

International Student Guide



**The George Washington University
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
Office of Student Life**

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<http://gsehd.gwu.edu/students>

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Before Arrival: Set up Accounts & Register for Class

Account Set-Up

After you accept your admission, your next step is to establish your accounts. You will need your account to register for classes, update your address, pay your bills, access your GWemail account, and communicate with instructors.

Instructions on how to set up your accounts, along with frequently asked questions are available online in our [GSEHD New Student Guide](#).

Registering for Your First Semester

Before you register for classes, it is very important to discuss your course selection with your faculty advisor or student services representative. You should have received a “Welcome” email from your student services representative. You can reach out to them if you’re unsure of who your advisor is. Generally your advisor or student services representative will also be able to speak with you over the phone or through Skype.

Instructions on how to register are available online [here](#).

After Arrival: Check In & Update Your Address

Check in at the International Services Office

As soon as possible upon arriving in Washington, DC, you must check-in at GW’s International Services Office (ISO). The staff will collect your immigration documents, confirm that you are legally ready to begin your studies, and answer any questions you may have about your visa status.

Please visit the [Mandatory In-Person Check-in](#) page for information on the first steps you'll need to complete prior to arriving at the ISO. Please allow yourself at least 30 minutes for In-Person Check-in. At peak times it could take longer. While visiting the ISO please visit the Welcome Center at the International Services Office. No Appointment is needed. The ISO is located in the 5th floor of the Marvin Center (800 21st St NW).

Update Your Address

Updating your address in the Gweb Information System is extremely important to maintain your legal status in the United States. The International Services Office sends your address to the U.S immigration office through this system.

Each time you move, please make sure you always update your address in the system! This is very important! Wrong addresses can cause ISO to inform the U.S Immigration which may affect your ability to travel your visa or even risk deportation.

Instructions on how to update your address are available online [here](#).

Frequently asked questions

Q. I'm temporarily staying at my friend's place. Can I update my address when I find an apartment?

A. Please put your friends' address. Even though you know that you are moving to a new place, you must put the temporary address. (Hotel address is also fine). Please update your address again when you move to a new place.

Q. I know when I'm moving out. Should I put the date on "Until this date"?

A. No, you should not to put anything in "Until this date". Wait until you move into the new place to update your address. At that time you can put the move out date in the old address and click submit. The system automatically deletes your previous address and you can insert the new current address.

Q. I'm not in the U.S yet. Should I update my address after my arrival to the U.S?

A. Please make sure your permanent address is correct. You can put the foreign address under "Current, Current" if you are not physically in the U.S yet. Upon arriving in the U.S, you must change it to your new address as soon as possible.

*When you come to the ISO for check-in, please visit the Welcome Center at the ISO to double check that you updated your address correctly! Again, **this is very important!!!!**

Travel & Re-Entry

After you arrive, if you need to travel outside of the U.S, you must receive a travel signature from your ISO advisor. Please check the [academic calendar](#) and plan ahead. **It takes to up to 10 days to get a travel signature.** More info is available online [here](#).

GW University Services

Academic Support Services & Tools

GW offers various academic support services for international students to succeed in your academic life! Services include:

- GW University Writing Center
- English for Academic Purposes
- EAP Writing Support Program
- GW Tutoring Initiative
- Global Resources Center
- Disability Support Services

Information on these services (and many more!) is available online [here](#).

Blackboard Learning Center

One critical academic tool is the Blackboard Learning Center, the system many professors use to enable to access course syllabi and reading assignments. Most professors also use this website to communicate with students regarding their coursework. Check with your professors to see if they use Blackboard.

To Log in:

- **Username:** Your NetID (your **GWMail** address **without the "@gwmil.gwu.edu" portion**) and
- **passwords:** the same password that you use to login your GWMail

DegreeMAP

Degree Map is an online system that allows you to monitor your academic progress. It will display your academic requirements, and includes in-progress courses to show how they apply to your degree.

Instructions on how to access degree map are available online [here](#).

Gelman Library

Gelman librarians assist you in finding references through numerous databases, consortium loans, and interlibrary loans. You can also [online chat with librarians](#).

GW has a librarian specifically dedicated to GSEHD students. She has created research guides where you can access databases, statistics, website and more for your research and projects.

Dorinne Banks - Email: dbanks@gwu.edu, Phone: (202)994-2250, [Online Profile](#)

GW Library Research Guides for GSEHD Students

- [Counseling](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Educational Administration](#)
- [Human & Organizational Learning](#)
- [International Education](#)
- [Special Education](#)
- [SPED for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners](#)

GW Language Support Services

GW also offers many services to help international students continue to improve their English language skills. Services include:

- Everyday English Program
- Language Exchange
- EAP Conversation Support Program

More information on these programs is available online [here](#).

GSEHD Career Services

The GSEHD Office of Career Services provides career support and resources for GSEHD students in the internship or job search process. Services offered include:

- Resume and CV review
- Job search resources
- Help with documents for **Curricular Practical Training & Optional Practical Training**
- Interviewing and networking guidance

Contact: Amanda Friday, Fridayar@gwu.edu.

GW Campus Services

There are many offices on GW's campus dedicated to supporting student's needs. These offices can help you find housing, receive medical care, fix your computer, pay your bill, search for internships, and even do your taxes! They include:

- GW Housing
- GW Office of Off-Campus Student Housing
- GW Center for Career Services – International Student Assistance
- Multicultural Student Services Center
- Colonial Central
- Tech Commons

More information on these offices is available online [here](#).

GW Student Health Services

Student Health Service (SHS) provides various services to GW students. When you feel sick, you can make an appointment or walk-in to Student Health Service during regular business hours. You can explore more health services at GW online [here](#).

To make an appointment: <http://studenthealth.gwu.edu/appointments>

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday: 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 am to 11:00 am

To Schedule an appointment [online](#), or by calling 202-994-6827 press option # 1

Address

Student Health Service

Marvin Center Ground Floor

Washington, DC 20037

*GW Student Health Service is closed when the University is closed.

Health Insurance

GW offers a comprehensive health insurance plan through [Aetna Student Health](#).

IMPORTANT: ALL International Students holding a J1 or F1 visa are required to carry insurance. The students listed above will automatically be enrolled in Aetna Student Health Insurance plan with an option to opt-out if they have another insurance plan that meets the criteria listed below. Waivers are only granted through the [Aetna Student Health](#) website.

Overview of the US Healthcare System for International Students

The US healthcare system is complex and might be very different from the system in your country. To help you prepare and learn more about healthcare in the US please see the link below for a video that is an important guide for international students. With tips before you travel, to a complete overview of how the healthcare system works - you can be prepared!

<https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/us-healthcare-system-video.php>

Immunization

All incoming students under the age 26 are required to submit a [Mandatory Health Form](#) to Student Health Service

Immunization requirements: <http://studenthealth.gwu.edu/immunizations>

GW Mental Health Services

The George Washington University Counseling Center provides clinical services and consultation to support students' mental health and personal development. UCC offers individual and group consultation and more services for all GW students.

To speak to a counselor, please do not hesitate to call at **(202) 994-5300** or visit during the walk in hours.

University Counseling Center

Hours of Operation:

Monday - Friday: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

Walk In Hours:

Monday - Friday: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Address

Marvin Center Ground Floor

Washington, DC 20052

Phone: (202) 994-5300 (24/7 Hotline)

counsel@gwu.edu

To meet with a counselor specializing in
International students: Wednesdays, 9 am –
1 pm

To Make An Appointment:

Online info here: <https://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/access-counseling-services>

CALL: (202) 994-5300

After Hours Emergencies:

CALL: (202) 994-5300 (Option #3 connects you with the Counselor-on-Call
24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year)

Mental Health Awareness for International Students

Many international students experience difficulties during their stay in the US. The University Counseling Center is happy to help you with any concerns that you are facing, including stress, culture shock and homesickness. You are not alone. This short video introduces the concepts of mental health for international students in the US. Covering mental health awareness and warning signs, dispelling myths, and showing ways to seek treatment, the video seeks to demystify a complex topic.

<https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/mental-health-video.php>

Getting Involved on Campus

Looking for ways to get involved at GW? You can find countless opportunities within the GW community, including:

- [Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service](#)
- [International Students Community \(ISC\)](#)
- [Alternative Breaks](#)
- [GW TRAILS](#)
- [Center for Student Engagement](#)
- [Student Organizations](#)

For a complete listing of different ways to get involved on campus check [here](#).

GSEHD PRIME

[GSEHD PRIME](#) (Partnerships + Relationships = International Meaningful Experiences) was launched in order to build professional connections and friendships between GSEHD's international and domestic students. The purpose of the program is to provide incoming international students with a support network to help with their transition to DC and life as a graduate student, while at the same time providing domestic students the opportunity to learn about other cultures, explore DC, and connect to the GSEHD community.

Students are placed in small teams with two incoming international students paired with returning domestic students. Groups meet once or twice a month for social events as well as professional development-focused events. For more info contact gsehdosl@gwu.edu

GW International Alumni networks

The GW international alumni network comprises more than 8,400 graduates living in 150 countries!

You can find a GW alumni network in your home country [here](#)!

Getting Involved in the Washington, D.C. Community

Volunteer Organizations

If you are interested in developing hands-on experience to supplement your academics, volunteering is an excellent option. Not only will you be contributing to your community, you will be learning valuable skills and expanding your community to include people with similar interests as yourself. Browse the resources below to get started!



[Arlington Community Volunteer Network \(CVN\)](http://www.arlingtonva.us/CVN): Community Volunteer Network (CVN) is an active social network of young adults (20s & 30s) dedicated to making a positive difference in Arlington through volunteering, building networks, socializing, and developing leaders. We host monthly volunteer activities, meetups and occasional community forums to engage young adults in civic minded activities here in Arlington.

Website: www.arlingtonva.us/CVN



[Global Language Network \(GLN\)](http://www.thegln.org): GLN offers affordable language courses to members of the DC community. You can volunteer with this non-for-profit organization in a number of different ways, such as: teaching, teacher support, program analysis, communication, fundraising, outreach, and event planning. As a volunteer you have the benefits of priority registration for classes, professional development, and meeting fellow language-learners!

Website: www.thegln.org



[One Brick](http://www.washingtondc.onebrick.org/): One Brick provides support to local non-profit and community organizations by creating a unique, social and flexible volunteer environment for those interested in making a concrete difference the community. We enable people to get involved, have an impact and have fun, without the requirements of individual long-term commitments.

Website: [washingtondc.onebrick.org/](http://www.washingtondc.onebrick.org/)



[Serve DC](http://www.serve.dc.gov): Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism is the District of Columbia Government agency dedicated to promoting service as an innovative, sustainable solution to pressing social challenges. Serve DC engages District communities by building partnerships and organizational capacity, leading local and national volunteer and service initiatives, and providing and promoting meaningful service opportunities.

Website: www.serve.dc.gov



[Volunteer Match](http://www.volunteermatch.org): VolunteerMatch strengthens communities by making it easier for good people and good causes to connect. The organization offers a variety of online services to support a community of [nonprofit](#), [volunteer](#) and [business leaders](#) committed to civic engagement.

Website: www.volunteermatch.org

Community Building & Networking Opportunities

Networking is about making connections and building lasting relationships throughout your career. Being a professional as well as a graduate student in Washington, DC opens up a wide variety of networking opportunities that you would not find elsewhere. Many of these events are informal, include professional development components and function much like social events. Taking advantage of these opportunities will give you an edge up in your career and will help you build a community in the city.



[International Club of DC](#): Washington's premiere organization for internationally-minded professionals who enjoy international cultural experiences as well as social, educational, and outdoor events while helping the community. They organize a variety of private events for our members each month. Join them as they venture out to discover your city and your world.

Website: <http://www.internationalclubdc.com/>



[International Embassies in DC](#): With more than 175 embassies, ambassadors' residences and foreign cultural centers in the nation's capital, you can easily explore Washington, DC's international side. Many embassies open their doors to the public for concerts, exhibitions, dinners and other special events.

Website: <http://washington.org>



[LinkedIn](#): Our mission is simple: connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. When you join LinkedIn, you get access to people, jobs, news, updates, and insights that help you be great at what you do.

Website: www.linkedin.com



[Meetup](#): Meetup is the world's largest network of local groups. Meetup makes it easy for anyone to organize a local group or find one of the thousands already meeting up face-to-face. More than 9,000 groups get together in local communities each day, each one with the goal of improving themselves or their communities.

Website: <http://www.meetup.com>



[Professionals in the City](#): Professionals in the City is a socializing and networking organization that offers professionals in major cities an opportunity to unwind, have fun, and meet people who share their interests outside of the workplace. From happy hours and theme parties at the best clubs and restaurants, to embassy galas, sporting events, outdoor activities and tours, you can be sure there is something for everyone.

Website: <http://www.prosinthecity.com>



[Things To Do® D.C.](#): With a membership consisting of 150,000 to 200,000 local young professionals, Things To Do® (TTD) produces original events that enrich your social and cultural experiences while enabling you to meet other young professionals in a friendly environment. From black tie galas to embassy affairs, informational seminars to outdoor adventure, nightclub parties to exotic weekend getaways, TTD provides something for every young professional.

Website: www.thingstododc.com

If you have any questions, feel free to contact:

GSEHD Office of Student Life

Phone: (202) 994-9283

Email: gsehdosl@gwu.edu

Questions regarding Visa and Immigration

The International Services Office (ISO)

Phone: 202-994-4477

Email: iso@gwu.edu

