



LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY
LANCERS

International Student Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Dear New International Student,

Your time at Longwood University will provide you with a unique opportunity for educational development and personal adventure. In an ever-shrinking, interdependent world, we know that the key to success is often measured in terms of global awareness and the ability to function in a culture and environment different from our own. This maturity can best be provided by immersion in a foreign culture combined with the interaction and involvement in an international academic environment.

Today, in our global community, multinational corporations depend on employees with the ability to comfortably adjust to other environments and who understand the diversity found in other cultures. Ultimately, success in a career will be greatly enhanced by the cosmopolitan, objective outlook that participants gain through the educational exchange experience. Living, studying, or working in a foreign country helps develop a cosmopolitan outlook on life and a better understanding of the complexities of the modern world. I am happy that you have decided to develop your international acumen at Longwood University.

This handbook is designed to assist international students on F or J visas in planning and preparing for their stay at Longwood University prior to departure for the United States. Here you will find practical advice on basic necessities required for your trip. Some of the material in this handbook is important before departure as well as upon arrival. I invite you to read through the information carefully and please contact me if you have questions. You will also find at the end a "checklist" that is designed to help you before you depart for Longwood University.

It is our goal to provide you with an outstanding educational and cultural experience that will enable you to become a global citizen. We also hope that we will gain knowledge from you so that we may have a greater understanding of your culture and society, thereby enhancing our own global perspective.

On behalf of the Office of International Affairs, I welcome you to Longwood University.

Dr. Petra Visscher

Executive Director of International Affairs

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Patti Trent, Director of International Admissions & Student/Scholar Services

Telephone +1-434-603-1074

APPLYING FOR A VISA

If you are attending Longwood as an exchange student for one semester or one year, and have received a form DS 2019 from us, you will be obtaining a "J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa." Please scroll down to the section on J visas. If you have been admitted to Longwood as an undergraduate student, or as an ESL student, you will have received a form I-20 from us and will need to secure an "F-1 Student" visa. Please read the information on F visas directly below this paragraph. For questions regarding **any** visa information review the information found on the following website: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange.html>.

F-1 VISA

You must apply for an F-1 visa at a United States Embassy or Consulate abroad before beginning your travel to the United States.¹ For general information about F-1 visas, please consult the Department of State's website at http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html. For specific details on how to apply for a visa in your country, please visit <http://www.usembassy.gov/> and click on the post nearest you.

Basic steps

Obtaining an F-1 visa involves three main steps.

1. Obtaining your I-20 from Longwood University.
2. Paying the SEVIS Fee.
3. Attending an interview at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy.

Visa Appointments

Refer to the website of your nearest American Embassy or Consulate for instructions on how to make an appointment for a visa interview. Typically, you will be required to complete the DS-160 electronic visa application (<https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>) and upload a digital photograph before you can even schedule your interview.

Since visa appointments are limited and visa processing times can be lengthy, you should make your appointment as soon as you receive your I-20. During peak travel periods, such as the summer months, there may be long waiting periods for appointments. However, consulates will give priority to F-1 applicants if requested. You can get a sense of the typical wait times and processing times at your consulate on the following webpage: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait_4638.html.

Visa Interviews

When you attend your visa interview, you will need the following:

- passport (valid for at least six months past your intended stay in the United States),
- signed I-20,

¹ Canadian citizens are not required to apply for a visa before entering the United States as F-1 students, but they must pay the SEVIS fee three days before applying for admission to the United States. At the U.S. port of entry, these travelers must present their I-20 form and proof of financial resources to cover their stay in the United States. Please note that Canadian "Landed Immigrants" must obtain a U.S. visa at an American Embassy or Consulate.

- Letter of Acceptance from Longwood University,
- evidence of your financial support,
- confirmation page with barcode from the DS-160 application form,
- proof of payment of visa application fee,
- SEVIS Fee Receipt (I-901),
- two 5cm x 5cm recent color photographs of the face, and
- transcripts and diplomas from previous institutions, standardized test scores (TOEFL, SAT, etc.), if applicable.

Some consulates may require additional documentation, so review the post's own website for specific instructions. If approved, your visa will **not** be issued immediately; you will need to leave your passport at the Embassy for a number of days. Passport pickup/return processes vary by country. Please review your local Embassy's website for more details.

J-1 VISA

You must apply for a J-1 visa at a United States Embassy or Consulate abroad before beginning your travel to the United States¹. For general information about J-1 visas, please consult the Department of State's website at http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html For specific details on how to apply for a visa in your country, please visit <http://www.usembassy.gov/> and click on the post nearest you.

Basic steps

Obtaining a J-1 visa involves three main steps:

1. Obtaining your DS-2019 from Longwood University.
2. Paying the SEVIS Fee.
3. Attending an interview at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy.

Visa Appointments

Refer to the website of your nearest American Embassy or Consulate for instructions on how to make an appointment for a visa interview. Typically, you will be required to complete the DS-160 electronic visa application (<https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>) and upload a digital photograph before you can even schedule your interview.

Since visa appointments are limited and visa processing times can be lengthy, you should make your appointment as soon as you receive your DS-2019. During peak travel periods, such as the summer months, there may be long waiting periods for appointments. However, consulates will give priority to J-1 applicants if requested. You can get a sense of the typical wait times and processing times at your consulate on the following webpage:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait_4638.html.

Visa Interviews

When you attend your visa interview, you will need the following:

- passport (valid for at least six months past your intended stay in the United States),
- signed DS-2019,
- Letter of Acceptance from Longwood University,
- evidence of your financial support,
- confirmation page with barcode from the DS-160 application form,
- proof of payment of visa application fee,

- SEVIS Fee Receipt (I-901),
- two 5cm x 5cm recent color photographs of the face, and
- transcripts and diplomas from previous institutions, standardized test scores (TOEFL, SAT, etc.), if applicable.

Some consulates may require additional documentation, so review the post's own website for specific instructions. If approved, your visa will **not** be issued immediately; you will need to leave your passport at the Embassy for a number of days. Passport pickup/return processes vary by country. Please review your local Embassy's website for more details

¹ Canadian citizens are not required to apply for a visa before entering the United States as J-1 exchange visitors, but they must pay the SEVIS fee three days before applying for admission to the United States. At the U.S. port of entry, these travelers must present their DS-2019 form and proof of financial resources to cover their stay in the United States. Please note that Canadian "Landed Immigrants" must obtain a U.S. visa at an American Embassy or Consulate.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR I-20 or DS-2019

I-20

The I-20 is a multi-purpose document issued by a U.S. government-approved institution certifying that you have been accepted into a program and that you have demonstrated sufficient financial resources to stay in the United States for the length of the program. The I-20 is officially titled the "Certificate of Eligibility" because it enables you to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad. Your spouse or children will also each need their own I-20 to obtain J-2 dependent status, if desired.

Obtaining the I-20 from a U.S. institution is not sufficient to attain F-1 status; you must **also** be admitted to the United States at a port of entry in F-1 status, **or** be approved for a change of status while in the United States.

How the I-20 is created

Once you have been accepted into a program, Longwood University enters your personal information into a U.S. government database called SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). SEVIS processes the information and electronically produces your I-20 Certificate of Eligibility. A school official (known as the Designated School Official) prints and signs the I-20 and then forwards the hardcopy form to you. If an update or change needs to be made on the I-20, the Designated School Official enters these requests through SEVIS, and a new version of the document is produced.

How the I-20 is used outside the U.S.

The student uses the I-20 form to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad. The *visa* is the document that grants a traveler permission to apply for admission at a U.S. port of entry. When entering the country, it is essential to present the original I-20 along with the F-1 visa.

How the I-20 is used inside the U.S.

Once you have arrived in the U.S. and passed through the border inspection process, the I-20 is used for proof of your legal status.

Traveling with the I-20

If you will be traveling abroad and then returning to the U.S. to resume your F-1 program, you must take your I-20 with you. Before your departure from the U.S., make sure that you have an unexpired "travel endorsement" signature from a Designated School Official at Longwood University on the bottom of the third page of the I-20. This signature is valid for one year for multiple visits outside the U.S. or until the I-20 expires, whichever comes first. You will need to have your original I-20 when you apply for readmission at the U.S. port of entry. If you need to apply for a new visa while abroad, you will also need to present your original I-20 to your nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Important Information on the I-20

Some immigration regulations governing the F-1 status are listed on page 4 of the document. It is important that F-1 visitors read this page to understand the rules that apply to their stay in the U.S.

The I-20 End Date

A program end date was entered into item #5 on page 1 of your I-20 based on your particular program. If you are not able to finish your program before that date, you must request an extension from your program sponsor **before** the I-20 expires. In all cases, proof of sufficient funds will be required to extend your program.

The 60-day Grace Period

After completing your program, you are allowed a 60-day grace period to depart the U.S.

DS-2019

The DS-2019 is a multi-purpose document issued by a U.S. government-approved institution certifying that you have been accepted into a program and that you have demonstrated sufficient financial resources to stay in the United States for the length of the program. The DS-2019 is officially titled the "Certificate of Eligibility" because it enables you to apply for a J-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad. Your spouse or children will also each need their own DS-2019 to obtain J-2 dependent status, if desired.

Obtaining the DS-2019 from a U.S. institution is not sufficient to attain J-1 status; you must also be admitted to the United States at a port of entry in J-1 status, **or** be approved for a change of status while in the United States.

How the DS-2019 is created

Once you have been accepted into a program, Longwood University enters your personal information into a U.S. government database called SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). SEVIS processes the information and electronically produces your DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility. A school official (known as the Responsible Officer) prints and signs the DS-2019 and then forwards the hardcopy form to you. If an update or change needs to be made on the DS-2019, the Responsible Officer enters these requests through SEVIS, and a new version of the document is produced.

How the DS-2019 is used outside the U.S.

The international student uses the DS-2019 form to apply for a J-1 visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad. The visa is the document that grants a traveler permission to apply for admission at a U.S. port of entry. When entering the country, it is essential to present the original DS-2019 along with the J-1 visa.

How the DS-2019 is used inside the U.S.

Once you have arrived in the U.S. and passed through the border inspection process, the DS-2019 is used for proof of your legal status.

Traveling with the DS-2019

If you will be traveling abroad and then returning to the U.S. to resume your J-1 program, you must take your DS-2019 with you. Before your departure from the U.S., make sure that you have an unexpired "travel validation" signature from a responsible officer at Longwood University on the DS-2019 (bottom right corner). This signature is valid for one year for multiple visits outside the U.S. or until the DS-2019 expires, whichever comes first. You will need to have your original DS-2019 when you apply for readmission at the U.S. port of entry. If you need to apply for a new visa while abroad, you will also need to present your original DS-2019 to your nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Important Information on the DS-2019

Some immigration regulations governing the J-1 status are listed on page 2 of the document. It is important that J-1 visitors read this page to understand the rules that apply to their stay in the U.S.

The DS-2019 End Date

An "end date" was entered into item #3 on page 1 of your DS-2019 based on your particular program. If you are not able to finish your program before that date, you must request an extension from your program sponsor **BEFORE** the DS-2019 expires. In all cases, proof of sufficient funds will be required to extend your program.

The 30-day Grace Period

After completing your program, you are allowed a 30-day grace period to depart the U.S

THE SEVIS FEE

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a U.S. government database that manages data and application processes for F-1 or J-1 nonimmigrants in the United States. If you are beginning a new program in the U.S., you are required to pay a one-time fee before you may obtain an F-1 or J-1 visa and enter the United States. The SEVIS fee is in addition to any visa application or reciprocity fees you may be required to pay at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. F-2 or J-2 dependent family members do not need to pay the SEVIS fee.

General observations

- Fee payment information can be found on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement web page. <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm>
- Payment and receipt of the fee should be made at least three business days before applying for a visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- Canadian citizens must pay the fee at least three business days prior to entering the United States.
- The fee **cannot** be paid at a U.S. consulate or at a U.S. port of entry. (Note: Some consulates in China and India may be able to collect the SEVIS fee together with visa application fees. Contact your American Consulate for fee-payment information.)

Methods of Payment:

Online

1. Online payment can be made via the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement website (<https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.jsp>). Accepted credit cards include Visa, MasterCard, and American Express.
2. Complete the online form (I-901) as instructed.
3. Enter your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 or DS-2019.
4. Enter the SEVIS ID number on your I-20 or DS-2019 (found in the upper-right corner, just above the bar code).
5. Print the online receipt after completing the payment form.

By Mail

Read the payment instructions and download Form I-901 (<http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/I-901.pdf>). Be sure to allow adequate mailing time for receipt and processing of your payment before your visa interview.

Western Union

Read the instructions for payments via Western Union on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement website (http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/wu_instr.htm). At the bottom of the page, select the link corresponding to your current location (International or U.S.) and your visa category (F or J).

Your Payment Receipt

- After paying the fee, you will receive a payment receipt. If paying online, be sure to **print** the receipt at the end of your transaction.

- Make and keep extra copies of your SEVIS fee payment receipt. You should keep your receipt for your entire stay in the United States.
- Present a copy of the receipt with your visa application at the U.S. consulate and at the U.S. port of entry. Carry the receipt with you during any future travel into the United States.
- F-2 or J-2 dependent family members should present a copy of the F-1's or J-1's SEVIS receipt when applying for F-2 or J-2 visas and when traveling into the United States.

ENTERING THE UNITED STATES



When to Arrive

In your acceptance letter you will receive information about when to arrive at Richmond International Airport (RIC).

When you travel, hand-carry your documents with you; do not pack your passport, I-20 or DS-2019, or similar documents in your checked bags, in case your luggage is delayed.

Be prepared to present the following documents to the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer:

- passport containing F-1 visa or J-1 visa and
- Form I-20 or DS-2019.

In addition, it is strongly recommended that you also hand-carry the following documentation:

- evidence of financial resources,
- evidence of student status such as your acceptance letter from Longwood University,
- paper receipt for payment of the SEVIS fee, and
- Name and contact information for your “Responsible Officer”, including a 24-hour emergency contact number at the school: Patricia Trent: 434-603-1074.

If you are traveling by aircraft, you should receive a Customs Declaration Form and an I-94 Arrival-Departure Record before arriving at the initial port-of-entry in the United States. In order to save time, please complete these forms while onboard the plane so that they will be ready for submission to the appropriate Customs and Border Protection Officers upon your arrival.

Orientation and Check-in at Longwood

A comprehensive orientation program will be conducted for all newly arriving students. This is a required activity; it will also be your opportunity to obtain your university identification card, keys to on-campus accommodations, and other necessities. If, for some reason, you are unable to attend the orientation (due to a flight cancellation, for example), you must check in, in person, at the Office of International Affairs. This should be done within 24 hours of your arrival. Please be sure to bring your passport and I-20 or DS-2019, immunization record, and proof of valid medical insurance.

TRAVEL AND RE-ENTRY

Travel to Other Countries

Other countries may require a visa and/or immunizations to enter their country. Before your departure, contact the nearest consulate or embassy of the country(ies) you plan to visit for updated information. Your own country's Foreign Ministry may also have helpful information on its website.

Travel Inside the U.S.

We strongly recommend that you carry a valid passport, your I-20 or DS-2019, and proof of current registration at Longwood University. Non-registered students or visitors should obtain verification of their current good standing from their department.

Travel Abroad and Re-entry to the U.S. - Required Documents

- **Passport**

Your passport must be valid at least six months into the future at all times, especially upon initial entry or re-entry to the U.S.



- **U.S. Entry Visa**

The visa stamp in your passport should be valid on the date of your return to the United States. (It does not, however, need to remain valid during your stay in the U.S.) If you have an old, expired passport with a valid U.S. entry visa, you do not need to get a new visa in your new passport as long as you carry both passports when you enter the United States. Canadian citizens do not need a U.S. visa. Canadian landed immigrants, however, are required to obtain U.S. entry visas.

- **Evidence of Financial Support**

It is strongly recommended that F-1 or J-1 non-immigrants carry proof of the financial support and resources reflected on the Form I-20 or DS-2019.

- **F-1or J-1 documents:**

Make sure your form I-20 or DS-2019 has been properly “endorsed” (signed within one year of your intended reentry date) by the school official or agency that issued the document. We generally recommend that the signature be current within 10 months of your re-entry date. If Longwood University issued your I-20 or DS-2019, bring it to the International Affairs Office for endorsing by a DSO.

- It is also recommended that students travel with proof of the current semester's registration (e.g., a printout of full-time class enrollment).

MAINTAINING LEGAL STATUS IN THE UNITED STATES

It is very important that you ensure that you remain in good status throughout your tenure at Longwood University. If you do not maintain legal status, then your visa may be terminated, forcing you to leave the university and/or suffer other consequences which include, but are not limited to:

- ineligibility for on-campus employment and/or
- ineligibility to apply to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for a change of visa status.

The key to ensuring you remain in good status is to be knowledgeable about your visa regulations. We will diligently strive to educate you and answer any questions you may have. However, you are responsible for learning and abiding by these policies. Our website will provide the basic knowledge that you need to remain in compliance with your visa regulations. Remember that you should always contact us if you have any questions.

Change of Address

If your address in the United States changes, you must notify the International Student Advisor within seven days.

Employment

You may not work in the United States without proper authorization. You are allowed work on-campus with authorization from the International Student Advisor and a valid Social Security number. More information about how to receive on-campus employment authorization can be found on the international student employment and internship opportunities page on Longwood University's website.

Travel Documents

You are responsible for ensuring that your travel documents are kept up to date. Remember that you must keep a valid travel authorization signature in the bottom-right corner of your I-20 or DS-2019. The signature is valid for twelve months. Once the signature has expired, you will need the International Student Advisor to sign again before you travel outside the country. You must also maintain your passport valid for least six months into the future during your tenure at Longwood. An expired passport will prevent you from entering or reentering the United States.

Full Course of Study and “Normal Progress” Requirements

F-1 and J-1 international students are required to register for and complete a full course of study every term (fall and spring). Undergraduate students must register for at least 12 credit hours each term, and graduate students must register for at least 9 credit hours each term. If you plan to register for less than a full course load, then you must have prior approval from the International Student Advisor. Failure to register for a full course load without a reason accepted by the Department of Homeland Security will constitute a violation of your immigration status.

Acceptable Reasons for a Reduced Course Load:

Academic Difficulties: Problems with coursework due to improper course placement (the course is too advanced for you), initial difficulty with the English language and/or with reading requirements, or unfamiliarity with teaching methods in the United States. Your Academic Advisor or Dean must provide documentation to the International Student Advisor regarding the academic difficulties.

Medical Reason: Accident or illness that prevents you from completing a full course of study. Per DHS policy, illness of a family member is not a recognized reason for a reduced course load. The International Student Advisor must receive a letter from a medical doctor, clinical psychologist or doctor of osteopathy that states that the student is medically unable to maintain a full-time course load.

Reasons Not Accepted for a Reduced Course Load

- Financial difficulties
- Illness of a family member
- Academic suspension

Taxes

Make sure you file your taxes! Visit the IRS website for more information,

<http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/International-Taxpayers/Foreign-Students-and-Scholars> .

WHAT TO BRING



Keep in mind that most airlines restrict passengers to two checked suitcases. In addition, there are strict limitations for carry-on luggage. **DO NOT PACK** your passport and other legal documents or valuables in your checked luggage. Sometimes luggage is not always waiting for you on the other end!

Since many of you will have overnight flights or very long daytime trips, you may want to consider carrying a change of clothes and/or a toothbrush in your carry-on bag.

Bedding and linens

Given airlines' weight restrictions for luggage, you may find it most convenient to buy towels and bed linens after you arrive at Longwood University. The Office of International Affairs typically schedules a stop at the local Wal-Mart for such purchases on the first day in Farmville. As an alternative, you may prefer to these items in advance and have them shipped to the university. The following websites sell extra-long twin sheets that fit the beds in Longwood's residence halls: <http://www.dormco.com> and <http://www.rhl.org/lwc>.

Mailing address for delivery:

Your Name

Office of International Affairs

Longwood University

201 High Street

Farmville, VA 23909 USA

Clothes

Longwood University students dress informally every day to classes and most other campus activities. Informal dress includes slacks, shorts, jeans for men and women, T-shirts, tennis shoes, sandals, and even flip-flops. However, there will be occasions when it is appropriate to wear more formal attire, such as a skirt and blouse or dress, or a sport coat and tie along with dress shoes. You may want to bring or prepare to buy winter wear such as: a coat, scarf, and gloves. It is recommended to avoid provocative, revealing clothing.

Electricity

The standard electric current in the United States is 110-volt alternating current, at 60 cycles per second (110V AC, 60 Hz). For small electrical appliances such as hairdryers or radios, a voltage converter as well as an adapter plug may be needed. To make things easier, we recommend purchasing these inexpensive appliances in the U.S. Even with an adapter or converter, there is a risk of a blowout, which could ruin your appliance and possibly even short-circuit the wiring in the residence hall.



Customs Regulations

Under no circumstances should you try to attempt to conceal any type of contraband merchandise or prohibited items, such as illegal drugs. Random searches occur at all U.S. and international ports of entry, and you are subject to search, both luggage and person, by U.S. Customs officials.

The legal age to purchase, possess and drink alcoholic drinks – including beer and wine – is 21. Individuals under 21 are not permitted to bring alcohol into the U.S.

In addition, you are not allowed to bring into the United States any fresh food or fruit. Exceptions are processed, pre-packaged items purchased in Duty Free Shops, such as cheese, candy, smoked fish, and canned delicacies. Other products will be confiscated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors in the International Arrivals/Customs areas.

If you take prescription medicine on a regular basis, be sure to carry the medication in its original, labeled packaging to avoid potential complications or hassles with Customs officials. For more detailed information, please consult the US Custom Services website www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/.

Upon Arrival

Longwood will arrange a trip to the local store on the day of your arrival to get anything you might have forgotten or want to get when you arrived here.

The following is a list that has been created to help serve as a helpful guide for college students to have when living in dorms for the first time.

- Alarm Clock
- Backpack
- Bathrobe
- Bicycle with durable lock
- Bedspread/Blanket
- Camera
- Can Opener
- Carpet or Scatter Rugs
- Cleaning Supplies
- Clothes Drying Rack
- Coat Hangers
- Coax cable
- Computer
- Desk lamp (non-halogen)
- Fan (even in AC buildings)
- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Laundry Basket and Detergent
- Ironing Board
- Pictures/Posters
- Pillow(s)
- Postage Stamps
- Quarters (for laundry)
- School Supplies
- Shower Shoes
- Stereo (with headphones)
- Storage Boxes or Foot Locker
- Telephone (voicemail provided)
- Television (cable ready)
- Toiletries
- Towels/Washcloths
- Twin EXTRA LONG Sheets
- Umbrella
- Utensils

To gather more information about what you can bring, as well as what you should not bring visit: www.longwood.edu/rcf/12847.htm.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Information about local banking is provided toward the end of this Handbook. The legal currency of the U.S. is the dollar. Money denominations are one, five, ten, twenty, fifty and one hundred dollar bills. There is also a two dollar bill, but it is seldom used. U.S. coins are penny (one cent with 100 equaling one dollar), nickel (five cents), dime (ten cents), quarter (twenty five cents), half dollar, and some dollar coins (not often used).

Credit Cards

Major credit cards, such as Visa, MasterCard, and American Express, are widely accepted. If you have an existing credit card, check the expiration date and your credit limit before you leave home, and make any arrangements as necessary.



You can use almost any credit or debit card to pay your Longwood University fees. The cashiering office does not accept credit cards in person; instead, you must enter your credit/debit card details into a secure online payment platform. Please note that a 2.75% convenience fee is added to your bill if you decide to pay by credit or debit card. (This covers the commission that the credit card companies charge Longwood University for such payments.)

Many U.S. banks have ATM machines that allow you to obtain cash advances, but the exchange and interest rates may be less favorable than a straight withdrawal of funds from your checking or saving accounts. Check with your credit card company to see if you need a different PIN for international transactions.

In case of theft or loss, be sure to report the loss to your credit card company. U.S. and international customer service telephone numbers are usually printed on the back of the credit card. Be sure to keep a separate record of such important emergency telephone numbers before your departure.

Bank accounts

If you plan to stay in the United States for a year or longer, you might find it useful to open an American bank account. In order to do so, you will be required to show proof of identity and citizenship. Special paperwork as non-US citizen may also need to be completed. You may want to bring funds in travelers' checks from your home country for deposit into the new account.

To avoid significant delays, avoid bringing bank checks drawn on a national bank in your home country. Instead, most major overseas banks should be willing to issue a check drawn on their "corresponding" financial institution in the United States, such as Citibank or Bank of America. It is also possible to move funds to your U.S. bank account via a "wire" transfer of funds. There are specific procedures for this transaction, which your U.S. bank customer service department can help you with.



Travelers' checks

Travelers' checks have become less useful over the years here in the U.S. due to the increase in credit card use. You can spend travelers' checks at many local stores, provided you bring along proper identification, such as a passport. You can also use travelers' checks to pay fees for accommodations, meal plans, and tuition at the cashiering office in Student Accounts.

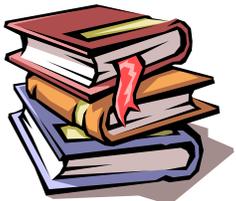
Banks in Farmville will not cash travelers' checks unless you hold an account at that bank. For reasons of safety and security, we do not advise you to bring large sums of money in cash.

Spending money

The best source of information on how much money you'll need here is often from other international students who have attended Longwood University. Despite careful budgeting, students very often find that they end up needing more money than they originally planned. It is always better to overestimate than to underestimate.



Each student should properly determine a sufficient means of spending that is reliable throughout their stay. Be careful in your planning and be particularly cautious in using credit cards. Sometimes "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" is more dangerous than you think. Above all, please be sure to bring additional funds to cover higher initial set-up costs during the first few months. Textbooks, room furnishings, and other one-time expenses will be more costly than your average monthly expenditures for the remainder of your stay here. While determining your budget for each semester include the following additional expenses estimates.



- *Personal expenses* (clothing, personal items, and recreation): \$600
 - *Books and supplies (on average)*: \$350 average
 - *Student Health Insurance (4 months)*: approximately \$600
 - *Domestic Travel*: If you are planning on doing extra traveling in the U.S. on breaks or after the semester is over it is important to think about the cost. Transportation here in the U.S. is very expensive so it is a good idea to plan your trips in advance in order to get the best deals! View the transportation information on page 22 for more deals on how to travel in the U.S.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Medical insurance

All international students attending Longwood University on an F-1 or J-1 visa are **required** to demonstrate adequate medical insurance for the entire time in residence. Health insurance must be valid for the **entire** duration of your educational program (the time period listed on your I-20 or DS-2019). For more information about International Student Insurance feel free to watch the follow video, <http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/us-healthcare-system-video.php> (this video has subtitles available in Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Chinese and English).

Your health insurance must meet or exceed the minimum coverage described below.

1. Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000.
2. Expenses associated with medical evacuation to your home country in the amount of \$250,000 to \$300,000.

If you do not already hold medical insurance, please purchase a plan from Longwood University's preferred partner, International Student Insurance. In order to have sufficient coverage, you must sign up for either the "Select" or "Budget" plans via their website:

<http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/bespoke/longwood-university.php>.

If you become ill while in the US, you will be expected to furnish proof of your medical insurance coverage before doctors or a hospital will provide services. (There are exceptions for true emergencies.) Depending upon your insurance provider, the physician or hospital may file for direct payment and send a bill requesting payment from you for any amount not covered by your insurance. Physicians and hospitals expect prompt payment. Not all plans include dental insurance, and you are likely to be asked to pay for a visit to a dentist at the time of treatment, unless other arrangements are made. Be sure to keep all records of your treatment and expenses. **If you willfully fail to purchase and maintain proper health insurance, your visa must be terminated.**

Vaccinations

All students must present a completed Immunization Record upon arrival. The blank form, which you should complete along with your healthcare provided, is available at

http://www.longwood.edu/assets/health/Immunization_Record_FY_2014.pdf. Under State law, all students must undergo screening for tuberculosis, as well as immunizations for measles, mumps, rubella, polio, diphtheria, and tetanus. Meningitis and hepatitis B immunizations are also required; however, you may sign waivers for meningitis and hepatitis B if you choose not to receive these two immunizations.



Students without complete immunization records will not be permitted to register for classes.

Pre-Existing Conditions

If you have a chronic medical condition, such as diabetes, carry a letter with you from your physician describing your condition, along with information about any prescription medicines or injections you take. Please also be sure to provide a copy of this letter to the Student Health and Wellness Center.

If you have an on-going medical condition or potentially life-threatening allergies to certain kinds of medications, such as codeine or sulfa-based drugs, please be sure to inform the Student Health and Wellness Center.

Medications



As a general rule, if you take regularly prescribed medication, be sure to bring what you'll need with you. Ask your physician or pharmacist to write the name brand/generic name on the container and be sure to leave medications in their original packaging or vials. If a physician has prescribed you to take a medication that is considered to be a narcotic or similarly controlled substance, be sure to carry the medicine in its original container, along with a copy of your prescription.

Medical Assistance

For most routine medical needs, the Student Health and Wellness Center will be able to serve your needs. If you require additional medical follow up, the staff will assist you with locating physicians, specialists, and hospital facilities in Farmville or nearby areas.

Drugs and alcohol

ILLEGAL DRUG USE AND POSSESSION ARE SERIOUS CRIMES IN THE UNITED STATES. Possible penalties include imprisonment and deportation. Even though you are a citizen of another country, you are subject to the laws of the United States during your visit here. In addition, legal representation is very expensive. Most attorneys' professional fees can approach \$200 or more per hour.

Be advised that laws regarding alcohol use are different here than in many countries.

- You must be at least 21 years of age to purchase, possess, or consume alcohol.
- You may not carry open bottles or cups of alcohol outside of restaurants, bars or homes.
- Driving and/or walking drunk are legal offenses.

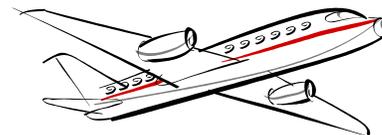


Longwood University students are required to uphold the laws; students who face consequences for breaking US laws will also face consequences from the University.

TRANSPORTATION

Flights

Longwood University will happily assist you from the nearest airport (Richmond International [RIC]) to the University campus. In order to take advantage of this service, you must arrange to arrive at the airport on the specific day mentioned in your acceptance letter and on our website at <http://www.longwood.edu/internationalaffairs/>. Depending your place of origin, you should be able to purchase a flight ticket arriving at gateways such as New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Raleigh-Durham, Chicago, or Atlanta with connecting service to Richmond. Upon your arrival at Richmond's airport, Longwood representatives will welcome you, assist you with your luggage, and transport you to Farmville. Please be sure to forward your flight itinerary to the Office of International Affairs in advance. It is not Longwood's responsibility to book your flight to and from the U.S. that is your responsibility.



At the end of the semester/academic year, Longwood University offers you a complimentary ride back to the Richmond airport. As before, this transportation will be available only on the specific date communicated to you via email and on our website (<http://www.longwood.edu/internationalaffairs/>).

Students who opt to arrive or depart Farmville on alternative dates will be responsible for their own transportation to or from the airport. Below are some transportation options:

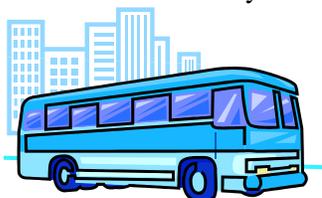
- Virginia AirLink is a shuttle service which can transport you to Farmville from Richmond at a low cost. You can make a reservation in advance on their website (<http://virginiaairlink.bookingtool.net/>) or call (804-372-7433) to arrange a last minute booking.
- Airport Taxi Service has brought many international students from the airport in Richmond, Virginia to Farmville. It is quite expensive but is an option if needed. Below is the contact information.
 - Abdelhadi Ibrahim
(804) 836-0649
Richmond, VA
Company # (804) 233-4444

Local transportation

Farmville has a local bus transportation known as FAB (Farmville Area Bus). Two bus lines cover the majority of the town and can transport you to most places of interest, including stores and restaurants. FAB bus stops are conveniently located on campus and on the adjacent streets. The public bus service is free for Longwood students.

Traveling Outside of Farmville

There are few ways to travel throughout the U.S. The cheapest way will be by bus but sometimes it's best to take other type of transportation if you are going a far distance. The following are some of transportation companies that are available to you.



- **Bus:** Intercity coach/bus service is offered by Greyhound Lines (www.greyhound.com), with direct service to Richmond and connecting routes to the rest of

the country. Greyhound's bus stop in Farmville is within convenient walking distance of campus. Below are the approximate cost to travel by bus:

Farmville to Richmond- departs 5:45pm most days- \$30 (one-way)

Farmville to Lynchburg- departs 5:45pm most days- \$25 (takes 5 hours, one-way)

Farmville to Washington- same time- \$60 (takes 4 hours, 40 minutes, one-way)

The Megabus is another cheap bus that can be taken from Richmond to many big cities in the U.S. Check out their prices at <https://us.megabus.com/>.

- **Train:** The National Railroad Passenger Corporation, Amtrak, is a corporation striving to deliver a high quality, safe, on-time rail passenger service that exceeds customer expectations. (<http://www.amtrak.com/home>) Prices vary depending on when you book. If you book in advance you can get great deals on round trip tickets. Closest train stations to Farmville are in Lynchburg and Richmond.
- **Flights:** Flying in the U.S. can be very expensive. Southwestern Airline (<http://www.southwest.com/>) is a cheaper airline that you could use for domestic travel. There are many different flight search engines that will help you find the cheapest flight throughout the U.S.



- **Car Rentals:** You can rent a car if you wish. You must have a valid drivers licenses and be 21 years old or older for some companies. The following are a few car rental companies in Farmville, Virginia.
 - **Hertz**
4644 Farmville Road
Farmville, Virginia, United States
Phone: 434-392-0323
Hours of Operation: Mo-Fr 0800-1730, Sa 0900-1200, Sun Closed
Location Type: Corporate
 - **Enterprise Rent-A-Car**
2102B SOUTH MAIN ST/PO BOX 445
FARMVILLE, VA 23901-0445
Tel.: (434) 315-0024
- **Applying for a Drivers License:** You can apply for your drivers license to permit you to drive here in the U.S. Vist the DMV's website, <http://www.dmv.state.va.us/drivers/>, to learn more about the process of applying for your license.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND DINING

Residence Halls and Meal Plans

Longwood University strives to match each international student with an American student in an on-campus dormitory for at least their first semester, unless other arrangements have been made. As with most U.S. universities, Longwood's residence halls are composed of shared dormitory rooms. In other words, you can expect to have a roommate. In addition, you will need to provide your own linens and towels.

The following are items that are provided to Main Campus residents.

- Each resident is provided:
 - extra-long twin bed (bunkable) with mattress (most are 36" x 80"),
 - desk (top is 25"x43") & chair,
 - dresser (20"x35" top),
 - closet space for hanging clothes,
 - electronic mail service, Internet access and voice mail.
- Each room has:
 - window shades or blinds,
 - tile or hardwood flooring,
 - overhead lighting,
 - smoke detector,
 - analog telephone connection (resident must provide the telephone), and
 - basic cable TV connection.
- Each bathroom is equipped with a shower curtain.

Your meal plan – which allows you to eat in Longwood's dining hall – will be determined by the conditions of the contract between your school and Longwood. Absent any such contract, you will have the option to choose among a number of differently priced plans. You can expect to receive an email with updated information about meal plans a few weeks before your arrival. For more information about meal plan options visit the following website: <http://www.longwood.edu/rcf/31337.htm>.



COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Back Home

We understand when homesickness hits all you want is to hear your family on the other line. This is normal and we don't want to discourage communication back home but it can cause a barrier when you are embracing a new culture and language. Try to monitor the time you spend communicating back home.

If you happen to be struggling with things here in the U.S. and call home to talk to family about how you are doing make sure you follow up with a phone call after your struggles have been resolved. The last thing you want is for your family and friends back home to worry about you.

Listed below are a few ways you can stay connected with your family and friends back home and with your new friends here at Longwood!

Telephones

When you reach Farmville, it is always a good idea to call home. Family and friends will be anxiously waiting to hear from you. You may call from most public phone booths using a telephone card purchased either in the United States or at home. Calling from the U.S. by direct dialing using a phone card is one of the least expensive methods of calling home. Therefore, we strongly suggest that you establish a pre-determined day and time, allowing for time zone differences, to speak with family members and friends. Often major telephone companies offer special international rates for countries/numbers frequently called.

Inexpensive telephones may be purchased at a local store to use in your dorm room if you wish to use an international calling card.

Cell Phones

A smart option for a cell phone that would be used for here in the U.S. (also used to call back home) would be a no contract phone. Many of the popular businesses sell the phones at low prices but you have to sign a two year contract which won't work for you as an international student. The following are a few contract free options and you can buy the phones online or at Walmart.



Straight Talk

- Cost-\$30 monthly for 1,000 voice minutes, 1,000 text messages and 30 megabytes of data; \$45 a month for unlimited talking, texting and data; \$60 for unlimited international calls, texting and data. Three-month, six-month and yearly plans are also available.
- Phones-Several versions of the iPhone, including the 16GB iPhone 5 for \$550 (or \$400 refurbished); a selection of Android devices, including the Samsung Galaxy S III (\$400); the BlackBerry Curve (\$130); and basic phones such as the LG 900G (\$20). You can bring your own CDMA or GSM phone — check whether a phone is compatible at straighttalkbyop.com.

T-Mobile

- Cost- All plans include unlimited talking and text messaging. You'll pay \$50 a month for 500GB of full-speed data, \$60 for 2.5GB or \$70 for unlimited data with no speed caps. To create a family plan, prices start at \$30 per month to add a second line on the 500MB plan and \$10 for each additional line thereafter.
- Phones -A wide selection of devices, including the 32GB iPhone 5 (\$650), the Samsung Galaxy S III (\$452) and the BlackBerry Q10 (\$580). Or bring your own compatible GSM phone. You'll pay \$10 for a SIM card whether you buy a phone from T-Mobile or bring one.

Virgin Mobile: Beyond Talk

- Cost-Plans come with unlimited text messaging and data (data speed will be slowed any month you pass 2.5GB of usage). For \$35 a month, you get 300 minutes of call time; for \$45, you get 1,200 minutes; for \$55, you get unlimited talk time. If you don't want a smart phone, check out the PayLo plans, which range from \$20 to \$40 per month and include limited Web access.
- Phones- A few versions of the iPhone, such as the 16GB iPhone 5s (\$550); and a selection of Android devices, including Samsung Galaxy III 4G LTE (\$350).



Skype

Skype, a voice-over-Internet provider, is a no-cost means to communicate with your home and friends abroad. You will need to register for the service via the Internet (skype.com) and purchase a webcam for video communication.

Viber

Viber is an app that you can download to your smart phone and call anywhere around the world for free!

E-mail

You should receive instructions from the University's Information Technology Services Department regarding the setup of your Longwood email address. New Student Orientation will include a session designed to acquaint you with the computer technology available at Longwood University.

It is very important to check your Longwood email on a regular basis, in order to receive important academic and student-services updates.



Postal mail

During orientation, you will receive your on-campus mailbox number and combination. Air mail sent from overseas will likely take 5 - 10 days to reach you. At Longwood's on-campus post office, you can purchase stamps for both foreign and domestic mailing, and you can mail packages via UPS. A full service post office located in downtown Farmville can assist with tasks such as mailing packages, which may require customs forms and/or insurance.

We recommend that you do not mail packages or important letters through USPS (United States Postal Services). USPS does not track mail once it leaves the U.S. If you wish to send important packages, Midtown Mailboxes is

located very close to campus and can assist you with international mail. Check out the following link for more information: <http://www.midtownmailboxes.com/Default.aspx>.

CULTURAL MATTERS

Culture shock



Students on international programs, especially those who have not previously lived abroad, sometimes experience what is called “culture shock.” This feeling of mild depression and nostalgia for the way things are done back home can be disturbing, but it is quite normal. Culture shock occurs most often after the first few weeks in a new environment where behavior patterns, food, language and ways of life are different. It is natural to feel a bit of anxiety or discomfort, because – after all – the new environment is not home. Participants in overseas programs should bear in mind that practically everyone in this type of situation experiences some elements of culture shock, and feeling this way does not mean that anything is “wrong” with you.

One of the most effective ways of dealing with culture shock is to briefly get away from the new environment. By spending a weekend in a different place, the return to campus becomes, in effect, a return to home. Usually this psychological “trick” works to reduce or eliminate culture shock. Students who continue to feel slightly depressed or ill-at-ease should contact the International Affairs Office or visit the Counseling Center located on the upper floor of the Health and Fitness Center for assistance. You may also want to locate other international students on campus from your home country or region to share perspectives. By making an effort to dig below the surface in order to **understand** the new culture, you may be able to cope with it in a more rational way (even if you’re not fully prepared to **accept** the culture).

About the Area

Farmville is located in central Virginia and has a population of approximately 8,000. In addition to being the seat of government of Prince Edward County, the town is also the business and educational center of the surrounding region.



Farmville’s weather is mild in the spring and fall; hot and humid in the summer, with temperatures reaching 100F (38C); and cold in the winter, with temperatures falling as low as 10F (-12C). Precipitation – in the form of rain and snow, depending on the temperature – falls throughout the year. Winter clothing is appropriate November through March. Clothing for all seasons may be purchased at a variety of local stores.

It is a one-hour drive from Farmville to Richmond, the state capital and a major hub for transportation, shopping, entertainment, and culture. Washington DC and Virginia Beach are approximately three hours away; New York City is an eight-hour drive away. Information about Virginia attractions may be obtained from the State of Virginia Tourism web site: www.virginia.org.

ADDITIONAL FARMVILLE INFORMATION

LOCAL BANKS:

Bank of America

201 Main Street

Wells Fargo

127 N. Main Street

BB&T

1304 S Main St

(434)392-8147

If you decide to open a bank account, take both your passport and Longwood University identification card to the local branch. The banks offer special accounts to students. Please use your local address for the account.

SHOPPING WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF CAMPUS:

CVS/Pharmacy

Southgate Shopping Mall

(434) 392-1881 (store)

(434) 392-3104 (pharmacy)

OTHER SHOPPING IN FARMVILLE:

Belk Department Store

Longwood Shopping Center

1506 S. Main

(434) 392-8843

Wal-Mart (24 hours)

1800 Peery Dr.

(434) 392-5334

Food Lion

Longwood Village Shopping Center



Restaurants:

Charley's Waterfront Café, Fishin Pig, McDonald's, Burger King, Ruby Tuesday, Taco Bell, Domino's Pizza, Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken, , Arby's, Wendy's, Subway, Applebee's, La Parota, Macados, Hong Kong Kitchen, Pino's, El Patrón, Moe's Southwest Grill, Buffalo Wild Wings, Merk's Place, Musashi Asian Cuisine,.

**Movie Theaters:**

Sunchase Cinema 8 is located at 215 Sunchase Blvd. In addition, the Student Union and other student groups sponsor movies on-campus throughout the academic year.

Religious Organizations:

There are several churches and religious centers, and church-affiliated student organizations located near/on campus. Houses of worship in town include the following:

- Baptist
- Church of Christ
- Episcopal
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Presbyterian
- Quaker
- Seventh Day Adventist
- Roman Catholic
- Orthodox Christian
- The Islamic Center

A full list with locations and contact numbers is available in the Office of International Affairs!

