Welcome to Georgia Tech!

Important Numbers

- Georgia Tech Police Department: 404.894.2500
- Office of International Education: 404.894.7475
- Registrar’s Office: 404.894.4150
- Housing Department: 404.894.2470
- Buzzcard Center: 404.894.2899
- Bursar’s Office: 404.894.4618
- Communication Center: 404.385.3612
- Stamps Health Services: 404.894.1420
ABOUT GEORGIA TECH

Located in Atlanta, Georgia, the Georgia Institute of Technology is a leading research university committed to improving the human condition through advanced science and technology.

Ranked as the #7 best public university, Georgia Tech provides a focused, technologically-based education to more than 32,700 undergraduate and graduate students, 24% of them are international students.

Georgia Tech has many nationally recognized programs, all top-ranked by peers and publications alike, and is ranked in the nation’s top 10 public universities by U.S. News and World Report.

The strong academic work ethic at Tech is balanced by a collegiate atmosphere incorporating both intercollegiate and intramural sports, campus traditions, and some 400 student organizations.

There is no doubt that Georgia Tech stands out as a distinctively different kind of university, one that is eagerly encouraging and developing the revolutionary technologies of the 21st century.

Equipped with the extremely rich resources of an outstanding student body and faculty, strong partnerships with business, industry, and government, and support from alumni and friends, Georgia Tech is designing a future of global preeminence, leadership, and service.
WHO WE ARE:
International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is a workgroup within the Office of International Education (OIE). Our mission is to serve as a resource and advocate for the large and diverse population of international students and scholars at GT.

WHAT WE DO:
ISSS is a resource to which you can turn to receive support to solve problems, obtain information to maintain your immigration status, and connect you to Georgia Tech and external resources.

CONTACT US:
OIE is open Monday-Friday: 8:30am-4:30 pm. You may contact the office by phone at 404-894-7475 between 8:00 am-5:00 pm or send an email to info@oie.gatech.edu.

WALK-IN ADVISING HOURS:
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 1:00 pm-4:30 pm (no appointment needed). Students may schedule morning appointments at oie.gatech.edu/isss.

iSTART:
iStart is the software used by OIE to manage student records. Students use iStart to request changes and updates to their I-20 or DS-2019. The normal processing time for requests made through iStart is 5 business days (1 week). You can log into iStart at istart.gatech.edu using your GT username and password.

iBUZZ:
iBuzz is a bi-weekly electronic newsletter sent to all enrolled F/J students. ISSS encourages international students to read this regularly as it contains important announcements, updates, and deadlines.

OIE HELPS YOU WITH
- Practical training authorization
- Travel and visa renewal
- Changes or updates to your I-20 or DS-2019
- Transferring to another school
- Replace lost forms
YOUR FIRST WEEK: SETTLING-IN!

REMOVE HOLDS FOR REGISTRATION
Students cannot register until all holds have been removed. After completing International Student check-in, check your Buzzport record for any additional registration holds and contact the appropriate office to get it removed. Additional holds may include “Immigration file missing”, “Immunization records missing”, and “Final transcript and degree certificate missing” (for grad students).

REGISTER FOR CLASSES:
After completing international student check-in and all holds are removed from your account, you may register for classes. The course registration deadline is 4 pm on the first Friday of classes.

BUZZCARD (GT IDENTIFICATION):
The BuzzCard is the Georgia Tech identification card that provides access to a variety of campus-wide services. The first card is issued free of charge. You will need your passport and GT ID number handy to get your BuzzCard. Visit buzzcard.gatech.edu for more information.

Undergraduate Students: You will obtain your BuzzCard during FASET orientation.
Graduate Students: Visit the BuzzCard Center (48 5th St NW, Atlanta, 30332, located on the 2nd floor of Barnes & Noble in Tech Square) to get your BuzzCard.

In order to maintain your immigration status, make sure to register at least 12 credit hours before the final day of course registration. No more than 3 online credit hours of enrollment can be counted toward the 12 credit hours.
IMMIGRATION

Maintaining Your F-1/J-1 Status

It is important to understand and comply the F or J regulations during your time in the U.S. Failure to abide by these laws can greatly impact your ability to meet your education and personal goals. Please remember that your immigration status and academic success are connected so you must be successful at both.

All international students must do the following to maintain status:

- Be enrolled full-time (12+ hours) each semester unless a vacation semester has been earned or you have been approved for an authorized reduced course load. Only 3 online credit hours can be counted towards the 12-hour requirements.
- Keep a valid, unexpired I-20/DS-2019 and passport (passport must be valid at least 6 months into the future).
- Update your physical addresses in iStart when there is a change to your U.S. or home country address.
- Work no more than 20 hours/week while enrolled full-time.
- Have a valid travel signature before leaving and re-entering the U.S.
- Complete an Income Tax Return as per IRS regulation by April 15th of each year.
- Notify ISSS of any change to or addition of your F-2/J-2 dependents.
EMPLOYMENT

Employment eligibility varies by visa type. Visit oie.gatech.edu/isss for more details regarding employment in your visa status.

ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT:
F-1 and J-1 students in good standing are eligible to work on-campus part-time (up to 20 hours/week) while school is in session and may be eligible to work more than part-time over school breaks and summer vacation. On-campus employment is subject to GT policies so please always work with the Human Resources Administrator in your hiring department to determine eligibility.

- F-1 students: There is no formal authorization required from OIE.
- J-1 students: On-campus employment requires approval in writing from OIE. To request on-campus employment, submit the “J on-campus Work Authorization Request” e-form in iStart.

Any job on campus that is paid by Georgia Tech or a firm providing service to GT students is considered to be on-campus employment. Examples are Barnes & Noble @Georgia Tech Bookstore, the Student Center, or an academic department. If you have questions about whether your employment will be considered on-campus, check with OIE.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT:
Off-campus employment is available ONLY with permission from OIE and sometimes USCIS. You are not eligible for these off-campus work options until you have completed one academic year of full-time enrollment in the U.S. Please see the OIE website for more detailed information.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN):
A Social Security Number (SSN) is a permanent identification number administered by the Social Security Administration. SSNs are required for anyone employed in the U.S. but is not required for anything else. For more information about SSN, please visit oie.gatech.edu/content/social-security-numbers
FINANCES AT GEORGIA TECH

Costs Involved in Attending GT:
There are several fee payment options for Georgia Tech students: Travelex or Flywire for international payments, Webchecks, Check or wire transfer, and All major credit cards.
Please see the bursar’s website at bursar.gatech.edu for additional information on payment types and how to pay your bill. There is a strict tuition payment deadline within the first 2 weeks, typically the 2nd Monday of classes.

Open a U.S. Bank Account:
You are not required to have an SSN to open an account in a local bank. Some banks offer special accounts for students, so bring your BuzzCard with you when opening a bank account. You can find more information on OIE’s website at oie.gatech.edu/content/opening-us-bank-account.

Cellphones:
Some of the major cell phone service providers in Atlanta include AT&T, Sprint, Verizon, and T-Mobile. Some cell phone companies may require a Social Security Number (for credit check purposes) in order to establish a contract. Many companies offer other alternatives for students without an SSN.
For details on the different plans that each cell phone company offers and their requirements, visit: oie.gatech.edu/content/cell-phones

In order to maintain your immigration status, international students' account balances should be paid before the deadline set by Bursar's office.

Banks near Georgia Tech

- Wells Fargo
  645 State St NW
  Atlanta, GA 30313
  404 853 1960
  1 800 869 3557
  www.wellsfargo.com

- PNC Bank
  75 5th St NW
  Atlanta, GA 30308
  404 897 5688
  1 888 762 2265
  www.pnc.com

- Bank of America
  600 Peachtree St NE
  Atlanta, GA 30308
  404 607 4850
  1 800 432 1000
  www.bankofamerica.com

- SunTrust
  523 Luckie St NW
  Atlanta, GA 30313
  404 253 3509
  1 800 786 8787
  www.suntrust.com
# GROCERIES AND SUPPLIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groceries and Supplies</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IKEA</td>
<td>Mon - Sun</td>
<td>10am - 9pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>441 16th St NW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target (Atlantic Station)</td>
<td>Mon - Sun</td>
<td>8am - 11pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>375 18th St NW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walmart (Howell Mill)</td>
<td>Mon - Sun</td>
<td>6am - 12am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801 Howell Mill Rd NW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publix (Midtown)</td>
<td>Mon - Sun</td>
<td>6:45am - 11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>950 Sprint St NW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publix (Atlantic Station)</td>
<td>Mon - Sun</td>
<td>7am - 10pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1380 Atlantic Dr. NW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroger (Howell Mill)</td>
<td>Mon - Sun</td>
<td>6am - 1am</td>
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<tr>
<td>1715 Howell Mill Rd NW</td>
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The Weekend Grocery Shuttle: Stinger bus transports students to Atlantic Station’s Publix store on weekends from 10am to 6am. For maps, arrival times, and tracking visit [https://pts.gatech.edu/bus009](https://pts.gatech.edu/bus009)

## ONLINE SHOPPING:

Many students prefer shopping online with Amazon.com, WayFair.com, and Walmart.com. Amazon@GeorgiaTech is a store for easy pickup and returns for Amazon, located at Tech Square (86 5th St NW, Atlanta, GA)!
SAFETY AT GEORGIA TECH

SAFETY TIPS FROM GTPD:
The Georgia Tech Police Department (GTPD) has provided the following tips to help students minimize their chances of becoming a victim of crime:

- Be aware of your surroundings and use the Stingerette (stingerette.com) for after-hours transportation.
- Never leave valuables unattended and do not walk while talking on the phone or while wearing headphones as you will not be able to hear people approaching.
- Never prop doors open, even for a short time.
- Jacket Guardian: This is an opt-in system that allows cell phone users to make an emergency call directly to the GTPD, allowing them to respond more quickly. Jacket guardian is free to students, faculty, and staff.
- Don’t drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs! International students who receive a DUI will have their visa revoked!

For on-campus emergencies, dial the GTPD emergency number (404-894-2500). Make sure to save this number in your phone.
For off-campus emergencies, dial 911. Please visit police.gatech.edu to learn more about safety tips and information from GTPD.

Important Georgia Tech Policies:
There are important policies the Georgia Tech community is expected to follow to ensure fairness, orderly conduct, and harmony. These policies allow the large student body to live and work together harmoniously with minimum friction and misunderstanding. These policies cover a wide range of important topics and rules and you should become familiar with them upon arrival. Students are expected to thoroughly understand and respect these policies. For more information on important Georgia Tech policies, visit: https://oie.gatech.edu/content/important-gt-policies.
JOIN THE YELLOW JACKET COMMUNITY!

The GT campus is a dynamic and vibrant place, with an array of activities for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors. From athletics and concerts to lectures and social gatherings, great things are always happening at Tech. Music, dance, and comedy productions are offered at the renowned Ferst Center for the Arts and the student-run DramaTech Theater. Tech offers exciting sporting events including football, basketball, baseball, swimming and diving, and golf. The Campus Compass is only a starting point for you to learn about the fun activities Tech has to offer. The best way to learn is to get out and explore your new campus!

Global Jackets is a multi-cultural student organization that is dedicated to celebrating Georgia Tech’s diverse student population. Students interested in learning more are advised to email the student organization leaders listed on:
gatech.campuslabs.com/engage/

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS:

There are hundreds of student organizations at Georgia Tech giving students many opportunities to get involved on campus. At the beginning of each semester, tables are set up near or in the Student Center by members of different student organizations looking to recruit new members. For a full listing of these groups and contact information, visit:
gatech.campuslabs.com/engage/
GT’s campus has a number of useful resources that students use on a daily basis. Here you will find a vast network of supportive and caring people to help you smoothly transition to Georgia Tech, succeed in your classes, and create an unforgettable experience.

**CENTER FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS:**
[success.gatech.edu](http://success.gatech.edu)
The Center for Academic Success provides exemplary academic support programs and services. They conduct 1-to-1 tutoring sessions, peer led study sessions, and various workshops to help students achieve their academic best.

**STAMPS HEALTH SERVICES:**
[health.gatech.edu](http://health.gatech.edu)
Stamps Health Services provides medical care and health education for students, along with pharmacy, laboratory, and radiology services. Specialty clinics include gynecology, psychiatry, dentistry, and nutrition.

**CAMPUS RECREATION CENTER (CRC):**
[crc.gatech.edu](http://crc.gatech.edu)
The CRC fitness center has been recognized as one of the best campus recreation facilities in the country. This full-service fitness center offers cardio and weight training equipment, pools, basketball/volleyball courts, wall-climbing, an indoor track, and more.

**CLOUGH COMMONS:**
[clough.gatech.edu](http://clough.gatech.edu)
Located near the library, Clough Commons offers state-of-art meeting spaces which can be reserved through an online reservation system and is the hub for many student led organization meetings.

**STUDENT CENTER:**
[studentcenter.gatech.edu](http://studentcenter.gatech.edu)
The Student Center offers a wide variety of services like the campus box office, food, bowling and billiards facilities, a movie theater, post office, music listening room, ballroom, computer lab, ATMs, and several lounge and study areas.

**FERST CENTER FOR THE ARTS:**
[ferstcenter.gatech.edu](http://ferstcenter.gatech.edu)
The Ferst Center for the Arts hosts a number of concerts, recitals, lectures, dance, film, and theater performances throughout the semester. See Ferst Center Box Office for calendar and tickets. Tickets are generally available online (arts.gatech.edu/ferstcenter) and by phone at 404-894-9600.
LIBRARY:
library.gatech.edu/
GT Library is re-defining the research library of the 21st Century, creating an environment where scholars can access the vast digital cloud of humanity's recorded knowledge.

POST OFFICE:
studentcenter.gatech.edu/georgia-tech-post-office#students
The post office is located on the 1st floor of the Student Center. Through the Post Office, students can send and receive packages and mail. Students living on campus are automatically assigned a P.O box, and students living off-campus must apply and pay an annual fee if they would like to have one.
The Office of Information and Technology takes care of all internet, network, cyber-security, and other IT-related support for students on campus.

**EMAIL:**

**mail.gatech.edu**

Email is the primary method of communication between students and the University. Students are responsible for checking their emails regularly. All students have a default email address of username@gatech.edu which can be customized through the Passport website.

**BUZZPORT:**

**buzzport.gatech.edu**

On Buzzport you can register for classes, make payments, update personal information, view class schedules, student account information, and academic records. Your GT account username & password are needed to access BuzzPort.

**CANVAS:**

**canvas.gatech.edu**

Canvas is an online teaching, learning, and collaboration software. You can submit assignments, view grades, and access course material/resources through Canvas, using your GT username & password.

**TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION:**

**twofactor.oit.gatech.edu**

Georgia Tech considers the security and privacy of employee and student information to be of utmost importance. To keep our information safe, the Institute requires that all students, faculty, and staff to use two-factor authentication when accessing campus services and systems.

**WIFI:**

**faq.oit.gatech.edu/content/how-do-i-connect-eduroam-network**

Eduroam is the default LAWN Wi-Fi service. It is a secure world-wide roaming authentication service which allows users to connect to WiFi networks when visiting GT campus.
TRANSPORTATION
FOR MORE INFO, VISIT PTS.GATECH.EDU/BUS

To track GT busses, visit: bus.gatech.edu/

ATLANTA TRANSPORTATION AND DRIVING:
Georgia Tech’s campus is accessible by Atlanta’s public transportation system, MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority). MARTA offers rail and bus service throughout metropolitan Atlanta. Trains stop throughout the city, with two stops convenient to the Georgia Tech campus: North Avenue Station and Midtown Station. Visit itsmarta.com for more information.

UBER AND LYFT:
Uber and Lyft provide affordable transportation. Always, make sure you ride on the correct vehicle by checking plate numbers, drivers photo, and always have your driver to confirm your name.
GA DRIVER'S LICENSE

OBTAINING A GA DRIVER’S LICENSE:
You may apply for a license or a Georgia State identification card at any Department of Driver Services (DDS) office if you are older than 18. DDS offices in Atlanta are more familiar with F/J students. Applicants must pass Vision, Knowledge, and Road Skills exams. For the most convenient locations for knowledge & driving exams, visit: www.dds.ga.gov.

Requirements for a Driver's License: You must apply in person to the DDS for Georgia “Class C” Driver’s license for regular non-commercial motor vehicles. When applying, bring the following to the DDS center:

- Passport valid for at least six months
- I-94: either paper or printed electronic copy
- 2 proofs of residence: This can include a signed lease agreement, utility bill with applicant's name and local address, bank statement, etc.
- Current I-20 or DS-2019
- SSN or Form SSA-L676 (Social Security Card Denial Notice)

RECOMMENDATIONS:
- Wait until your SEVIS record is active before you apply. The SEVIS record will activate within the first few weeks of the semester. Confirm that your SEVIS records are active through iStart.
- Before purchasing a car, you must obtain GA Driver's license to register the car. The state requires that all cars be registered within 30 days of the date of purchase.
- You are not required to have a SSN to obtain a GA Driver’s License. Students without SSNs are required to obtain Form SSA-L676 (Social Security Card Denial Notice) from the Social Security Administration before applying for a license.
HOUSING AND HEALTH INSURANCE

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING:
housing.gatech.edu
GT offers a variety of on-campus housing options for undergraduate and graduate students. Signing a residence hall contract with GT housing requires you to live in the residence hall system for the entire academic year.

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING:
https://oie.gatech.edu/content/housing-campus-and-around-gt
Students are responsible for securing their own housing off-campus. There are many residential apartments within the GT area with varied amenities.

HEALTH SERVICES:
health.gatech.edu
All F and J students are required to have health insurance for the duration of their time at GT. All international students will be automatically enrolled in the BlueCross/Blue Shield (BCBS) student health insurance plan mandated by the University System of Georgia. If you wish to purchase an alternative plan and apply for an insurance waiver, you may do so. The student health fee is not the health insurance fee; the health insurance is a separate, mandatory expense.

HEALTH INSURANCE:
health.gatech.edu
All F and J students are required to have health insurance for the duration of their time at GT. All international students will be automatically enrolled in the BlueCross/Blue Shield (BCBS) student health insurance plan mandated by the University System of Georgia. If you wish to purchase an alternative plan and apply for an insurance waiver, you may do so.
Atlanta—Your New Home Away From Home:

Atlanta is the capital of the state of Georgia, site of the 1996 Olympic Games, and one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. It is home to approximately 5.9 million people and has the busiest airport in the country. Atlanta, the undisputed business and cultural center of the southeast US, is consistently ranked as one of the top 10 places for high-tech and international career opportunities. There are more than 1,600 international businesses in Atlanta and Fortune 500 companies such as BlueLink Holdings, CNN, Coca Cola Enterprises, Delta Air Lines, Home Depot, SunTrust Bank and UPS are headquartered in the area. The city combines classic small-town southern hospitality with all the amenities of a cosmopolitan city. The moderate cost of living, which is below the national average, and the pleasant climate, which permits year-round outdoor activities, makes Atlanta appealing to many. The city has four distinct seasons, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy a range of comfortable climates. During the fall and spring, Atlanta is quite comfortable with temperatures of 70-80° F (21-26° C). Summers can be quite hot and humid, and winters are normally mild with a few colder spells. The annual rainfall is about 48 in (122 cm).
Atlanta Attractions & Restaurants

The city of Atlanta features a wide variety of popular attractions, restaurants and events that will make your stay filled with fun and new experiences!

Some of the attractions:
- Atlanta Botanical Garden: atlantabg.org
- High Museum of Art: high.org
- Fox Theatre: foxtheatre.org
- Atlanta History Center: www.atlantahistorycenter.com
- Chattahoochee Nature Center: chattnaturecenter.org
- CNN Center: cnn.com/tour
- Georgia Aquarium: georgiaaquarium.org
- Martin Luther King, Jr National Historical Site: nps.gov/mlk
- Stone Mountain Park: stonemountainpark.com
- World of Coca-Cola: worldofcoca-cola.com
- National Center for Civil and Human Rights: www.civelandhumanrights.org

For more information, go to https://oie.gatech.edu/content/atlanta-attractions-restaurants.
Please visit oie.gatech.edu/ISSS_campus_compass for more information.