

# International Student Booklet



WELCOME TO COLUMBIA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
AND TO COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

2016-2017 EDITION

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Welcome to Columbia International University!

We are excited that God has led you to continue your training at Columbia International University (CIU). We trust you will find a community of believers interested in learning from you and a faculty eager to train you. We count it a special privilege to have you on our campus.

This booklet is designed to provide basic information about the United States, Columbia and CIU. It will answer many of your questions about immigration guidelines, academic standards, institutional requirements and cultural distinctives. It will probably not answer all of your questions, but it will help you to be more knowledgeable and more comfortable in this new setting.

We want to help you in any way that we are able, but often we cannot help because we are not aware of the need. We understand that in certain cultures it may be considered rude or inappropriate to tell someone else your needs. This is not usually so in America and it is not the way we want it to be at CIU. Please make your needs known to Student Life, your Assistant Deans for Student Development (single women – Mrs. Donna Thompson; single men – Dr. Marshall Davis; married students – Dr. Brion Burns), or your advisor. While we may not be able to meet every need you may have, we can advise you on the best course of action to take.

We trust that you understand that our monetary resources are limited. Therefore, we usually cannot help with financial needs. But, if you need assistance with coursework, if you need a ride to buy items at the store or complete an errand, or if you have other needs of this type, we can assist you in finding help. We certainly have the time and the desire to listen and to pray for you, whatever your need may be.

Please read this information carefully and keep this booklet where you can refer to it often. Adjustment to the American way of talking, living and doing things will take time, but the Lord's grace will enable you to "catch on" quickly. All of us at CIU are here to serve you.

## 1.2 International Student Services

The International Student Services office is located within the Student Center.  
Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM

### **International Student Advisor (Mr. Rick Swift) 807-5234 (Admin. Assistant –Mrs. Brandy Stevens)**

Here are some other useful contact numbers:

Associate Dean of Student Life (Dr. Brion Burns) 807-5236 (Admin. Assistant-Mrs. Lainie McWilliams, ext.5236)

Assistant Dean of Student Life: Women's Ministry (Mrs. Donna Thompson) 807-5451

Assistant Dean of Student Life: Men's Ministry (Dr. Marshall Davis) 807-5487

## 1.3 Important Campus Phone Numbers and Web Links

### [Campus Map](#)

	<u>Location</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
SSM and Graduate School Admissions	Administration Building	Ext. 5024
Undergraduate Admissions	Administration Building	Ext. 5024
International Student Advisor	Rossi Student Center (Student Life Office)	Ext. 5234
Health Services	Memorial Residence Hall	Ext. 5056
Registrar	Administration Building	Ext. 5028
Financial Aid	Administration Building	Ext. 5036
Assistant Dean of Student Development:		
Married Students	Rossi Student Center (Student Life Office)	Ext. 5236
Single Women	Founders Residence Hall	Ext. 5451
Single Men	Memorial Residence Hall	Ext. 5487
Dean of Student Life	Rossi Student Center (Student Life Office)	Ext. 5234
Academic Deans' Offices:		
Arts & Sciences	Fisher Building	Ext. 5630
Counseling	Shuster Building	Ext. 5321
Education	Shuster Building	Ext. 5329
ICS	Fisher Building	Ext. 5604 or 5609
SSM	Shuster Building	Ext. 5330
Accounting/Cashier	Administration Building	Ext. 5055
Ram Shack	Rossi Student Center	Ext. 5263
Post Office	Rossi Student Center	Ext. 5250
Dining Room	Rossi Student Center (upper level)	Ext. 5276
Library	G. Allen Fleece	Ext. 5110
Residence Life Office	Memorial Residence Hall	Ext. 5485
IT Help Desk	Student Computing Center (Ridderhof)	Ext. 5199
Security Desk	Ridderhof Building	Ext. 5010

## 2 PREPARATIONS FOR STUDIES

### 2.1 Deposit

After acceptance, confirm your intent to enroll by sending your enrollment deposit. Single students submit \$7000 and married students submit \$10,000. For undergraduate students who plan to live on-campus, a \$100 deposit will also be taken from your enrollment deposit to hold your room. *Note: The enrollment and housing deposits are not additional fees; they are down payments and will be applied towards your first semester's expenses.*

You may submit the deposit in one of the following ways:

1. Send a check or money order (payable to CIU) to Admissions, PO Box 3122, Columbia, SC 29230,
2. Provide credit card information over the phone by calling the International Admissions Counselor (IAC) 803-807-5345, or
3. Request your bank to complete an Electronic Funds Transfer. Please contact the IAC for additional information.

## 2.2 Advisement

Upon your acceptance, you will be assigned an academic advisor (a faculty member who teaches in your degree program). In order to ensure that you register for classes which fit your intended degree program and for which you have met all prerequisites, you are required to check with your advisor before registering for your courses. You cannot register for courses until you have communicated with your advisor. **Undergraduate students will have the opportunity to meet with their advisor during Orientation.**

## 2.3 Health Insurance

All of our students are required to have Health Insurance. If you bring your spouse or family with you, they will also need coverage. If you do not have medical insurance or would like to purchase CIU Health Insurance, you can select this option on the Health Insurance page of your my.ciu.edu account. You will be charged per semester, and should see this fee added to your Fee Statement (for information about coverage and fees, visit <http://www.studentinsurance.com/Schools/SC/CIU/> for more details. This policy is at a lower rate than if you were to purchase insurance on your own since they are getting several customers at one location. If you have medical insurance, you need to enter your health insurance information and click “submit.” Every semester, students are required to list their current insurance policy as part of registration (even if your insurance policy remains the same from one semester to the next).

U.S. insurance operates in the following manner: at the time of purchase you will pay a rather large **premium** (please see a health insurance brochure for current costs). Many of the benefits will begin immediately; others will take full effect after you have met what is called a **deductible**.

The deductible is an initial payment that you will make each year for medical services or prescription medicines. Usually the deductible is about \$100 per family member. This deductible allows your insurance premiums to be substantially lower. Insurance would probably not be affordable without this deductible in place.

The way a deductible works is that after you have paid \$100 in expenses for yourself (and each family member) within a calendar year, your insurance begins paying 80% of all following medical costs (this amount may vary). Please make sure you use a network provider (a doctor or hospital that works in agreement with your insurance company). If you do not, the portion the insurance pays will be much lower. A list of these network providers will be available to you from the insurance company. Another advantage of a network provider is that often the insurance company gets medical services for a lower cost than you could by yourself. These savings (often quite significant) are passed on to you. This insurance system can be quite confusing for those new to it. Please ask the International Student Advisor (ISA), the Human Resources Department at CIU, or the insurance company for further explanations.

## 2.4 Health Form

You will not be able to register until this form is completed and returned. A form will be mailed to you, but you are welcome to begin working on this requirement by going to [https://my.ciu.edu/ICS/Campus\\_Life/Health\\_Services\\_and\\_Insurance](https://my.ciu.edu/ICS/Campus_Life/Health_Services_and_Insurance) and printing the health form yourself.

The first page is a record of your immunizations. You will either need a copy **of your immunizations or a doctor's signature** indicating that the dates written on your form are correct. You will also need a **Tuberculosis Screening** (a PPD)--it must be completed within one year previous to enrolling at CIU. This can be done at a doctor's office or your local Health Department. Keep in mind you will need to return to the doctor/health department 48-76 hours later to have the test read. The test is not complete without an official record of the results.

The second page is a Medical History Questionnaire. You will also need to include proof of Insurance. If you decide, you can enroll in CIU's student medical insurance plan. You do **not** need a physical and will only need to see a doctor if you need immunizations/PPD test. If you have any questions, you may contact our campus nurse, Sally Kennedy, at ext. 5056 or by email at [skennedy@ciu.edu](mailto:skennedy@ciu.edu).

### 2.5 MY.CIU.EDU Account

As an accepted student, you will receive a my.ciu.edu account. You will be given your my.ciu.edu username and password by the Registrar. Once you have your username and password, visit [my.ciu.edu](http://my.ciu.edu) and login (for username, enter firstname.lastname). Please **begin using this email address for all correspondence with CIU!** Due to U.S. laws on personal privacy, once you have enrolled, **we are not allowed to correspond with students through their personal email accounts.** You will also receive very important information from the university through your [my.ciu.edu](http://my.ciu.edu) account, so it is important to check it frequently. Access to "Webmail" is possible once you log on to [my.ciu.edu](http://my.ciu.edu). You may forward your [my.ciu.edu](http://my.ciu.edu) emails to another email address, if you prefer. To forward, click "Options" at the top of your email screen. Then click "Mail Forwarding Options." Enter the address to which you would like your [my.ciu.edu](http://my.ciu.edu) emails forwarded. Please be aware that you forfeit your "Right to Privacy" if you choose to have your emails forwarded to your other email accounts.

### 2.6 Registration

To register for classes online, click on "Registration" in the lower left part of the [my.ciu.edu](http://my.ciu.edu) Homepage. Click on the Most of your registration work will be completed on this page. **Undergraduate students will not be given clearance to register until CIU has received your Health form and you have contacted your advisor.**

### 2.7 Orientation

#### Undergraduate/College Students

A mandatory orientation called CONNECT:CIU is held for new, incoming students in August and January before the start of classes. Instructions will be sent to new students on how to register for CONNECT:CIU.

#### Graduate/Seminary

If you are a new, incoming student in the fall and spring, there is an all-day mandatory orientation held before the first day of classes. Information from Student Life will be sent to the student.

### 2.8 Fee and Payment Options

You are required to either pay your account balance in full or to set up a payment plan by the first day of classes.

In order to pay your tuition, fees, etc., you will need to access [https://my.ciu.edu/ics/Student Accounting](https://my.ciu.edu/ics/Student_Accounting)

You may pay in one of the following ways:

CIU Accounting Office to pay by check, money order, or by credit card online

## 3 THE AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

### 3.1 The Semester System

The academic year is composed of fall and spring terms; each is approximately 16 weeks in length. In addition, there are one-week and two-week summer classes for college, graduate and seminary students. Seminary also holds one-week intensives during January, called Winterim Classes.

### 3.2 The Credit System

The University uses a credit system in which each course has a specific number of “credit hours”, representing the number of hours that are spent in class each week. Most classes meet for 3 hours per week and are therefore, 3 credit hours. A normal course load for undergraduate students is 12 to 15 credit hours (or 4 to 5 courses) per semester. International undergraduate students must take at least 12 credit hours each semester in order to meet minimum student visa requirements. Full-time graduate/seminary study is considered 9 credit hours each semester.

### 3.3 The Grading System

Academic performance in each course is evaluated by letter grades which have a corresponding value or number. At the end of each semester, students receive the number of credits corresponding to the number of courses that are successfully completed. A student’s grade-point-average (or GPA) is determined by dividing the sum of grades by the total number of course hours taken each semester.

GRADE	EXPLANATION	SEMESTER HOUR
A	Excellent Work	4.0
A-		3.7
B+		3.3
B	Good Work	3.0
B-		2.7
C+		2.3
C	Acceptable Work	2.0
C-		1.7
D+		1.3
D	Poor Work	1.0
D-		0.7
F	Failure	0.0
WF	Withdrawal Failing	0.0
W	Withdrawal	
I	Incomplete	(temporary grade only)
S	Satisfactory	
U	Unsatisfactory	
AU	Audit	No credit is granted

A student taking 4 courses totaling 12 semester hours receives the following grades: A, A, B+, B  
 As a result the student’s GPA would be  $4+4+3.3+3.0=14.3 \times 3$  (semester hours per course) =  $42.9 \div 12 = 3.575$  GPA



### 3.4 Keys to Academic Success in the U.S.

Students may have to adapt their study habits to the American educational system, which emphasizes evaluation in the form of tests, papers, projects, quizzes, and participation in class discussions throughout the semester, in addition to exams at the end of the semester. Students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in class discussions. Some professors take attendance and will include class participation, attendance, and exam grades in the calculation of final grades.

In the classroom, students are encouraged to ask questions and to express their opinions, even if they differ from those of the professor. In some classes, students may be asked to prepare a short lecture or presentation to deliver to the class. **Any time students feel unsure about what is expected of them in class or of some aspect of the material being presented, they should ask the professor for clarification.** If students do not ask questions, the professor assumes that students understand all the material that is presented. Other students, professors, academic advisors, and counselors can offer guidance to new students beginning studies.

#### Plagiarism

CIU expects you to be honorable in all your academic work. You are to do, and be responsible for, your own work. Dishonesty in assignments, examinations, written papers, or any other academic work is contrary to scriptural principles of Christian living and is an affront to fellow students and the faculty.

Plagiarism, regardless of intent, is the presentation of another person's ideas or words as one's own. The following are specific examples of plagiarism:

1. The words, sentences, ideas, conclusions, examples, and/or organization of an assignment are borrowed from a source (a book, article, another student's paper, tapes, etc.) without acknowledging the source.
2. A student submits work done by another student, in part or in whole, in place of his or her own work.
3. A student submits assignments received from, or purchased from commercial firms or any other person or group.
4. A student knowingly aids another student in plagiarizing an assignment.

Plagiarism, or other forms of cheating, will result in academic penalty. It may also result in failure of assignment or test, failure in the course, or further disciplinary action.

#### Time Management

The American culture is time-oriented, rather than event-oriented. Therefore, be on time to meetings, classes, appointments, etc. Plan always to be at the appointed place a few minutes ahead of time. When asked to share or speak, **make every effort to not** exceed the given time limit.

Be sensitive to other people. Do not carry on extended conversation with someone who is studying or obviously has other responsibilities.

As for your own study time, make a time schedule to ensure that you have time to complete your homework assignments and study adequately for tests. For example, plan to study a little bit each day for tests instead of waiting to "cram" the night before. The school states that for every hour of class time, you should spend 1 ½ hours (2 hours at the graduate level) outside of class. For the first semester you may have to plan on 2 ½ to 3 hours of study time for each

hour of class time. Do not be embarrassed to ASK QUESTIONS. You should find most CIU students and the CIU faculty eager to help you in our studies. We want to help! Seek us out, both students and faculty. That is how we learned, too! You may also wish to visit the Academic Success Center to get study skills and tutoring help.

The CIU faculty has determined that international students should be given an extended time period to complete tests. This extra time will be added to the normal period that English speaking students receive. This is for your benefit should you continue to have some difficulty with the language. You are encouraged to take advantage of this privilege when you find it necessary. Please let your professor know if you need this extra time.

## 4 HOUSING, UTILITIES AND SERVICES

### 4.1 Living on-campus: Residence Halls

On campus residence halls are available for single students. There are men's residence halls (Memorial, Petty, and West) and women's residence halls (Founders, East, and Walker). For students living on campus, washers and dryers are provided free of charge. They are located in the basements of Founders, East & Memorial Hall. For more info on Residence Life, please visit [https://my.ciu.edu/ICS/Residence\\_Life](https://my.ciu.edu/ICS/Residence_Life)

### 4.2 Living on-campus: Pineview Apartments

On campus apartments are available for married, graduate/seminary or single students 23 years old or older. For more info, please visit <http://www.ciu.edu/campus-life/student-life/housing-and-dining/pineview-apartments>

### 4.3 Off-campus Housing

The Student Life office also maintains a database which contains listings of apartments for rent, and houses and mobile homes for rent or sale. This can be accessed through: <http://www.ciu.edu/campus-life/student-life/housing-and-dining/find-off-campus-housing>

#### ***Common questions you may ask a potential landlord:***

- How much is the monthly rent/security deposit?
- How long is the lease? Is there a charge to break the lease?
- What is included in the rent? Are utilities included? What is the average monthly cost?
- Are there laundry facilities in your apartment or in the building? If not, are they nearby?
- Is the apartment furnished? Will I have my own kitchen or will I share with other tenants?
- How many people are sharing the house? Will I share the room with anybody?
- Is parking available? If not, where can I park?

### 4.4 Utilities

When you move in to your new home, you may be required to pay deposits in order to get utility service. This would include electricity, water, and telephone connections. If you rent a home, apartment, or mobile home these utilities

(except telephone) may possibly be, but rarely are, included in your rent. If so, no deposit will be required. If this is not the case, then deposits are most likely required. You may call each company to ask about this. All of these deposits will be refunded when you leave or, usually after a few months of use it is given as a credit on your bill. Remember that monthly utility costs must be added to rent when calculating your budget.

**Electricity & Gas:** (<http://www.sceg.com/en/>)

South Carolina Electric & Gas (SCE&G) will most likely be the company that provides service for you. You may call them at (803) 799-9000. Probably the only valid identification that you have is your passport. If so, you will need to go to one of the SCE&G offices (the closest is 3011 Farrow Road). The main office is downtown at 1400 Lady Street (corner of Lady and Marion St.). Plan on going to the office since you do not have a credit history in the United States. They are open 8-5 Monday-Friday. You need to know your street address and be sure to take your passport and any other identification you think might be needed.

**Water Service:** (<http://www.columbiasc.net/waterservices>)

To have the water service turned on and to get your account information started, you will need to go to the City of Columbia: Water Customer Service office is located at 1225 Laurel Street (downtown). They require a deposit depending on the location and type of residence. You will need to have a completed lot rental agreement (if in the Village) or a housing contract, plus your identification (passport) to get your service started. You can call the Columbia Water Department at (803) 545-3300.

**Telephone:** (<http://www.att.com/>)

ATT provides landline non-cellular phone services and mobile phone services for the Columbia area. To obtain more information regarding landline or cellular phone services visit [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com) or (see section 4.5 below).

**Trash Pick-Up:**

Please check with your landlord or a neighbor to see if there is a fee for garbage collection.

## 4.5 Mobile/Cell Phone

Listed below are some local “international friendly” wireless/cellular phone companies. These companies will allow international students to sign up for service without a U.S. social security number (SSN) but may require a deposit or contract to begin service. In each case, the deposit and/or contract (for a specified length of time - i.e. one year) required to obtain wireless/cellular service will vary by company.

**(AT&T) Wireless** ([www.wireless.att.com](http://www.wireless.att.com))

Harbison	1-803-407-0695
St. Andrews Road	1-803-612-8475
Lexington	1-803-359-9103
Forest Dr	1-803-790-1776
O’Neil Court	1-803-419-8899

**Verizon Wireless** ([www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com))

Broad River	1-803-781-6899
Two Notch Road.	1-803-865-6300
Columbiana	1-803-749-4500

**Sprint PCS** ([www.sprint.com](http://www.sprint.com))

Bush River Road	1-803-772-1267
Columbiana Cir	1-803-407-1873

Harbison Blvd

1-803-781-0243

## 4.6 Furniture and Household Items

Furniture bought from Target and Wal-Mart is usually less expensive pieces. There are several ways to obtain inexpensive furniture and in some cases, borrow or rent items while studying at the University:

### Student Life Message Board

Students can browse the bulletin board outside the Student Life office for potential furniture for sale.

### Garage/yard/moving sales

Classified advertisements in local newspapers list a variety of community sales and events. People moving or cleaning their houses often have garage or lawn sales, selling excess goods at reasonable prices. Most items are used and for the best selection, it is best to arrive at the sale as early as possible.

### Church Bazaars

These public sales are held at various churches around the area. These community events are similar to garage sales and items are usually donated by church members and sold at the bazaar for a moderate price. The purpose of this event is to raise money for the church or one of their charitable projects. Local newspapers frequently announce these sales in the classified advertisement section.

### The Carolina Trader

This is a newspaper devoted to advertising second-hand furniture as well as used cars, clothing, and other items. The Trader costs 50 cents and is sold at many local grocery stores and gas stations.

### Thrift Stores

Thrift stores sell used goods that have been donated by people in the community. Visit [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com) for local addresses and phone numbers of thrift stores in the area.

### Rental Companies

Furniture may be rented from a variety of companies for a monthly fee. These items range from complete living room suites to kitchen appliances and electronics and maintained by the company. Local rental companies are listed under "Rental-furniture" on [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com)

## 4.7 Banking

There are several good banks located within five miles of CIU. You will need to take some form of identification with you to open an account (at least your passport). Because there are so many different types of accounts that the banks offer, please take some time to call them and find out what they offer and the fees involved. All of these banks offer a student account. You may need a CIU student I.D. to open one of these types of accounts. The bank may also request a Social Security Card in order to open an account with them. A student account may not be the best for your needs. Here are a couple of local banks for your information.

### South State Bank

Gervais Street – Phone # (803) 771-2265 – [www.southstatebank.com](http://www.southstatebank.com)

They have an ATM machine in the student center on campus. An ATM is a machine where you can withdraw money conveniently with a bank card whenever you need it (just use it wisely). This bank might be a good choice for you.

**Wells Fargo**

101 Dutch Square Boulevard – Phone # (803) 750-7804 ([www.wellsfargo.com](http://www.wellsfargo.com))  
They have been very helpful to CIU students in the past.

**NBSC (National Bank of South Carolina)**

1025 Broad River Road – Phone # (803) 731-7400 ([banknbsc.synovus.com](http://banknbsc.synovus.com))  
NBSC is a local bank that can be found only in South Carolina.

**Bank of America**

330 Bush River Road (across from Dutch Square Mall) – Phone # (803) 765-4730 [www.bankofamerica.com](http://www.bankofamerica.com)  
They are a major bank with many offices located throughout the southeast United States.

**4.8 Postal Services**

**Post Offices:**

Columbia Main Post Office  
1601 Assembly Street  
(803) 926-6354

Eau Claire Station  
4026 Lamar Street  
(Branch closest to CIU) (803) 252-9009

You can mail most anything from the CIU Post Office in the Rossi Student Center. Several overseas couriers are available (DHL, UPS, Federal Express, etc.). A first-class stamp costs around 50 cents and this stamp will mail a regular letter anywhere in the United States. A post-card stamp is about half the price of a regular stamp. Check with your local post office or the CIU post office for airmail prices. The cost of mailing a package will depend upon the package weight. The post office will weigh packages for free and inform you of its mailing cost.

**4.9 Water**

The water in Columbia is safe to drink directly from the faucet (“tap water”). You may also purchase bottled water in stores, including the Ram Shack (Campus Store). Some places recommend that water be purified before drinking it due to a special problem with the local or city water. Filters (which can be bought at stores like Wal-Mart) are a good way to make sure your water is purified.

**4.10 Food**

There are several places to shop, depending on what quality and price range you wish to have. Local stores such as Dollar General, Family Dollar and Aldi’s are cheaper, while Wal-Mart may have more selections. Sam’s Club (part of Wal-Mart corporation) has a club card with an annual membership fee that allows you to purchase in large quantities and often for a reduced price. Bi-Lo, Food Lion, and Kroger all have free “membership” cards that allow you to receive discount rates. Publix has better quality products, but they are more expensive. Some ingredients that are difficult to find in other stores may be carried at Publix.

Ethnic foods may be limited in regular grocery stores and often are contained in just one aisle. However, there are alternatives if you seek an ethnic grocery store.

Use cash or traveler’s checks on your first trip. (ATM and Credit cards may also be used in most stores)  
Some stores have an “express” check-out aisle where the limit for groceries is 10 to 20 items. Although it may seem like an “express” line might be faster, in reality, it may take just as much time as a regular aisle.

### 4.11 KOINONIA COOP

All off-campus CIU Students (including Pine View Apartment residents) may join the Koinonia Co-op. The Co-op strives to reduce financial burdens by providing quality Harvest Hope Food Bank goods and products at no cost, as well as clothes and other household items at a reduced cost. Each member contributes a small amount of time to operate the ministry. Registration is required with a suggested donation at the start of semester. Contact James Wilson at [jwilson@ciu.edu](mailto:jwilson@ciu.edu) or 803-807-5378 for more information.

### 4.12 Shopping

**Shopping** – There are many shopping malls in Columbia that have a variety of department stores and specialty stores (clothing, shoe, toy, jewelry, athletic, etc.).

#### **Columbiana Centre**

I-26 & Harbison Boulevard  
Department Stores: Sears, Dillards, Belk & J.C. Penney

#### **Columbia Mall**

7201 Two Notch Road (just off of I-20)  
Department Stores, Food Court

#### **Dutch Square Mall**

800 Bush River Road  
Department Stores: Burlington Coat Factory & Belk

#### **Market Pointe Mall**

I-20 & Bush River Road  
Discount Clothing Stores: Hamricks  
Discount Home Furnishings: Waccamaw

#### **The Village at Sandhill**

481 Town Center Place, Columbia SC 29229  
Department Stores, Dining, Fitness, Recreation

#### **Discount Clothing Stores in Columbia**

T.J. Maxx  
Ross  
Marshall’s  
Target/K-Mart/Wal-Mart  
Factory Outlets

### 4.13 Laundry

For off-campus students, there are laundry facilities available around town There is usually a cost of \$.75 to \$2.00 for each load of laundry. If you live in an apartment complex, check with your manager to see if washers and dryers are available for your use.

Washers and dryers for sale will occasionally be listed on the bulletin board in the Student Center. To rent a washer and/or dryer, contact a local rental store. Visit [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com) You may also find a reasonably priced washer and dryer in the Carolina Trader - a small newspaper listing all kinds of items for sale by individuals.

#### 4.14 Repairs

Repair stores are listed on [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com) as well. They are listed under the name of the product needing repair.

Cars:	Automobile Repair & Service
Refrigerators:	Refrigerators & Freezers – Service & Repair
Stoves:	Ranges and Ovens – Service & Repair
Water Heaters:	Water Heaters – Repairing
Heaters:	Heating Equipment and Systems – Cleaning & Repair
Air Conditioners:	Air Conditioning Equipment and Systems – Repairing
Washers and Dryers:	Washing Machines and Dryers – Service & Repair
Plumbing:	Plumbing Contractors

#### 4.15 Television

For telephone numbers of local cable companies, type “cable” or “satellite” on [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com)

### 5 CAR INFORMATION AND DRIVER’S LICENSES

#### 5.1 Driver’s License

When looking to buy a car, there are many other items that you need to know. Do you have a driver’s license? Your international driver’s license is valid in South Carolina as long as you stay on a student visa (F-1 or F-2). See <http://www.scdmvlonline.com>. Before that license expires you should begin the process to get a South Carolina Driver’s License (SCDL).

If you do not have a driver’s license, or if you need to switch your foreign driver’s license to a SCDL, you should first obtain a South Carolina Driver’s Manual from any of the branch offices of the Department of Motor Vehicles:

- 1630 Shop Road..... (803)737-8350
- 1016 Broad Stone Road..... (803)749-9041

Once you have studied this manual (available only in English), you may take the written portion of the driving test (English or Spanish). Once you have passed the written portion, you may proceed with the actual driving test the same day. If you have a valid international driver’s license or a valid license from your home country there is no waiting period between the written and the actual driving test. If you are required to get a permit first (if you do not have a driver’s license), you will have a 90 day wait before you can take the driving portion of the test. You will need to provide your own vehicle for this test. The driver’s manual describes what will be expected of you. Please call one of the branch offices listed above to see where you should go to take your tests. The Dutch Square office is the closest office and they have the manual and other services, but they do not do testing. Please take your passport and international (or your country’s) driver’s license

to the tests. They may keep this other driver's license, but you should request it back if you will be travelling back to your home country.

### 5.2 Purchasing a Car

There are several places to look to buy a car. One place is the bulletin board by the Student Life office in the student center. Students and friends of CIU often sell fairly inexpensive cars on this board. Another source is the Carolina Trader or the Auto Trader that you can buy for about \$1 at most gas stations. These papers list cars (most for sale by the owner) from all over South Carolina that are for sale. You will find all price ranges in the Traders. One other source would be a car dealer. Prices usually are higher at a dealer, but in exchange for a higher price you may get a warranty in case anything goes wrong in the first couple months you own the car. When purchasing a car, make sure that they provide you with the Title.

It would be wise to either take someone with you who can evaluate the car, or ask if you can test drive the car and have a mechanic look at it for you. Mr. Byron Bullard (Bullard Auto Repair, (803)754-8787) is a CIU graduate and a car mechanic very near the school who might be able to look a car over for you if you give him advanced notice. Take the car by his shop and there may be a small fee (please call and ask Mr. Bullard if it is a convenient time for him before driving a car to his shop).

### 5.3 Car Insurance

You will also need to buy insurance for your car. This can amount to several hundred dollars per year and it is required by law. You can find insurance companies listed in the online phone book (Visit [www.yellopages.com](http://www.yellopages.com) under "Insurance"). It is probably best to speak with an agent from a major company such as State Farm, Nationwide, Allstate, or Geico. You can also ask faculty, staff, or students here at CIU for recommendations.

### 5.4 Automobile Tags and Registration

New residents must secure license plates within 45 days. You will need proof of liability insurance, title, registration card, and proof of property tax payment. For more information, contact the Richland County (803) 929-6000 [www.richlandonline.com](http://www.richlandonline.com).

### 5.5 Driving Laws

South Carolina has a seat belt law affecting **all** passengers in the vehicle. A child from birth up one year of age or who weighs less than twenty pounds must be properly secured in an approved rear-facing child safety seat. A child who is at least one year of age but less than six years of age and who weighs at least twenty pounds but less than forty pounds must be secured in a forward-facing child safety. A child who is at least one year of age but less than six years of age and who weighs at least forty pounds but not more than eighty pounds must be secured by a belt- positioning booster seat.

**A child who is less than six years of age cannot occupy a front passenger seat of a motor vehicle.** If you have your windshield wipers on during the day because of rain, you are required by law to also have your headlights on. Consult a South Carolina Driver's Manual for additional information.



## 5.6 If You Are Involved in an Accident

1. Call the police, assist anyone in danger and call an ambulance for anyone seriously injured.
2. Secure names and addresses of all persons in the other car.
3. Be sure to obtain names and addresses of all witnesses.
4. Obtain license number and State of registration of the other vehicle(s).
5. DO NOT ADMIT RESPONSIBILITY; let the police officer determine who was at fault.
6. Be prepared to show the police officer your proof of insurance, your driver's license and your current vehicle registration.
7. Do not disclose your insurance policy limits to anyone (except the police).
8. Report the accident immediately to your insurance representative or to the corporate office.

## 6 IMMIGRATION GUIDELINES

The information listed on this page has to do with the agreement you have made with the United States Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in order to come to the U.S. to study. Any violations of this agreement may result in the loss of your student status, and this in turn could lead to your being asked to leave the country immediately (this can be referred to as "being deported"). The guidelines of your F-1 visa will be listed below with the consequences of violating that particular guideline. Please do not take these issues lightly. Failure to comply with USCIS regulations, and failure to proceed with correcting an "out of status" situation can easily lead to your being barred from re-entering the U.S. for either three or ten years (Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996).

### 6.1 Full Course of Study

You must maintain a full course of study. This means that if you are in the college you are *required* to take at least 12 hours each semester. If you are in the seminary or graduate school you are *required* to take at least 9 hours each semester. The only semester you are allowed to drop below this number of hours is the last semester of your degree program. A distance education course can be added to your semester total but only 3 credit hours [e.g. a college student may take 9 hours in class and 3 hours via extension {12 hour total}].

If you do NOT take the required number of hours, you fall out of F-1 status and must either apply for reinstatement or leave the country and re-enter on a new I-20. If you fail to do either of these you are considered an "overstay" by the USCIS and your visa is automatically cancelled. If you apply for reinstatement and it is denied, you are then "unlawfully present" in the U.S. This can result in your deportation (removal from the country) if you do not take steps to return to your home country. Exceptions may be made for illness or language difficulty, but this may occur only once during your degree program. Unless curriculum restrictions limit the number of courses you are able to take.

### 6.2 Maintain a Valid Passport

You should always try to keep at least 6 months on your expiration date in your passport. While your visa stamp and your I-94 probably have D/S marked on it ("duration of status"), the passport could expire while you are here. While there are no serious consequences to having an expired passport while you are in the US, if you leave and try to re-enter

the US with an expired passport, you may be denied re-entry. This could cause tremendous problems, especially if you are not traveling from your home country. Should your passport get within six months of its expiration date, it will be your responsibility to submit your passport to the appropriate embassy here in the U.S. for revalidation. The International Student Advisor or the admissions offices will be glad to help you locate your embassy in Washington D.C. Your embassy can be found on the internet at: <http://www.embassy.org/embassies/index.html>.

### 6.3 I-20 Dates

Please pay careful attention to the date on item #5 on the I-20 you were issued. Item #5 gives the date that you are scheduled to complete your program. This date is very important! **You cannot let this date expire.** About 30 days before the I-20 expires you will need to get a new I-20 for an extension of stay. This is not a difficult process, but the problems that it will cause if it expires could be significant. You are entitled to one extension during your studies unless you change degree programs.

### 6.4 Necessary Documents – [Passport, Visa, I-94 card, I-20, SEVIS receipt]

You are required to acquaint yourself with all documents received from the school regarding immigration requirements. You should ensure that you carefully read the I-20 that you received and the restrictions that are a part of your status as a non-immigrant (F-1) student. These are found on the second page of your I-20. You also received an I-94 when you entered the country. This was stapled to the inside of your passport. Keep this document because you must surrender it to the U.S. when you leave the country. If it is not stapled in your passport, please do so.

Soon after you arrive at CIU these documents will be reviewed and photocopied for file purposes by the ISA or Student Life Office. They will provide CIU with verification that all immigration procedures have been followed and the necessary files are in order should the USCIS choose to review them. This information will also be available for future reference if unusual circumstances arise during your program of study.

### 6.5 Work Off-Campus

**You may not work off-campus without USCIS Authorization.** If you do, you are out of status and face the same implications as stated in 6.1 above. If you work on campus and this is still not meeting your financial needs, you may be eligible to work off campus with USCIS authorization. Please see the International Student Advisor (“ISA”) for information and the necessary paperwork regarding economic hardship.

There are exceptions in addition to the Economic Hardship exception mentioned above. Work necessary for internships or practicum, as well as work for experience after graduation is possible. Please see the ISA for information. You must be in status for a full academic year before you can apply to work off campus.

### 6.6 Work On-Campus

You may work up to 20 hours/week on your F-1 visa. You may also work full time during holidays and between semesters (summer and January short term) if you are not taking classes. If you exceed this you face the same implications as stated in 6.1 above.

### 6.7 Practical Training

F-1 students may be eligible for practical training, depending on their program of study. Practical training is authorized by the International Student Advisor. Practical training may be an internship or a practicum (called Curricular Practical Training) or it can be a year of work experience after graduation (called Optional Practical Training).

Requesting permission for practical training, involves several steps. A lengthy form must be completed, the ISA must submit certain information on the computer and an application fee is required. The work associated with the practical training must be directly related to the skills for which you have been trained in your degree sequence. Practical training may be authorized for as little as 3 months or may be extended to 12 months (depending upon the length of one's program and previous studies).

Further information can be obtained from the ISA. We will be glad to help you with any legal matters or questions you may have to the extent that we are able.

### **6.8 Financial Certification**

**Each spring you will be asked to re-certify your finances for the upcoming year.** It may be as simple as signing a statement that your current finances or sponsorship are still valid and ongoing or you may need to seek out additional sponsors. Financial aid awards will be made later in the spring and will be factored in at that time.

### **6.9 End of Program**

Upon the completion of your course of study at CIU, you have 60 (sixty) days to leave the U.S. or obtain an I-20 for a transfer to another school or program (such as: College to Seminary). If you stop your studies for any reason, you have 30 days to leave the U.S. If you stay beyond these limits, U.S. Immigration considers you to be "out of status." Any violations of status could ultimately result in deportation from the U.S. and up to a ten year ban before you are allowed to re-enter.

### **6.10 Transferring From One School to Another**

Make sure the school you are transferring from has completed their responsibilities in the government database before traveling outside of the US. You will need the "Transfer I-20" from the school you are transferring to in order to reenter the US.

### **6.11 Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**

All F-1 students are required to file income tax returns. You must report all income that has its source in the United States. This includes any pay you receive from a job you have while a student, or any scholarships or money you receive to help pay for your expenses above and beyond tuition. Any money you receive from a sponsor who is not in the United States is not taxable.

Tax returns are filed before April 15<sup>th</sup> for the previous year. For example, any money you make or receive from January 1<sup>st</sup>, of this year, through December 31<sup>st</sup>, of this year, will be reported on tax forms before April 15<sup>th</sup>, of next year. You should receive a notice from the ISA in February with some instructions about what you should do.

If you are employed while a student, either with a part-time job on campus or with a special exception to work off campus, please be sure your employer is taking out enough taxes from each paycheck. If they do not, you may have a large tax bill to pay when you file your tax return.

## 6.12 Resident Alien Status

Some international students at Columbia International University are classified as Resident Aliens. They are not subject to the immigration restrictions specified above. Other guidelines and observations noted in this booklet will not necessarily apply to international students who have this classification. F-1 students should usually **not** consider applying for this status. CIU does not have information on this status, nor do we assist students in applying for this status.

# 7 HEALTH, HOSPITALS AND EMERGENCY

## 7.1 Campus Health Services

The Health Services Department on campus serves only students and can help you, the student, with certain health needs. They also sell certain medicines at a very good price and can make good recommendations for medical help (dentists, eye doctors, etc.). This may be a very wise place to start. Please call Sally Kennedy (the school nurse) at (803) 807-5056. You can also make an appointment with a doctor who comes to CIU periodically during the week, **but the doctor will only see students, not spouses and children.**

**Health Services** –CIU Health Services is open to all CIU students (on campus and off campus). It is located on the first floor of Memorial Residence Hall. The nurse is in the clinic daily to see students; the hours may vary so watch the Insider for the times the clinic is open. Due to limited resources, Health Services can only serve students and is **not** able to serve families of students.

### Clinic Services

- \* If you feel ill, you can walk in the clinic during regular clinic hours, Monday through Friday, to get an assessment of your condition and a recommendation for treatment
- \* A doctor is available by appointment in the clinic – you will need to see the nurse first for an assessment before seeing the doctor (the doctor will see students only, not families)
- \* Referrals (medical, dental, chiropractic, etc.)
- \* Many over-the-counter medications at low cost
- \* Screening programs (cholesterol, blood pressure, tuberculosis, vision, etc.)
- \* Health education and instruction materials

Please call the nurse during the day with any questions regarding illness, injury, doctors, or whether or not you should use the emergency room. The nurse will be glad to help you in whatever way she can.

## 7.2 Immunizations for Children

Documentation of certain immunizations is required before your child can start school. If you or your children need shots before starting school, the best place may be the Richland County Health Department located on the corner of Harden St. and Hampton St. Here are some phone numbers you can call:

Information: (803) 576-2980                      Immunizations: (803) 576-2980

**(You can also get helpful advice from the CIU nurse, stop by the clinic or call ext. 5056)**

## 7.3 Community Clinic

In cases of illness or minor injury, there is the Sterling Sharpe Clinic (Eau Claire Cooperative Health Center) located on Monticello Road across from the Eau Claire High School. They serve adults and children. The charges are minimal, and your health insurance will assist in your payments once deductibles are met (please read the section on Student Insurance for more information about health insurance). The phone number for the clinic is - (803) 252-3770.

## 7.4 Emergency Telephone Numbers

Police, Fire, Ambulance.....911

### Emergency Medical Service (Ambulance & Paramedics)

Richland County..... (803) 254-3061  
 Lexington County..... (803) 359-2521  
 Lexington Medical Center (hospital)..... (803) 791-2000  
 Fort Jackson..... (803) 751-4444

Poison Control Center..... (803)777-1117 or 1-800-222-1222

### SCE&G (South Carolina Electric & Gas)

Lights Out/Power Off/ Downed or sparking power line.....1-888-333-4465  
 \*This is for when there is a large storm, or some other event that causes our home to lose power.  
 If only part of your power goes out it is likely that a circuit in the trailer has tripped off.  
 It can be turned on again at the electrical panel box found somewhere in your home.

Gas Leaks/Emergencies..... 1-800-815-0083

\*If smell gas fumes, call the CIU Physical Plant first if it is during the day (ext. 5401), or if it is at night you can call CIU Security at (803) 513-3967.

### Sheriff

Richland County..... (803) 576-3000  
 Lexington County..... (803) 785-8230

\*Call the sheriff for your county if you need to report something stolen or if your house or car has been broken into. You can also call the sheriff to inform them of something suspicious in your neighborhood-be sure of what you are doing before you call.

\*For sheriff's phone numbers in other counties in the Columbia area, see [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com)

TTY Emergency Numbers for the Deaf/Speech –Impaired Customers

Emergencies Only.....733-8684

\*\*You also can choose to dial “0” for the operator and stay on the line. If you cannot stay on the line, give the street address and community where help is needed. You will probably receive quicker service if you call one of the phone numbers above, but if you are in a panic or don’t know what to do, dial “0.”

\*\*\*For additional emergency phone numbers and information, please see [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com)

**Hospitals**

- Palmetto Health Richland Hospital (closest to CIU)
  - Five Richland Medical Park ..... (803) 434-7000
- Palmetto Baptist Medical Center
  - Taylor at Marion Street..... (803) 296-5010
- Lexington Medical Center
  - 2720 Sunset Boulevard, West Columbia..... (803) 791-2000
- Providence Hospital
  - 2435 Forest Drive..... (803) 256-5300
- Veterans Administration Medical Center - Dorns Veterans Hospital
  - Garners Ferry Road..... (803) 776-4000

**8 SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER AND JOBS**

**8.1 Social Security Number**

A Social Security number may be issued to an international student who has a job offer. You can apply for your Social Security number from the Social Security Office located in the Strom Thurmond Building (1835 Assembly Street – 929-7635). The office is located on the second floor of this building and you should go to window #5. You will need to take all of your immigration papers (I-20, I-94, passport and visa), a letter from your employer and the completed application with you. Their hours are 8:30-3:30 Monday through Friday. Applications are available on the Internet or in the ISA’s office. Wait 10 days after you arrive in the United States before you apply. The 10-day wait allows time for all the government databases to update with your arrival information.

Department of Health and Human Services,  
The Social Security Administration-District Office (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, window #5)  
1835 Assembly Street (Strom Thurmond Building)  
Columbia, SC 29201  
1-866-964-7594 (General Information: 1-800-325-0778)  
The internet address is [www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html](http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html)

For questions you may have about any of the previous information or any other questions, please do not hesitate to call Mr. Rick Swift (International Student Advisor) at (803) 807-5234 or Mrs. Brandy Stevens, [bstevens@ciu.edu](mailto:bstevens@ciu.edu). Their offices are located in the Student Center in the Student Life Office.

## 8.2 Jobs

### On-campus Employment

F-1 students are permitted by immigration regulations to be employed on campus for up to 20 hours per week when school is in session. This does not require special permission from immigration or a designated school official. During vacation periods an F-1 student may be employed on campus for up to 40 hours per week.

### Off-campus Employment

F-1 students are **not** permitted to obtain employment off campus prior to completing one full academic year of study at CIU (an academic year would be Fall and Spring semesters). Your reasons for requesting work off campus after completing one year of study need to be extreme. Serious financial difficulties due to the loss of a sponsor or devaluation of your home currency are possible reasons. Forms for obtaining permission to work off-campus after the first year are available from the International Student Advisor (ISA). It is a long and complicated process involving many forms, and permission can take 8-12 weeks to arrive from the USCIS.

***\*Dependents of F-1 students (spouses and/or children with an F-2 visa classification) are not permitted to work for any reason, either on campus or off campus.\*Any work accepted outside of these guidelines is a violation of your student status and may terminate your visa.***

## 9 CAMPUS LIFE

**Academic Advisors** – Each student at CIU is assigned an academic advisor to assist in selecting the appropriate courses. Your advisor is prepared to answer your questions concerning courses of study, majors, minors, credits, and other terms that may be new to you. Your academic advisor is available to assist you with questions concerning your class schedule. It is up to you to take the initiative in seeking assistance from your advisor. You may even wish to counsel with him or her in other matters. Contact the Dean's Office if you do not know your academic advisor. **\*\*Remember, your advisor is available to help you; call on him/her!**

**Handbook Reading** – The Student Handbook is required reading for all students. The handbook can be found at [https://my.ciu.edu/ICS/Campus\\_Life/Student\\_Handbook](https://my.ciu.edu/ICS/Campus_Life/Student_Handbook)

**The Insider** – The Insider is a weekly online flyer, which provides the students with important information such as the chapel schedule, registration information, activity dates and locations and other items of interest to the student body. Since it is the main source of passing information along to the student body (and the faculty and staff), **please be sure you read it carefully.** The Insider can also be viewed on the internet ([www.ciu.edu](http://www.ciu.edu))

**Student Missions Connection (SMC)** – This campus organization, made up of CIU students, exists to stimulate interest and participation in foreign missions by conducting chapel programs and daily regional prayer meetings which concentrate on world evangelization. You, as an international student, can contribute greatly to the success of this organization and be used of God to stimulate interest and concern for the evangelization and spiritual growth of your own country. Anyone can join a regional prayer group, to pray and provide additional information for the region of the world you are from, or to share a burden of another region.

**International Students Association (ISA)** - This campus organization, made up of CIU students, exists to reach out to the International population at CIU. They encourage fellowship with other international students and have fun events

throughout the year. Their reason for existing is so that they can help international students feel welcome as well as helping out with the strangeness of a new land and culture.

**Special Events** – You are encouraged to participate in special events such as school picnics, programs, and seminars. Many of these are scheduled specifically for you as a student. They provide you with an opportunity to learn, to fellowship and gain some useful insights into life in the U.S. Watch the [Insider](#) for information about upcoming events.

**Connect:CIU:** Please see information under 2.7.

Connect:CIU is for all new, incoming college (undergraduate) students (transfer and freshmen), held every fall in the days before the start of classes. It is an opportunity for all new undergraduate CIU students to connect with fellow CIU students, faculty and staff.

### **Prayer Days**

Three separate days each semester are set aside to seek the Lord in prayer, corporately and individually. Classes are cancelled for the day.

### **Christian Life Conference**

A one-week conference held during the fall semester, Christian Life Conference brings in a special speaker to challenge our student body towards a closer walk with Christ.

### **Fall Break**

A four-day weekend break during October. No class or chapel is held on these days.

### **World Christian Week**

World Christian Week is a week set aside in the spring semester to focus on world missions and how we are to personally be a part of world missions. Many mission agency representatives exhibit in the Student Center during that week.

### **Spring Break**

Several days of break from classes for students, usually in March or April.

## **10 CITY OF COLUMBIA AND SURROUNDING AREA**

### **10.1 Overview of Columbia**

College town, industrial complex, military base, historical haven, retailing center of the state, governmental center, and popular “stopover” vacation site for thousands of visitors each year can all be used to describe the city of Columbia. One of the few cities specifically designed to serve as a capital city, Columbia was created by a legislative act in 1786. Though now one of the top 100 cities in the United States in population, Columbia originally was part of a large Southern plantation owned by Colonel Thomas Taylor. Taylor, early in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, acquired acreage in the geographic center of the state, reportedly in exchange for one horse and a rifle.

In 1786, the state legislature voted to move the capital from Charleston to a more accessible and central location; Taylor’s property was judged to be perfect. In the original resolution, the name of the new capital was left blank, and it was not until sometime later that the city was christened. Three names were proposed to the General Assembly—“Town of Refuge,” “Washington,” and “Columbia.” Columbia was selected by an 11 to 7 vote.

Columbia is centrally located and is about a two hour drive from the mountains or the seashore.



Twice judged as an “All-American City,” Columbia offers a wide range of attractions, historical landmarks, beautiful residential areas, governmental services, educational complexes, modern retailing facilities, industrial firms, and recreational opportunities that enable officials to call Columbia “a great city in America’s future.”

The Columbia area is home to more than 140 industrial firms, including such nationally known companies as General Electric, Westinghouse, Eastman Kodak, Bose, Rockwell, Bendix, Oxford, a division of Canada Iron and Foundry, Allied Chemical, B.F. Goodrich, and Argus.

Columbia offers opportunities for those who enjoy attending athletic events. The Carolina Coliseum holds more than 12,000 fans who watch the **University of South Carolina Gamecocks** compete with some of the nation’s top college basketball teams. Football fans can watch the Gamecocks take on nationally-ranked teams each fall. The various sports teams from the area colleges and universities provide exciting competition for spectators almost year-round. In addition, Columbia is home to the Columbia Blowfish, a minor-league baseball team.

**Lake Murray**, less than 15 miles northwest of the city, has more than 500 miles of shoreline for water sports’ enthusiasts. Eight public recreation areas have been set aside by South Carolina Electric & Gas at the lake, which was created by the building of one of the world’s largest earthen power dams.

The average temperatures in Columbia vary from 90° F (32° C) in July to 45° F (8° C) in January, though it can be considerably hotter or cooler than this day to day. The average rainfall is 48 inches (120 cm) per year, with an average snowfall of only 1.5 inches (5 cm) per year.

Over 500,000 people live in the greater Columbia area; 125,000+ live within the city limits.

## 10.2 Columbia Metropolitan Convention and Visitor’s Bureau

<http://www.columbiacvb.com/>

Visit this website to obtain information on area parks, historic sites, cultural events, community calendar, dining and nightlife, and local businesses. Columbia Visitor’s Center is located at 1101 Lincoln Street in downtown Columbia.

Some ideas for entertainment and education are:

- a. The Riverbanks Zoo ([www.riverbanks.org](http://www.riverbanks.org))
- b. Richland County Library
- c. St. Andrew’s \$2.00 theater
- d. The Marionette Theatre
- e. The SC State History Museum
- f. Eduventure

## 10.3 AREA MINISTRIES

### **International Friendship Ministries**

[www.ifmusa.org](http://www.ifmusa.org)

(803) 799-3452

610 Pickens Street, Columbia, SC 29201

IFM, in partnership with local churches, hosts a free dinner every Friday night for international students and their families near the University of South Carolina campus. Dinner is followed by several breakout sessions led by volunteers

ranging in topics from Bible to English to practical matters of living in the US. A great opportunity to meet fellow international students and to share Christ.

IFM also hosts the annual Columbia International Festival held in April. For more info see <http://www.ifmusa.org/festival/>.

**HIS International**

[www.hisinternational.org](http://www.hisinternational.org)

(803) 779-2852

HIS International, Inc., had its beginnings in Columbia, South Carolina in 1991, and now includes staff members working in Columbia and on campuses in Virginia (Virginia Tech in Blacksburg) and Charlotte (University of North Carolina). Other groups in the United States have modeled their programs after HIS International in Columbia. During the school year, they host a free lunch on Wednesdays and Thursdays. They also hold English Classes, Bible Study Discussion Groups, Retreats and Travel opportunities. HIS staff members and volunteers assist with practical needs in adjusting to American culture. Many CIU students volunteer at HIS or attend HIS events.

## 11 CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

### 11.1 Greetings

As you walk down the sidewalk you may hear many greetings that mean “hello”; for example: Hi, Howdy, How ya doing, How are you, How is it going, Hey, etc. Do not feel insulted when a person keeps on walking after asking you “How is it going?” He or she does not really expect an answer. This is a normal, appropriate way to say hello – they are not being rude. A quick reply might be, “Fine, how are you?” or “Fine, thanks.”

Remember, get used to hasty expressions. Americans are normally in a hurry and nothing is meant against you personally when they do not pause for a detailed answer after asking “How are you?” But we encourage you to share if the opportunity is there.

### 11.2 Vocabulary

(Here are some explanations of words or phrases you may hear and not understand):

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Guys:       | Refers to boys or men usually, but can also refer to a mixed group of men and women (“Hey guys, do you want to study together tonight?”). It does not refer to a bad person as it does in some cultures. |
| Gals:       | girls  |
| Y’all:      | The southern way of addressing more than one person, literally “You all.” i.e. “Bye, y’all!”   |
| What’s Up?: | A question meaning “How are you?” or “What are you doing?”   |
| Brainstorm: | meeting to quickly get everyone’s ideas on a certain question or subject   |

Pick your brains:	to find out all one knows on a certain subject by questioning them
Cram:	when a person tries to learn too much in a short time usually as a result of waiting until the night before to study for an exam
Hang around/hang out:	to remain near a person, group, or place; "Let's hang out in the Student Center."
"Caf":	Cafeteria, a place to eat, usually where you go through a serving line to choose your food; e.g., our CIU Dining Room serves cafeteria style
Faculty:	people who serve in teaching and/or administrative positions
Staff:	people who serve in helping positions such as secretaries, print shop personnel, radio station personnel, maintenance workers, etc.
CMRD:	Curriculum Ministry Resource Department (MRD) (located in the lower level of the Ridderhof building), contains crafts and teaching aids for Sunday School, etc.

### 11.3 Conversation

It is polite to look at people in the eye when carrying on a conversation. This is not considered disrespectful in the USA. Make sure you are understood and speak slowly, if necessary. Often the person with whom you are speaking will not ask you to repeat a sentence he did not understand because he does not wish to embarrass you. You may feel he is disinterested in what you are saying, when, in fact, it may be that he did not understand what you said. Be careful in asking personal questions such as, "How old are you?" (Especially older people and ladies), "How much did you pay for that?", or "How much do you weigh?" (Especially ladies). This may embarrass the person and is not commonly done.

### 11.4 Eating and Table Etiquette at CIU

- \*Place napkin (serviette) in your lap while eating.
- \*Avoid leaning on the table with your elbow and forearm.
- \*Do not cut in front of someone in the serving lines (the faculty are allowed to do so since they may have other immediate obligations or responsibilities).
- \*Americans most often use their knives to cut their food and then eat with their fork. Do what is comfortable for you, but be aware of the difference.
- \*Chew food with your mouth closed.

### 11.5 Personal Hygiene

Many consider North Americans to be overly particular about cleanliness. This is directed to homes, bedding, clothing, and bodies. Often the major factor in determining if something is not clean is by how it smells. Americans generally bathe (or shower) the entire body once per day, or at least every other day. They freely use deodorants, powders, etc. Underclothing, socks, and shirts are changed daily. Teeth are usually brushed a minimum of once per day. Body and mouth odors are very offensive in this culture. Each student should have his or her own soap, toothpaste, and other personal toilet articles and be careful not to use a roommate's articles.

If onions, garlic, or peppers are some of your favorite foods (on hamburgers, etc.), after eating them you may need to brush your teeth, use mouthwash, or use breath mints. Please be aware of these cleanliness practices and consider this culture in your daily hygiene practice.

## 11.6 U.S. Holidays

There are few “National Holidays” in the USA. Each individual state has jurisdiction over the non-federal holidays it officially observes and whether or not an individual has to work on a certain holiday depends on his/her employer. There are six holidays that are observed as federal holidays – that is, that all federal government offices are closed – and, as a result, all states and nearly all employers observe those holidays as well. These are: New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Many holidays are not observed on the actual day, but on the closest Monday to give workers a three-day weekend. Stores are usually open (in the USA you will find only a few days when you cannot shop). Mail is usually NOT delivered on any holiday and banks and post offices are closed. Public transportation generally runs a special holiday schedule.

Some religious and ethnic holidays are observed only by people that follow a particular religion or come from a particular ethnic heritage; other such holidays, such as St. Patrick’s Day for those of Irish heritage, are celebrated by all Americans, even those that do not belong to the same religious or ethnic group. Following is a calendar of some of the holidays largely celebrated:

### January

- NEW YEAR’S DAY (Jan 1) – Federal Holiday
- MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.’S BIRTHDAY (Jan 15) – Martin Luther King Jr. was an African-American civil rights activist who was assassinated in 1968. This holiday commemorates his life and work.

### February

- BLACK HISTORY MONTH – a celebration of the history of African-American culture in the US
- VALENTINE’S DAY (Feb 14) – a day in which people send flowers, candy or cards to their “sweetheart” (the one they love). Often done just in fun, but to be taken seriously by husbands!
- PRESIDENT’S DAY (the third Monday in February) – the combined birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (president of the U.S. during the U.S. Civil War) and George Washington (first U.S. president)

### March

- ST. PATRICK’S DAY (Mar 17) – a celebration of Irish heritage for the Irish and non-Irish alike. (Careful, someone might pinch you if you don’t wear green – this is something fun kids often do).

### April

- PASSOVER – a Jewish holiday time of 8 days (date varies according to the Jewish calendar). It commemorates the events in Israel’s history the night before their flight from Egypt.
- EASTER – (dates vary) A week of various church activities remembering events of Christ’s last days.
- Palm Sunday – the Sunday before Easter, Jesus entered Jerusalem
- Good Friday – the Friday before Easter, crucifixion of Christ

- Easter Sunday – main Easter holiday, Christ’s resurrection
- HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY (Apr 27) – remembering those that died in the Holocaust during World War II

### May

- MOTHER’S DAY (second Sunday in May) – a day where mothers are honored and treated to special gifts and attentions.
- MEMORIAL DAY (observed on the last Monday in May) – a federal holiday. This is the day to honor United States soldiers who died in any war.

### June

- FATHER’S DAY (third Sunday in June) – like Mother’s Day, but this time for fathers.

### July

- INDEPENDENCE DAY (July 4) – a federal holiday that celebrates the birth of the American nation. The Declaration of Independence was accepted by the Continental Congress on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in 1776. Parades, fireworks and cookouts are a big tradition on this holiday.

### September

- \*LABOR DAY (first Monday in September) – a federal holiday honoring the nation’s workers.
- \*ROSH HASHANAH (date varies) – the Jewish New Year is celebrated with family gatherings, special meals and sweet things to eat. It opens a ten day religious observance ending with YOM KIPPUR, the Day of Atonement, the Jews’ most solemn day. A day of fasting and prayer.

### October

- COLUMBUS DAY (observed on the second Monday in October) – It is the anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus in the New World in 1492.
- UNITED NATIONS DAY (Oct 24) – The UN officially came into being on October 24, 1945. It was set up as an organization to preserve peace and human rights, advance justice, and constitute a structure for international cooperation.
- HALLOWEEN (Oct 31) – a holiday with pagan origins, it is now an occasion for children to dress up in costumes and go “Trick or Treating” for candy in their schools and neighborhoods. You will see pumpkins, ghosts and witches decorating many homes and stores. Around sundown, children in costumes may begin coming to your door. When the children say, “Trick or treat!” *you are expected to give them “goodies”*, usually wrapped candies (parents will not accept homemade food). This has become a controversial time for Christian families because of the evil associated with the night and some children’s costumes are often gruesome. If you leave the front porch light **off** children will usually not come to your door. Many churches now have Fall Festivals that children can attend instead of Halloween.
- REFORMATION DAY (last Sunday in October) – celebrated by many churches in honor of Martin Luther and others who sought to rid the church of false doctrine and destructive practices in the Middle Ages.

### November

- GENERAL ELECTIONS DAY (the Tuesday after the first Monday in November) – federal, state, and local elections, other than special elections, are scheduled on this day.
- VETERAN’S DAY (Nov 11) – celebrates the soldiers who survived the war. Historically the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice between the Allies and Germans in 1918, ending World War I. Usually marked with a parade.

- THANKSGIVING (fourth Thursday in November) – a federal holiday and the most “American” of U.S. holidays. It commemorates the feast held at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1621 by the Wampanoag people (Native Americans) and the Pilgrim colonists. The Pilgrims gave thanks for food given to them by the Wampanoag people after their first desperate harvest year on American soil. There are certain dishes traditionally eaten at Thanksgiving: Turkey, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, etc.

### December

- HANUKKAH (date varies according to the Jewish calendar) – the Jewish “Feast of Lights.” This holiday commemorates the time when, after years of oppression, Jews were able to reestablish their independence and freedom to worship. Although they found only one day’s supply of oil to light the temple lamps it miraculously lasted 8 days. Thus, Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days. Family members and friends exchange gifts during the holiday.
- CHRISTMAS DAY (Dec 25) – celebrated as a federal holiday, this is a Christian holiday commemorating the anniversary of Christ’s birth. In modern times, it has also become a gift-giving holiday. Many symbols and traditions are connected with Christmas: Christmas trees, holly, mistletoe, Christmas logs, candles, Christmas carols, and-most important for children-Santa Claus, who travels through the winter sky on a sled pulled by reindeer and comes down the chimney during Christmas Eve (the night before Christmas Day) to leave gifts for children who have been well-behaved all year long.

NOTE: Christmas and Easter are two holidays in which churches are often full of people who would otherwise never bother to come to church. Keep this in mind as you seek to reach those who need to hear the gospel of God’s salvation. This might be the best time to invite them to join you at church.

## **11.7 Personal Adjustment**

You may encounter some of the following concerns as you adjust to a new culture:

### Social Adjustment

1. Loneliness and alienation
2. Envy and distrust in interpersonal relations
3. Tension between individual and family centeredness
4. Feelings of superiority due to international experiences and travel
5. New and different interests from local peers
6. Lack of modern conveniences
7. Role or status changes
8. Dissatisfaction with some ritualized patterns of social interaction

### Communication Barriers

1. Adoption of verbal and non-verbal codes which are not familiar to you
2. Speech mannerisms which may be misinterpreted
3. Impatience with indirect communication styles
4. Absence of colleagues who speak the same “language”
5. Unfamiliarity with new forms of communication and styles of expression; current jargon and slang

### National and Political Concerns

1. Changes in conditions, national priorities, policies, views
2. Political climate not helpful to professional activity and/or advancement
3. Economic uncertainties and conditions
4. Changes in leadership, ruling parties
5. Bureaucracy
6. Reluctance to live in a setting of political uncertainty
7. Dissatisfaction with political situation
8. Observed lack of national goals

### Educational Concerns

1. Relevance of U.S. education to home situation
2. Lack of facilities and resources for research or application of skills
3. Absence of professional education programs to keep up with new developments and knowledge in the field
4. Little opportunity to improve skills
5. Incomplete fulfillment of educational goals in the U.S. and its implications back home

\*(The above list is a modified version of an inventory by participants in the University of Texas *Janus* Program).

It is normal to feel excited when you first arrive and later to feel discouraged, possibly even alone. Please find someone with whom to discuss these matters; remember we are here to help you! A special source of help may be found in the Student Life Office. The Women's, Men's and Married student's Assistant Deans of Student Development are here especially to serve and listen to you.

## **12 MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

### **12.1 Time Zones**

The main area of the United States falls into parts of four time zones. Columbia is in the Eastern Time zone. If you wish to call someone in another state, refer to a Time Zone map (<http://www.worldtimezone.com/time-usa12.php>) to find out if it would be appropriate to call at that time. (Example: You wish to speak to someone in California. It is 8:00 a.m. in Columbia, South Carolina, so it would be 5:00 a.m. in California. It would not be appropriate to call at this time since the person you wish to speak with would probably be asleep).

### **12.2 Daylight Savings Time**

Most states use daylight savings time from March through November. On the second Sunday in March the time is adjusted ahead one hour (2:00 a.m. becomes 3:00 a.m.) On the first Sunday in November the time is adjusted back one hour (2:00 a.m. becomes 1:00 a.m.). A helpful way to remember this is to use the saying "Spring forward, Fall back."

### **12.3 Finances-Currency**

The dollar is the official currency in the U.S. Most large purchases are often made by check, debit card, or credit card, but you should pay the small bills (daily expenses) in cash. Always check if the change is correct when you purchase something and pay special attention to the bills, since being of the same size and color makes it difficult to tell them apart.

To see the exchange rate for different currencies, go to [Currency Converter](#) .

<b>Coins</b>			<b>Bills (paper money)</b>	
Penny	\$0.01 (or 1¢)	1 cent	1 dollar (sometimes called “a buck”)	\$1.00
Nickel	\$0.05 (or 5¢)	5 cents	2 dollars (very rare)	\$2.00
Dime	\$0.10 (or 10¢)	10 cents	5 dollars	\$5.00
Quarter	\$0.25 (or 25¢)	25 cents	10 dollars	\$10.00
Half Dollar	\$0.50 (or 50¢)	50 cents	20 dollars	\$20.00
Silver Dollar	\$1.00	1 dollar	50 dollars	\$50.00
			100 dollars	\$100.00

## 12. 4 Temperatures

If you use the Celsius scale for telling the temperature, you may be a little confused when you hear a weather report. The U.S. uses the Fahrenheit scale and it is a little bit different.

95° F = 35° C	41° F = 5° C
86° F = 30° C	32° F = 0° C
77° F = 25° C	23° F = -5° C
68° F = 20° C	14° F = 10° C
59° F = 15° C	5° F = -15° C
50° F = 10° C	0° F = -17.8° C

## 12.5 Weights and Measures

°Fahrenheit = (9/5 °C) + 32
°Celsius = (°F – 32) x 5/9
2.45 Centimeters = 1 inch (in.)
12 Inches = 1 Foot (ft.)
1 Foot = .3028 Meter
3 Feet= 1 Yard (yd.)
1 Yard= .9144 Meter
1.6093 Kilometers = 1 Mile (mi.)
8 Ounces = 1 Cup
2 Cups =1 Pint
4 Cups= 1 Quart (qt.)
2 Pints= 1 Quart
2.1 Pints= 1 Liter
4 Quarts= 1 Gallon
23.3 Grams= 1 Ounce



16 Ounces= 1 Pound  
2.2 Pounds= 1 Kilogram

## 12.6 Transportation

Airport: Columbia Metropolitan Airport (803) 822-5000)

For airline information see "Airlines" in the [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com)

City Buses: COMET: ((803) 255-7100)

<http://catchthecomet.org/> for bus route maps and schedules

Greyhound Bus Lines (1-800-231-2222)

Train: Amtrak (1-800-872-7245)