need help, have a great idea, or just want to talk about technology at MICA, please feel free to contact TSS. The Help Desk can help you with your tech issue or concern or direct you to the proper person to address your needs.



Writing Studio

Bunting 452

(410)225-2418

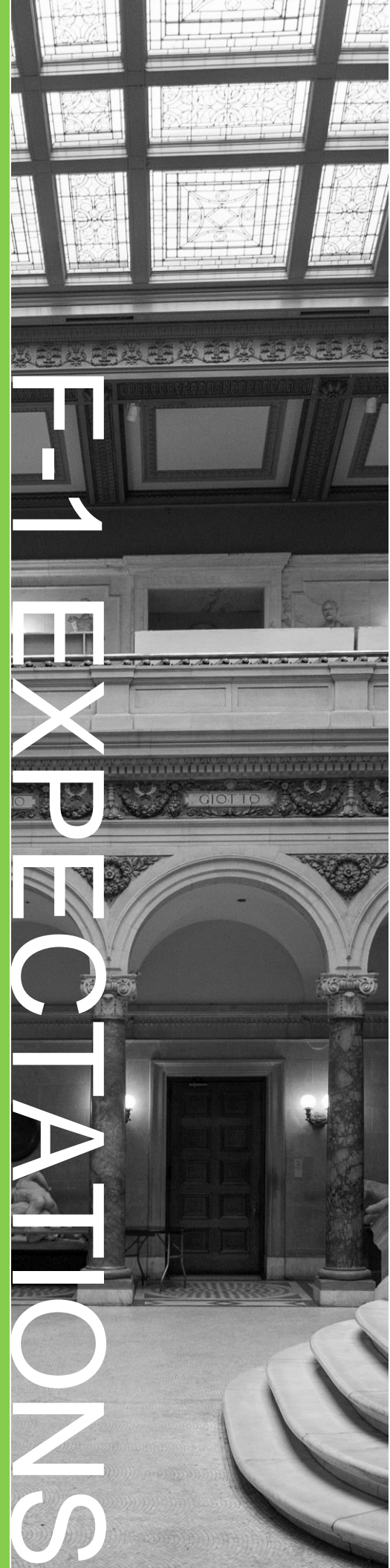
The Writing Studio welcomes all MICA students and recognizes the necessity for artists to be articulate, both in person and on the page. Tutor and student work together on main ideas, sentence writing, organization, grammar, and other writing challenges, and on a diverse array of written products as well, including papers, artist statements, cover letters and grant applications.

Most of the tutors who work in the Writing Studio have years of experience working with student writers, including those for whom English is a second language.

The Studio also offers a small bank of computers generally equipped with Internet access and word processing software. Some machines contain assistive technology software for use by students who face difficulties with reading and writing.

Every international student at MICA is expected to be responsible for their immigration status by following these procedures:

- Inform International Education if you move to a new address or change your phone number.
- Check your passport and make sure it is always valid for at least six months into the future.
- Notify International Education if any details listed on your I-20 have changed: your degree program, graduation date, financial sponsors, dependents, etc.
- Before traveling internationally, make sure your immigration documents are in place for your return.
 - On the date you re-enter the US your F-1 visa must be valid.
 - On the date you re-enter the US Page 2 of your I-20 must have a travel signature dated not older than 12 months from a member of International Education staff.
- Allow enough time for the Office of International Education to process your paperwork requests, especially when time limits are important (for extensions to your program, applications for practical training, travel signatures before school break, etc). Usually, a minimum of one week is required.
- Make an appointment with your Academic Advisor to discuss any academic concerns or problems with faculty or classes.
- Always discuss employment opportunities (on-campus or off-campus), internships, or volunteer work with the Office of International Education.



The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) have established many rules and procedures that are your responsibility to understand and follow.

Passport

The passport is the formal permit from your own country's government to travel abroad. Your passport should be valid for six months into the future whenever you enter the US. While in the US, you may renew your passport at a Consulate for your home country or at the Embassy in Washington, D.C. Contact your embassy or consulate directly to verify the proper procedures. If your passport is lost or stolen, obtain a replacement as soon as possible.

When you enter the US the border official should stamp your passport and write F-1 D/S. If something else is written, contact International Education.

VISA

The visa is a stamp issued by the US Consulate in your home country and placed in your passport. The visa authorizes you to apply for entry to the United States.

It is your responsibility to check your visa and be sure of the type, number of entries permitted, and the dates the visa is valid. If your visa expires during your course of study, you must apply for a new visa while you are outside the US, either at the American Consulate in your home country or the country you are visiting.

Remember: Visas may *only* be obtained from outside the US. You may not renew your visa from inside the US.

I-94 Number

Everybody is assigned an I-94 number when they enter the US. You will receive a new I-94 number every time you enter the US. You may need to know your I-94 number if you apply for a drivers license, social security number, etc. I-94 numbers are recorded digitally. To retrieve your I-94 number, log on to:

<http://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>

Form I-20

You must present an I-20 when you apply for an F-1 visa at the US Consulate, and again when you enter the United States. It is a good idea to keep your I-20 with your passport and be sure that it is accessible at all times.

If you lose your I-20, contact the Office of International Education immediately for a replacement. It is a good idea to keep a photocopy of your I-20 in a safe place.

If you travel outside the US, you must have a travel signature on page 2 of your I-20. Without this signature, you may not be permitted to reenter the US. To obtain a signature, come to the Office of International Education before your trip. The signature must be less than one year old at the time you reenter the US (or less than six months old if you have graduated and are engaged in post-completion OPT).

If you forget to obtain a travel signature before you leave the US, contact the Office of International Education immediately. You will be responsible for the cost of mailing a new I-20 to your location abroad.

Program Extension

If you think you may not complete your degree by the program end date on your I-20, contact the Office of International Education as soon as possible. Depending on your circumstances, International Education may be able to extend your program end date and issue a new I-20. To receive a program extension, you must provide new financial documents similar to the ones you submitted to receive your initial I-20.

Employment

Regulations on employment for F-1 students are very strict. When you applied for an F-1 visa, you had to prove access to sufficient funds to maintain yourself for at least one year in the United States. The government's expectation is that you will not need to work to support yourself financially. Persons with F-2 status (dependents of F-1 students) are not permitted to work.

Any type of work is considered employment, even an unpaid internship or selling your own artwork. Providing a service for compensation other than money (for example, babysitting in exchange for free room and board) is also considered work.

Please read the sections (below) about On-Campus Employment, CPT and OPT for further information about your employment and internship options while you are studying on an F-1 visa.

On-Campus Employment

All F-1 students are eligible to work on campus. You may begin applying for on-campus jobs immediately after arriving at MICA; you do not need to obtain special permission from the Office of International Education. Paychecks must be issued by MICA, Parkhurst, or Campus Safety, and the job must be located on campus. You may work part time (20 hours per week or less) while classes are in session. During vacation periods when classes are not in session, you may work any number of hours.

On-Campus Employment (Continued)

At MICA, some on-campus jobs are reserved for students who qualify for a US government program called Federal Work-Study. F-1 students are not eligible for these work-study jobs.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

After two consecutive semesters in F-1 status, you will be eligible for CPT. You may obtain CPT authorization for a credit-bearing, off-campus internship (paid or unpaid).

- Before you begin work, you must obtain approval for the internship from MICA's Career Development office and obtain a new I-20 with CPT authorization from MICA's Office of International Education
- CPT authorization is for a specific employer, start date and end date. You may not work for a different employer or work before/after the dates on your I-20. Self-employment is not permitted.
- While school is in session, you may receive authorization for part-time CPT (20 hours per week or less). During vacation periods, when classes are not in session, you may be authorized for part-time or full-time CPT (more than 20 hours per week). Please be aware that more than 364 days of full-time CPT will make you ineligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT).
- Credit for internships must be on your transcript during the same semester that you are authorized for work. Students participating in summer internships must remember to register for summer internship credits.

Further information and a CPT application can be found on the Office of International Education's website.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

After two consecutive semesters in F-1 status, you will be eligible for OPT. OPT authorization allows you to work off-campus.

- There are two kinds of OPT: pre-completion and post-completion. You may apply for pre-completion OPT before you finish your degree program. Pre-completion OPT may be part-time while classes are in session, and part-time or full-time during vacation periods.
- F-1 students are permitted to complete 12 months of OPT work per degree level. Most students use their OPT allocation AFTER graduation.
- All OPT work must be in your field of study and require your level of education. Self-employment is permitted (be careful to follow all applicable business and tax laws related to self employment).

- OPT authorization is granted by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). You cannot apply for OPT by yourself; you must obtain a new I-20 from the International Education office to submit with the OPT application. The application fee is currently \$380 and the government will take 60-90 days to review your application. Approval is not guaranteed.
- You are not eligible to work until you receive an authorization card (EAD) and reach the start date listed on the card. Detailed information can be found on the International Education website.

Social Security

An F-1 student who works in the United States is required to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN). Instructions for applying can be found on the International Education website.

Taxes

All F-1 students must submit a federal tax form each year, even students who did not earn any money during the year. Students who earn income must submit both federal and Maryland state tax forms. The Office of International Education will send an email with more information at the appropriate time each year, but we cannot provide individual tax advice or complete the forms for you. You can obtain personal assistance from local state and federal tax offices.

Military Service

F-1 visa holders are not subject to laws related to service in the United States military. However, male students in immigrant status (including legal permanent residents, illegal aliens, and refugees) are subject to these laws and must register with the Selective Service System.

Students pursuing full degrees at MICA may wish to open a U.S. bank account. Having a local bank will enable you to make money deposits/ withdrawals and perform other banking activities while in Baltimore. Local banks will be represented at the Resource Fair at the MICA orientation, or you can visit a branch to open an account once you become settled in Baltimore.

Documents Needed to Open an Account:

- Passport, valid 6+ months into the future
- F-1 Visa
- I-20
- MICA ID card

Note: You do not need a social security number in order to open a bank account

Banking Terms:

- **ATM:** ATM stands for Automated Teller Machine. This is where you can perform many banking tasks including depositing checks and cash and withdrawing cash. You will be given an ATM card to access these machines. When you set up your bank account, you will also create a pin number to use along with your ATM card.
- **Checking Account:** This is the simplest type of bank account. Some banks charge a fee for checking accounts, some require minimum monthly purchases or deposits in order to avoid late fees.
- **Savings Account:** These types of accounts will earn interest. That means the money you put into savings accounts may grow. Some savings accounts do not permit you to write checks and may otherwise limit withdrawals.
- **Online Banking:** Many banks offer digital banking services, including smartphone check deposits, online payments, online statements and more. Speak to your bank if you would like to be a “paperless” customer, receiving only online statements.
- **Debit Card:** A Debit card links directly to your checking account. You can generally use a debit card to pay for purchases anywhere you can use a credit card. Your debit card may also serve as your ATM card.
- **Credit Card:** A Credit Card will enable you to make purchases and pay for them at a later date. Beware: if you make a late payment on your credit card bill, you will be charged fees and your credit will be affected.

Points to Consider when Opening an Account:

- What do overseas wire transfers cost?
- What is the minimum balance required?
Will I incur a fee if my balance goes below the minimum?
- Will I incur a monthly service charge?
- Are there ATM branches nearby where I live? Nearby places in the U.S. where I plan to travel?
- Will I need to write checks? Can I obtain a checkbook from this bank?

Banks Nearby to MICA:

- **M & T Bank:**
301 Baltimore Street
- **PNC Bank:**
1100 North Charles Street
- **Suntrust Bank:**
1209 North Charles Street





CELL PHONES

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Obtaining a cell phone will be one of your top concerns when settling in Baltimore. A cell phone will help connect you to your peers, and provide a way for you to keep in touch with home.

Documents Needed to Sign Up with a Phone Co.

- Passport, valid 6+ months into the future
- F-1 Visa
- I-20
- MICA ID card

Note: You do not need a social security number in order to obtain a cell phone

Types of Cell Phone Plans:

Prepaid/Pay as you Go:

- Customers can purchase a phone with a set amount of phone call minutes, texts and data.
- When minutes, texts and data are used up, customers will need to purchase more before they are again able to make or receive calls.
- Many prepaid plans do not offer smartphones.
- Customers will need to purchase their own device.
- Customers who have no social security number will not generally need to pay a security deposit.

Month-to-Month

- Customers pay for a specific set of phone call minutes, texts and data.
- There will be additional fees if customers use more minutes, texts and data than their plan allows.
- Month-to-month customers are not bound to a contract and may leave the phone company at the end of the month with no monetary penalty.

Contract:

- Sometimes when opening an account, cell phone companies offer a better rate for service if you commit to staying with that phone company and plan for a minimum amount of time (normally around two years). There are monetary penalties for those who choose to leave plans before the contract is over.
- Contract plans offer a specific set of phone call minutes, texts and data. There will be additional fees if customers use more their phone more than their plan allows.
- Contract plans may offer cell phone devices at a heavily discounted rate.
- Many contract plans require a high security deposit for customers who, like many international students, do not have a social security number.

Points to Consider when Opening an Account:

- How much does it cost to call or text overseas?
- How long do I want to commit to a plan for?
- Do I have a social security number? Am I prepared to pay a deposit on a contract plan because I do not have a SSN?

Cell Phone Providers Nearby to MICA:

- AT&T
1001 Fleet Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
(410)782-7680, www.att.com
- Verizon
1002 Fleet Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
(410)528-5421, www.verizonwireless.com
- T-Mobile
29 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
(410)230-9600, www.t-mobile.com
- Cricket
2401 Liberty Heights Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215
(410)567-7806, www.mycricket.com

US Values	Other Countries' Values
Change	Tradition
Time and Its Control	Human Interaction
Equality	Hierarchy/ Rank/ Status
Individualism/Privacy	Group's Welfare
Self Help	Birthright Inheritance
Competition	Cooperation
Future Orientation	Past Orientation
Action/Work Orientation	Being' Orientation
Informality	Formality
Directness/ Openness/ Honesty	Indirectness/ Ritual/ 'Face'
Practicality/ Efficiency/ Materialism	Idealism/ Spiritualism/ Detachment

Cultural Values

It is normal to experience stress while studying internationally. You not only have to adjust to being a student in a new and different setting, but also to living in a new environment. Quite likely, you will be far away from friends and family and will experience feelings of loneliness and homesickness. These feelings are very natural. The difference between what you expect and what you actually experience may contribute to the level of distress you feel.

There are so many aspects to any one culture that it is impossible to describe or to summarize in a few words what the culture is like. However, there are some characteristics of American culture that can be described, and perhaps these descriptions will help you understand the behavior you see and observe in the United States. It does not mean, of course, that everyone in this country will display these characteristics, but it does mean that these characteristics tend to be evident in the country in general. The word American as used here means a person from the United States.

Actually anyone in the Americas-- North, Central, South America-- can be called an American. However, there is no convenient word in English for a person from this country, and the word American has come to be used.

If you are interested in learning about American culture and the way things are done here, certain Internet sites may be helpful. The website www.istudentcity.com is an excellent site for looking into and learning about American ways, and they have articles written for and by other students. Another site that could be useful for you is www.glimpseabroad.org, which is an online magazine written by international students for international students.



Stages of Cultural Adjustment

It may help to know that most people go through the following five fairly predictable stages as they adjust to their new environment:

Stage 1: The initial excitement about being in a new place is called the orientation or honeymoon phase.

Stage 2: This stage involves a period of initial cultural adjustment when you may feel lonely, frustrated or depressed.

Stage 3: This is a time of adjustment when you start feeling more comfortable with your surroundings and acquaintances.

Stage 4: As you complete the adjustment cycle, you will find yourself feeling integrated into the new culture.

Stage 5: Returning home may send you into a period of reverse cultural adjustment. You may have wanted to stay in the US longer and may try to figure out how and when you can return.

Symptoms of Stress

Many emotions and reactions are to be expected when you are stressed. Some common manifestations of stress are:

- Irritability over small things
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty falling asleep and/or staying asleep
- Queasy stomach
- Desire to run away
- Constant feeling of tiredness
- Psychosomatic illness
- Excessive criticism of others
- Poor work performance
- Difficulty making decisions
- Being unusually introspective
- Feelings of guilt, worry, anxiety

You should also be aware of the signs of a serious problem, either in yourself or in a fellow student that require immediate intervention. These signs may include:

- Prolonged depression
- Marked changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Self-destructive or violent behavior
- Excessive anxiety that interferes with the ability to function
- Alcohol or substance abuse
- Failure to comply with medical recommendations

Dealing with Stress

In dealing with the routine stress symptoms described in the first section above, you may find it helpful to think about the coping strategies that have worked for you in the past and may also want to develop some new strategies.

These symptoms are felt at some point and to some degree by all expatriates abroad, and it helps to anticipate that you may have periods of loneliness, sadness, or depression abroad so that you can be prepared to work through them. Whenever your usual coping mechanisms are not working or you find yourself making coping choices that are not in your best interest, realize that you may need more support and seek help. You may find it helpful to talk with your program coordinator or an instructor abroad about the stress you are feeling.

You may find the following techniques helpful in dealing with the stresses and strains of adjustment:

- Stay active in your host community and institution. New experiences and activities will keep you interested, inspired, and with other people. Staying active is one of the best ways to become acculturated and relaxed and to feel as though you are a real member of your new community abroad.
- Immerse yourself in art/study/reading/a hobby that is satisfying.
- Find a local person with whom you can talk regularly.
- Practice relaxation strategies through meditation, reading, taking walks, etc.
- Write letters/e-mails to family and friends-- but don't focus too much on this! Remember that it is important to balance contacts at home with your new and special opportunities for learning and community abroad.
- Visit fellow students.

If emotional signs and symptoms persist, consider it a possible medical problem and seek assistance from a counselor or physician. If your symptoms are severe, seek immediate assistance from your host institution's international office coordinator and a counselor or physician.

(Adapted from "Maintaining Strong Mental and Emotional Health" module, Pre-Service Health Training for Volunteers Binder, Peace Corps Office of Medical Services)



ACADEMICS

You will probably find that academic life at an American college, including American classrooms and teaching methods, differs from your own country. To help you succeed as a student at MICA, here are some important suggestions.

Evaluate Your Expectations

Have realistic expectations for yourself as you begin your study here. You will need some time to adjust to your new lifestyle, American culture, and Baltimore. Students often earn lower grades than they are accustomed to during their first semester. As their skills improve and they become accustomed to the college, their grades improve.

Study Skills

In the United States, professors expect students to use facts to solve problems in new, creative, or unique ways. It is not necessary to memorize your books, but rather it is necessary to understand the concepts, and be prepared to apply and communicate the concepts to real-life situations.

Hard Work from the Beginning

Pay special attention at the beginning of the course when the professor gives instructions about how he or she will conduct the class and determine grades.

- **Evaluation:** The American system emphasizes continual evaluation in the form of tests, projects, quizzes, and participation in class discussions throughout the semester or term, not only on an exam at the end of the semester or term.
- **Due Dates:** Your teacher will specify due dates for various assignments. These dates are firm and you must hand in your work by that date to receive full credit. If you know you cannot meet a deadline for an important reason, discuss this with your teacher ahead of time.

Attendance

- **Class Attendance:** Every professor will have an attendance policy. If you miss too many classes or are late for too many classes, professors have the right to give you a failing grade for the course, no matter what your scores are.
- **Arriving on Time:** It is very important to come to class on time. If you are late, enter quietly and sit down.
- **Illness and Absence:** If you are sick or have some emergency, your absence may be excused. You should be prepared to give some written evidence for this, such as a note from your doctor. If you know that you will miss one or more classes, inform your professor ahead of time. Make sure you do not miss any assignments and try to get class notes from a classmate. Contact MICA's Student Development Specialist for further help in dealing with your professors if you require absences due to illness.

The Syllabus

The syllabus will describe:

- Your professor's expectations of the class
- Assignments and their due dates
- Projects
- Grading Scale
- Attendance policy, texts to buy
- Tests and examination dates

You will be responsible for completing the material and following the rules listed on the syllabus.

Classroom Etiquette

Student/faculty relationships are generally casual and informal. Some professors may surprise you with their informal approach to teaching. For example, some professors sit on the table in front of the class. Other professors are much more formal in the classroom, but really enjoy talking to students outside of the class time.



Classroom Participation

In many countries, students are expected to sit quietly and listen to the professor. Often, students are not encouraged to ask questions or say anything at all. PROFESSORS IN THE UNITED STATES ARE DIFFERENT! Students are ENCOURAGED to ask questions and to voice their own opinions, even if they differ from the opinions of the professor! In the mind of an American professor, student comments and questions mean that the student is paying attention to the professor, and professors generally like that. Do not hesitate to ask a question about something you do not understand.

In some classes, you may be asked to prepare a short lecture or presentation to deliver to your class. Many such assignments are graded. It is normal to feel anxious about speaking in front of your professor and class. You should practice your presentation aloud to an audience of one or more, and ask for feedback before making class presentations. You can practice in front of your roommate or friends.

Office Hours

Do not hesitate to make an appointment to see the professor. It is not necessary to have a problem in order to make an appointment.

- **Discuss:** You may wish to discuss a particular topic in the course with the professor or to exchange views.
- **Introduce Yourself:** As an international student, we recommend you visit your professors early in the semester and introduce yourself. Most professors will want to know a little more about you, your country, and your previous education.

Papers

You will write many papers and essays while you are at MICA. It is wise to complete papers before their due date. That way, there will be time to ask another person or your professor for suggestions for improvement. Do not be afraid to ask your professor for clarification of his/her expectations for your term paper. You may also want to visit MICA's Writing Studio for help with papers and other written assignments.

Academic Honesty

Originality and individual achievement are highly valued in America. This is reflected in the focus on original thinking in class discussions, research projects and papers. It is also reflected in the rules of academic honesty. Some cultures view issues such as plagiarism differently. It is very important for you to understand exactly what comprises plagiarism at an American university.

The most important rule of academic honesty is that a student must be evaluated only on the basis of his or her work. If students violate this rule by submitting the work of other people as their own, they are committing a serious offense which is called plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism may result in a student's dismissal from the College. If you are ever in doubt about whether you may be committing plagiarism by using someone else's words or ideas and claiming them as your own, ask your professor to clarify the matter immediately.

Books

Textbook costs are different for every class. Students buy their own books for each course. Books can be expensive! At the end of each semester, you may be able to sell your books back to the bookstore. If you choose this option, do not expect a full refund. In fact, the amount you receive may be only a fraction of the original price. Keep in mind that hardcover books will be more expensive than paperback books. Used books are much less expensive as well. Buy your books as soon as you can if you'd like to be able to select the least expensive materials.



GLOSSARY OF ACADEMIC TERMS

Academic Advising

Process whereby students are provided with information regarding degree requirements, recommended coursework, programs of study, academic support services and policies, and procedures and academic progress.

Academic Advisor

An academic advisor is a MICA employee who provides students with information concerning courses, programs of study, and other information.

Academic Dishonesty

Originality and individual achievement are highly valued in America. This is reflected in the focus on original thinking in class discussions, research projects and papers. It is also reflected in the rules of academic honesty. The most important rule of academic honesty is that a student must be evaluated only on the basis of his or her own work. If students violate this rule by submitting work of other people as their own, they are committing a serious offense which is called plagiarism. Plagiarism may result in a student's dismissal from the College.

Academic Year

The academic year is divided into two semesters (fall and spring), each lasting 15 weeks. The MICA academic calendar is available online.

Assignment

Assignments are out-of-class work that are required by a professor and are due by a certain date. Examples of assignments are reading a book, writing a paper, or completing a painting.

Credit Hours

The quantity of work a student does at MICA is measured in credit hours. The number of credit hours for a course is usually based on the number of hours the class meets each week. To complete your degree, you must accumulate the credit hours specified for the degree you are seeking.

Course Load

International students on F-1 visas are required by law to carry a "full course load" (12 or more credit hours) to maintain their status. Exceptions to this rule must first be discussed with your academic advisor and the Office of International Education.

Course Withdrawal

This is the process a student uses to stop taking a class. If you do not properly drop or withdraw from a class you will receive a failing grade (F). If you “drop” the class by a specified date, no mark will appear on your academic record. If you withdraw from a course after that date, a mark of “W” will appear on your transcript. The deadlines for adding, dropping, and withdrawing from classes are published in the academic calendar.

Department

The department is an academic unit within a college or school (for example, Sculpture or Painting).

Final Exam

This is an examination given at the end of a semester and usually accounts for a significant portion of your grade. Most exams are comprehensive, that is, they cover all material covered in the course. Always check with your professor to confirm the time, date, and location of exams.

Grades and GPAs

The quality of a student’s academic work is measured by letter grades and grade point average (GPA).

Major

For undergraduate students, a major is their area of concentration of study.

Midterm

A mid-term is a test given near the middle of the semester, usually in the 7th week.

Office Hours

Do not hesitate to make an appointment to see the professor, even if you don’t have a problem to discuss. You may see a professor to talk through a topic or to exchange views. Most professors will be interested to know a little more about you and your country and previous education.

Prerequisite

Course(s) or other condition(s) required before enrolling in a more advanced class. Prerequisites are listed in the Academic Bulletin and the MICA website.

Alcohol Policy

Maryland Institute College of Art is committed to enforcing College policies that prohibit persons under the age of 21 from possessing, serving, or consuming alcohol. In addition, MICA discourages those 21 years and over from abusing alcohol. The unauthorized possession or use of alcoholic beverages on College-owned or college-controlled property, including student residences, is expressly forbidden. As adults, students bear ultimate personal responsibility for knowing and adhering to state and federal law.

Students living in campus housing who are 21 years or older may drink alcohol in the privacy of their apartments; however, they may not buy or serve alcohol to students or others under the legal drinking age. If an apartment is shared by those both under and over 21, it must be clear to any College official that alcohol is being consumed only by those 21 years of age and older. If an apartment is occupied only by those under 21, then alcohol is not permitted under any circumstance.

Open containers of alcohol are not permitted in any of the public or common spaces on campus, including courtyards, stairwells, or parking lots. Multi-quart containers such as kegs are not allowed in any campus-owned or controlled space.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to the following sanctions, among others, depending upon the College officials' assessment of the severity of the violation(s):

- Alcohol education
- Assessment for alcohol abuse problem
- Required alcohol abuse treatment program
- Housing probation (if student resides in College housing)
- Dismissal from College housing (if student lives in College housing)
- Suspension from the College
- Dismissal from the College
- Referral to law enforcement agencies

Also, if alcohol is found in the possession of underage students, staff will require that the alcohol be disposed of in the presence of the staff member. Students who are in the presence of alcohol, under certain circumstances, may also be determined to be in violation of the alcohol policy.

Smoking Regulations

Smoking is prohibited in all indoor campus spaces, including student rooms in College residential facilities. Smoking is also prohibited within 25 feet of buildings.

The goal is to eliminate situations where students, employees, and visitors must walk through smoke-filled areas in order to enter a MICA building, and also to prevent smoke from migrating into the building. “No Smoking” signs will be posted as a reminder of this policy.

Ash trays are provided in areas where smoking is permitted, and smokers are encouraged to use them instead of campus sidewalks and lawns when extinguishing their cigarettes.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is a violation of the law and a violation of the College’s policy. This policy on sexual harassment applies to the entire College and to the conduct of students, faculty, staff, and vendors both on campus and at College-sponsored events and activities.

Sexual harassment toward a student is a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972. Students who believe they have been subject to sexual harassment at the College are instructed to contact the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Sexual harassment toward an employee is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Title VII is the primary legal basis for sex discrimination claims of employees. It protects both men and women and includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

If you feel that you are being sexually harassed, or are aware of the occurrence of sexual harassment, you should immediately contact one of the following and The College will investigate the matter promptly and take appropriate steps to equitably resolve the matter:

- Vice President for Student Affairs: Office of Student Affairs, Bunting Center 260, (410)225-2422

Sexual harassment is unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is offensive to students, staff, or faculty. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to:

- Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical contact where submission to the conduct is made a term or condition of instruction, employment or any College activity or is used as the basis for academic decisions or employment.

- Unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which unreasonably interferes with a student, staff, or faculty member’s work or creates a hostile or demeaning employment or educational environment.

Some examples of prohibited harassment include:

- Unwelcome sexual advances. This includes patting, pinching, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, or any other physical contact considered unacceptable by another individual.
- Requests or demands for a sexual relationship. This includes subtle or blatant unwanted flirtations, advances, propositions, expectations, or requests for any type of sexual relationship.
- Verbal abuse or teasing that is sexually oriented or based on gender or sexual preference. This includes comments about an individual's body or appearance, off-color jokes, or any other offensive comments, innuendos, or actions with which someone may be uncomfortable (where such comments go beyond an isolated innocuous compliment).

Romantic Relationships

The development of a romantic relationship can be complicated and involve a great number of factors. Initially a person may express that they want to get to know the other better. The informal meetings between individuals are commonly referred to as “dates”. The time spent together can involve going out to get something to eat, to attend a movie or other social events. In many situations, a person may date several different people. After an extended period of time, if both people agree, the two may enter into a committed relationship where they only date each other.

Sexual relationships are common when two people become romantically involved. If you are considering engaging in intimate behaviors with another person, it is highly suggested that you consult Student Health Services for information on birth control and safer sex practices.

Public Displays of Affection [PDA(s)]

Individuals that are closely acquainted may greet each other with a hug and/or a kiss on the cheek. The exchange is generally very brief. As well, the practice only takes place with the permission of both individuals. Romantic partners may demonstrate their affection for each other by way of holding hands or engaging in a kiss.

Greetings

Americans are very friendly. They tend to greet each other with a smile, sometimes a handshake, and a friendly, “hello, how are you?” (which is not actually a question about your health” or “what’s up?”) Such a greeting is very common, and does not always require an answer. You will hear many casual greetings among students including, “hi,” “hey,” “howdy,” “what’s new?” or “how’s it goin’?” You will also hear “how are ya?” or “how ya doin’?” Unlike some other cultures, these questions do not mean that the person wants to stop and talk about how you are. The expected answer is “fine,” even if you are not feeling “fine.” If an American friend greets you with, “Hi, what’s going on?” and walks away, do not feel offended, it is a popular way of greeting.



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Here at MICA, we have several services in place to help students experiencing medical emergencies. This resource sheet will help you understand who to call if you are experiencing a medical issue.

If you live on-campus:

- During the day from Monday to Friday, if you are feeling ill, contact Student Health Services at (410)225-4118. If you are too sick to walk over to Student Health, contact the Campus Safety Emergency Line at (443)423-3333. Campus Safety will come to your apartment and either help transport you to Student Health Services or call 911 for an ambulance. Campus Safety can also retrieve a wheelchair from the Student Health Center on a short-term basis.
- During the evening or weekend, contact Campus Safety at (443)423-3333. Campus Safety will either transport you to the emergency room or call 911 for an ambulance. If Campus Safety takes you to the emergency room, they will ask you to bring a roommate or a friend who can let them know when you are ready to be picked up and brought back to campus.
- If you don't have a friend who can go with you to the emergency room, please ask Campus Safety to contact the Residence Life Staff Person on-call or the Student Affairs Staff Person on-call to assist you.
- Once you are back on-campus, if your medical emergency results in missing class, please call the MICA Student Development Specialist, at (410)225-2422.
- If you have follow-up medical appointments off campus, please call the Student Development Specialist so they can work with you on a transportation plan and support. They can also help you if you have sustained physical injuries that provide challenges for you in the classroom by identifying potential accommodations.

**STUDENTS EXPERIENCING LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCIES
(FAINTED, PASSED-OUT, ETC.) CALL 9-1-1.**

If you live off-campus:

- During the day from Monday to Friday, call Student Health Services at (410)225-4118. If you are too sick and live near campus, call Campus Safety at (443)423-3333 to determine if they can help transport you to Student Health or the emergency room.
- During the evening or weekend, first try calling Campus Safety at (443)423-3333 to determine if they can help. Otherwise contact 9-1-1 for an ambulance.
- If you don't have a friend who can go with you to the emergency room, please have Campus Safety contact the Residence Life Staff Person or call the Student Affairs Staff Person on-call to assist you.
- Once you are back on campus, if your medical emergency results in missing class, please call the Student Development Specialist, at (410)225-2422.

If you are still unsure as to whom to call, here are some helpful numbers:

Student Affairs: (410)225-2422

International Education: (410)225-2243



