

Pre-Departure Information Guide

This information sheet is designed to give you a quick guide on your transition to Glendale, California. You can also access any part of the Online Orientation that you want to re-review from the *Flipbook* link on our [Admitted Students](#) page's Orientation section. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further assistance.

Academic Planning

We recommend that you bring with you copies of any syllabi, catalogs, course descriptions or other relevant materials issued by any international college or university you previously attended. These materials can be helpful to counselors should questions arise concerning your placement in courses at GCC.

Obtaining a Visa

The first thing you must do to arrange for your entry into the United States is to obtain an F-1 student visa from a U.S. embassy or consulate near you. Visa procedures vary somewhat from one embassy/consulate to another. Before applying for a visa, check with your [embassy/consulate](#) for current procedures and required documents. At minimum, you will be required to submit the following:

- Visa application and fee
- Passport-style photo(s)
- Proof of [SEVIS I-901 fee](#) payment
- Valid passport
- I-20 from GCC
- Proof of financial support

Transfer Students: If you have been attending another institution in the United States as an F-1 student, please follow the steps on our Admitted Students page to [Complete Your Transfer to GCC](#). Additional forms may be required by your school.

DO NOT enter the U.S. on a B-1/B-2 tourist visa. You cannot study on this visa and changing status from B-1/B-2 to F-1 in the US is a lengthy, expensive, and difficult process.

Note: Canadian citizens are not required to obtain a student visa. Instead, Canadians present an I-20 and proof of financial support at the point of entry.

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Finances

It is very important that you estimate your educational and living expenses carefully to make certain that you will have sufficient funds available to meet all your needs while studying at GCC. Institutional financial aid is not available, outside of limited scholarships available to current students, so you should not expect to receive an award or financial assistance after you have been admitted or registered for classes.

Employment

F-1 students are allowed to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week during the academic year. Students may work more during vacation periods. Permission to accept employment off-campus is strictly regulated by U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). You should not plan on working to support yourself during your studies. F-2 spouses (husband or wife of an F-1 student) may not be employed at any time under any circumstances. Please read more about dependents and their School & Work limitations on our [Admitted Students](#) page.

Arrival in the US

Packing. Before packing, check with your airline to find out how much baggage you will be allowed to take with you. Please do not send any baggage in advance of your arrival to GCC as we do not have storage facilities for luggage or packages. Projects Abroad has created a wonderful [Ultimate Travel Checklist](#) that you might find useful when packing.

Money. Do not carry a large amount of cash. Instead, purchase traveler's checks or use a major credit card such as Visa or American Express. **Do not place your cash, credit cards, or traveler's checks in your checked luggage.**

Health & Medicine. Bring a small supply of familiar medicine, such as pain relievers, that you are used to. If you have prescription medicines, bring a larger supply and proof of your prescription. You may not be able to immediately renew your prescription in the US.

Arrival in Glendale. Most international flights land at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), though you may choose to fly into Burbank Airport (BUR). There are several shuttle services operating between Glendale and BUR or LAX. LAX is roughly 27 miles (44 km) away from Glendale. BUR is roughly 10 miles (16 km) away.

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Weather. Glendale is about 7 miles north of the city of Los Angeles, at the base of the San Rafael Mountains in Los Angeles County. Situated at an elevation of 550 feet, the weather is almost always warm and sunny with an annual average rainfall of approximately 15 inches (378 mm). The temperature may drop to the high-40°Fs (4°C) some nights in December and January, but will often climb to 68°F (20°C) or higher in the daytime. The rainy season is in the winter, and summer is usually very warm and dry (temperatures can reach 85°F/90°F or 29°C/32°C).

City of Glendale Website. Further information about the city of Glendale is available on-line at <https://www.glendaleca.gov/>.

Health Insurance

Health care in the U.S. is very expensive. To ensure your safety and well-being while you study with us, all international students are required to purchase the school's [student health insurance plan](#).

Check-In

All students must register for and attend the [in-person orientation](#) and download their [I-94 card](#) to verify they have been granted an admission duration of D/S. Note that it can take up to 5 days after your entry into the US for your I-94 to be available online. You will keep your I-94 card in your personal records; the office does not need a copy, however, if your I-94 does not show D/S please contact us immediately for next steps. Late arrivals cannot be accommodated. Please contact us immediately at gcciso@glendale.edu if it becomes apparent you will not be able to attend orientation or arrive on time for classes.