



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

International Graduate Student Guide

2019-2020



Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies
Harkins Hall 213

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Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

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The Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies staff and the Director of International Student Success warmly welcome you to the Providence College community. Our office assists international and exchange students at Providence College to make their transition to an American education, and (along with their class dean and major academic advisors) help to monitor their progress toward their degree. We are the main office on campus which provides services to international and exchange students and assist with acclimation to academics, social, and personal integration into the College and local community.

Welcome to Providence College!

Your F-1 Student Status

What is SEVIS?

SEVIS stands for “Student and Exchange Visitor Information System” and is an internet database system that allows schools and U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) to exchange data on the visa status of international students. Accurate and current information is transmitted electronically throughout all F-1 student’s time in the United States. U.S. embassies and consulates and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officials also have access to the information stored in SEVIS.



All incoming F-1 students must pay a SEVIS fee to receive the F-1 visa, for which they receive an I-901 receipt. This fee is paid only once—you do not need to pay again if you decide to pursue another degree or transfer to another school. The SEVIS fee must be paid before your consular appointment. It is possible to pay online using a credit card at <https://www.fmjfee.com/#>.

You will need to use the SEVIS Number issued to you on the I-20 Form. You will receive a printable receipt immediately, and your information will be electronically entered on your SEVIS record, which the consulate can then access.

Applying for an F-1 Student Visa

Students are issued F-1 visas to study full-time in the United States. After your International Graduate Student Supplement form and additional materials have been received, Providence College will send you an I-20 form. The I-20 is a document containing information about Providence College, the cost of studying and living in the U.S., the length of your program, and information about you. The I-20 is the “Certificate of Eligibility for Non-Immigrant Students.” It is NOT a visa. You will need the I-20 in order to apply for an F-1 visa.

All visa applicants are required to meet in person with a U.S. Embassy or consulate official. A list of US Embassy locations can be found <https://www.usembassy.gov/>. It is recommended that you visit the website of the U.S. Embassy/Consulates in your country for more information on the process for making appointments. Most consulates require that an appointment be made on the website or by phone. This is a necessary first step to becoming an international student approved for study in the U.S.

Maintaining F-1 Legal Status

Students who come to the U.S. to study full-time are granted a nonimmigrant classification known as “F-1.” This is commonly referred to as your “status.”

In order to remain legally present in the United States, you must “maintain” your status; that is you must follow the rules that apply to your status. It is your legal responsibility to understand and follow these rules. The most important rules for F-1s are:

- You must attend the school that is indicated in item two of your I-20.
- You must register for and complete a full course of study each semester during the academic year. This is a minimum of 9 credits per semester for Master’s programs.
- You must have a current and valid signature on page 3 of your I-20, dated within one year of your travel date.
- Keep your passport, I-20 in a safe place and keep copies in a separate place. If you lose any of these documents contact the Assistant Dean/ Director of International Student Success in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies immediately!
- You cannot be employed without proper authorization from the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies and the USCIS.
- Students who are present in the United States under a student visa are responsible for filing tax forms, due each April 15. Providence College uses a special software called Sprintax that is designed for international students filing taxes. You will receive an email regarding filing taxes in February of each filing tax year.
- You must:
 - apply for extensions before your I-20 expires
 - obtain written approval from the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies prior to transferring to another school.
- Report any change of address within ten (10) days of moving.
- You must have health insurance. F-1 students are required to have health insurance that meets federal minimums.

Losing/Regaining your Legal Status

If you fail to follow these guidelines you will lose legal status and all related benefits. This is very serious! Among other things, it means that you will not be eligible for any employment, even on-campus jobs and you will not be able to receive a reentry signature on your document from the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies. Additionally, your SEVIS record will be terminated and SEVIS will automatically notify the immigration services of your loss of legal status. You may be asked to appear at an immigration office and become subject to deportation from the U.S. **If you lose your legal status, you must meet with Assistant Dean/ Director of International Student Success in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies immediately to discuss your options!**

Student Employment

Working on an F-1 Visa



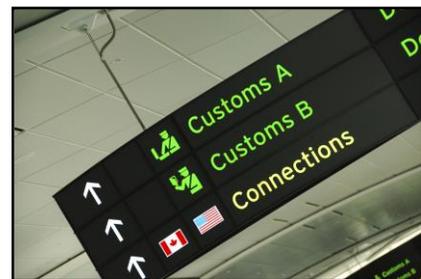
For the first year, international students are permitted only to work on-campus for no more than 20 hours per week. No off-campus employment is allowed. In order to work (both on and off-campus) and receive payment, students must obtain a Social Security number. This requires students to have an offer letter of employment in writing. When you are ready to apply for a Social Security number, make an appointment with Assistant Dean/ Director of International Student Success. She will issue a support letter and give you directions for submitting the application at the Social Security Office.

After your first year, if you are interested in working off campus, you have the option of applying for Optional Practical Training (employment related to your field of study, done before or after completion of your degree), or Curricular Practical Training (employment that is an integral part of your degree program's curriculum, done for pay or credit while attending Providence College). Contact the Assistant Dean/ Director of International Student Success regarding application procedures for the CPT and the OPT programs.

Preparing for your Arrival to the United States

Preparing for Your Arrival to the United States

- Allow enough time to get your visa – U.S. Embassies or consulates in some countries require visa appointments to be set up several weeks in advance.
- Plan to arrive in Providence or Boston Logan Airport between 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, August 16, 2019** for the mandatory International Student Welcome program. This program will be followed by the Orientation Program for all new incoming students. International students are required to attend both programs.
- Check on airplane reservations as early as possible; you might be able to save money by booking your flight in advance. Reconfirm your flight reservation 72 hours before departure.
- Ask the airlines if there are any restrictions regarding how much baggage you can take, or if there are any size or weight restrictions to the baggage you can take with you.
- If you will be bringing a large quantity of baggage, you may wish to check with transport companies regarding the cost of shipment of your belongings. It may be less expensive to ship your baggage on a transport carrier instead of a passenger carrier.
- Pack a carry-on bag with personal articles for use in case your luggage is temporarily lost during your journey. Pack valuables and your immigration documents in this bag.
- Make a list of the important items you wish to take with you - medicines, clothing, personal items, alarm clock, favorite music, etc.
- If you require medicines containing controlled drugs or narcotics (e.g., cough medicine, heart drugs, sleeping pills or stimulants), you should have all these products properly packaged and labeled.



NOTE: You will not be able to have foreign prescriptions for controlled drugs filled in the U.S. without first seeing a U.S. registered doctor. You should also have a statement of prescription from your doctor

indicating that the medicine is being used under a doctor's direction and is necessary for your physical well-being. Also, keep in mind that a medication available in your home may not be available in the United States. Speak to your doctor about what alternative medicines you might take, or plan on seeing a U.S. doctor shortly after your arrival.

- About two weeks before you are to depart, start a second "items to take" list that includes things you did not initially think of, but you are using on a regular basis—toothbrush, sunglasses, etc.
- Read all the information provided by the College so that you will know what to expect once you reach the U.S. and Providence College.
- Familiarize yourself with your travel documents (visa, I-20 form).

NOTE: Students are responsible to arrive at Providence College on their own from either Logan International Airport (Boston, MA), New York, or other ports of entry from abroad. Give your family a contact number, such as that for the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies (+1.401.865.2495), in case of emergency.

Before you leave, make sure you have the telephone number for the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies with you so that you can contact the office in the event you run into any complications once you arrive in the U.S.: +1.401.865.2495.

While traveling, you should keep your passport, identification papers and money with you at all times. Do not lose them, as it is very difficult to replace them while you are traveling!

Documents to bring:

- Official transcripts from secondary schools, colleges, or universities
- Medical and dental records, including certificates of immunizations and vaccinations
- Information about medical conditions or treatments, prescriptions for medication (including generic and brand names) and eyeglasses

NOTE: Obtain English translations of these documents and have the translations certified by U.S. educational advising center or a U.S. consulate or embassy. Retain photocopies of all original documents for your records.

Health Care & Insurance

Health Care in Providence

Although there is a health center on campus, it is generally only for resident (i.e., undergraduate) students. Graduate students should plan on choosing a doctor available through their insurance company. There are also a variety of clinics and medical offices throughout Providence and Rhode Island that are available for use in case of emergency.



Health Insurance Requirements and Details

Health insurance coverage is required by the federal government for international students to be maintaining their visa status. Students must demonstrate proof of coverage for a minimum of the nine months of the academic year.

Students may choose any one of the following plans. Proof of health insurance must be provided to the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies within the **first week of the semester and must be presented to the office at the beginning of each new academic year.**

OPTION 1: Providence College Student Health Insurance Plan, this plan is offered through University Health Plans and coverage is valid from September of each year through August of the following year. More information may be found here:
www.universityhealthplans.com/Providence

OPTION 2: iNext Insurance Plan for International Students offers two levels of coverage – Navigator and Navigator Plus. Students may choose to purchase coverage only for the amount of time you will be studying in the United States during the next year. And the cost is based on age and level of coverage. More information on the insurance plan and cost breakdowns may be found here: <http://www.inext.com/plans/travel-to-usa/>

OPTION 3: ISO Plan for International Students offers five levels of coverage – COMPASS Silver, COMPASS Gold, ISO Med 1, Shield 500, Shield 3000. Students may choose to purchase coverage only for the amount of time you will be studying in the United States during the next year and the cost is based on age and level of coverage. More information on the insurance plan and cost breakdowns may be found here:
https://www.isoa.org/?gclid=CjwKCAjwopTYBRAzEiwAnU4kbzo94SBsJO98_uXeQrtd028TXYdL353ea1ZfSwWzDwn7WlcbjOnjBoCHeUQAxD_BwE

Immunizations

Along with arranging for health insurance coverage, you must fill out a physical examination record before you enroll. This record -- which must include a record of your past illnesses, tuberculin test results, and evidence of immunization against common diseases, including rubella and measles -- should be completed by your own physician on forms supplied by the College. This record helps to ensure the health and welfare of you and your fellow students in a small community where illness can spread very quickly.

Emergency and Urgent Care

In the event of a medical emergency, students should call ext. 2888 for campus EMTs or ext. 2222 for security. The person on-call will notify an ambulance and assist the student until emergency services arrive. The following is a list of local hospitals in Providence:

- ***St. Joseph Hospital***
(401) 456-3000
- ***Rhode Island Hospital***
(401) 444-4000
- ***Roger Williams Medical Center***
(401) 456-2000
- ***Miriam Hospital***
(401) 793-2500



Providence College 101

Campus Resources

Office of the Dean of Undergraduate & Graduate Studies

The Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies works with different departments on campus in providing the resources and support needed to increase international study at Providence College. International students are particularly welcome at the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies where they can meet with the Director of International Student Success to discuss their life at Providence College and to get assistance in finding the campus resources that will help make them successful students.

Student ID Cards

Each Providence College student and employee is issued a campus identification (ID) card through the PC Card Office. The PC ID card provides proof of identity and shall be carried by the cardholder at all times while present on campus

<https://www.providence.edu/pc-card-office-services/>

Food and Dining

There are two dining halls at Providence College. Raymond Hall and Alumni Food Court, at which you may pay cash. Both dining halls offer standard breakfast, lunch, and dinner options throughout the school year. Dining hall hours vary on holidays and school breaks.

Office of the Bursar

The Bursar's Office is responsible for the billing and collection of tuition charges and other fees associated with enrollment at the college. For more information, contact the Office of the Bursar.

Location: Harkins Hall 400, TEL: 2284.

<https://bursar.providence.edu/>

Computing on Campus

Providence College provides a wide range of computing resources in order to support the educational mission and administration of the College. There are computer labs in multiple

locations across campus that are available for your use. Hours will vary based on location and day of the week, and will also differ during breaks and holidays.

The computer facilities are an essential resource for academic, administrative and research processes for members of the College community. All members of the College community are encouraged to use these resources, provided they respect the rights of others, abide by the rules and regulations of the College, and assume shared responsibility for safeguarding the College's computing environment. Proper and fair use is essential if all are to derive maximum benefit from them. Users found in violation may be subject to penalties of varying degree, including temporary or permanent denial of access to computer resources and services. Violators may also be subject to action by campus, civil or criminal judicial systems.

Providence College and the Computer Services Department are focused on providing anytime, anywhere access to information that would otherwise be impossible without the core technologies we use. Among these are:

CyberFriar: CyberFriar is the main way to manage your personal and academic records at Providence College. It is the main web system that works with the college's administrative database – SCT Banner. This is the main web access for the student and faculty tasks beyond the class. For students this means registering for courses, updating address and personal information, viewing mid-term and final grades, viewing all financial aid and billing information on your student account, viewing and requesting academic transcripts, and performing degree evaluation to monitor your progress toward completing your degree requirements.

The Information Technology Department provides all support for the network and phone communications on campus. The office is located on the first floor of Accino Hall. Phone numbers: Information Technology, x2345; Helpdesk, x4357; Telecommunications x2800.

The Phillips Memorial Library

The campus library is widely used by Providence College students as a place to research, study, and work on class assignments. The library features many different types of study environments including individual study cubicles, eighty computer workstations, quiet group study rooms, and comfortable seating for relaxed reading.

Students have access to a collection of 350,000 books and bound periodical volumes, approximately 1,650 current print periodical titles, and over 19,000 full-text electronic journals. Students also have free access to volumes in every higher education library in the state of Rhode Island through the HELIN system. The Phillips Memorial Library also houses the English and History Departments, the Office of Academic Services, the Tutoring Center and the Writing Center.

<http://www.providence.edu/library>

TEL: x1992

Campus Bookstore

The Providence College Bookstore is located in lower Slavin Student Center. It is affiliated with the Barnes & Noble (a bookstore chain). You can order your textbooks online and the

bookstore will hold them for you, or you can simply purchase books when you arrive on campus. Book costs can be substantial. It is important that you plan your financial support accordingly. Keep in mind that buying used books when possible is a cheaper alternative to buying new books.

You may also purchase books through other bookstores or websites, such as Amazon.com. Be careful to ensure you are purchasing the correct edition!

Also available in the Providence College Bookstore are basic needs such as toiletries and school supplies. In addition, Providence College apparel can also be purchased here.

TEL: X2181 Email Address: bksprovidence@bncollege.com
<https://providence.bncollege.com/shop/providence/home>

Important Telephone Numbers and Websites on Campus

All phone numbers below are listed as if you are calling from a campus phone number. In order to make a call from off-campus, a public or cell phone, dial 401-865- before the numbers below.

Emergency: 2222
Security (non-emergency): 2391
Center for International Studies: 2114
Office of Academic Records: 2366
Slavin Info Desk: 2444
Student Accounts: 2284
Computer Help Desk: 4357
Phillips Memorial Library: 2242

The following campus websites may be very helpful if you want to learn more about Providence College before you arrive on campus:

Office of the Registrar:
<https://registrar.providence.edu/>

Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies:
<https://dean-office.providence.edu/>

Office of Financial Aid:
<https://financial-aid.providence.edu/>

Office of Student Accounts:
<https://bursar.providence.edu/>

Housing in Providence

<https://citizenship-off-campus.providence.edu/off-campus-life/>

The Off-Campus Living Office can assist you in finding housing near Providence College, and give you information on the U.S. system of signing leases.



Safety and Security

Safety Tips

Because Providence College is a small, intimate community, you may find yourself lulled into a sense of total safety. However, personal safety is a concern on all college campuses, regardless of how safe they might feel. While there are measures that the College has in place to protect students, faculty and staff, you should keep the following tips in mind when you arrive:



- Keep the door to your room and to your residence hall locked when you are away.
- Be sure the residence hall door locks behind you when you enter or leave the building.
- Do not keep large sums of money in your room, and do not carry large sums of money with you.
- Do not leave laptop computers or other expensive pieces of equipment unattended.
- When walking at night, stick to well-lighted walkways.
- Do not hitchhike, and do not accept rides from strangers.

Safety Services

A safety escort service is provided by the Office of Safety and Security by request. A student escort service is available during the school year. An off-campus shuttle bus service is also available.

Providence College also maintains a system of emergency telephones throughout the campus. These phones can be easily located by the bright blue light on top of the mounting pedestal. The automatic dialing feature of these phones provides direct contact with the Office of Safety and Security, which can immediately send a Security Officer.

Fire Safety

For your own safety and the safety of your fellow students, fire and safety hazards of any kind are not allowed in the residence halls. These include, but are not limited to, open flames and objects that create them (i.e., candles), flammable materials used as decoration, lighting that contains halogen bulbs, decorative electrical lighting, and other personal belongings.

In addition, please consider the types of electrical appliances that you bring along or purchase. Items such as hot plates, broiler ovens, toasters and space heaters are not allowed in the residence halls. Popcorn makers, curling irons, flat irons, coffee makers, and other similar items may be used, but only in common areas such as lavatories and kitchens. Hair dryers and small microwaves may be used in student rooms. All extension cords must meet the following safety standards: They must be UL-approved/listed, have a grounded plug (have a third prong), and be 14 gauge and 15 amps.

UL-approved circuit breaker multi-plugs are also allowed. If you have any questions about the electrical appliances that you plan to bring or purchase, please contact the Residence Life Office.

U.S. Culture & Values

**Taken from the University of Minnesota International Student Handbook*



No doubt you already know a great deal about the U.S. and perhaps about U.S. Americans. Yet if you are new to studying in the U.S. there are probably a few things that may surprise you and possibly challenge you about some common U.S. values. We describe a few here so that you may be prepared for these values and how they differ (or don't) from your own cultural values.

The Importance of Time

In the United States, time is treated like a tangible asset and is used carefully and productively. Being “on time” (arriving at the stated time) for class or meeting with advisers, instructors, or even with friends is very important.

The Work Ethic

Like people in many countries, U.S. Americans place a high value on hard work. However, they tend to feel personally responsible for their accomplishments and take personal credit for what they've done. It is believed that people achieve results on the basis of how hard they work, so they often judge others by how hard they work and how task-oriented they are.

Achievement

A very high value is placed on a person's accomplishments and productivity. Individuals evaluate themselves and are evaluated by others in terms of their achievements and accomplishments.

Individualism

U.S. Americans tend to view themselves first and foremost as individuals with both freedom and responsibility to manage their own lives, make their own decisions and accomplish their own goals. Families and friends are important, but individuals are expected to consider their own needs, desires, and values. U.S. Americans seem to be less comfortable being obligated to or dependent on others. People are also held individually accountable for things they have promised to do, and international students may find that they are expected to do more of their work independently than they are accustomed to at home.

Direct Communication and Problem-Solving Style

While this varies greatly by region and family background, people in the United States generally place a higher priority on clear, factual communication. This means that at times, U.S. Americans may choose to be direct even if it means possibly hurting or embarrassing another person.

Pragmatism

U.S. Americans can be pragmatic and oriented toward practical matters. They are attracted to things and ideas that are seen as “useful.” This goes together with the orientation toward work and achievement. There is a high value on being able to relate “theory” to “practice.”

Understanding these values can help you understand why things are as they are in the U.S. and help you to adjust to your new home.

Friendship and dating in the United States

You may find that people in the United States have very different ideas than you do about making friends. Because of the value put on friendliness, U.S. Americans sometimes misread people from other countries who are reserved or formal as being cold or rude. In the U.S., saying “Good morning,” “Hi,” or “Hello,” with a smile will usually indicate that you do not have any bad feelings towards colleagues, faculty, or friends. Until you get used to it, this friendliness (smiling and being sociable and helpful) can be confused with an invitation for a friendship.

U.S. Americans are often much slower to form deep relationships than first impressions may indicate. They may shy away from international students out of respect for your privacy or to avoid offense, so you may need to be the one to initiate friendships. Because U.S. Americans are “doers,” it is helpful when trying to make friends to ask someone to do something with you: go out for coffee, to a movie, shopping, bowling, etc. Another approach is to join a club or activity on the campus or in your community.

Generally, dating among students is very casual due to the expense of going out. There are no set rules in terms of who asks for the date or who pays. In many cases the person who asks for the date will pay, but one should be prepared to cover their share of the expenses. Volunteering to cover some of the costs would be a nice gesture and probably appreciated by your date.

(Adapted from American Ways by Gary Althen, University of Iowa)

Protocol

First Names and Titles

There are strong regional and cultural differences within the United States with regard to formality and the use of titles with names. These include “Mr.” (pronounced “Mister” and meaning male, married or single), “Ms.” (pronounced “Miz,” meaning female, married or single), “Mrs.” (pronounced “Missus,” meaning a married female), “Prof.” (short for “Professor,” meaning someone who has a faculty appointment or tenure at a college or university), or “Dr.” (short for “Doctor,” meaning a medical doctor or someone with a Ph.D. or Ed.D.).

In New England, people generally use first names when speaking. This can make addressing professors, teaching assistants (TAs), and staff very confusing for international students when they first arrive. Do you call a professor by a title such as “Professor Brown,” or do you call her by first name, “Judith,” as you may hear other students do? Sometimes it’s one way, and sometimes it’s another, so how can you tell when each is appropriate?

It is best when dealing with professors and TAs to err on the side of politeness and use their titles — Professor, Doctor, Mr., or Ms. Often instructors will tell you on the first day of class

what they would like to be called. If you aren't sure, it is appropriate to ask them how they would like to be addressed. Graduate students, especially graduate assistants and TAs, are more likely than undergraduates to be on a first-name basis with their professors. And most professors are on a first-name basis with each other.

Office staff, receptionists, and secretaries are almost always on a first-name basis with students. It is most important to remember that informality is not an indication of disrespect. It is simply a cultural habit that may indicate mutual respect, equality, and a willingness to engage in open dialogue and intellectual exchange.

Perspectives on Friendships: U.S. American and Contrasting Viewpoints

U.S. American

- 1 A friend is anyone from a passing acquaintance to a lifetime intimate.
- 2 Friends are often limited to an area of common interest, such as work, school, or recreation.
- 3 Friends gather to enjoy an activity together.
- 4 If someone has a problem, it is acceptable to go to a professional (i.e., counselor) for help.
- 5 Friends may be "dropped" if they do not live up to our expectations or standards of behavior.
- 6 Friendships cross genders.
- 7 Friendships cross generations.
- 8 One schedules time to see friends.
- 9 Americans act friendly and informally with almost everyone.

Contrasting

- 1 A friend is someone with whom one is very close.
- 2 A friendship embraces the whole person.
- 3 Friends gather just to be together.
- 4 Someone with a problem goes to a friend or family member for help at any time.
- 5 One tolerates a lot from someone who is a friend.
- 6 Friendships are made only with the same gender.
- 7 Friendships are made with people of the same age.
- 8 Friends are available at any time.
- 9 People who don't know each other maintain a formal relationship.

Adapted from American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective, by E. C. Stewart.

Appropriate Dress

In the United States one's way of dressing is expected to suit the circumstance. As students, dressing casually (jeans, shorts, shirt, t-shirt) is acceptable. In the workplace or other professional settings, follow the norms of that particular place. Professional attire for men generally requires dress slacks, shirt and tie, or a suit. For women it may require a suit (with slacks or skirt), dress, or skirt and blouse. Be observant of what others are wearing or ask a supervisor before wearing casual clothes. Also note that because people are dressed casually doesn't mean it's an informal environment or that supervisors or professors are to be treated as equals.

Dealing with Organizations

We have all experienced frustration in dealing with organizations. This frustration is often worse in a foreign country. When it is combined with common misperceptions that many international students have about the roles and status of office personnel in their host country, there can be serious misunderstandings. This can lead to anger, hurt feelings, and even greater difficulties in getting what you need.

Guidelines for Getting Things Done

- There is a strong trend toward informality in the United States. In many countries, secretaries and receptionists are trained to use specific, formal behavior in order to serve people courteously, including set greetings such as, “Good morning, may I help you?” In the United States, the desire to be on “equal footing” with others tends to make people uncomfortable with this kind of formal behavior. You may encounter a very casual attitude from many of the college staff with whom you have business. In comparison with your background and experience, you may find this very helpful and courteous, or casual to the point of disrespect. Try not to take it personally!
- Be respectful of all employees. In the United States, secretaries and receptionists often have power to make decisions, and they may have the information you need.
- Remember that in the United States, many rules really are followed, and procedures often are not negotiable. Arguing or demanding to see someone “in charge” will not lead to success. It is more effective to explain exactly what you need and what kind of problem you have been having, and ask, “What do I do now?” or “Is there someone who could help me?” Even though employees usually can’t “bend the rules”, if they like you, they are more likely to put a little extra energy into problem solving.
- If you follow procedures and instructions carefully, a lot of time and energy can be saved. In the United States, many things are done over the phone, or through the mail, making a personal visit unnecessary. Take the names and phone numbers of people you talk to, in case some delay or complication does arise and you need further help.

(Adapted from American Ways by Gary Althen, University of Iowa)

Legal Issues

While many internationals may expect the U.S. to be the “land of the free”, it is often not long after arrival that sojourners realize this is a country of many rules and regulations. As you will see from the following description of some of the laws that may affect you, the rules and regulations are intended to protect the rights of the individual -the basis for our legal system.

Alcohol and Tobacco Products

U.S. laws concerning the sale and consumption of alcohol may seem very liberal or very constraining to you, depending on your nationality. In the United States, it is illegal to purchase, consume, carry or otherwise transport alcoholic drinks, including beer and wine, until you reach the age of 21. The penalties for breaking this law can be very strict. For additional information, please consult your *Student Handbook*, which will be distributed during orientation.

In many parts of the United States, including the state of Rhode Island, **public** buildings are "smoke free." This means that smoking in any part of the building is against the law. In

states that allow smoking inside public buildings, there are usually designated smoking areas. All restaurants and bars in Rhode Island are “smoke free.”

At Providence College, smoking is not allowed in the residence facilities or in areas of general access such as lounges, restrooms, lobbies, hallways and elevators. Designated smoking areas are provided *outside* of each residential building. These same rules do not necessarily apply to *off-campus* housing. However, if you are a guest in someone's home, room, or apartment off campus, it is common courtesy to ask permission before you smoke.

Drugs and Medications

In the United States the use, possession, sale or distribution of any illegal drug – such as marijuana, cocaine, heroin, LSD, Ecstasy, and others – is a violation of state and federal law. In addition, as a Providence College student, you are not allowed to be in a room where illegal drugs are being used, even if you are not using those drugs yourself. Penalties for violating the College’s drug policy are also strict and may include immediate dismissal from the College.

It is also important to note that prescription medications – drugs given to you with a doctor’s approval – are for your use only. It is illegal to use prescription drugs not prescribed for you. It is also illegal to give, sell, or distribute your own prescription drugs to others. Additional information on the College’s drug policy may be found in your *Student Handbook/Planner*.

Sexual Harassment and Stalking

Sexual harassment and stalking laws legally protect individuals from being victims of sexual and other harassment. These laws apply to all within the U.S. - citizens, residents, and visitors.

Sexual harassment is the misuse of power that has sexual overtones and generally falls under the following circumstances: as a condition of an individual’s employment or academic advancement, or in a situation that unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work or academic performance. Sexual harassment can be verbal or physical. As a result of sexual harassment laws, many U.S. Americans now avoid physical contact with acquaintances; an exception to this is the hand shake, which is a recognized form of greeting.

It is also illegal to “stalk” an individual by following the person, continually making unwanted phone calls or other unwelcome attempts to contact another person. If you force unwanted physical or verbal contact on another person, you may violate Rhode Island law as well as social norms.

If you have questions about what sexual harassment is, or feel you are being harassed, you are encouraged to contact the Personal Counseling Center, or the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies. If you believe you are being stalked, contact the police.

Domestic Assault

Rhode Island law prohibits individuals from inflicting bodily harm on their spouse or partner and children. Police have the ability, under the law, to arrest and jail a person, even if the victim does not want to press criminal charges. Often police will proceed with such action.

U.S. Criminal Sexual Conduct Laws

It is important to have an understanding of U.S. law in the Criminal Sexual Conduct Code. Individuals have the right to stop sexual contact at any time. This means that when a person says “no” to any type of sexual contact, it violates the law if the partner attempts to emotionally or verbally coerce or physically force that person into continuing the sexual contact. Violation of the Criminal Sexual Conduct Code ranges from forced rape to improperly (without consent) touching the clothed or unclothed intimate body parts of another person. Violation of these laws can result in a prison time or a hefty fine.

If you become a sexual assault victim, contact Providence College security. The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is also another good campus resource to assist you. Contact a SART member by calling (401) 865-1177

Shoplifting

You may find shopping here very different from what you are used to at home. Generally, merchandise is sold “self-service,” and clerks are not close at hand. It is very important when shopping in U.S. stores, especially very large stores, to use a cart or basket provided by the store. Never put a piece of merchandise in your pocket, your purse, or a fold of your clothing. If you do, it may appear to a store employee that you intend to take it without paying for it. In the past, such misunderstandings have led to international students’ arrests by the police on charges of “shoplifting.” Stores often have devices attached to items to prevent shoplifting, and you may sometimes find you are being watched by an employee or a hidden camera. Shoplifting is a crime, and you can be taken to court, even over a misunderstanding.

Personal Safety

As an urban area, Providence is not free from crime. However, you can take some simple precautions to keep yourself and your belongings safe while you are living here. Trust your instincts regarding people and places, and don’t be afraid to ask for help. If you feel you are in danger, notify the police by calling 911.

PC Security can assist you 24/7 if you feel unsafe at any time. There are also emergency phones and campus phones located around campus, which you can use to call x2222 on campus if you have an emergency. Here are some additional suggestions to protect yourself and your property:

- After dark, walk with someone else and stay on well-lit streets.
- Do not give your name, telephone number, home address or e-mail address to someone whom you do not know well. Ask the person for a contact number if you are interested in meeting again.
- Learn that it is acceptable to say “no” directly. Anything else may be taken as “yes” or “maybe.”
- Do not wear headphones, as they may decrease your ability to hear noises around you.

- When walking past people, looking at the ground or directly into someone’s eyes may make you seem vulnerable. Experts advise focusing on the neck area.
- If you feel threatened or harassed, talk to a Dean of the Office of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies staff member or security.
- Wear bright or light colors to increase your visibility at night.
- Walk facing oncoming traffic if no sidewalk is available.
- Have your keys out and ready for use when approaching your building or car.
- Always carry enough change with you to make a phone call or take a bus or taxi.
- Do not leave any valuables—your backpack, purse, or books, unattended.
- When using an ATM machine, try to find one in a well-lit and busy area. Avoid counting your cash where other people can see you.
- Lock your room whenever you leave it, as well as at night when you are studying or sleeping.
- Do not let strangers into your dorm for any reason.
- Never give your credit card number or Social Security number on a telephone call you did not initiate.

Cleanliness

U.S. Americans place a strong emphasis on cleanliness. Daily bathing, use of a deodorant, and brushing one’s teeth twice a day is recommended. Many people in the United States become uncomfortable when they are in close contact with someone who has noticeable body or mouth odor. Though U.S. Americans communicate directly on many topics, they will probably avoid that person rather than discuss the problem.

Personal care products such as soaps, deodorants, shampoos, toothpaste, mouthwash, and feminine hygiene products (tampons and pads) can be purchased in grocery, drug, or discount stores. Pharmacies are the best place to ask questions about specific product information. If the clerk is unable to help you, talk directly with the pharmacist.

Public Restrooms

Toilet facilities are known by many names. In Rhode Island, you will be understood if you ask for the restroom, toilet, ladies’ or men’s room, or bathroom. Most public restrooms have two separate facilities, one for men and one for women, but some facilities may be “unisex,” meaning they are used by both males and females. Women’s restrooms often have a vending machine with tampons or sanitary napkins, as well as a container for disposing of used ones. Paper towels and feminine hygiene products should not be flushed down the toilet.

Intimate Relationships and Attitudes Towards Sex

Generally, U.S. Americans may seem very open about sex, but this openness does not necessarily mean that they are promiscuous or even sexually active. Providence College abides by the Catholic Church teaching that sexual relations should only occur within the context of marriage. As such, the college does not distribute condoms, birth control pills, or other forms of contraception.



Living in a Different Culture

Living in a culture different from your own is an exciting and often challenging experience. Besides finding housing, registering for courses, and getting to know a new city, you will probably go through “cultural adjustment,” the transition to a new culture. Most people will experience some “culture shock” as part of this process.

What Is Culture Shock?

“Culture shock” is the name given to a feeling of disorientation or confusion that often occurs when a person leaves a familiar place and moves to an unfamiliar one. Coming to Rhode Island from another country, you will encounter a multitude of new things—buildings, stores, and even the trees may look different. Food may not be the same, and people may look, speak, and act differently from people at home. Even the smells may be different. Your English might not serve you as well as you expected it would. You might not be able to convey your full personality in English, with the result that you think other people are seeing you as a child. And your family and friends are far away. As a result of all this you may feel confused, unsure of yourself, and may have some doubts about the wisdom of your decision to come here.

Symptoms

Some people are more affected by culture shock than others. People experiencing culture shock tend to become nervous and unusually tired. They may want to sleep a lot or may have difficulty sleeping. They may write many letters home. They may feel frustrated and hostile toward the local people. They may get excessively angry about minor irritations. It is not unusual to become very dependent on fellow nationals. All these feelings may make it difficult to deal with residents of the host country and use their language.

Coping with Culture Shock

Different people react differently to culture shock. Some become depressed, or even physically ill. Others are stimulated by the new experiences. Here are some ideas that might be helpful to you:

Maintain your perspective.

Try to remember that thousands of people have come to Rhode Island from other countries and have survived (even when they arrived in the cold of winter).

Take some practical steps.

In *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning*, J. Daniel Hess makes these suggestions for people who are experiencing the loneliness or distress of culture shock:

- 1.) **Find people to interact with.** Ask them questions. As you take an interest in them, your feelings will have a focal point outside of yourself.
- 2.) **Surround yourself with familiar things**—a favorite jacket, a photo, a CD. Make your environment pleasant and reinforcing.
- 3.) **Slow down.** Simplify your daily tasks. Relax. Let your emotions catch up with the newness all around you.
- 4.) **Develop patterns.** Follow the same routine each day so that you get a sense of returning to the familiar.
- 5.) **Give expression to your feelings.** Cry. Laugh. Sing. Pray. Draw a picture.

- 6.) **Revise your goals** to accommodate detours instead of scolding yourself for failures.
- 7.) **Keep working on language skills.** Practice the American idiom, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.”
- 8.) **Confide to friends** that you are sad. Their support will warm you.
- 9.) **Make a few small decisions and carry them out.** Your resolve in small things will increase your confidence. Be assured that, however stressful, culture shock passes if you are willing to let the process of cross-cultural adaptation take its course.

Be patient with yourself and with other people.

Adjustment is a gradual, day-by-day process. It normally takes some time—a few weeks, a few months, and maybe longer—for people to become comfortable in a new country.

Take care of yourself.

It is particularly important in times of stress to eat a balanced diet, get enough rest, and get regular physical exercise. Take breaks for recreation or socializing. Studying or working constantly, without taking care of yourself, may make yourself sick, and make your entire situation worse.

Realize that you may be treated as a stereotype.

On many occasions, international students will be responded to as “a foreign student” or “a student from country X.” Whether the stereotype is positive or negative depends on the person’s experience, not on anything about you personally. Try not to let this discourage you. Try to start some interesting conversations about the subject of stereotypes—what peoples’ stereotypes are, where they came from, and so on. And remember that you probably have your own stereotypes about U.S. Americans.

Talk with experienced international students from your country and other countries.

Their observations and advice can help you. Ask them what things they have found most bothersome, most interesting, most perplexing. Ask them what sources of information and support have been most helpful.

Learn the local criteria for success.

Find out what is considered a good performance in studies, research, social relations, and other aspects of your life here. You can get information about this from teachers, native students, secretaries, neighbors, and many others.

Avoid being excessively influenced by dramatic events.

Newcomers to a society may have a particular, very noticeable experience from which they generalize about the new society and the people who live in it. In fact, the experience might be very unusual, not a safe basis for generalization. For example, a new male international student found that his roommate removed all of his clothes when he was in the room studying or relaxing. The new international student at first supposed this was what U.S. students customarily did, and wondered if he should do the same. He wisely asked around, though, and found that his roommate’s behavior was not typical. If you have a dramatic experience that influences your opinions or feelings about local people, discuss the experience with others and get an idea whether it is typical or unusual.

Do what you think is appropriate and explain if necessary.

This suggestion comes from Ju Daushen, a University of Iowa graduate student. He advises new students to act in the way they consider appropriate, and then, if the host responds in an unexpected way, to give an explanation of the culture and customs that led you to behave in the way you did.

Learn from the experience.

Moving into a new culture can be the most fascinating and educational experience of your life. It gives you the opportunity to explore an entirely new way of living and compare it to your own. Here are some questions that you might try to answer as you encounter the local people:

- How do they make friends?
- How do friends treat each other?
- Who respects whom, and how is respect shown?
- What attitudes do they have about their families?
- What is the relationship between males and females?
- How do people spend their time? Why?
- How do they deal with conflicts or disagreements?
- What do they talk about?
- What kind of evidence do they seek or use when evaluating an idea or trying to win an argument?

You can compare the answers you get to the answers you would get to the same questions in your country, and you can help yourself develop a better understanding of your own society and of the one where you are living now.

A discussion with the International Student Advisor can help achieve a useful perspective on culture shock and insights into U.S. culture.

Pre-Departure Anxiety

There's a lot to do before going to another country. People often become overwhelmed with details and are nervous about leaving family and friends for so long. Boarding the plane can bring enthusiasm back.

“The Honeymoon”

Just like with many new relationships, the first reaction to a new culture is often euphoric. You have finally arrived after months, maybe years, of planning. The differences in scenery, food, language, or customs can be exhilarating!

Initial culture shock

This is where the excitement of differences can often quickly turn to frustration. For many, the shock can come at the first meal when familiar foods are nowhere to be found. For others, it is the realization that speaking a second language all day is not only exhausting, it's frustrating to feel limited in your communication. For others, the initial shock is an accumulation of many factors, including the lack of familiar faces and cultural cues.

Surface adjustment

This can occur when you have settled into a new routine. Maybe you have successfully registered and made it to your classes. Perhaps you've met some people in your classes that seem like they will become friends.

Culture shock

This is a state of mind you reach when the deeper differences between cultures are experienced and the novelty of the difference decreases. There may be unresolved cultural conflicts in the classroom, with friends, or with the society in general.

Places of true culture learning

Moving out of culture shock and into adaptation and adjustment is not simply a matter of feeling better. Rather, it requires understanding the reasons behind culture shock and developing personal strategies for dealing with cultural differences. Most sojourners cannot do this process alone; get help from others with international experience to understand U.S. culture and appropriate coping strategies.

Adaptation and adjustment

It takes time to adapt and adjust to your new environment. Skills you developed in previous transitions will help you when you encounter future intercultural challenges. Adjusting and adapting to a new culture requires the ability to know yourself well and to know the ways of the culture and its expectations of you.

Reentry shock or adjustment

The challenges of coming home can be many – the most significant can be that you did not expect it to be hard to come home. But it can be difficult, no matter how excited you are to see family and friends. Moreover, it can be hard to make sense of your experiences in the U.S., especially if you have to immediately find a job or return to your studies. With reentry, the goal is not to jump right back into everything – otherwise, why did you leave? You want to put your new found skills to good use: seeing things from another point of view, speaking another language, and learning of another area of the world. Staying connected with other international alumni is one strategy that can lessen the shock of reentry.

Academics at Providence College

The Grading System

Our grading system has “letter” grades, and plusses (+) and minuses (-), to let you know how you are doing in a particular course. Giving a numerical equivalence to each letter (i.e., the “quality points”) allows an overall average grade for a semester or for your whole College career to be calculated. To obtain the quality points earned in a course, the numerical equivalent of the grade is multiplied by the number of hours for which the course was taken. The grade-point average (GPA) is



computed by dividing the total quality points by the total number of hours for which letter grades are recorded.

At the end of every term you will receive a “Cumulative Grade Point Average” (CGPA), which is the average of your cumulative GPAs from all completed semesters.

Repeating a Course

A student may repeat any course taken at Providence College. Various courses are defined as repeatable for credit such as performance-based courses or special topic courses where the content changes each semester. In all other cases, consultation with the program director is required prior to registration to repeat a course with an earned grade from a previous semester. In these cases, only the most recent grade will be used to calculate the overall GPA. Students considering repeating a course should be aware that the most recent grade will be recorded, whether or not it is higher than the earlier attempt. A repeated course is noted on the transcript with an “I” (included in the GPA) or an “E” (excluded from the GPA) to designate the relationship of the course to the student’s academic record.

Satisfactory Progress

If a degree candidate does not maintain a B (3.00) average, his or her status will be reviewed immediately by the appropriate academic director in consultation with the appropriate faculty members of the department. Such review may result in the candidate being placed on probationary status or dismissed from the program. Students who are permitted to continue on probationary status must achieve a cumulative average of B (3.00) or better in graduate level coursework during the next semester. Students failing to achieve the necessary B (3.00) average will be subject to dismissal.

This table shows how the “Grade Point Average” (or “GPA”) is calculated:

<i>Grade/Quality Points</i>		
	Standard	
A (Superior)	4.00 points per each credit hour completed	
A-	3.67 points per each credit hour completed	
B+ (Very Good)	3.33 points per each credit hour completed	
B (Good)	3.00 points per each credit hour completed	
B-	2.67 points per each credit hour completed	
C+ (Above Average)	2.33 points per each credit hour completed	
C (Average)	2.00 points per each credit hour completed	
C-	1.67 points per each credit hour completed	
F (Failure)	0.00 points per each credit hour completed	
P (Pass)	Passing in Pass/Fail Course; this grade is not computed in the GPA	
AU (Audit)	Student attends class in non-credit capacity; this grade is not computed in the GPA	
I (Incomplete)	No quality points will be averaged into the GPA	
WD (Withdrawal)	Approved withdrawal from a course' this grade is not computed in the GPA	
NC(Not Completed)	No quality points will be averaged into the GPA.	

Communication and Notification

E-mail is the official and universal method of communication and notification from College officials to the entire student body and individual students. Therefore, students are expected to check their College e-mail accounts on a regular basis. In addition, in an emergency or in the event of an urgent matter, the College may need to contact students via telephone; therefore, students must provide a current U.S. telephone number to the College.

Interrupted Program of Study

If a student engaged in graduate study leaves the College for a significant period before completing the degree, courses will be counted toward the program of study if the time period of interrupted study is less than 10 years. That is, the period between the last and present (or new) enrollment does not exceed 10 years. Students should consult with the Assistant Dean of International Studies regarding their visa status.

Grade Reports

Grade reports issued by the Office of Academic Records are made available to students twice each semester. Mid-semester grades are advisory in nature. Grades awarded at the end of the semester become part of the student's official record.

All grades, once submitted to the Office of Academic Records, will not be changed without written approval of the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. Students are entitled to official copies of their grades if all administrative, disciplinary, or financial obligations to the College have been fulfilled. Official transcripts may be obtained from the Office of Academic Records.

Definition of Terms

Cheating occurs when a student does not do his or her own work on an academic exercise. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to

- copying from another student's exam or quiz;
- allowing another student to copy from your exam or quiz;
- using outside materials on an exam that are not authorized for use during the test;
- preparing notes to take into a closed-book exam (for example writing on your hand or desk);
- collaborating on a project that was intended to be the work of an individual student.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of the work or ideas of another scholar—whether written or not—without acknowledgement, or the failure to identify the source of the idea correctly, regardless of whether it is done consciously or inadvertently. Plagiarism may take many forms. In its most blatant form, entire phrases, sentences or paragraphs are used verbatim, without quotation marks or the appropriate citation. But it is also plagiarism to paraphrase the work of another without attributing it to that author, or to take a written passage and alter a few words in an effort to make the writing one's own. The use of an idea of another which cannot reasonably be regarded as common knowledge is plagiarism. Non-textual images such as drawings, graphs, and maps are also subject to plagiarism, as are the experiments, computer programs, musical compositions, and websites of others. Since footnoting and bibliographical conventions differ significantly between disciplines, students should consult with their professors about the conventions of academic footnoting and bibliographical documentation expected in a particular course.

Multiple Submissions: The same work may not be submitted to more than one course without the prior approval of all instructors involved. Reasonable portions of a student's previous work on the topic may be used, but the extent of the work must be acknowledged.

Basic Academic Expectations

Attendance

It is very important that you attend classes. Class attendance is usually required unless an individual professor suspends this ruling. Not attending a course may result in failing the course, a lower grade, or denial of an extension for course assignments. But unlike in high school, no one will make you go to class or go to bed at night! This new freedom is often enticing, especially when faced with an early morning class. Some professors take attendance very seriously; some courses (e.g., theater performance courses) cannot allow a single absence, even if you have a good excuse. If you do not attend the first week of class, your place will be given away to another student. In addition, being on time for classes is expected—entering late is considered rude and disruptive. However, if you are unwell, and are unable to attend class, you should contact the professor (before class) and let him/her know. Most professors are understanding in such cases. Some professors may excuse absences for health reasons only if you bring in a note from your physician or from the Student Health Center. You can also contact your class dean when you are unable to attend class.

Class Participation

In many classes, students are not only encouraged to participate in classroom discussions, they are expected to do so. The final grade that you receive in a course may reflect a combination of factors: a mid-term exam, final and/or other exams, compositions and research papers, AND class participation. Class participation involves contributing to the class discussions and answering questions in class. Don't be afraid to participate in class discussions even if you are not totally sure of your answer; don't be afraid of raising your hand to ask a question in class (you'll probably find that your classmates were wondering about the same thing you asked about!), because participating will indicate that you are thinking about the topic of conversation, and it may help you clarify your thoughts on a topic.



Taking Notes

It is very important for you to take good notes on your professor's lecture material, especially since most of this material will be covered on exams. It is not necessary or even possible to write down every word your professor says. However, you should be sure to cover the main points of the lecture material in your notes. The Office of Academic Services can help you in your note-taking skills if you do not think you are taking good notes.

Useful Tips

- **Make a schedule:** Your body and your mind function best if you follow a schedule that is relatively consistent and regular. Getting dramatically different amounts of sleep from night to night and waking up at very different times is confusing for your system. Students who follow a regular and predictable schedule of sleep, study, meal-times and exercise report a better quality of life and are, in general, more successful throughout their college careers.
- **Review material** from previous class and reading before lecture classes: Such a review will tune you in to the day's lesson and eliminate lag time. Your learning will be more active and retention more efficient if you have prepared a framework for new material.

- Review your notes immediately after each class, or at the latest, that evening: That review will pave the way for a more concentrated review for exams. A 15 minute review of your class notes that evening is worth more than hours of cramming just before the exam!
- Keep priorities in mind as you make your study plan: It is natural to want to do the easiest or most pleasant tasks first. Think about whether this is in your best interest. Students often report significant success in allotting a specific amount of time to a difficult task and doing that task first.
- Avoid too much detail: Do not over-organize. There is a common temptation to spend far too much time perfecting the plan and never getting to the actual task.
- Remember that you do not have to account for and schedule every minute: A schedule that is too detailed and rigid is nearly impossible to keep; know that you will require some down time and leave some time slots blank.
- Know your sleep pattern: Determine how much sleep you need and make every effort to get that amount of on a regular basis. Sacrificing sleep for study is a trap. Avoid it!
- Schedule time for physical exercise: Exercise is essential for maintaining good mental and physical health. You will feel better, work more efficiently, have more energy, and enjoy greater success in all areas if you get regular exercise.
- Plan ahead: Double your time estimates and start early. Making and keeping a schedule requires discipline. However, in order to stick with the schedule, you must maintain some flexibility. Time estimates may need to be revised, circumstances change, emergencies arise, and sometimes it is impossible to do what you planned to do according to your schedule. It is important that you remain flexible enough to adjust and that you not give up on managing your time and your program.
- Ask for help when you need it: Asking for help is not viewed as a failure but as being responsible and proactive. We all need help; the smart ones are the ones who admit it!
- Communicate with college professors and administrators in writing: Decisions are considered official when in writing.
- Be honest: If you cannot make an appointment or report back to an advisor on a particular date or if you cannot lead a class discussion or make a presentation on a particular day, tell your advisor or professor. Do not agree to a given schedule just to be polite.

Adapted from: McLaren, Margaret C., 1998. Interpreting Cultural Differences: The Challenge of Intercultural Communication. Norfolk, UK: Peter Francis Publishers, the University of Michigan and the Oberlin College International Student Handbooks

Money & Banking

Financial, Money, and Billing Information

You will have some expenses in getting settled in during the first week at Providence College. We recommend that you plan on carrying U.S. currency in traveler's checks and/or cash. The amount of \$500 should be enough to cover initial expenses, and another \$400-500 should be allocated for books, school and room supplies.



Bank checks drawn in U.S. Dollars from your home country may take several weeks to clear. Bank checks drawn in a foreign currency are not recommended. Credit cards like Visa, MasterCard and American Express from your home country can be used.

Santander Bank

Providence College

Slavin Center, Lower Level

Very convenient for Providence College students with ATM on campus and available when building is open. Office hours vary.

1025 Smith Street

Providence, RI 02918

401-274-1025

Five minute walk from campus

Basic Financial Terminology

Bank Account: There are several types of accounts and each bank has its own policies governing its accounts. Shop around at different banks to find the services that best meet your needs before deciding on which account you wish to open. Make sure you carry two forms of identification when you open an account (your passport and I-20, and your college ID).

Checking Account: A bank account from which checks can be drawn. Usually, this type of account requires no minimum balance but it does not earn interest. The number of checks you can write per month may be limited. There may be a monthly service fee depending on minimum account balance.

Check: A written order to a bank to pay the amount specified from your checking account.

Cashier's Check or Certified Check: A check sold by a bank for a fee. Cashier's checks are used to transfer money from one place to another when personal checks are unacceptable. Cashier's checks are issued by the bank, whereas certified checks are personal checks that are certified by the bank for a small fee.

Bounced Checks: These are checks that are not paid because of insufficient funds. Bounced checks would usually cost you a service charge from the bank, and a charge from the payee.

Service Charge: A fee for bank services involved in checking account, safe deposit box, excessive withdrawals from a savings account and checks drawn against uncollected or insufficient funds.

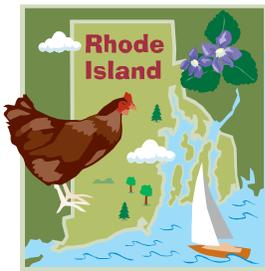
Balance: The amount of money you have available in your bank account.

Money Order: A draft sold by a bank or a post office for a fee. Money orders are used to transfer money from one place to another when it is not advisable to mail a personal check.

Credit Cards: These are issued by banks, gasoline companies and stores and are used to delay payments for purchases. Examples of these are MasterCard, Visa, American Express, and Discover. If you have an international credit card, bring it with you, as it is an excellent form of identification. You may try to obtain a credit card here; please keep in mind that credit cards are sometimes refused to international students. Annual fees and interest rates vary with the banks. If you have a credit card, remember that you have to pay the bill monthly.

Interest: The amount earned by your money in a savings or checking account.

Life in Rhode Island



Climate

Rhode Island, located in the region of the United States known as “New England”, sees a full cycle of seasons throughout the year. The winter in Rhode Island tends to be cold and snowy, with temperatures averaging between 20° and 40° F (-7 °and 4° C) and anywhere from 5” to 30” (12.7cm to 76.2cm) of snowfall. Spring can be unpredictable, but is often mild and rainy, with temperatures around 50° and 60 ° F (10° and 16° C). In the summer, temperatures can reach into the upper 80’s and 90’s (27° - 32° C), with some humidity. Fall then becomes cooler, with temperatures averaging between 40° and 60° F (4° and 10° C).

Colleges and Universities

Rhode Island is home to many institutions of higher education. Below is a list of all higher education institutions located within the state:

Brown University
Bryant University
Community College of Rhode Island
Johnson & Wales University
Naval War College
New England Institute of Technology

Providence College
Rhode Island College
Rhode Island School of Design
Roger Williams University
Salve Regina University
University of Rhode Island

Getting Around

The location of Providence College provides convenient access to transportation in and around the city of Providence.

Bus

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) stops on Huxley Avenue (which separates East and West campus). The bus will take you to Kennedy Plaza in the downtown section of the city. From there, you can take the RIPTA to anywhere in RI for free. Greyhound Bus also has a station downtown; this bus has connecting services all over the U.S. The nearby Peter Pan Bus station offers services throughout New England.

Schedules and Fares for Buses running inbound and outbound from Kennedy Plaza to Providence College campus or other locations are available at <http://www.ripta.com/55>. Be sure to consult the schedule because times may change for holidays and weekends. Visit www.ripta.com for any other schedules, maps or questions.

Train

There is an Amtrak train station located in downtown Providence about 5 minutes by taxi from Providence College, walking distance from Kennedy plaza and accessible by RIPTA. To book a train to Boston, New York, Washington DC or elsewhere visit <http://www.amtrak.com/home> to buy tickets in advance or buy at the station located on 100 Gaspee Street, Providence RI. Regional trains to Boston cost around \$15.00 roundtrip and run daily. Travel times: Providence to Boston, Massachusetts is one hour, Providence to New York is three hours, Providence to Washington, D.C. is seven hours.

Airports

You will most likely arrive via Logan International Airport in Boston, Massachusetts (one hour from Providence). There are busses and trains that provide access to Logan. International students are reminded that they are responsible for their own transportation to Providence from their point of entry in the U.S. The College is unable to provide transportation from Boston, New York, or other arrival points other than Providence, RI.

T.F. Green Airport serves the Providence area and is located 15 minutes from campus. The airport provides access to major cities throughout the U.S.

Taxi Cab

Unless you are downtown you will likely not be able to hail a cab on the street, so you'll need to call and request one:

Checker Cabs (401) 944-2000
Yellow Cab (401) 941-1122
Big Daddy Taxi (401) 274-1101

Note: If you are travelling to the airport for a flight, be sure to reserve your taxi in advance. Also, when arriving at TF Green airport there are cabs at the exit which will take you to Providence College. This should be about a 15 minute ride.

Notable Places

The **state capital building**, located in downtown, is made of white Georgian marble. On top is the world's fourth largest self-supported marble dome. It houses the Rhode Island Charter of 1663 and other state treasures.

Trinity Repertory Company is a regional theatre located in Providence, Rhode Island. The theatre is a member of the League of Resident Theatres. Founded in 1963, the theatre is "one of the most respected regional theatres in the country."

WaterFire is an environmental art installation created by Barnaby Evans in Providence. Since 1994 it has been presented on selected evenings during the summer months. It consists of a series of up to 100 bonfires that blaze just above the surface of the three rivers that pass through the middle of downtown, with accompanying music selected from an eclectic pool of classical and world music. The string of fires illuminates nearly two-thirds of a mile (1 km) of urban public spaces and parks, and residents and visitors gather to stroll along the river banks.

The seaside city of **Newport** is home to many famous mansions, including The Breakers, Marble House and Belcourt Castle. It is also home to the Touro Synagogue, the oldest lasting synagogue within the United States. The **Newport Jazz Festival** is a music festival held every August in Newport, Rhode Island. It was established in 1954 by the jazz pianist George Wein. Two of the most famous performances in the festival's history include Miles Davis's 1955 solo on "Round Midnight" and the Duke Ellington Orchestra's lengthy 1956 performance of "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue."

Local Sports

In baseball, the **Pawtucket Red Sox** (known colloquially as the PawSox) are the AAA affiliate of the Boston Red Sox and belong to the International League. They play their home games at McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. The PawSox played the longest game in professional baseball history, a 33-inning game against the Rochester Red Wings at McCoy Stadium.

The **Providence Bruins** are an ice hockey team in the American Hockey League. They play in Providence at the Dunkin' Donuts Center. They are an affiliate team of the Boston Bruins.

Consulates and Embassies

(Located in Massachusetts unless otherwise noted):

Telephone numbers are subject to change

Albania (in Washington, D.C.):
(212) 223-4942

Mexico:
(617) 426-4181

Austria:
(617) 227-3131

Nepal (Washington D.C.):
(202) 667-4550

Argentina (in New York):
(212) 603-0400

Netherlands:
(617) 542-8452

Australia (New York)
(212) 351-6500

New Zealand (New York):
(212-832-4038

Brazil:
(617) 542-4000

Peru:
(617) 338-2227

Bulgaria (in New York):
(212) 935-4646

Philippines (in New York):
(212) 764-1330

Canada:
(617) 262-3760

Poland:
(617) 357-1980

China (in New York) :
(212) 868-7752

Romania:
(617) 624-0228

Croatia (in New York):
(212) 599-3066

Russia (in New York):
(212) 348-0926

Dominican Republic:
(617) 482-8121

Serbia and Montenegro (in Washington, D.C.):
(202) 332-0333

Ecuador (in New York):
(212) 808-0170

Slovakia (in New York):
(212) 286-8434

Germany:
(617) 369-4900

South Africa (in New York):
(212) 213-4880

Great Britain:
(617) 245-4500

Spain:
(617) 536-2506

Greece:
(617) 523-0100

Taiwan:
(617) 737-2050

Honduras (in New York):
212.714.9450

Turkey (in New York):
(212) 949-0160

Israel:
(617) 535-0200

Ukraine (in New York):
(212) 371-5690

Italy:
(617) 542-0483

Venezuela:
(617) 266-9368

Japan:
(617) 973-9772

Zimbabwe (Washington D.C):
(202) 332-7100

For countries not on the list, check <https://projectvisa.com/>.

Money

Monetary Units (see www.oanda.com for currency exchange rates and conversion calculators)

The U.S. monetary system follows the decimal system. The basic unit is the dollar, the symbol for which is "\$." The most widely used bills are in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10 and \$20.

Each dollar can be divided into 100 cents. Currency in the form of a coin is: 1 cent (penny), 5 cents (nickel), 10 cents (dime) and 25 cents (quarter). There are some other coins, such as the 50-cent coin or the dollar coin, both of which are not usually in general circulation.

What Can You Buy with a Dollar!

Cup of coffee:	\$2 and up
Hamburger, fries and drink:	\$10 and up
Lunch at a restaurant:	\$15 and up
Hotel/motel room:	\$80 and up
Movie theatre (cinema):	\$10 and up
Haircut (woman):	\$15 - \$60
Haircut (man):	\$10 - \$25
Letter stamp in the U.S:	\$0.55
Monthly rent for a two bedroom apartment:	\$900-1100+
Monthly rent for a room in a house:	\$300 - \$600+

Sales Tax

Rhode Island 7% (8% in restaurants)

Most states in the United States charge a sales tax on tangible personal property and services, such as clothing, restaurant and fast food restaurant meals, services (haircutting), newspapers, books, toiletries etc. Sales taxes vary from state to state, but average 5% or 6% in most places. Sales taxes are added at the cash register, so be prepared for your bill to be more than the price tag on an item.

In Rhode Island, the state sales tax is 7%; clothing and shoes are not taxed.

In restaurants in Rhode Island, the food tax is 8%.

Tipping

Tipping, also known as gratuity, is giving a small amount of money to another person for a service. These are the most often tipped services:

Waiter/waitress:	15-20% of food bill at restaurant
Hotel/Airport Porters:	\$1 - \$2 per bag
Barbers/hairdressers:	15% of bill
Taxi drivers:	10% - 15% of fare
Food delivery persons:	No less than \$1

Services you **should never** tip:

- Police officers
- Physicians
- Government employees
- University employees

Tipping these services may be interpreted as a bribe, which is illegal.

In addition, you do not tip:

- Bus drivers
- Theatre ushers
- Museum guides
- Salespeople
- Employees at fast food restaurants
- Hotel clerks

Units of Measure

Length

- US Equivalents = Metric Equivalents
- Inch (in.) 0.083 foot = 2.54 centimeters
- Foot (ft.) 12 inches = 0.3048 meter
- Yard (yd.) 3 ft/36 in. = 0.9144 meter
- Mile (mi.) 1,760 yds/5280 ft. = 1.609 kilometers

Liquid

- US Equivalents = Metric Equivalents
- Fluid ounce, 8 fluid drams = 29.573 milliliters
- Pint, 16 fluid ounces = 0.473 liters
- Quart, 2 pints = 0.946 liter
- Gallon, 4 quarts = 3.785 liters

Weight

- US Equivalent = Metric Equivalent
- Ounce (oz.), 16 ounces = 28.350 grams
- Pound (lb), 16 ounces = 453.59237 grams
- 1 kg. = 2.205 pounds



"Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born."

-Anais Nin