



International



STUDENT HANDBOOK



Welcome!

LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

We are thrilled to have you to our campus, and we hope this handbook provides you with helpful information as you adjust to living in the U.S. and studying at LCU.

Airport Pick-Up

If possible, please request airport pick-up at least one week before your scheduled arrival. To request airport pick-up, international students can contact Shawn.Tyler@LCU.edu or Olga.Pahom@LCU.edu.

Important Documents and I-20 Forms

Please make sure you store your passport, I-20, and other “home” documents (I.D. cards, Driver’s Licenses, etc.) in a safe place. Each time you plan to leave the country and return to the U.S., you must renew your I-20 form. The I-20 must be renewed and signed through Shelley Parnell (Shelley.Parnell@LCU.edu) for undergraduate students and through Cindy McCrady (Cindy.McCrady@LCU.edu) for graduate students. Also, please remember that you must take a minimum of 12 hours each semester to maintain your F-1 status. There are internship options post-graduation (e.g., OPT), about which you can inquire through Shelley Parnell.

Language Proficiency

If you feel that you need assistance to develop your English proficiency in order to complete your academic studies, you can seek out the services of an English tutor. The LCU Center for Student Success provides tutoring services for English and many other disciplines **free of charge** to all full-time students. For more information, please visit LCU.edu/student-success or contact Isaias Miranda at Isaias.Miranda@LCU.edu.

Clothing and Bedding

The LCU residence halls do not provide sheets, blankets, and towels, so please make plans to acquire some when you arrive in Lubbock. In addition, Lubbock weather can get cold during the winter months (and at other unexpected times during the year), so you will need warm clothes,

warm shoes, hats, mitts, scarves, and a coat. If you are missing clothing items, bed sheets or blankets, please contact Dean Mushambangabo, the college minister at Green Lawn Church of Christ. Dean helps direct a Blessing Center on the south end of the church property which can provide food, clothing, household goods, and bedding needs. His contact information is deanm@greenlawn.org or by phone 806.470.9824.

Transportation/Travel

Lubbock does not have a strong public transportation system, so you may need assistance to go shopping, attend church, and participate in off-campus social functions. If you have your own vehicle and plan to drive, make sure you obtain a Texas driver's license. More information can be found at StudyInTheStates.dhs.gov/driving-in-the-united-states. If you need transportation assistance, please contact Shawn Tyler at Shawn.Tyler@LCU.edu or by phone at 806.445.7305. In addition, you can also communicate your transportation needs to your Resident Assistant (RA).

Housing During Breaks and Holidays

The LCU residence halls close during fall and spring breaks and during holidays. If you do not have a place to stay during these times, please contact Housing@LCU.edu for housing on campus. If housing needs to be obtained off campus, contact Shawn Tyler (Shawn.Tyler@LCU.edu) or Olga Pahom (Olga.Pahom@LCU.edu). If you secure alternative housing during the breaks or holidays, please communicate this information to your Resident Assistant (RA).

Bank Account

If you need help setting up an American bank account for receiving overseas funds or obtaining a debit or credit card, please contact Shawn Tyler at Shawn.Tyler@LCU.edu.

Phone

For assistance regarding obtaining a phone or a phone plan, please contact Shawn Tyler at Shawn.Tyler@LCU.edu.

Social Security Card

International students on F-1 visas cannot work off-campus but may apply for part-time on-campus employment. LCU often helps international students with work programs on campus, i.e. maintenance, grounds keeping, cafeteria, the REC, etc. To be able to work, you must obtain a social security card with the help of a form from Shelley Parnell (Shelley.Parnell@LCU.edu).

Employment

F-1 students are only permitted to work on campus up to 20 hours per week while school is in session. They can work full-time on campus during holidays and vacation periods if they intend to register for the next academic semester. Any other work must be approved by the Principal Designated School Official (PDSO).

Taxes

Once international students begin working in the United States, they are required to file tax forms with the Internal Revenue Service. They must fill out the 1040-NR (non-resident) form and not the regular 1040 form (U.S. citizens). Filling out the wrong form could result in a large financial payment to the IRS.

Medical Care On Campus

Before coming to LCU, please submit your Immunization Records and Tuberculosis Form to your admissions counselor, or you may email them directly to the clinic at HealthForms@LCU.edu.

LCU has a registered nurse during regular office hours who can be the first stop for most common medical issues. The Student Health Office is located in the Student Union Building (SUB) on the second floor in the There is no charge to see the clinic nurse.

The Student Health Office can be reached by phone at 806.720.7482. For more information, including emergency or after-hours medical care, please see our website at LCU.edu/Student-Health.

Health Insurance

If you are interested in purchasing medical insurance for emergencies or off-campus health care, please contact Zach Galbraith (Zach@Galbraith-group.com). Dustin Driskill will also assist student athletes for insurance needs.

Counseling Center

The LCU Counseling Center, located on the second floor of the SUB, Room 202, provides professional, confidential services for international students and their dependents. Anyone seeking counseling may receive the first session free of charge with subsequent session only \$10 each. To schedule an appointment, come by in person, call 806.720.7478, or request an appointment via e-mail at Counseling@LCU.edu.



Academics

AND GUIDELINES FOR CAMPUS LIFE

Center for Student Success

If you need academic help (tutoring, study groups, etc.), the Center for Student Success provides such services free of charge. Isaias Miranda, Director of the Center for Student Success, a campus mentor that can help with any academic needs. He can be reached at Isaias.Miranda@LCU.edu or at 806.720.7236. Tyler Adams is the Tutoring Coordinator, and he can assign a tutor for a specific course that you may need tutoring in. He can be reached at Tyler.Adams@LCU.edu or at 806.720.7158.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

An important academic topic is plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of information, content, or wording that originates from another source as one's own. Plagiarism is unacceptable in the U.S. and can result in failing a course and being suspended from the university. All the work submitted in your courses at LCU must abide by principles of academic integrity. Besides plagiarism, other instances of academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cheating, which is the use of materials (including papers purchased or acquired from individuals, internet websites, etc.), study aids, etc. for testing and assignments, that are not authorized by the instructor;
- Conspiring in or aiding and abetting of dishonest behavior, such as knowingly providing materials from which another may cheat; Falsification or invention of material for academic work.
- All plagiarism and academic dishonesty are unacceptable and can result in a notification to Student Life, the Academic Dean, the student's advisor, the Provost, and the Dean of Students.

Disability Services

If you have a documented medical or mental condition that requires assistance, please contact Larinda Creel, LCU Disability Services Coordinator (Larinda.Creel@LCU.edu or 806.720.7156) or Isaias Miranda, Director of the Center for Student Success (Isaias.Miranda@LCU.edu or 806.720.7236).

The LCU Writing Center

The LCU Writing Center offers help during all stages of the writing process: brainstorming, early drafts, revision, and editing. It is free of charge for all students. For more information visit LCU.edu/writing-center or visit them in person at the library.

General Laws and Regulations

International students need to be aware of the LCU student handbook which outlines behavior guidelines for many aspects of campus life. It is important for students to familiarize themselves with these guidelines in order to avoid disciplinary actions. The information can be obtained at LCU.edu/resources/student-handbook/ under the Code of Community Standards. Housing specific policies can be found at LCU.edu/student-life/housing/reslife-guide/. It is important for international students to especially understand LCU campus guidelines concerning:

An Alcohol-Free Campus

The legal drinking age in the U.S. is 21. Drinks cannot be purchased or consumed if you are younger than this age. As an LCU student, you may not own or use alcohol on campus even if you are 21 or older.

A Pornography-Free Campus

As a Christian university, we do not allow the use of pornography on our campus. The institutional consequences for viewing pornography are very serious.

Curfews for Residence Halls

Please familiarize yourself with the residence hall curfew and observe it.

Sexual Harassment Guidelines

Harassment is taken very seriously in the U.S. Harassment is not limited to sexual behavior but can include inappropriate jokes,

unwelcome advances/touch, or even asking someone on a date after repeatedly being refused. The consequences for harassment are severe. You have the same protections from harassment as any other LCU student. For more information, please contact Heather Howell, Interim Title IX Coordinator, at Heather.Howell@LCU.edu or by phone at 806.720.7899.

Interactions with Law Enforcement

Police officers in the U.S. are tasked with enforcing the law. When you interact with police officers, be respectful and comply with their requests. If stopped by a police officer while in a car, keep your hands visible (e.g., on the wheel) and do not get out of the car unless the officer asks you to do so. Remain in the car and respond to the officer's questions calmly and honestly. Do not argue, negotiate, or offer a bribe to a police officer. The overwhelming majority of police officers interact with the public in a courteous and professional manner while enforcing the law.

Student Athletes Observation of All NCAA DIV II Compliance Rules

International athletes may not receive money, loans of any kind, meals unless these items are also available to the general student body. Contact the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance Jessica.Pope@LCU.edu with any questions.



ADJUSTING TO *American Culture*

Stages of Cultural Adaptation

Adjusting to a new culture has its ups and downs. It is typical to go through the following four stages as you adapt to life in the U.S.:

Excitement

Everything about the new culture seems interesting and fun. Even arising issues are often interpreted positively at this stage.

Culture Shock

The new culture seems very difficult and different from the home culture, and the differences are seen negatively. It is common to feel lonely, bored, stressed, angry, and to have sleep or digestive issues.

Adjustment

During this stage, you develop a new attitude and become more patient as you work on adjusting to the new culture.

Adaptation

At this stage, you know how to navigate the new culture well. Even if you do not feel completely “at home,” you learn to see the world in a different way and do things differently than what you were previously accustomed to. You grow as a multicultural person.

These four stages are not linear; it is possible to go back and forth between various stages as you adapt to a new culture.

Tips for Successful Adaptation

Some tips for successfully adjusting to U.S. culture include the following:

- Be patient with yourself and others during the process
- Be open to learning about the new culture
- Stay active
- Do not isolate yourself, communicate with others
- Rely on social support:
Attend International Student Association meetings, where you will meet other international students who are going through a similar process

Join American social groups on campus (clubs, devotionals, chapel) and off campus (church, trips) so you can learn more about the U.S. culture

- Keep a journal about your experiences
- Seek out counseling if the culture shock persists, and coping becomes difficult.

U.S. Cultural Values

As you work on adjusting to American culture, you may want to learn more about the following U.S. cultural values:

Individualism

Americans value independence, being different from others, and sharing personal opinions and beliefs openly. To students who do not come from individualistic cultures, this may seem argumentative. You will notice that American students generally speak openly, directly, and respectfully in class, with RAs, and other situations. You can feel free to do the same.

Personal Space

Related to individualism, many Americans feel most comfortable when there is plenty of space between them and the person they are interacting with. The exact distance depends on the level of familiarity in the relationship. Generally, when interacting with strangers or acquaintances, leave approximately 2-3 feet (60-90 cm) of distance.

Time Consciousness

You may have heard the expression, “Time is money.” In the U.S., time is a precious commodity, and people are highly respectful of others’ time. This means that arriving late is considered rude. If you agree to meet someone at a specific time, be punctual. If you plan to arrive more than 5 minutes late, let the other person know as soon as possible.

Personal Hygiene

Most Americans take personal hygiene very seriously. Generally, odors produced by the human body (perspiration, breath) are considered unpleasant. To reduce body odors, please wash with soap once a day, use deodorant daily, brush your teeth twice a day, and use mouthwash as needed.

In addition, clothing should not emit body odors. This means that clothes should be washed after one use. Generally, it is considered

inappropriate to wear the same clothes two or more days in a row. Women typically shave their hair from their underarms and lower legs, and many women use make-up frequently.

Friendship/Dating

Dating in the U.S. tends to be fairly informal. People date to get to know each other, and it does not necessarily mean they have romantic feelings for each other. It is often not unusual to date multiple people at the same time. In addition, inviting someone for a date may not mean that the person initiating the invitation will pay for the expenses associated with the date. Unless otherwise agreed, each person generally pays their own expenses.

Friendship is also fairly informal, and people use the word “friend” to describe people they are on friendly terms with, even if they are not very close.

Tipping Practices

In many service industries, tips are expected. For example, it is expected for restaurant customers to tip waiters 15% of the total bill. Similar tips are expected by hairdressers and in other service industries. For more information about what is typical, ask an American friend.

American Holidays

Holidays can be associated with homesickness for many international students, but they are also an opportunity to get to know fun aspects of U.S. culture. Some popular holidays that you may want to learn more about include the following: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and Independence Day.

Summary of Helpful Organizations and Contacts

Counseling Center

John Maples, *Director of Counseling Center*

EMAIL: John.Maples@LCU.edu

PHONE: 806.720.7478

International Student Contacts

For more information about immigration and work restrictions, as well as special housing needs:

Shelley Parnell, *Undergraduate International Students*

EMAIL: Shelley.Parnell@LCU.edu

Cindy McCrady, *Graduate International Students*

EMAIL: Cindy.McCrary@LCU.edu

Sunny Park, *Student Housing*

EMAIL: Sunny.Park@LCU.edu

Center for Student Success

Isaias Miranda, *Director of Center for Student Success*

EMAIL: Isaias.Miranda@LCU.edu PHONE: 806.720.7236

Larinda Creel, *Disability Services Coordinator*

EMAIL: Larinda.Creel@LCU.edu PHONE: 806.720.7156

The LCU Writing Center

The Writing Center offers help free of charge during all stages of the writing process: brainstorming, early drafts, revision, and editing.

WEBSITE: LCU.edu/writing-center VISIT IN-PERSON: University Library

International Student Association

Shawn Tyler, *Director of MissionLink; Lecturer in Residence, Bible*

EMAIL: Shawn.Tyler@LCU.edu

Dr. Olga Pahom, *Assistant Professor of Linguistics and Cultural Studies; Associate Dean, Honors College*

EMAIL: Olga.Pahom@LCU.edu

Green Lawn Church of Christ Blessing Center

Provides food, clothing, and household items free of charge.

Dean Mushambangabo, *College Minister*

EMAIL: deanm@greenlawn.org PHONE: 806.470.9824

Student Business Office

Jessica Snead, *Director of Student Accounts*

EMAIL: BusinessOffice-Student@LCU.edu PHONE: 806.720.7305

Financial Aid

Amy Hardesty, *Director of Financial Assistance*

EMAIL: Amy.Hardesty@LCU.edu PHONE: 806.720.7178

Summary Checklist

Please answer the following questions.

Share your answers with your RA who can help you with any issues related to the questions for which your answer is "no."

Do you have LCU's academic calendar, or do you know how to access it?

Yes No

Have you set up your LCU email?

Yes No

Do you have an LCU ID card?

Yes No

Have you obtained your LCU mailbox?

Yes No

If you have a vehicle, have you obtained your parking sticker?

Yes No

Do you know who your academic advisor is and how to contact them?

Yes No

Has your academic advisor confirmed your semester courses?

Yes No

Have you obtained the proper books and syllabi for all courses?

Yes No

Have you understood assignment deadlines and how to create a work plan?

Yes No

Do you have a computer?

Yes No

If you do not have a computer, do you know that computers are available in the Library and Student Success Center?

Yes No

Do you have proficiency in Microsoft Office Word, PowerPoint, Moodle, Email, Library, Internet Research?

Yes No

Are you aware of LCU's campus resources such as the Library, Student Center for Success, and Writing Center?

Yes No

Do you need assistance for any disability accommodations?

Yes No

Do you understand that you are free to ask questions and obtain help and guidance from the faculty and tutors in the Center for Student Success?

Yes No

Do you understand the guidelines about plagiarism for academic studies?

Yes No



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