

**HANDBOOK**

**FOR**

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

**AND SCHOLARS**

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**

**INTERNATIONAL CENTER**

**OFFICE OF**

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>ACADEMICS &amp; STUDENT LIFE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>IMMIGRATION</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND GAINESVILLE</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>HOUSING</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; SAFETY HEALTH</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>HEALTH</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>SAFETY</b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION &amp; TRAVEL</b> .....	<b>75</b>
<b>MONEY MANAGEMENT</b> .....	<b>81</b>
<b>SHOPPING</b> .....	<b>88</b>
<b>GETTING ALONG WITH AMERICANS</b> .....	<b>94</b>
<b>ENTERTAINMENT &amp; RECREATION</b> .....	<b>106</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS</b> .....	<b>113</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: HANDBOOK ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>115</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: MORE SUPPORT SERVICES</b> .....	<b>116</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

On behalf of the University of Florida, the staff at the UFIC/ISS and the Gainesville community, I wish to extend to you our warmest welcome to the United States and to Florida.

This information handbook is designed to help you achieve your academic goals and to live comfortably in our community. This is a reference book of readily available information to which many persons including foreign students have contributed. We have not attempted to answer every possible question about life on campus and in the United States in this handbook. We hope however that after reading this handbook you will have a general overview of what to expect being an international student at the University of Florida. If you need any further advice, assistance, or information, please telephone the University of Florida International Center of which ISS is a division, at 392-5323 ext. 600 or "drop in" at 170 Hub. Our office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a m-5.00 p m. The UFIC is here to help you!

I would like to thank all the UFIC staff who helped prepare this handbook. I would also like to acknowledge the University of Iowa for their kind permission to use some sections from their Handbook, as well as all other contributors.

University of Florida International Center

# **ACADEMICS & STUDENT LIFE**

## **The American Academic System**

### *Academics*

By the time they attend college, most American students have completed twelve years of formal education: six years of elementary school, two years of junior high school, and four years of senior high school. Undergraduate college programs generally require four to five years of study, while master programs involve two further years of study, and doctoral programs three or more years beyond the master's level. The American academic system, as a whole, is intended to provide a broad education for as many people as possible. While many institutions of higher education require exams for admission evaluation, there is no screening examination that directs a student into an academic or vocational area at an early age. A high proportion of the population completes secondary school and many students attempt some kind of post-secondary education at the undergraduate level. Within the American society there is a conflict between those who advocate earlier and greater specialization in a field and those who believe in a broader "humanistic" or "Liberal Arts" education. Because of these differences in philosophies, emphasis on requirements may vary from university to university, or from department to department within the same school. The American educational system does produce specialists, people who study a limited range of topics in great depth. Specialization comes later in the U.S. system than it does in most other countries. It is not until the third year of undergraduate work that a student concentrates on the study of his "major" field. There is further specialization in graduate work, especially as students undertake research for their thesis or dissertation.

UF Computer and Software Requirement

### *Computer Requirement*

The following is the official UF policy on the student computer requirement, taken from the UF Student Guide:

Access to and on-going use of a computer will be required for all students to complete their degree programs successfully. Effective with the Summer B 1999 term, the University of Florida expects each entering student to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to his or her degree program. Competency in the basic use of a computer is a requirement for graduation. Class assignments may require use of a computer, academic advising and registration can be done by computer, and official university correspondence is often sent via e-mail.

While the university offers limited access to computers through its computer labs, most students will be expected to purchase or lease a computer that is capable of dial-up or network connection to the Internet, graphical access to the World Wide Web, and productivity functions such as word processing and spreadsheet calculation. Costs of meeting this requirement will be included in financial aid considerations.

### ***Interpretation of the policy***

For the Freshman and Sophomore years, these functions can be provided by most currently available standard computers. A student computer configuration should include an office software suite and printer. Appropriate networking and Internet software is available to students at no additional cost from the University. Sample minimum computer configurations, current as of Spring 1999, are provided on the website. Individual colleges may have additional requirements or recommendations for lower division, upper division, graduate and professional students.

Further information about the UF computer policy can be found at the following website:  
<http://www.circa.ufl.edu/computers/>

## **Leadership and Extracurricular Activities**

While American academic institutions encourage the learning of facts, most also advocate the student's personal growth. A variety of activities attract student participation on American campuses, and these extracurricular activities are believed to develop "leadership" qualities in students, which will enrich their lives after they graduate from school.

## **Entrance Examinations**

Information regarding minimum test scores and requirements for admission to the University of Florida may be found in the "Admission" sections of the undergraduate and graduate catalogues, or at the Admissions Office, located in S201 Criser Hall. Many universities require students to take nationally administered examinations, which permit the school to evaluate the student's skills in relation to other students across the country. Some universities require a minimum score on these examinations before they will accept an applicant. International students must also take these examinations before they are considered for admission.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) measures a student's mastery of the English language. Most universities require international students to take this examination before admission to graduate or undergraduate schools. Many schools also require international students to take the Test of Spoken English (TSE).

Undergraduate admission may depend upon one's score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Program (ACT). These tests measure verbal and math skills of high school students. High scores on the College Board Achievement Tests (also known as "advanced placement tests" or "APT") in English composition, mathematics, social sciences, and sciences may give an entering student advanced placement in the University. Some schools will approve credits for university-level courses if the student's score is high on these examinations.

The most common test for graduate school admission is the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). This test measures proficiency in English, mathematics, and logic. Professional schools also require entrance examinations. Students who wish to earn a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) must complete the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT). Students applying to law school generally take the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT). Medical school applicants take the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT).

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, New Jersey administers the majority of these examinations. Students may write directly to the ETS for registration forms and information. Their address is: Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ, 08541-6151. Several offices on campus stock registration pamphlets for these tests as well: the Office for Instructional Resources in 1012 Turlington Hall; the Registrar's Office in S222 Criser Hall; the Graduate School in Grinter Hall; the UFIC in 170 Hub, and the English Language Institute in 313 Norman Hall.

## **Evaluation of Performance in School**

### ***Credits***

The quantity of academic work a student does at the University is measured in "credits." The number of credits a course is worth usually depends on the number of hours per week that it meets. A "three-credit course," for example, will meet three hours weekly for one semester. It might meet for three fifty-minute sessions, as undergraduate classes normally do, or for one three-hour session, the more common pattern in graduate classes. At the end of the semester, the student who has achieved a passing grade in the course has earned "three credits" or "three credit hours." A student must earn a specified number of credits in order to graduate. This number varies for undergraduates and graduates, as well as among departments. Further information about specific requirements for various degrees may be found in the catalogues or through the departments.

### ***The Grading System***

The quality of a student's academic work is measured by means of "grades." There are seven grades which are considered "passing" grades for undergraduates at the University of Florida: A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, and D. For undergraduates, the grade which designates "failing" is "E" (or "F" in some schools). For graduate students, "passing" grades are more stringent: A, B+, B, C+ and C (although graduate students must maintain a "B" overall grade point average). Grades lower than a C may be considered failing grades in graduate school. The official explanation of grades at the University of Florida may be found in the University

catalogues. Each grade carries a designated number of "points" per credit. These point designations and computations may be found in the catalogue under the headings "Grades" and "Averages."

### ***S/U Option***

Students may also choose to be evaluated for some classes which have an optional "satisfactory" ("S") and "unsatisfactory" ("U") grading basis. An explanation of this option may be found in the catalogue under the category "Grades." Students considering this option should consult with an advisor to understand how a course taken under this type of evaluation will affect their competitive standing with other students.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to complete their own work, without any dependence on other students or sources. One of the worst violations a student can commit while studying at an academic institution is to engage in academic dishonesty. Students should never look at other students' papers during an examination. To "cheat" on an examination by getting answers from other students or from materials illicitly brought to the test can result in a failing grade for the examination and in disciplinary action. Severe penalties, including expulsion from the University, may result if the student is found guilty of academic dishonesty. The University catalogue contains "Academic Honesty Guidelines" which explain officially what constitutes "cheating," "plagiarism," bribery," "conspiracy," or other forms of academic dishonesty. Because these offenses are so serious in the academic environment, all students should read these guidelines to make themselves aware of the seriousness of this offense.

### **University of Florida Teaching Methods**

#### ***Lectures***

The most common method of instruction at the University is the classroom lecture. The lectures are often supplemented by "discussion sections," which are led by professors or teaching assistants, by reading assignments in textbooks or library books, and by periodic

written assignments. Early in the morning a professor may teach a class that is videotaped and replayed on television for classes held later that day.

### ***Discussion sections***

In classes that are too large to permit questions and discussion, a "discussion section" is often arranged for students to pose questions to the instructor leading the section. It is very important for students to contribute to the discussion in the classrooms, as this is one aspect in which students are evaluated for grades. In some countries it is "disrespectful" for the student to question or challenge the teacher. In this country, by contrast, questioning or challenging the teacher is viewed as a good sign of interest, attention, and independent thinking. In many classes, your grade will be determined in part by your contribution to class discussion. If you sit in "respectful" silence, the professor may assume that you are not interested in what is being said in the class, or that you do not understand any of the discussion.

### ***Laboratories***

Many courses have co-requisite laboratory courses, where the theory learned in a classroom is applied to practical problems. This means you must take the discussion course and the laboratory course. For further information please, check with the department offering the course.

### ***Office hours***

If for some reason you do not have the opportunity to raise questions in class, you can visit privately with your professors during their office hours. These are designated times when the professor will be available in his/her office to answer questions. Professors usually announce their office hours during the first few meetings of the course. Some professors will make appointments with students who have a conflict with their office hours.

### ***Term papers***

In many courses students are required to write a "term paper" (also called simply a "paper"). A term paper is written based on study or research the student himself/herself has done in the library or laboratory. Teachers normally assign term papers during the early part of the course. Students are expected to work on the paper during the semester and submit it near the end of the semester when it is due. The grade the student receives on the term paper may constitute a significant portion of his/her grade for the course. It is wise to complete term papers in advance of their due date so there is time to ask another person to review the paper and suggest revisions. Many students consult with their professors before writing their papers. The library and bookstores have books that explain the format of term papers, including the use of footnotes and bibliographies. In particular, Kate Turabian's book, Manual for Writers of Theses and Dissertation and the Chicago Manual of Style are well-known guides to term paper format. Questions about term paper assignments should be discussed with the professor. Professors prefer typewritten papers to handwritten papers. The Student Activities Center at the J. Wayne Reitz Union has computers which students may use free of charge. Most students type their papers on the computer, using the school's word processing system.

### ***Libraries***

Both in the preparation of the term papers and in doing assignments for classes, students are likely to use the library quite often. It is important, therefore, to learn how the library system works at the University of Florida. There are several libraries on campus, all of which are listed in the campus phone book. In each place, the librarians can answer questions about the library's organization, location of specific materials, reference materials, the LUIS computer system that locates books by subject, author, or title, and other features. You will need your University of Florida Gator 1 identification card in order to check out materials.

### ***Examinations***

Students will take many examinations while they are in school. Nearly every class has a "final examination" at the end of the semester. Most have a "mid-term examination" near the

middle of the semester. There may also be additional "tests" or "quizzes" given with greater frequency, perhaps even weekly. All these tests are designed to assure that students are doing the work that is assigned to them, and to measure how much they are learning. There are two general types of tests, objective and subjective, and these may be administered in a variety of forms.

### Objective examinations

An objective examination tests the student's knowledge of particular facts. Foreign students sometimes have difficulty with objective examinations, not because they do not know the material on which the test is based, but because their knowledge of English sometimes is not sophisticated enough to enable them to distinguish subtle differences in meaning. There are five different kinds of questions commonly found on objective examinations. Multiple choice questions require the student to choose from a series of answers, selecting the one (or more) that is most appropriate. True and false questions demand that the student read a statement and indicate whether it is true or false. Matching questions involve pairing the words, statements, or phrases from two columns. Identification questions ask the student to identify and briefly explain the significance of a name, term, or phrase. Fill-in-the-blank questions require the student to write information in an incomplete statement in order to make it complete and correct.

### Subjective examinations. or "essay questions"

These test items require the student to write an essay in response to a question or statement. This kind of examination tests a student's ability to organize and relate his/her knowledge of a particular subject. You are usually expected to write a long "discussion-style" answer to an essay question. Because the time allotted for each essay question may be short, you must be able to put your thoughts quickly down on the paper. Help with essay writing can be arranged through the Writing Center in 2109 Turlington Hall.

## **Keys to Academic Success**

### ***Expect to Adjust to a New Environment.***

A period of adjustment to a new educational system is often necessary before students are able to perform to the best of their abilities. International students sometimes earn lower grades during their first semester in school in the U.S. than they are used to do in their home countries. Then, as they become accustomed to the system, their English and their grades improve. They should not expect to do outstanding academic work during their first semester here, since they are exposed to so many new things.

### ***Select Courses Wisely.***

Especially during the first semester, students should not take more courses than necessary. As all international students must be registered full-time, it is important to choose a combination of more-demanding and less-demanding courses rather than only "difficult" ones which require unusually heavy amounts of work. It is also recommended never to take more than two computer courses at one time, as the time and facility limitations often frustrate students who take an overload of computer courses. When arranging their course schedules, students should consult not only with their academic advisors, but also with experienced students who are familiar with available courses and teachers. International students may be tempted to register for more courses than necessary in order to earn their degree more quickly. The usual result from taking too many courses may be discouragement, and poor academic performance. Students should be familiar with pass/fail options, as well as the procedure for dropping courses, which may be found in the catalogue. The advisors at the different departments, as well as at the ISS, work to help students in difficult academic positions such as these. You have to see an advisor at the ISS before you can drop a course or withdraw. Any time you are experiencing academic difficulties, or are having trouble selecting courses, consult with an advisor at the ISS immediately.

### ***Ask for Help Immediately.***

If you find that the course load you are taking becomes overwhelming, you should speak to your advisor, professor, or a counselor at the ISS immediately. If a problem is identified

early, the chances are greater for a positive resolution of the situation. Students may be directed to tutoring services, assisted in "dropping" a course, or advised in other ways to remedy the situation.

***Work Hard from the Beginning.***

It is not possible, in the American system of higher education, to wait until the latter part of the semester to begin studying. If you do not begin studying on the first day of classes, you are likely to find yourself behind and may experience academic difficulty.

***Talk to Professors.***

Professors expect students to ask questions in class or immediately following the class. They expect students to have problems or need advice, they should make an appointment to visit the professor during his/her office hours. If a student is not doing well in class and does not go to see the professor to discuss the situation, the professor is likely to assume that the student is not really interested in the course. Professors may, in fact, have a negative or indifferent evaluation of a student who never raises questions or challenges in class, or who does not visit the professor outside of the class to discuss academic issues.

***Understand the Assumptions behind the Educational System.***

From past experience in your own educational system, you may have developed certain assumptions about the nature and purpose of education, and about the way your field of interest should be studied. For example, students may have been taught that it is important to be able to memorize large quantities of information that are provided by professors, authors, or other experts. In the American educational system, international students may find that being able to memorize material is less important than being able to analyze and synthesize material from many sources (to read several things and to reconstruct a theory or a system in one's own way) as they develop their own ideas and viewpoints. It is important to realize the differences that exist between the U.S. and other educational systems. New students will need to adjust their thinking if they are going to succeed academically. Whether or not the

student personally accepts the values of the educational system here, he/she will find it easier to act in accordance with them while he/she is here.

### ***Know How to Study.***

The study habits that were appropriate for the educational system in your home country may not be appropriate for the educational system here. Students may need to approach their studies in a different way while studying here. The Reading and Writing Center offers classes in study skills. Workshops are offered around campus in many different subjects. Please refer to the section on Academic Assistance, which follows, for more information about the Reading and Writing Center and other tutoring services.

## **Study Skills**

### ***Organize your time.***

Students have a large amount of work to do and a limited amount of time in which to do it. Schedules permit the student to maximize the efficiency of their performance by planning different sections of the day or week in which to accomplish their tasks. Specific time periods should be devoted to sleeping, eating, enjoying personal activities, attending classes, and studying. Adjust your schedule to allow adequate study time. Reading the course syllabi for each of your courses at the beginning of the semester will enable you to set completion dates for assignments at different times during the semester. The important point is to organize one's time so that all assignments and demands can be accommodated.

### ***Read effectively.***

It may not be possible to memorize all the reading materials for the entire semester, or even to study them in depth. In general, students are expected to familiarize themselves with the main points from each reading and to be able to relate what different writers have said regarding the same issue. Learn to draw the main points from a large number of readings.

Here are some suggestions: Skim: contents, the titles of chapters, the headings of various sections of chapters, the "topic sentences" which begin most paragraphs, and the summary paragraphs or sections. This gives the reader an outline of what the author is saying.

Read: Review the material more carefully this time, noting the main points, conclusions, and contentions. Write notes about these main points, following the outline of the reading itself.

Question: Rather than passively accepting what the writer has written, ask yourself, "Why is the writer saying this?" "What is the evidence for that?" "Does that agree with what this same writer said earlier, or with what another writer on the same subject said."

Review. Skim the reading again. Look at your notes again. Try to retain in your mind the main points of the readings. If the student finds that he/she is reading slowly or that his/her vocabulary is inadequate, the Reading and Writing Center and other support services are available. Feel free to consult with the ISS concerning this type of problem.

### ***Derive as much as Possible from Classes.***

Since attendance and participation in classes are such important parts of the academic system here, it is worthwhile to gain as much as possible from your classes. Be prepared for class. Read in advance. If you have read the assignments that relate to a class, you will understand the material in the class better. In class, questions relating to the readings may arise. Take notes. Write down the main points which the professor makes. Many professors will use phrases that will help the student to identify the points they believe are important and that students should therefore listen attentively. After the class, review the notes. Complete the information that you might have left out in class. Mark items that are still unclear. Reviewing the notes after class helps students to remember the material. Ask for help if necessary.

### ***Review.***

Remain current in your studies. If a student falls behind on reading or assignments, he/she will have difficulty preparing adequately for tests. Schedule time to review. Before the test, review notes from lectures and readings. Anticipate what the professor will ask on the test by recalling the points that were emphasized during the lecture.

### ***Prepare for Tests.***

Rest well before the test. Most people perform better on tests if they sleep adequately the night before the exam. "Cramming" for the examination, that is, attempting to study all the

material on the night before the examination, usually results in exhaustion during the examination and poor performance. Read test instructions carefully. Know what questions are being asked in the test, and answer only what is being asked. Many students miss points because they do not properly answer the question that was asked. Schedule time accordingly. Notice how much time is available during the test period, how many points are awarded for each question, and evaluate the time involved in answering the different types of questions. too much time on only one or a few questions.

## **The Academic Environment at the University of Florida**

The academic environment at the University of Florida can be overwhelming to new students, and may discourage them from seeking resources that can help them. This section will introduce students to some of the resources on campus.

### ***Resource Books***

The Undergraduate and the Graduate Record, which are the university catalogues for undergraduate and graduate students, contain official regulations and information about the University. In the University catalogues you can find admissions information, graduation requirements, lists of registered student organizations, academic information, information about student life, and much more than is covered in this handbook. You can find these catalogues in The Registrar's Office, in S222 Criser Hall.

University Telephone Directory: All registered students can receive a free copy of the University telephone directory, which is printed annually. The telephone directory contains campus department listings, faculty and staff listings, student listings, student support services, NEXUS tapes information, campus building and college abbreviations, the academic calendar, listings of the University libraries, recreation and entertainment facilities, and campus dining facilities. Telephone books are available in S222 Criser Hall.

UF Student Guide: This booklet explains the student conduct code, academic facilities, and support services on campus. It is available through the Office of Student Services in P202 Peabody Hall.

Guidelines for Writing Theses and Dissertations: This publication, available from the Graduate School Editorial Office in 168 Grinter Hall, specifies the Graduate School's format and grammar expectations for theses and dissertations submitted by graduate candidates.

## **Academic Advisement**

Undergraduate students must satisfy general education requirements, as well as the requirements of their upper division colleges before they receive their bachelor's degree. During the first two years of study (freshmen and sophomore), students choose required and elective courses. Because the upper division colleges require their applicants to have successfully completed certain prerequisites before admittance, students should plan their schedules very carefully. Academic counselors located in the Academic Advisement Center on Fletcher Road will explain general education requirements to students. These counselors normally handle questions of students classified as "1UF" and "2UF," (freshmen and sophomores who have not declared a major) as well as students who remain in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Counselors in the Academic Advisement Center and advisors in the upper division majors should be consulted when students plan course schedules for their first two years. Please refer to the following section entitled "Undergraduate Student Academic Regulations--80-Hour Rule" for more information about why it is important to choose courses very carefully. Upperclassmen (juniors and seniors) should visit their department's undergraduate advisor when planning their course schedule. The course selection guide, which is printed each semester, lists these advisors. A semester or two before graduating, all students should request a graduation check from their College, to ensure they have completed all necessary major, College, and University graduation.

Graduate Students should consult with their graduate advisor about course work. These requirements differ with the degree sought, and may be found in the Graduate Record

catalogue. The Graduate School, located on the second floor of Grinter Hall, can answer questions concerning graduation requirements, thesis/dissertation completion, oral and written examinations, and supervisory committee selection

## **Undergraduate Student Academic Regulations**

The regulations listed here are not the only regulations with which students must comply, but are also the most commonly misunderstood rules that pose serious consequences for students if not followed. The University catalogues list other regulations of special concern to students and are the official academic regulations of the University.

***C.L.A.S.T.:*** The College Level Academic Skills Test (C.L.A.S.T.) is an achievement test which measures the reading, writing, and computational skills of students at the sophomore level of school. The Board of Regents requires students of the Florida State University System to pass this examination before they have completed 60 semester hours of class. Students who do not take the exam are not permitted to enroll at the University until they have passed it successfully. The Registrar's Office, located in S222 Criser Hall, and the Office of Instructional Resources, located at 1012 Turlington Hall, have applications for the exam. Students who need assistance in preparing for the test can ask about preparation courses offered by the Reading and Writing Center, located in Turlington Hall, or can purchase books which prepare students for the exam from the Campus Shop and Bookstore.

***80-Hour Rule:*** By the time they complete 80 semester hours of classes, undergraduate students must apply for admission and be accepted by one of the upper division colleges. Students who are not accepted by an upper division college by this time will not be permitted to enroll further at the University of Florida. This ceiling of 80 hours requires students to plan the course work for their first two years carefully. All colleges require applicants to have completed prerequisites before admission to the college, so the student may plan to register for these courses as early as the first semester. Waiting until the third semester may be too late, as students may be forced to enroll in more than 80 hours of classes before they have completed the requirements necessary for admission into the college. In order to avoid dilemmas such as these, students should consult with academic advisors in the program in

which they hope to enroll as well as with the counselors in the Academic Advisement Center or the ISS.

***Residency Requirement:*** University regulations require that an undergraduate student remain classified in the same college for a particular amount of time before graduating from that college. This requirement ensures that students do not switch from one college to another arbitrarily. This requirement and others are discussed in the section entitled, "Student Academic Regulations" in the undergraduate catalogue.

***Applying for Graduation:*** It is the student's responsibility to apply for graduation on time and to request that a "graduation check" be done in the semesters prior to graduation. The University maintains deadlines for graduation applications. Consult the section entitled, "Academic Regulations" in the University catalogue for more information about graduation requirements.

***Maintaining "Satisfactory" Progress:*** The University considers "satisfactory progress" for undergraduates to be a minimum 2.0 overall grade point average (or "GPA"). A student who falls below this average may find himself/herself on academic warning, probation, or suspension. While this problem is a serious one for American and international students alike, it presents many complications for international students, who are issued their visa on the condition that they will progress satisfactorily towards an academic degree. If you find yourself in academic trouble, it is especially important for international students to seek help immediately. The counselors at the ISS will try to resolve difficult situations such as these. There may be many reasons for poor academic performance, such as language problems, cultural adjustment or medical problems. More detailed information about satisfactory progress and grade point averages is discussed in the "Academic Regulations" section of the university catalogue. Students must take responsibility themselves for seeing that these requirements are met. If you find that you are having trouble interpreting the catalogue or other regulations, ask the counselors in the ISS or your academic advisor for help.

## **Graduate Student Academic Regulations**

**"Satisfactory Progress":** Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average in their graduate course work. A more detailed discussion about acceptable grades for classes, course levels, and study loads may be found in the graduate catalogue in the section entitled, "General Regulations." Students should also consult with their departments about the department's definition of satisfactory performance.

**Applying for Graduation:** Graduate students must satisfy requirements for the department as well as for the Graduate School. In addition, students must apply for graduation by the date specified in the catalogue. For more details concerning graduation requirements and degree awards, consult the graduate catalogue. Other regulations vary between departments and between degrees sought. Consult the graduate advisors, the Graduate School and the Graduate Record catalogue for specifics.

## **Petitions**

The University of Florida uses a petition procedure to evaluate whether particular situations may be worthy of exception to University rules. For example, someone with very unusual and legitimate circumstances may petition to have money refunded for courses dropped, to be permitted back into the University when they have been suspended, etc. Petitions are not always granted, but they are an option. If you feel you need to petition, speak with a counselor at the ISS. They can help you present your case at the Petitions Committee.

## **Academic Assistance & Tutoring**

Several academic counseling centers at the University provide assistance in special areas of study. Some students may need special tutoring to strengthen their weaker academic areas. Listed below are a few sources of academic assistance:

**Professors and Departments:** The immediate sources of help for students are the professors and graduate assistants for the particular course. Professors hold office hours during the

week, during which times they are available. In addition, graduate assistants and graders hold office hours to help students with problems or questions. If these sources are not adequate, the professor may know of other students who will tutor. Please contact the ISS for further information regarding academic assistance.

***The Reading and Writing Center:*** The Reading and Writing Center, located in 2109 Turlington Hall (392-0791), offers noncredit mini-courses, independent study sessions, and some credit courses in reading and writing. The Center is part of the Office of Instructional Resources. The Center aims to help students with communication skills. Summer and Fall courses are offered for freshman. Conversation skills courses are offered every semester for international students. The teachers are trained to assist students who speak English as their second language. They have experience in helping you improve your test-taking skills (for the C.L.A.S.T., G.R.E., and other similar tests), writing papers, theses, and dissertations, and spelling are only a few of the areas in which the Center offers help. For more information, contact the Center.

***Linguistics Department:*** The Linguistics Department in 112 Anderson Hall (392-0639) normally offers a course in English as a Second Language for students who need help with their spoken and written English. For more information about the course, contact the Linguistics Department.

***Broward Hall Teaching Center:*** This Center, located in the basement of Broward Hall (392-2010), provides help for students in several subject areas, including physical, biological, and social sciences, humanities, other disciplines. The tutoring is geared towards undergraduates and graduate students. Tutoring schedules allocate different times for different subjects. This schedule is available at the Teaching Center.

***Math Anxiety Group, Counseling Center:*** The Counseling Center, located in P301 Peabody (392-1575) organizes group support sessions for students who have problems with

mathematics. The group meets weekly during the semester. Students interested in joining the group should call the Counseling Center.

### **International Students Support Services**

A student's academic performance can be affected by circumstances that lie outside of school. Difficulties with cultural adjustment, family or friends, or other pressures can influence a student's concentration, time and attention to studies. When concerns such as these arise, it is important for the student to acknowledge that the condition exists, and to seek help if the condition persists. More often than not, an ignored problem does not improve, it gets worse. Support services on campus are there to help students through difficult periods that everyone has. Seeking help is an acceptable practice in the United States. In fact, it is expected of students to seek help if they need assistance since they pay tuition not only for courses but for services on campus as well, so taking advantage of services is making use of your educational investment. The University catalogue also explains these services in the "Student Affairs" section. The Office for Student Services publishes the "Student Lifesaver," a card which lists telephone numbers for these support services. If you do not know where to begin, call the UFIC (392-5323) or the Student Services Office (392-1261) for direction. These offices can put you on the right track. Students must use their own initiative to seek help themselves. The University is just too large for the various offices to seek out students who need help. See the sections on Health & Safety and the Appendices for more information regarding counseling.

***The International Student Services (ISS):*** The ISS is a department within the University of Florida International Center which is part of the UF Office of Academic Affairs. ISS assists students with immigration questions, admissions, academic counseling, personal counseling, emergency assistance, and referral to other support services. The office is open between 8.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is located in 170 Hub (392-5323).

***The Office for Student Services:*** Located in P202 Peabody (392-1261), the Office of Student Services assists students with academic withdrawals\* judicial affairs, disabled student affairs, minority student affairs, women affairs, fraternity and sorority issues, and many other areas of concern. (\*Please notice that international students always have to go to the ISS before they can drop or withdraw from classes.). BACCHUS (Boost Alcohol Consciousness and Health of University Students), the Campus Alcohol Information Center, PLUS (Physically Limited University Students), and SOTA (Students Over Traditional Age) may be reached through this office. The Office for Student Services is an excellent clearinghouse for all types of campus information. If the staff themselves cannot answer a student's question, they will know the right person to contact on campus.

***The University Counseling Center:*** The Counseling Center in P301 Peabody (392-1573) assists students and their spouses with personal, career, and academic concerns. The psychologists and peer counselors counsel people individually, offer group workshops and programs, and teach courses. Some topics which may be of interest to students include assertiveness workshops, test anxiety and math confidence groups.

***Other Sources of Counseling:*** The Campus Ministers Cooperative is a consortium of different religious leaders in Gainesville. Membership in this cooperative is voluntary. Members of the cooperative may be found in the front pages of the campus telephone book. Information about churches may be found in the "Yellow Pages" of the Southern Bell telephone book under the heading "churches" or "synagogues." Many faiths are represented in Gainesville; if you are not able to find the faith of your choice in either telephone book, ask at the ISS.

***The NEXUS Tape Information Service:*** This is a selection of tapes about matters pertaining to the University and student life. The Counseling Center sponsors the "CounselLine" telephone tape program, part of the NEXUS tape information system, to help students with specific concerns such as, "How to deal with the loneliness," "Vocational Decision Making," and "Friendship Building." The CounselLine tapes are listed in the front

pages of the campus telephone directory. In order to hear a tape, a student should (1) dial 392-1683, the NEXUS number, (2) ask for the appropriate tape number, and (3) listen to the tape. A complete listing of NEXUS tapes may be found in the blue pages of the University telephone directory. Operators answer the phones between 7 a.m. and 12 midnight, Monday-Sunday. The caller remains anonymous, so it is easier to inquire about topics that may be sensitive or embarrassing if discussed face-to-face with another person.

## IMMIGRATION

Like all countries in the world, the United States has laws and regulations governing foreigners who are temporarily within its boundaries. It is always a good idea to consult with the ISS about questions regarding your immigration status. Below is a summary of the essential things for which a foreign student or scholar is responsible:

**Passport:** It is your responsibility to keep your passport valid. Your passport is renewed through your embassy or consulate in the U.S. The UFIC has the address and phone number of the nearest consulate or embassy. It is a good idea to keep a copy of your passport in a place separate from your passport in case the passport becomes lost or stolen. You may leave a copy with us in your file, if you wish. Your embassy or consulate will be able to issue a replacement passport more promptly if you can provide them with a copy of the original. If your passport is lost or stolen, file a report with the Campus Police and the Gainesville Police, and send your copy of the police reports when you file for a replacement passport. For passport renewal, your embassy/consulate may need a letter verifying that you are a full-time student. You may request such a letter from the UFIC. It takes 3 working days for letters to be prepared. Scholars should get a letter from their department verifying that they are associated with that department pursuing the stated program objective from their IAP-66.

**Visa:** The visa is permission granted by the U.S. to request entry into the U.S. It is the multi-colored stamp or label affixed into your passport that you obtained in the American Embassy or Consulate abroad. It may have been issued for single or multiple entries into the U.S., and may be used prior to the date that it expires. An American visa has a visa number, the visa type, the visa issuance date, the number of entries, and the visa expiration date. The visa in your passport does not have to remain valid while you are in the U.S. Please see the sections on the I-94 and I-20 or IAP-66 regarding your valid stay in the U.S. Please see the section on travel. It is your I-20 or IAP 66 and I 94, which must remain valid while you, are

in the U.S. American visas cannot be renewed inside the U.S. The I-20 or IAP-66 and I-94 can be renewed in the U.S. The I-20 or IAP-66 and I-94 are not the visa; they are your visa papers.

**I-94 Form** (Departure Record): The I-94 shows that you have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. The I-94 arrival/departure number is also known as the "*admission*" number. The I-94 is the small white card that is usually stapled into passport on the page next to your American visa, given at the port of entry in to the U.S. This is given to every foreign person who enters the U.S. The I-94 contains an 11-digit number call the Arrival/Departure number. Its computerized number that INS assigns to you to keep track of your arrival and departure from the U.S. The I-94 should not be confused with your American visa. Read the section on visas again if you are confused. The I-94 has an immigration stamp on it in red ink, which shows the port of entry by which you enter the U.S., the date you entered, the visa status with which you entered and the expiration date of your stay. It is a good idea to make a copy of both sides of the I-94 form, and keep the copy in a safe place (separate from your passport). The I-94 is surrendered each time you leave the U.S., and a new one is given to you each time you re-enter the U.S. F-1 students receive the same number each time on their I-94, and are identified by this number during their entire stay in the U.S. J-1 students and scholars also receive a number each time they re-enter the U.S. Although, J-1 exchange visitor not necessarily receive the previously mentioned D/S condition.

**Expiration Date of the I-94:** If you are a F-1 student, and you entered the U.S. with an I-20 form, it is very probable that you were given an I-94 at the port of entry with the expiration date of "D/S". D/S is an abbreviation that INS uses to indicate "duration of status." This means that you are admitted until the completion date indicated on your I-20 in item #5. Because the actual date an F-1 student will complete his or her degree may vary, or the student may continue on for a higher degree, the INS does not give an actual expiration date on the I-94. Whenever you are asked to fill in forms and list the expiration date of your I-94 and you are an F-1 student, the correct answer would be "D/S." You may want to add in parentheses the completion date from your I-20. That is the date within which the

University has determined you should be able to complete your studies for the current degree you are pursuing. If you have not completed your studies by that date, you should contact the UFIC office for advice. If you are a J-1 student or research scholar, your I-94 will have an expiration date written on it. That is the date by which you must make your departure from the U.S. However, the IAP-66 contains the actual ending date of your J-1 program. This is the date in item #3 of the IAP-66. If you have not completed the degree for which you are currently studying by this date, consult with the ISS office. Note: The INS gives you a 30-day grace period from the ending date of the IAP-66 in which to make your departure from the U.S. You may not work or receive compensation during this grace period.

**Renewal of IAP-66 for Exchange Visitors (J-1 Students and Scholars):** You are responsible for keeping track of the expiration date of your IAP-66 if you have J-1 visa status. The expiration date of the IAP-66 is in item #3, where it reads." This form covers the period from dd/mm/yy to dd/mm/yy." That ending date is the expiration of the IAP-66 form, not the expiration date on the I-94, which reflects a 30-day grace period which has been added to your stay. If you plan to extend your stay, you must file in advance of the IAP-66 expiration date, not the I-94 expiration date. If you need to file for an extension of your IAP-66, consult immediately with the UFIC office for further instructions. If your IAP-66 was issued by a program sponsor other than the University of Florida, you will have to contact your sponsor to issue you a new IAP-66 form. You may then bring the new IAP-66 form to the UFIC for assistance in filling your extension. Filing an extension of the IAP-66 and I-94 does not renew your J-1 visa in your passport. The J-1 visa stamp in your passport does not have to be kept valid while you are in the U.S., as long as you maintain the validity of your IAP-66. If you travel outside of the U.S. with an expired J-1 visa, you must renew it in your home country prior to re-entry to the U.S. The UFIC will be able to give you more information regarding this, or see the section on traveling abroad.

## **Visa Types**

***F-1 Student:*** This visa permits an individual to enter the U.S. for full-time study at an authorized institution in the U.S. To obtain an F-1 visa, it is necessary to present an I-20 Form (Certificate of Eligibility) to an American Embassy or Consulate abroad.

***F-2 Spouse/Dependent:*** This visa is held by spouses and dependents of F-1 students. To obtain an F-2 visa, the spouse presents an I-20 form in the name of the F-1 student to an American Embassy or Consulate abroad, along with evidence of financial support. F-2 dependents are ***NEVER*** allowed to be employed or receive assistantships.

***J-1 Exchange Visitor (Student or Scholar):*** An exchange visa permits an individual to enter the U.S. for study, teaching, research or training. The individual presents an IAP-66 form to an American Embassy or Consulate abroad to obtain a J-1 visa. S/he is obligated to engage in the activities specified on the IAP-66 form while in the U.S.

***J-2 Spouse/Dependent:*** This visa is held by spouses and dependents of J-1 visa holders. To obtain a J-2 visa, the spouse presents a Form IAP-66 in the name of the J-1 student to an American Embassy or Consulate abroad, along with evidence of financial support.

## **Full-Time Student Status**

You must pursue a full-time course of study during the academic year. The academic year at UF is based on the trimester system, Fall, Winter and Summer terms. With few exceptions, F-1 students must be full-time students each semester except the summer semester until they receive their degrees. “Full-time study” for undergraduate students means a minimum of twelve credit hours each semester. For graduate students, full-time study may be less than 12 hours per term depending upon the departmental requirements (check with your department). The University is required to report to the INS when an F-1 student is enrolled less than full-time. It is, therefore, extremely important for F-1 students to maintain full-time enrollment.

If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent you from meeting the above requirements, please see one of the advisors at the ISS office before dropping below the prescribed number of credits.

***Vacation Periods:*** No student can take a vacation semester unless it is during the Summer vacation. You can take the summer vacation off if you were a full time student the previous semester and will be full time student during the semester that follows the Summer semester

***Extension of F-1 Stay:*** If you have not completed your degree by the date on your I-20 ID (page 3/4), but have otherwise been in status, you must file for an extension of your I-20. This procedure is called a "Notification Extension". To apply for this, you must have been maintaining your full-time F-1 status. If you are not sure if you need to have your I-20 extended or not, bring your I-20 with you to the ISS office. If you know you need to extend your I-20, you must follow these steps: Complete an I-538 form (section A, items #1-6, and your signature and date). Obtain a letter from your faculty advisor (or department coordinator), on department letterhead stationery, addressed to the University of Florida International Center, International Studies Services and including: your new completion date, how many years your program takes, a statement that you have been making satisfactory academic progress towards your degree, the amount and source of your funding during the extension period, any pertinent information explaining any delays in your graduation or other compelling circumstances (such as change of major). Apply at the ISS office for a new I-20 to be issued. This takes at least 3 working days. If you have been making normal academic progress towards your degree, and you are in valid F-1 status, you are eligible to apply for the Notification Extension. Please bring the above-mentioned documents to the front desk and they will prepare your new I-20. If you have not been in valid F-1 status, you will need to apply for F-1 ***Reinstatement:*** Check at the ISS information regarding the Reinstatement procedures.

## **Transfer Students**

Transfer students are those students transferring from another university within the U.S. F-1 or J-1 visa holders require a University of Florida I-20 or IAP-66 to attend this school. You must report to the ISS to do the transfer process during the first 15 days of classes. The ISS submits the documents to INS, to let them know that you are now attending the University of Florida. **[If you are an student who previously attended a U.S. institution and intend to transfer to another U.S. institution after a temporary absence from the U.S, you must have an I-20 or IAP-66 from the University of Florida to attend this school.]** You must have a valid F-1 or J-1 visa in your passport (if the visa is valid, but it is for the previous school you attended, you are not required to change it for the University of Florida). Do not re-enter the U.S. on the I-20 or IAP-66 issued by your old school. Do not re-enter the U.S. on a tourist visa! J-1 transfer students may not receive UF assistantships or work on campus until INS completes the transfer procedure.

## **Vacation Travel Outside the United States for F-1 and J-1 Holders**

If you plan to travel outside the U.S., you should always consult with the ISS first. *Always bring your passport and page 3/4 of your I-20 (student carbon copy), or page 3 of your IAP-66 (pink copy) with you when making inquiries* at the ISS office about traveling outside the U.S. Your passport and your visa must be valid beyond the date on which you plan to re-enter the U.S. If your visa has expired, and you plan to travel outside the U.S., or, if you have changed your visa status while in the U.S., you will need to obtain a new visa at an American Embassy or Consulate abroad or in your home country before you may re-enter the U.S. *It is not possible to revalidate your visa while you are in the U.S.* The exception is travel to Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean Islands for 30 days or less. For such trips you will need only your valid passport, your I-94, and your I-20 or IAP-66 endorsed by the UFIC designated school official or responsible officer. If going to Canada, you must contact the Canadian consulate in New York, NY, to determine whether you need a visa to enter to Canada. (1251 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020-1175, (212) 768-2400) *Please give the ISS at least a week to review documents before any trip abroad.* A

minimum of 3 working days is required for the ISS to prepare your documents. During vacation periods, it is especially important to apply for travel documents very early, since most other students are planning to travel also. You should allow enough time to renew your visa in the American Embassy or Consulate in your home country. ***Never leave your passport, I-20 or IAP-66 form, or I-94 (or any immigration-related documents) in your luggage!*** Always carry these items on your person when departing the U.S., and upon re-entry. Immigration inspectors have been known to refuse entry into the country if you are not in possession of any one of these documents. Luggage can be lost, sometimes for days, sometimes forever, and you may be severely inconvenienced if you have to miss your plane because you are held up by immigration.

***Canadian Citizens:*** Students or research scholars who hold Canadian citizenship do not require passports to enter the U.S. from Canada, although it is strongly recommended. Canadian citizens who enter the U.S. to attend the University of Florida must have either an I-20 or IAP-66 issued by the University of Florida, ***and must present either document at the point of entry into the U.S.*** The inspecting officer will issue you an I-94 as an F-1 or J-1. Please, ***do not come into the U.S. as a visitor*** if you are planning to be a student. If you travel to Canada for a vacation during your studies, you must come to the ISS at least 3 days in advance of your trip, and have your I-20 or IAP-66 signed on the back for re-entry. If you travel to a country other than Canada, you will have to follow the general procedures outlined in the preceding section on vacation travel.

## **Student Employment**

***F-1 On-Campus:*** F-1 students may work at the University without having to obtain permission from INS. You may work on campus up to 20 hours per week as long as the job does not interfere with your ability to continue as a full-time student. You must go to S107 Criser Hall to the Student Employment Office, to obtain an on-campus work permit. You may work up to 40 hours per week on campus during the Summer semester if you are not registered. ***When you are a registered student you are limited to 20 hours per week on-campus employment.***

***F-1 Off-Campus:*** In order to work off-campus F-1 students must obtain permission from both the ISS and INS. Off-campus part-time employment is VERY RARELY granted. Off-campus employment, if approved, is limited to 20 hours per week while you are registered, and during the vacation semester you may work up to 40 hours per week if you are not registered. Permission will not be granted during a student's first year in the U.S. For further information please consult with the ISS.

***F-1 Practical Training:*** Practical training permission allows student to obtain employment experience in their field of study to increase their academic experience. You will become eligible for practical training after the first year in F-1 status. F-1 students may be granted permission by INS to undertake full-time employment, "practical training," under 2 sets of circumstances: Optional Practical Training: To be carried out before or after completion of the degree and available for a maximum of 12 months (no extensions allowed.). Full informative packages are available at the ISS front office. Please be advised that you need to submit your request 90-120 days before to the date you intend to start working. Practical Training is only endorsed by ISS with your Academic Advisor's consent. Practical Training is given to F-1 students for twelve months.

***Curricular Practical Training:*** Before completion of the degree requirements and only if it is stated in the student's degree requirements that an internship or *practicum* is needed to finish the degree (guidelines also available at the ISS front office.) There has to be a course available to register for the internship, co-op or practicum. Curricular Practical training is granted per "semester" and can not exceed twelve months as a total. If it exceeds this time, it counts against Optional Practical Training. Before making CPT or OPT practical training request, you must stop by ISS to pick up a complete information package which will tell you the exact steps to take and will provide you with the right forms to be filled.

***F-2 Spouses/Dependents:*** F-2's are not allowed to be employed, nor have assistantships. An F-2 dependent who is admitted to the university as a graduate student cannot accept any

offer of assistantship until change of visa status is approved by INS from F-2 to F-1 (Please note that change of visa status can take from three to four months in processing at INS). You can, however, attend the university as a student paying for your own classes.

***J-1 On-Campus:*** A J-1 student may work at the University on-campus by obtaining permission from the ISS. You may work up to 20 hours per week as long as the work does not interfere with your ability to continue as a full-time student. If your IAP-66 was issued by anyone other than the University of Florida, you will need permission from your program sponsor. Please come to the ISS for further information. Under no circumstances will you be allowed to work more than 20 hours per week while you are a registered student. During vacation breaks, like summer semester or holidays you may work up to 40 hours per week on campus if you are not registered. J-1 Exchange Students will not receive work permission from the ISS as funding for the Exchange Programs must be shown in advance.

***J-1 Off-Campus:*** You must have the permission of your program sponsor for any off-campus employment. If the University of Florida issued your IAP-66, you must come to the ISS to find out if you are eligible. If your program sponsor is not the University of Florida, you must contact your sponsor in regards to permission to work off campus. Off-campus work permission is RARELY GIVEN for J-1 students as proof of funding must be shown in advance.

***J-1 Academic Training:*** A J-1 student who has earned a degree may request permission from his/her sponsor to engage in academic training. J-1 academic training is for up to 18 months, and for PhD graduates up to 36 months of post-doctoral academic training. If the University is your program sponsor, our office may grant you J-1 academic training. You will need a letter from your faculty advisor recommending you for the academic training. Instructions for filing for J-1 academic training are available from the ISS office. If the University is not your sponsor, you will have to contact your program sponsor for instructions for filing for J-1 academic training. Be advised that some sponsors prohibit academic training after completion of your studies because you are expected to return home

immediately after completion of your degree requirements. In such cases, you may not be granted academic training.

***J-2 Employment:*** The holder of a J-2 visa must apply to INS for permission to accept employment. You may get instructions and forms for filing for J-2 employment permission at the ISS office. Approval is conditional, provided employment is not for support of the principal J-1 visa holder. A J-2 dependent with INS work permission may accept an assistantship as a graduate student.

### **Scholar Employment**

J-1 research scholars or visiting professors are issued IAP-66's expressly to achieve the program objective as stated on the IAP-66 form in item #4. Employment is limited to the University department in which the exchange visitor is doing research or other exchange activities. J-1 scholars are prohibited from engaging in any other employment, whether on or off-campus. You cannot change departments within the university. A J-1 scholar who wishes to engage in a brief consultation or lecture at another university must first consult with the ISS to obtain proper permit. J-2 spouses and J-2 dependents old enough to work (such as high school students) can get at the ISS office the instructions and forms to for J-2 work permission. Questions regarding scholar or scholar dependents employment should be directed to the ISS office.

## **FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND GAINESVILLE**

Gainesville's original settlers planned the town in a grid pattern that makes it relatively easy to find one's way around the city. The center of the grid is the intersection of University Avenue and Main Street. Streets run parallel to Main Street in a north-south direction. Avenues run parallel to University Avenue in an east-west direction. An easy way to remember east-west routes is to remember the word "APRIL," since the letters in that word (except "I") represent a route which runs in an east-west direction. Avenues, "A"; Place, "P"; Roads, "R"; Lanes, "L". Routes running north-south are streets, ways, drives, and terraces (SWDT).

The city is divided into four quadrants: northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast. Since the University is south of University Avenue and west of Main Street, it is located in the southwest section of Gainesville. Although the University of Florida extends beyond Gainesville, the main campus may be found between the boundaries of West University Avenue, SW 13th Street, Archer Road, and SW 34th Street. Streets and avenues are usually numbered. The lower the number, the closer the street is to the center of the grid. House numbers indicate the street and avenue on which the house can be found. For example, "1608 NW 2nd Avenue" would be found two blocks north of University Avenue (on 2nd Avenue), between 16th and 17th streets. When writing down an address, be certain to indicate whether it is NW, NE, SW, or SE and to include its designation, whether street, avenue, place, terrace, etc. Otherwise, there would be 4 different quadrants in which that address could be located, and it would be difficult to find the address. Most bookstores, gasoline stations, and rental car agencies sell maps of Gainesville and the state of Florida. The ISS can give you a city bus schedule which has a small map of the city, and which shows the bus routes.

## HOUSING

### **The Housing Situation in Gainesville**

Students and faculty are responsible for securing their own housing arrangements at the University of Florida. The ISS staff can offer advice about choosing living accommodations, but does not accept responsibility for housing arrangements. Gainesville offers many more housing facilities than there are people; this situation relieves pressure on international students and faculty who are also looking for a place to live. New students and scholars should consider location, budget, preferences, habits, and safety when choosing living accommodations and the area in which they will live. Many international students and scholars choose to live in one of the neighborhoods around campus, because they do not own automobiles or have to deal with parking problems on campus. Because utility costs are part of the monthly expenses, these should be estimated and considered when deciding how much you are willing to pay for rent each month. Students live both on campus (in dwellings owned and operated by the University of Florida) and off campus (in dwellings owned by private companies and individuals). Most new international students and scholars live off campus in accommodations that are near school, and walk or ride their bicycles or take the bus to campus. The University has a severe parking problem. There are not enough parking spaces for the number of students, staff, and faculty who need to park their cars. Most new international students live off campus at first, because housing on campus is normally not available when they arrive. Sometimes arrangements can be made for freshmen and for students with families, but only if the student has contacted the housing office and has made arrangements prior to beginning school by contacting the University Housing Office (392-2173) at Museum Road and SW 13th Street. There is no University housing for scholars, who must, therefore find their own off campus housing. The information contained in this section will assist scholars in locating accommodations.

*The UF Housing Office* prints an Off Campus Housing Package, which contains a list of the different apartment areas in Gainesville. The list compares prices, locations, and policies on

children and pets and other information on renting apartments in Gainesville. You may obtain this list from the Housing Office. Bulletin boards located in the UF Housing Office and the ISS also have vacancies posted, where persons looking for roommates may advertise. Sometimes people know that they would like to live in a particular apartment area. These people can call the office of that apartment complex to ask whether present residents need roommates or vacant apartments are available.

**Rental agencies:** Gator Rental Finders (1702 W. University Avenue, 336-9349) and other such rental agencies offer roommate-finding services for a fee. People are a valuable resource for finding a place to live; often friends of friends need roommates or know about someone needing a roommate. This is an advantage because the friend is a reference for the roommate.

**Nationality Clubs:** The ISS staff can give you telephone numbers of Nationality Club members who can assist you. Do not hesitate to contact any friends of nationals from your country who are here already. Students can also ask about roommates in their departments.

**Real estate agencies:** These agencies list houses which are vacant. They may charge a fee for their services. Real estate agents are listed in the "Yellow Pages" of the telephone book under the section entitled "Real Estate." An alternative method to find a place to live is to walk along the streets near campus to look for "For Rent" signs posted outside of houses. These sources should yield some housing options for new international students' families and visitors.

**Classified Ads:** You can learn about off campus housing vacancies in the "classified advertising" sections in the back of the city newspaper, the *Gainesville Sun*, and in the classified advertising section of the school newspaper, *The Independent Florida Alligator*, which provide listings of off campus rental units. The following abbreviations are used in classified advertisements. If you do not understand what an advertisement means, you should

ask the landlord to explain it. "BR" means bedroom; "bath" means bathroom; "A/C" means air conditioning; "furn" means furnished; "unfurn" means unfurnished.

### **Types of Dwellings: On Campus Housing**

The University of Florida maintains living areas for single and married students. These include dormitory rooms, co-ops, and apartments. There is a waiting list for any on campus housing, and it may take six weeks to a year before you receive the housing for which you have applied. If you are interested in living on campus, you should go to the Housing Office immediately and complete an application. You need to pay an application fee

**Residence Halls:** Residence halls, also called "dormitories," or "dorms," are buildings which contain many student rooms. Students share a room with one or more students or live in a room alone. Students on a floor or on a section of a floor share a bathroom that has several showers and toilets. Coin-operated laundry machines for washing and drying clothes are available in the building. Some residence halls also have cafeterias. Residence halls are in great demand by students because they are located right on campus. A typical residence hall room is furnished with beds, chairs, desks, and a closet. The student supplies his/her own sheets and towels. Residence halls afford excellent opportunities to interact with American students. Residence hall life is normally filled with activities, such as weekend movies, ping pong tournaments, and parties which are organized by the housing area student government. Students do not have much privacy in dorms.. International students should consider that most residence hall occupants are 18 or 19-year old Americans who might not be as serious about their studies as international students usually are.

**On Campus Co-ops:** "Co-ops" or "cooperative living organizations" are similar to residence halls, but are less expensive. Students share cleaning and maintenance chores, which reduces the cost of the room. These rooms may not be air-conditioned. The University of Florida maintains three Co-op buildings; Reid Hall, Buckman Hall, and North Hall. The student applies for a room in the Housing Office and in the Co-ops. The residents of the Co-op vote to admit the new members.

***Family Student Housing:*** There are five University-owned "villages" which serve married students with families. These are Corry Village, Diamond Village, Maguire Village, University Village South, and Tanglewood Village. With the exception of Tanglewood, which is located two miles out of campus on SW 13th Street, the housing villages are located on the perimeters of the campus. A campus bus drives to all the villages on weekdays. Family apartments are available with 1 or 2 bedrooms. Each apartment is equipped with a refrigerator, a stove, and kitchen cabinets.

***Furnished vs. Unfurnished Dwellings:*** Living areas are available both with and without furniture, and new students and faculty must decide which choice they prefer. Dwellings with furniture usually cost more. Items that may be in furnished apartments include a bed, bureau, desk, table, and chairs. You are expected to purchase your own linens and utensils. Unfurnished dwellings do not include furniture, although the apartments will contain a stove, refrigerator, kitchen cabinets, and perhaps a dishwasher. These accommodations are usually less expensive. You then purchase any furniture that you may need, move it into the apartment, and when you leave, you can sell it. It is also possible to rent furniture on a monthly basis from furniture leasing companies. Look in the "Yellow Pages" of the phone book under the category "Furniture Renting and Leasing."

***Rooms:*** A room may be located in a rooming house or in a private home. Some rooms may be "suites" in an apartment complex where the student lives in one room and shares a bathroom, kitchen, and living room with occupants of three or four other rooms in the suite. "Kitchen privileges," or access to a kitchen and utensils may or may not be included in the cost of renting a room in a house. Students interested in renting a room should ask whether the room is furnished, whether the rent includes kitchen privileges, and the normal monthly cost of utilities.

***"Efficiency Apartments:"*** Also called "studio apartments," efficiencies" are usually one large room which includes a kitchen area and bathroom. They are designed for one person or

perhaps two people. Most efficiencies are furnished. The occupant is expected to pay for electricity and water. Efficiency apartments are sometimes found in houses.

***Apartments:*** Gainesville has hundreds of apartment houses. Apartments consist of living room, kitchen, bedrooms, and one or more bathrooms. They are larger than efficiencies. Apartments may be furnished or unfurnished; furnished apartments cost more. You pay the utilities, unless other arrangements are specified. A few apartments offer maid service for an extra charge.

***Houses:*** Sometimes several students who want to live together choose to live in a house. While a few furnished houses are available, most rental houses are equipped only with stoves, refrigerators, and kitchen cabinets. The landlord is responsible for making repairs and caring for the yard unless the lease specifies otherwise. The occupant or "tenant" is responsible for keeping the house clean and paying for water, electricity, heating, and pest control bills unless other arrangements have been made with the landlord.

***Mobile Homes:*** Mobile homes, also called "trailers," can be rented (usually furnished) or purchased on the same basis as a house. These dwellings are usually located in "mobile home parks" with other mobile homes. The owner of the trailer must pay "lot rent" to the owner of the land on which the trailer is located. The tenant may or may not be asked to assume this cost.

***Off Campus Co-ops:*** An off-campus Co-op is similar to an on-campus Co-op in that everyone shares cleaning and maintenance duties. Off campus Co-ops are owned by non-profit organizations and are operated by the renters. Students joining a Co-op get a bed and other furniture in a room with one or two people, as well as meals. There is usually a waiting list for Co-ops, because they are inexpensive (and social places to live) as compared to other housing arrangements. There are two off campus Co-ops in Gainesville: Georgia Seagle Hall, 1002 West University Avenue (338-0045), and Collegiate Living Organization (CLO), 117 NW 15th Street (372-9322, 372-9328).

***Fraternities and Sororities:*** Student members of fraternities and sororities are called "Greeks" because the names of their organizations are comprised of Greek letters (such as Sigma Nu). They live in off-campus private houses that they refer to as their "House." Fraternities have all-male membership, and sororities are for women only. They may refer to each other as "Brothers" and "Sisters." The members of a fraternity or a sorority, who are undergraduates, usually live together in the fraternity's or sorority's house, eat together, and participate in activities together. Fraternities and sororities can be expensive to join. These organizations are very selective in choosing new members, usually accepting students from the same social, economic, and ethnic background as the rest of the members. Fraternity and sorority life is an integral part of the University of Florida campus, and their activities include fund raising activities, parties, and athletic competitions. International students who are interested in joining a fraternity or sorority should contact the fraternity or sorority of their choice for further information.

### **What To Keep In Mind When Looking For Accommodations**

You are not obliged to rent an apartment if you look at it! When looking for accommodations, the prospective tenant should remember that he/she is a customer searching for the right choice for him/her. If you are not satisfied with one dwelling and want to look at others, this is perfectly acceptable. You may tell the landlord that you wish to look around more. You should not feel pressured to accept a dwelling that you do not like. You should always inspect the apartment that you will rent before signing the lease. Get everything in writing before you sign a lease! All expenses of repair, painting, etc. should be written into the lease agreement before you sign it.

***Security Deposits and First and Last Months' Rent:*** A landlord will probably ask you for money before you move into an apartment. This may be in the form of a security deposit and first and last months' rent, and can amount to more than \$1,000 dollars. A "security deposit" is an amount of money that is supposed to guarantee that the tenant will care for the dwelling. If the tenant does not care for the property or clean it before leaving, the landlord

has a legal right to keep the security deposit. Otherwise, the landlord must return the security deposit within a month after the tenant leaves. You should have the agreement about the security deposit in writing included in the lease. Landlords will often ask for the sum of the first and last months' rent before the tenant moves into the apartment. This is to protect the landlord in case the tenant leaves early without paying the rent for the agreed upon lease term. Each landlord has particular requirements for deposits. You should ask the landlord about his particular requirements.

***Signing a lease:*** In most cases, the landlord will require the tenant to sign a lease. A lease is a written agreement between a tenant and a landlord that describes the responsibilities of each party. This is a binding legal document that commits the student to a specific period of residency in the unit. Most landlords in Gainesville want the tenant to sign a one-year lease. This presents a problem if the student leaves for the summer, because you must find someone to assume responsibility for the lease. If you know that you will not be in Gainesville for the entire year, you should not sign a year's lease. Shorter leases are available, or you can "sublease" from someone who has a present lease.

***Utilities:*** Unless someone is already living in the dwelling, the new tenant must start utility services, such as telephone, electricity, and gas. The tenant may need to assume the cost of water, garbage and pest control (a service where a company exterminates insects on a monthly basis), and may want to pay for cable television connection. Prospective tenants should ask the landlord about which services the landlord will provide and which services the tenant must arrange. This is important because utilities require deposits that may be expensive. For more information about utilities, please refer to the "Establishing Utilities Services" section of this handbook.

***Duration of the Lease:*** A prospective tenant should not sign a lease for a time period longer than he anticipates needing the housing. Some landlords will agree to leases of 6-, 9-, or 12-month duration with the option of renewing each additional month. The renter should ask whether he/she can "break" the lease (terminate occupancy early) if he/she gives a one or two

month notice to the landlord. If not, the renter will be required to pay rent until the end of the period covered by the lease even if he/she moves out and lives elsewhere. Many unpleasant disputes arise between landlords who want to keep their property rented and student renters who, after signing a lease, decide for some reason that they wish to live elsewhere. The lease should specify whether "subleasing" is permitted. "Subleasing" is a lease arrangement whereby another person replaces the initial tenant with responsibility for the lease.

**Restrictions:** The lease may contain restrictions, such as not permitting animals or children in the dwelling. Ask the landlord about his/her particular requirements. If you do not obey the restrictions on the lease, the landlord can ask you to leave.

**Student Legal Services:** The University of Florida offers a legal service for students which is called Student Legal Services. Attorneys are hired by the University to advise students in legal matters. If you have any questions about leases, contact their office which is located in Room 369 in the J. Wayne Reitz Union. Their phone number is 392-2196.

**Choosing a Roommate:** New students should consider budget, preferences, habits and safety when choosing living arrangements. Many international students choose to live with a roommate (or roommates) because they wish to save on monthly expenses. Because utility costs are part of the monthly expenses, these should be estimated and considered when deciding how much you and your roommate are willing to pay for rent each month. Finding the right roommate can help to make your experience here more pleasant. Here are some considerations when looking for a roommate: Does that person smoke? If you smoke, will this bother the other person? Because some names are used by both men and women, it is important to ask whether that person male or female? Will the roommate have any pets? Is the person quiet? Does he/she study a lot? Does he/she play the stereo loudly? Does he/she invite friends over regularly? Is the person a neat or messy housekeeper? Will you share expenses for food, or will each person buy his/her own food? Will you share expenses for utilities such as telephone, electricity, cable television, and gas? Whose name will be on the

contract? Will anyone else be spending the night regularly? Is the person religious? Does the person talk about religion a lot or keep religious beliefs to himself/herself? Is the person independent? Does he/she want to share time and interests, or does he/she prefer to be left alone? These questions are important to ask, as are any other issues that may be important to you. Students may experience pressures during the school year from both academic and personal life. An unpleasant "roommate situation" would increase this pressure. Students may have many social pressures during the year that may be augmented by a bad roommate experience at home. Some students choose a living situation for only one semester until they are more familiar with Gainesville and have made some friends with whom they can live. This is possible, as a few landlords rent apartments for a semester. Ask the ISS for help if you feel you need extra assistance.

### **Establishing Utility Services**

The City of Gainesville provides water, gas and electricity, and trash pick-up service, for a charge. "Gainesville Regional Utilities," or "GRU," is the name of the public agency that handles electricity, gas, water, and trash pick-up utility services for the city. Students should go to the Gainesville Regional Utilities office located at 301 S.E. 4th Avenue (334-3434), during normal working hours, and complete an application for services. A picture I.D. is required. People beginning service with GRU must pay a \$150 security deposit for electricity and a \$50 deposit for water. There is no security deposit for refuse pick-up. GRU will charge service charges for connecting water and electricity. This charge is \$10 each, and \$20 if service is begun that day. GRU will bill the customer monthly. For gas service, customers pay a \$30 deposit and \$25 service charge to begin service. They must complete an application and make an appointment for service to be started. Propane gas and other bottled gas or fuel oil is provided by other companies, which may be found in the "Yellow Pages" of the telephone book under the specific headings. Tenants should ask landlords which company serves their particular house or apartment.

*Southern Bell, and American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) Company* provide local and long-distance telephone service in Gainesville. Examples of other long distance phone

service companies are MCI and Sprint. Customers must arrange for telephone service as well as purchase of a telephone. In order to receive telephone service, a customer must contact, Southern Bell office,(780-2355). Customers are billed monthly for local and long distance service. Students who expect to make many long distance calls should also consider service with other long distance companies, such as: U.S. Sprint (1-800-366-4700); MCI (1-800-TALK-MCI); and AT&T (1-800-222-0300). Gainesville has three local television stations (Channel 20, Channel 51, and Channel 5) which can be watched without cable services. Cable television provides many more channels to watch, but the customer must pay monthly to receive the service.

**Cox Cable:** Located at 6020 NW 43 street t (377-2123), Cox Cable Co. can install the cable so that the customer can view extra channels. The customer must provide his own television. In order to establish service, the customer must call to make an appointment to discuss when you wish to begin service. Cox Cable bills customers monthly.

**Pest Control:** Florida residents often find insects troublesome. Cockroaches, ants, and fleas are commonly known as "pests." Several companies in the area will spray monthly to exterminate these insects. Tenants should ask whether the landlord provides pest control, or whether they need to arrange for this service themselves. The companies that offer this service may be found in the "Yellow Pages" of the telephone book. (NOTE: All prices quoted for utility and other deposits, and other requirements are subject to change. You should call each company to verify the information provided in this handbook.)

## **Housekeeping**

Some international students and scholars who come to the United States have never had the need to do their own shopping, cooking, and housecleaning. If these activities are new to you, you will need to understand that in the United States it is completely acceptable for persons who are not servants or women to shop for groceries, cook, wash dishes and clothes, clean house, and to take care of children. Most Americans, and American landlords, believe it is important for living quarters to be kept reasonably clean. This concern for cleanliness is

evident in the supermarket, where many cleaning products are sold. (Caution: Read labels of cleaning supplies carefully, noting precautions for use of these products. All Cleaning supplies should be kept out of the reach of children.)

***Kitchen Stoves and Ovens:*** Kitchen stoves may be either electric or gas. It is important to keep the burners and oven of an electric range clean so that they may operate safely and efficiently. Tenants should clean electric stove burners after each use to prevent food from hardening on them. The electric oven should also be cleaned periodically with an oven-cleaning product unless it is a “self-cleaning” oven, for which you should follow directions carefully. If a gas oven does not light automatically, you should always light the match first, and then slowly turn on the gas and light the pilot light. If the gas burners do not light automatically when turned on, the pilot light beneath them may have gone out. Carefully re light the pilot light in this case. It is dangerous for the pilot light to be out for long periods of time because dangerous levels of gas may escape. Call the utility department if you suspect a problem. If you smell a strong odor of gas, do not light a match or other flame. Call the utility company or fire department or the emergency number (911) immediately! Leave your dwelling immediately, and evacuate all persons inside, while waiting for assistance to arrive. (CAUTION: If a grease fire starts, throw baking soda on it. Do not use water! The best thing to use is an "ABC multi-purpose extinguisher" on this type of fire; these may be purchased in hardware or building supply stores such as Home Depot or Lowes.)

***Refrigerators:*** Refrigerators should be defrosted periodically, when ice or frost around the freezing unit becomes thick. To defrost a refrigerator, one should turn it off, empty it, and allow the water from the melting frost to drip into a pan or the tray beneath the freezer. This may take overnight, but can be done more rapidly if one puts a pan of hot water in the freezer. When the ice has melted, one should empty the tray of water into the sink. It is not a good idea to use sharp instruments to chip off the ice as they may damage the freezer and your eyes. A solution of baking soda and water can be used to clean the inside of the refrigerator. Some refrigerators automatically defrost themselves. The cooling grills on the back of a refrigerator should be vacuumed periodically to remove dust build-up, to enable the

unit to refrigerate more efficiently. A refrigerator that works inefficiently will cost you more on your electric utility bill.

***Disposal of Garbage:*** Because insects are such a problem in Florida, it is important for tenants to empty the trash in their house daily. The city will usually collect garbage at the curbs by houses or at the dumpster sites in apartment complexes. The landlord will inform the tenant about the way to dispose of garbage. Unless the dwelling has a garbage disposal in the sink, one should not put anything down the drain. If there is a garbage disposal in the sink, ask the landlord about what may be put into it. The city also has a recycling program called "Big Blue," and you can use the blue boxes provided to recycle your glass, tin cans, and newspaper. There are recycling centers in the city that may even pay you if you bring your recyclable items to them. You can look in the city phone book "Yellow Pages" under "Recycling".

***Cleaning Kitchens:*** American kitchens are more enclosed than kitchens in other countries. Grease and oil collect on cabinet and refrigerator tops and walls, especially if occupants fry foods often. These areas should be cleaned often in order to avoid unpleasant odors and fire hazards.

***Cleaning Bathroom:*** Sinks, showers, and tubs may be cleaned with one of the cleaning supplies listed at the end of this section. If a sink does not drain properly, ask the landlord or manager to look at it. Because some products damage drains, a plunger is recommended for them. Toilet bowls should be cleaned with a special cleaning solution designed for them. A plunger may also be used for toilets that do not flush properly. Do not put paper items other than toilet paper in the toilet.

***Cleaning Floors:*** Different types of floors will require different kinds of care. A landlord can recommend the way he/she prefers to have the floors cleaned. In apartments, the managers often maintain vacuum cleaners for tenant use. You can also buy vacuum cleaners

at department stores. Upon leaving a dwelling, the occupant is usually expected to shampoo the carpet. The landlord can inform the tenant about proper cleaning procedures.

***Cleaning Products:*** Grocery stores stock several products for cleaning. It is important to read labels carefully in order to understand proper uses and dangers of the products. Here are a few commonly used products: For ovens: *Easy-Off*, *Oven-Off* (self-cleaning ovens do not require any cleaner). For pots and pans: Scrubbing pads made of plastic should be used on teflon pans which are specially coated. Non-teflon pans can be cleaned with steel wool products such as *Brillo* pads or SOS pads, or with plastic pads such as *Scotch-Brite*. For washing dishes: If dishes are washed by hand, detergents such as *Ivory Liquid*, *Joy*, *Dove*, and *Palmolive* may be used. Dishwashers require special soap powder or liquid such as *Cascade*. For sinks and tubs: Powder cleansers such as *Bon-Ami*, *Comet* or *Ajax* may be used, but these may scratch the surface of sinks and tubs. Other cleaners such as *Mr. Clean*, *Tub and Tile Cleaner*, *Bathroom Bubbles*, and *Formula 409* can also clean surfaces and rid them of mildew. For toilet bowls: Products such as *Vanish* and *Sani-Flush* can be used with special brushes for the inside of bowls. For floors: *Mr. Clean*, *Spic 'N Span*, and other such products can be used with a mop to clean dirty floors. Waxes such as *Future* can shine floors. For washing clothes: *Tide*, *Cheer*, *All*, and other products in powder or liquid form will clean most clothes, although *Woolite* should be used to hand wash delicate items. Some products will bleach or soften clothes; read the directions carefully before using bleach, as it may ruin clothes! For windows and mirrors: *Windex*, ammonia and water, or vinegar. For dusting: Use a normal feather duster or towel, or one can use products such as *Pledge* or *Endust* to help collect dust. Many cleaning products may be found in "generic" form in stores. "Generic" products are not marked with a particular brand name, but they perform the same function as their commercial counterparts, and are usually less expensive. Natural cleaning products can also be used, such as baking soda, and vinegar. These are less caustic than strong chemical cleaners, and can be as efficient. Simple products such as chlorine bleach or ammonia can be used in place of expensive cleaners. (Warning: Keep all cleaning products out of reach of children and do not mix products!)

## **HEALTH & SAFETY HEALTH**

### **HEALTH**

#### **Staying Healthy**

Many illnesses surface because of a change in environment or an increase of stress. New students who arrive in the United States witness changes in time zone, environment, and diet that may initially cause sleep or digestive problems. Being kind to yourself, and allowing yourself adequate sleep and leisure time will avoid many trips to the Infirmary! As the school year progresses and finals approach, many students drop their normal eating, sleeping, and recreation patterns. While a modification may be in order during stressful times, complete dismissal of these routines may in fact increase stress, decrease performance, or cause illness. The best way to stay healthy is to stay balanced! This permits you to perform your mental and physical best.

#### **University Health Requirements**

In addition to academic requirements, the University imposes some health requirements on its entering students. The requirements include (1) purchase of comprehensive health insurance; (2) vaccination for measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) and PDD (tuberculosis); (3) completion of the standardized UF health questionnaire. These requirements are intended to protect the student population and enable the Infirmary to administer health care to each student in the most effective way possible. Failure to comply with these regulations will result in cancellation of the student's registration, so it is very important that all students take responsibility for satisfying these requirements.

***University Health Insurance Requirement:*** The University requires all international students to have health insurance which (1) has an aggregate cap equal or greater than \$200,000 ( this means that each illness or accident will be covered up to \$200,000); 2 ) covers for repatriation equal or greater than \$7000; 3) has medical evacuation equal or greater than \$10,000; 4) the insurance must be acceptable in all medical facilities; 5) pre-

existing conditions must be covered after six months enrollment; 6) deductible \$50 per occurrence if treatment is not rendered at the University of Florida Student Infirmary; 7) the insurance must be offered by insurers licensed to write health insurance by the Florida Department of Insurance approval. The student and visiting scholar on J visas are also required to cover their family with health insurance, as health care costs are very high and can in some cases financially destroy a person. More details about health insurance will be discussed in the "Health Insurance" section of this chapter. Health insurance brochures are available at the ISS.

***University Vaccination Requirement:*** All students entering the University are required to show proof of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccinations, and PPD (tuberculosis) vaccination or chest x-ray for tuberculosis, before attending classes. The Infirmary will administer these vaccinations to students who need them for a fee of approximately \$40. Students should bring their immunization records (translated into English) with them when they come to the United States, so that they can show proof of all immunizations.

***U.F. Student Health Questionnaire:*** The Infirmary issues a health questionnaire which inquires about the student's and his/her family's health history. The ISS issues copies of the questionnaire during new student check-in. Spouses who pay a fee \$80 per semester to use the Infirmary should also complete a health history questionnaire.

## **Health Emergencies**

What is a Health Emergency? In health emergencies, someone is suffering from serious bleeding, pain, or is in danger of death.. An emergency differs from other cases in its seriousness and urgency. For example, a person does not normally go to the Emergency Room when he/she suffers from a sore throat or feels slightly ill. Going to the Emergency Room in such cases may result in very expensive charges that the student may be required to pay him/herself. If you are covered by student health insurance, you are encouraged to go to the Infirmary or call the Infirmary. If this is not possible, please go to the nearest medical facility.

***How to Telephone an Ambulance:*** If someone is not available to take the injured person to the hospital or the person cannot drive him/herself, an ambulance may be called. The all-purpose emergency telephone number is just three digits: **911**. Because this number handles health, crime, and fire emergencies, the caller should tell the operator that this is a medical emergency and an ambulance is needed. Children should learn how to dial this emergency number and relate the necessary information in case they must call for help by themselves. Once the 911 operator has connected you with the ambulance service, the caller should: explain the nature of the illness (bleeding, convulsions, etc.); give the street and apartment address of the victim and his/her telephone number; give your own name; ask what you can do to help the victim while the ambulance is on its way. (The paramedics may issue instructions over the telephone while the ambulance is on its way in some urgent situations. Do not hang up until you are instructed to do so.)

**Emergency Telephone Numbers**

Alachua General Hospital (Shands Hospital) .....	372-4321
Crisis and Suicide Intervention Center: .....	376-4444
Emergency Numbers--City of Gainesville/Alachua County: .....	911
Florida Poison Information Center: .....	371-0000
North Florida Regional Hospital (emergencies only by physician referral): .....	333-4000
Poison Information: .....	1 800-282-3171
Rape & Crime Victim Advocate Program: .....	377-7273
Sexual Assault Recovery Service: .....	392-1171
Shands Hospital: .....	395-0111
SPARC (Sexual and Physical Abuse Resource Center): .....	377-8255
Suicide Prevention: .....	376-4444
U.F. Infirmary.....	392-1161

It is a good idea to keep these numbers beside your telephone, along with your name, your address, and your telephone number, in case of an emergency. If your spouse or children do not speak English very well, you should have this information written down for them. In an emergency it is easy to forget one's address, or to forget English if it is not your native language.

## **Health Insurance**

Why Purchase Health Insurance? Besides the fact that the University requires it, American health care is private, and therefore extremely expensive. If a person is not able to pay for him/herself and has not purchased insurance, many hospitals and physicians will refuse to treat them. For this reason, Americans purchase health insurance, which covers the bulk of their medical expenses. The University of Florida requires ALL international students and visiting scholars and their families to register for comprehensive health insurance. Students who fail to comply with this rule will not be able to register for classes.

***Legal Aspects of Health Insurance:*** An insurance policy is a contract between the policy holder and the insurance company. Like leases or other legal documents, every word has special meaning. Not understanding these words and sentences may result in expensive medical bills and confrontations with the insurance company or medical provider. International students and visiting scholars should ask someone at ISS or call the insurance company to clarify the contract with them. These are some words that are commonly found in insurance contracts:

Benefits: The money the insurance company pays the health care facility if you become ill or injured.

Claim: The form and procedure you use when you request money from the insurance company. Sometimes the health care facility will bill the insurance company directly. Other times, you must pay the health care costs yourself first and the insurance company must reimburse you later. When you request reimbursement, you are "filing a claim".

Coverage: These are conditions for which the insurance company will pay. Some insurance policies provide coverage for maternity, dental, or psychiatric care; others do not. The

University requires international students to purchase a policy with "broad coverage," that is, a policy which covers students in different health care situations at different health care facilities.

Deductible: The portion of medical costs that you pay yourself. If the contract indicates "\$100 deductible," this means you pay the first \$100, and the insurance company pays the rest. Most insurance policies require clients to pay a portion of the expenses; this decreases the cost of the insurance policy.

Dependents: Your spouse and children. If you are here with your family, your insurance policy should offer coverage of your dependents.

Exclusions: Cases for which the insurance company will not pay.

Policy: The insurance contract.

Premium: The price you pay for your insurance policy.

Rider: Additional benefits, such as maternity, dental, or health maintenance provisions, for which you pay extra money. These "riders" are added to your basic insurance contract.

***How to Use Your Insurance:*** After you sign your insurance contract, the insurance company will issue you an insurance card, which you should keep in your wallet at all times with other identification cards. If you do not receive a card from the insurance company, please call them to ask for one. You must show this card when you visit the physician or hospital. When you visit the health care facility, ask the person who takes your card whether he/she will send the bill to the insurance company directly, or whether you must file a claim yourself. If you go to the Infirmary and have the insurance chosen by the Student Government, you need only show your card or inform them of this insurance; then you will then never have to pay the bill, as it is at once sent to the insurance company. If you are treated for something for which you have to pay a portion, the insurance company will then inform you of this fact. You should save all bills associated with your visits hospital, laboratory, and pharmacy charges and include these when you file your claim. Make copies of all these bills, as well as of your claim form, so that you have a record of your expenses and correspondence with the insurance company. It is important to read the insurance policy carefully so that you understand what the insurance company will and will not cover.

Policyholders normally must ask the insurance company to send them the company's standardized claim form.

***Maternity Insurance:*** Some students plan to have children while they stay in the United States. Maternity insurance must be purchased BEFORE a child is conceived, or the insurance company will not insure the mother. Costs involved in delivering a normal baby can reach \$4,000 or more, so families who plan to have additional children while in the United States should think about protecting themselves with appropriate maternity insurance.

### **UF Student Health Service (the Infirmary):**

The Student Health Service, also known as the "Infirmary," is located on campus between the Florida Gym and the Space Sciences Research Building (SSRB). The Infirmary is open for regular patient service between 8:00 a. m. and 8:00 p. m., Monday through Friday, during the Fall and Spring Semester. Saturday and Sunday during the Fall and Spring Semester the hours are 12:00 p. m. to 4:00 p. m. During the Summer Semester and in between semesters the hours are 8:00 a m to 4:30 p m weekdays, and no weekend hours. Emergency staff are on call after normal business hours. Scholars are able to use the Infirmary. Please come to ISS for further information.

***Eligibility:*** All students who are registered for classes must pay a mandatory health fee as part of their tuition. This fee is not the same as the health insurance fee. It is a charge which helps pay for the operating costs of the Infirmary. Payment of this health fee permits the student to see a medical expert at the Infirmary for free. The specialty clinics, pharmacy, and laboratory services are not free; students are assessed a minimal charge to use them. If a student is not registered for school for one term, he/she may still pay a fee and receive Infirmary privileges. This "semester off" program also applies to student spouses. A student who has graduated from the University is no longer eligible for this "semester off" program. Student spouses may pay a fee to receive Infirmary privileges. Children may not receive care from the Infirmary, as the Infirmary does not have the staff or facilities for pediatrics. "Pediatrics" is the name for the specialization of children's medicine. Shands Teaching

Hospital, other local hospitals, and private physicians (found in the “Yellow Pages” of the telephone book under the heading "Physicians, Pediatrics") can provide pediatric care to children. Students are encouraged to use the Infirmary whenever possible, because hospital care elsewhere is very expensive. In order to receive reimbursement from the Student Government health insurance plan, a student must receive a referral from the Infirmary before he/she visits another hospital.

***Infirmary Services:*** The Infirmary is staffed with physicians, physician assistants, nurses, psychologists, and counselors who assist students in various areas. Students who need help are advised to make appointments ahead of time by calling 392-1161 during normal business hours. The staff is able to assist students on a walk-in basis in cases of sudden illness or emergency, but the waiting line is often long. The Infirmary has several clinics, including an allergy injection clinic, kidney clinic, blood pressure clinic, wart clinic, orthopedic clinic, dermatology clinic, plastic surgery clinic, allergy clinic, and a women's clinic, among other services. Some of these require referrals and additional fees. Associated with the Infirmary are a mental health section, a sexual assault recovery section, and a sports injury clinic. A laboratory and pharmacy are located at the Infirmary; these services charge fees which are normally lower than other places. The Infirmary also has hospital beds and facilities for inpatient care. It is not equipped to handle surgery or maternity cases. All visits to the Infirmary are confidential; that is, the information pertaining to these visits will not be released to third parties unless the patient authorizes the release in writing.

***How to Use the Infirmary:*** In order to make an appointment, students should call 392-1161 between 8:00am and 5:00p.m. If a student wishes to use a specialty clinic, he/she must first consult a physician, physician assistant, or nurse, who will make a referral to the appropriate clinic. Students must present a valid fee card and picture I.D, which proves they have paid the health fee for that semester. During his/her first visit, the student will be given an Infirmary I.D. card, which must be presented for future visits. The NEXUS tape information system has tapes that explain various Infirmary services. These tapes are listed in the

University telephone directory under the heading "NEXUS" in the "How's Your Health?" section. Call 392-1683 to ask for the tape number of your choice.

***Information for Disabled Students:*** The University of Florida offers many services to disabled students. A Dean in the Office for Student Services (392-1261), P202 Peabody Hall, is responsible for assisting disabled students. Call or visit the office to meet with the Dean if you are a disabled student. The Dean can inform you of the forms of assistance on campus. A few are listed below.

Handi-Van Transportation: The Student Traffic Court sponsors a van which transports permanently and temporarily disabled students around campus. Students can purchase semester boarding passes at a small fee. The van runs between 7:00 a. m. and 7:30 p. m., Monday - Friday, and adjusts its schedule to the needs of the students using the van. Call the Student Traffic Court for schedule information.

Textbook Recording Project: Blind students can arrange to have their reading assignments recited on tape. For more information about this service, contact the Office for Student Services (392-1261) or the Textbook Recording Project Office in Norman Hall.

Speech and Hearing Clinic: The clinic offers services in speech therapy, hearing aid orientation, and speech and hearing orientation and is located in Room 442 of the Arts and Sciences building.

P.L.U.S. (Physically Limited University Students): P.L.U.S. is a student organization which offers support towards disabled students at the University. For more information about P.L.U.S., contact the Office for Student Services.

### **How to Choose a Private Physician:**

It may be necessary to visit a medical specialist if the Infirmary is not able to handle a complex medical condition. In such situations, you should receive a written referral from the Infirmary which directs you to an appropriate medical specialist. In cases not covered by the Infirmary, such as maternity or pediatric care, you can ask for referrals from the Infirmary, from friends, or from the Alachua County Medical Society. The Medical Society's telephone number is 376-0715. The "Yellow Pages" of the telephone directory lists private physicians

alphabetically and by specialty. These listings may be found under the heading, "Physicians & Surgeon - M.D.". When you use a private physician, you must consider how you will arrange for payment of services. Some physicians bill the insurance company directly; others will bill you, and you must file a claim to receive reimbursement for expenses. Physicians in the U.S. are both male and female. If a woman does not feel comfortable about consulting a male doctor, she should request a referral for a female physician.

***Making An Appointment:*** Most doctors and clinics will require you to make an appointment before they will agree to see you. Sometimes the waiting time can be weeks long, so it is important to make an appointment in advance. The medical specialist will be better able to help you if you have some information about health history. Health records, including immunizations, allergies, and medical conditions, should be translated into English before you come to the U.S. or immediately after you arrive in the US. It is important to arrive for your appointment on time since Americans are very time conscious. Physicians see many people in one day and may not have time to see you at all if you are very late for your appointment.

### **Local Hospitals, Urgent Care Centers and Clinics**

The largest local hospitals that are close to the University are listed below. Other hospitals specializing in psychiatry, drug and alcohol dependency, and other areas, are also listed in the telephone book. Alachua General Hospital which now belongs to Shands Hospital (372-4321), 801 SW 2nd Avenue, is located five blocks east of the university. Alachua General Hospital offers a full range of services to patients, including medical/surgical services, obstetrics, pediatrics, and psychiatric care. North Florida Regional Medical Center (333-4000), State Road 26 (University Ave./Newberry Rd.) at I-75, is a hospital which offers a wide range of services, including the Women's Center. Emergency care is only available on a physician's referral basis. Shands Teaching Hospital (395-0111), SW Archer Road, is the University of Florida's teaching hospital. It includes facilities for medical and dental care. Medical students and faculty offer care for patients, using many new techniques in the field. The UF Student Infirmary normally makes referrals to the Physicians' Clinics at Shands

Hospital. These clinics provide medical assistance in different areas. Doctors who teach at the U.F. Medical School handle these clinics. Because the waiting list for these clinics is long, it is important to make an appointment early.

***Urgent Care Centers:*** Urgent Care Centers provide immediate assistance to people with standard injuries, such as bone fractures, lacerations, and sprains. They are not equipped to handle serious emergencies such as those involving internal injury. Urgent Care Centers are less expensive than hospital emergency rooms. They are located throughout Gainesville. Listings are in the city phone book “Yellow Pages” under "Emergency Minor Medical Facilities & Services." A few are listed here:

**Alachua Urgent Care Center:**

Monday - Saturday, 8:00 a. m. - 8:00 p.m.; 925 NW 43rd Street;..... 371-1777

**Emergency Medical Center:**

Monday - Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.; 6121 NW 1 Place; ..... 331-4357

**North Florida Regional Hospital;**

Monday - Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.; University Ave at I-75; ..... 333-4900

The Alachua County Health Department (336-2356), 730 NE Waldo Road, offers clinics in family planning, foreign travel immunizations, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS testing, tuberculosis, and other areas. They also administer shots to children who will be entering the public school system at a cost. The Health Department does not handle emergency cases, and does not administer to everyone. You must call the Health Department to inquire about the clinics for which you may be eligible.

***Women’s Clinics:*** Several women's clinics in Gainesville offer a variety of services from family planning counseling to physical examinations. The Infirmary has a women's clinic. Other women's clinics may be found in the “Yellow Pages” of the telephone directory under the heading "Clinics.”

## **Maternity Care**

**Insurance** The cost of having a baby in the United States can be very expensive--approximately \$4,000 for a normal delivery; therefore, it is advisable to purchase maternity benefits as part of your health insurance policy. It is crucial that you purchase maternity insurance before you conceive your child, or an insurance company will not cover you.

**Length of Time in a Physician's Care:** Most physicians and midwives prefer to monitor an expectant mother throughout her pregnancy, so pregnant women should choose an obstetrician (a doctor who specializes in delivering babies) early. Care before delivery is known as "prenatal care;" care after delivery is called "postpartum care." If the Infirmary or a friend cannot refer you to an obstetrician, consult the "Yellow Pages" of the telephone directory under the category "Physicians - Gynecology & Obstetrics" or ask for a referral from the Alachua County Medical Association. (376-0715). Childbirth Preparation Classes. The local hospitals have facilities for delivering babies, and offer "Childbirth Preparation" classes for expectant mothers. These classes are intended to orient expectant mothers to changes in their bodies and the childbirth process. Contact the local hospitals to find out more about their childbirth preparation courses.

## **The American Concern with Personal Cleanliness**

Some visitors to the USA may not be aware of the concern for personal cleanliness which Americans have. They may not realize that body odor or strong breath is considered offensive in this culture. This is especially a problem in Florida due to high degree of humidity. Students who come from countries where high humidity is not a problem may be unaware of this problem. They may therefore consider extreme efforts towards cleanliness wasteful or unnecessary. Not being aware of others' concerns, however, could lead to confrontations or problems with roommates, classmates, or officemates, since they might be embarrassed to tell you what they are thinking. If you suspect that others are avoiding you for this reason, you may want to ask a close friend about it or discuss it with one of the counselors at the ISS

## **Dental Care**

The preoccupation with cleanliness carries over to dental care. The average American visits a dentist or hygienist (a professional who cleans teeth) usually once or twice per year. By caring for teeth properly, they should last for a person's lifetime.

### ***Where to Go for Dental Care:***

The University of Florida has a Dental School, which offers a less-expensive source of dental care in the Gainesville community. Patients can make appointments with dental school professors and students during the school year. Because care is provided at a slightly lower cost, the waiting list is often long. Patients are encouraged to make appointments early. The UF Dental School (392-4261), is located in the Shand's Hospital. Private dentists may be found in the "Yellow Pages" of the telephone book under the heading, "Dentists." If you have any questions regarding choice of dentists, please contact the ISS.

## **Mental Health**

What is Mental Health? Good mental health relates to good physical health. Maintaining a positive mental state permits a person to function effectively in normal and stressful situations. Mental health can be a difficult topic to define specifically, because the definition varies between cultures. People who normally cope very effectively with situations in their own countries may find themselves needing assistance from time to time, due to the new cultural environment. In general the following behaviors may indicate an unhealthy mental state: prolonged depression; suicide contemplation; physical, verbal or mental abuse; alcohol abuse, or drug abuse. If you are experiencing any distressing feelings, or know someone else who is, you should seek help. Many sources of help are available to people who need mental health counseling, and it is expected that people will take the initiative themselves to seek help when they need it. ***Seeking help is acceptable, expected, and confidential.*** Some people refuse to seek help because they feel uncomfortable about sharing their personal concerns with outsiders. If you feel you may need some help in overcoming a situation, please do not hesitate to ask for it. Consultations with counselors at the ISS or the

Counseling Center at Peabody Hall, and other support offices, are confidential. A counselor can only offer support, help and concern if you let them know you need them.

**Where to Go for Help:** The ISS staff is especially aware of the difficulties international visitors face. No question is foolish, except the one which is not asked! Please feel free to come in and see one of the counselors. Below is a list of resources that can help students in different situations. The Office of Student Services also publishes the "Student Lifesaver," an excellent pamphlet which lists resources for specific areas.

General Mental Health, Depression:

ISS: .....	392-5323 ex 600
NEXUS (refer to Univ. telephone book for tapes).....	392-1683
Student Mental Health, Infirmary: .....	392-1171
University Counseling Center .....	392-1575

Suicide:

Alachua County Crisis Center.....	264-6789
Crisis & Suicide Intervention Center: .....	334-0888
NEXUS Counselline (refer to Univ. phone book) .....	392-1683
Student Mental Health, Infirmary: .....	392-1161
University Counseling Center: .....	392-1575

Drug Abuse

Corner Drugstore .....	334-3800
Infirmary .....	392-1161
Shands Emergency Room .....	395-0050

Alcohol Abuse:

Alcoholics' Anonymous: .....	372-8091
BACCHUS .....	392-1261

Rape/Sexual Assault

Emergency Numbers--Gainesville/Alachua County .....	911
Sexual Assault Recovery Service, Infirmary.....	392-1171

University Police Department .....	392-1111
Battery, Physical Abuse	
SPARC (Sexual & Physical Abuse Resource Center).....	377-8255

This list is not intended to be comprehensive. For information about where to go for help, call the ISS (392-5323), the Office for Student Services (392-1261), or the Information and Referral Service of United Way (375-4636).

**What Everyone Should Know About AIDS (HIV):**

The Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome or AIDS is a serious health threat to persons of every race, nationality, age group, and sexual preference. It is an illness caused by a virus which can destroys the immune system of the body. The virus eliminates one’s capacity to fight against other illnesses that invade your body. These illnesses can cause one’s death. So far there is no cure for AIDS. Who you are has nothing to do with whether or not you are in danger of being infected. AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease. There are very few ways in which one can become infected with the AIDS virus. It can be transmitted through semen, vaginal secretions, and blood. As a result, one can become infected by having sexual relation with an infected person, or by using drugs and sharing the needle or the syringe. Babies of women who are infected with the AIDS virus can be born with the AIDS virus, because AIDS can be transmitted through the blood of the mother to the baby during pregnancy or labor. Receiving infected blood has infected some hemophiliacs and others. Donating blood at a blood bank or hospital *does not* put you at risk of being infected with AIDS. The needles used for blood donation are new and sterile, and once used, they are destroyed. There is no way you can get AIDS through blood donation. Some persons have been infected with the AIDS virus by receiving transfusions of blood before 1985, before the AIDS virus was identified. Today all donated blood from the United States is screened for the AIDS virus. For more information, contact the Civitan Regional Blood Center, 1221 NW 13th Street, (334-1000), or the Alachua County Health Department, or the Florida AIDS Hotline (1-800-FLA-AIDS or 1-800-352-2437), or a counselor at the ISS. The Alachua County Health Department or the Civitan Regional Blood Center can give a test for the AIDS virus. To

prevent the sexual transmission of AIDS, condoms (prophylactics, "rubbers") in combination with spermicides (foam or cream used with an ingredient that kills sperm) is the best method for those who engage in sexual relations with a partner whose sexual history is not known.

## **SAFETY**

*Home Security.* Some of the best home security practices are also the simplest. Gainesville has its share of crime, and you should always be conscious of your own personal safety. Lock all doors and windows when you leave your home or apartment. Burglars or criminals will try the unlocked dwellings first. Don't make it easy for them by not keeping your doors locked. You should lock your doors and close your windows at night before going to bed. If you leave your apartment for even a few minutes, such as going to the laundry room, always lock your door. If you live alone or have easily accessible windows, you should lock your windows at night before you go to bed as well, or have protective devices such as security locks put on your windows to prevent break-ins. Don't assume second story windows are safe. Burglars can climb! Install "dead-bolt" locks on exterior doors. Simple "spring-bolt" door locks can be easily opened from the outside by experienced burglars. Install adequate outdoor lighting by your entry doors. Floodlights or other bright outdoor lights prevent intruders from gaining entry to your home or apartment. Leave them on at night whether you are at home or away. If you are a single woman, list your first name initial only in the phone book. Ask the phone company for other ways to protect yourself from unwanted callers. Also, list your first initial on your mailbox or door so that it is not obvious you are female. Even if you have other female roommates, you may all want to conceal your single female identity. Never leave a spare key outside the entry door, as experienced burglars also know to look under the doormat and other "secret" places. Never open the door to a stranger. Ask for identification through the door. If your door has a peephole, use it to see who is there (If your door does not have a peephole, discuss with your landlord about getting one installed.). If you do not know the person, do not open the door. Ask through the door what they want. If a stranger wants to use your phone, ask the number, and make the call for the person, or call the police or 911 and make a report for the person. Do

not open the door. If strangers present themselves as law enforcement officers, ask for their name and identification. Call the law enforcement agency to verify that that officer is there on an official call. If strangers present themselves as repair or delivery persons, call the company to verify the authenticity of the person before you open the door. You can check the person's identification through the peephole or window. Have all the locks rekeyed when you move into a new dwelling. You may need to have your landlord's permission first, as the manager may need to have access for maintenance, and to have a spare key in case you lock yourself out. Install a protective device on any sliding glass doors if there is none. Burglars can gain entry through sliding glass doors as well as other doors. Take your keys out before you get to your door and have them ready to use, so you don't stand before your door fumbling for your keys. Make sure your valuables are not in plain sight, in view of passersby. If you have valuables, close your drapes so those items are not in view. Any time you leave your apartment, close your drapes. Keep the telephone numbers of local emergency services such as fire and police beside your telephone. Windows should have additional protective devices to prevent the window locks from being forced open. Hardware stores carry home security devices. External door hinges should either be changed or altered with protective screws to prevent a burglar from removing the entire door to gain access to your dwelling. Garage doors should also be secured. Teach children never to open the door to strangers. Report suspicious persons or activities in your neighborhood to the police. Never give out your name, address, or phone number or other personal information to unknown callers. Never tell a stranger that your neighbor is not at home. Never give out information that you are alone, or when you will be away from home or on vacation. Teach children never to give out such information. If you hear or suspect a burglar is in your home while you are there, avoid a confrontation. If possible, call the police immediately. If you come home and your dwelling has obviously been entered, do not go inside. The intruder may still be inside. Go to a neighbor or other location to call the police. If you come home and your dwelling has been burglarized, do not go inside. Go to a neighbor to use the phone to call police, and wait at the neighbors until the police arrive. Some of these recommendations may sound a little extreme. But if you are new to this country, you may perceive all Americans as friendly, and may not expect criminal activity from a friendly

stranger. We are not advising you to suspect everyone you meet as a criminal, but do try to exercise good judgement. If you are suspicious of a person or suspect that you are in danger, do not hesitate to call the university police (392-1111). It is better to let them check out the situation. You might talk with friends or a counselor at the ISS if you have more concerns regarding what type of situations to avoid. The university police department has many brochures on home safety tips, personal safety, and any topic that has to do with safety. You may stop by and ask to have any brochure you would like, and they can also give you advice on these subjects.

***Personal Safety Tips:*** Practice the "buddy system", let friends or neighbors know where you are going, when you plan to return, and what routes you will take, and how you can be reached at your destination. Travel with a "buddy" to and from your activities. Pay attention to those walking around you. Walk in an alert and confident manner in parking lots and on the street. Learn self defense techniques. Travel in well-lit, highly traveled areas. Avoid taking "short cuts", especially through dense, wooded areas, even during the day. Don't walk close to bushes, parked cars, alleys, or suspicious-acting people. Don't jog at night or in the early morning when streets are deserted. Guard your purse, backpack, or wallet. Don't carry large amounts of cash or other valuable objects. This is especially the case if you are studying in the library. Even if you leave for a moment, take your things with you. If you think someone is following you, switch directions or go across the street. If you're still being followed, go to a public place and ask for help. Trust your instincts. If someone or something makes you uneasy, get out or away. Have a "fire drill" in your dwelling, so that in case of an emergency you will know escape routes. Keep your car doors locked, especially when you are driving. As you approach your car, look around it and in the back seat before entering. Don't hitchhike. Not only is it dangerous, in some cases it is illegal. Do not pick up hitchhikers. Do not accept rides from strangers when you are stranded with car trouble. If your car breaks down, raise the hood, and wait in your locked car for a law enforcement officer to arrive. If someone stops to help, ask him or her to call for assistance for you. Don't go with a stranger to call for assistance. Keep valuables out of plain view in your car. It is best not to keep valuable items in your car at all, even if in your trunk. Burglars can

break into a car or its trunk in minutes. If you ride the bus, use well lit, busy bus stops. Sit near the driver, and don't doze off or fail to pay attention. If someone harasses you, say loudly "leave me alone". Watch who gets off the bus with you, if you feel uneasy, go to a public place to ask for help. If you get an obscene or harassing phone call, hang up as soon as you realize the nature of the call. Don't try to find out who the caller is, and don't respond. If the calls keep coming, notify the police, keep a log of the times, what the caller said, a description of the voice, and any background noise.

**Campus Security:** The University of Florida campus is a secure place. Doors to residence halls are kept locked. The Housing Office maintains residence hall security from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. There are emergency "blue" phones located across the campus. These phones are directly linked to the UPD which is the University Campus Police. All housing staff have uniforms and identification cards. Residence hall staff are trained for security and crisis situations. Information desks are set up in residence halls. To enable the University to maintain campus security, students must do their part. Follow the above personal and home safety tips. Go to the UPD and get brochures on safety measures. Use good sense, and report suspicious or criminal activity. It is far better to have the police investigate what may turn out to be a non-threatening matter, than to allow a crime to be committed or to become a victim of a crime.

**SNAP (Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol)** Students who must walk on campus at night do not have to walk alone. The Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol, or "SNAP", is available to every student. You call the SNAP Office (392-SNAP or 392-7627) at the University Police Department in advance of when you need to be escorted. Then, a SNAP officer will meet you at the time and location you request, and walk with you to your campus destination. You can ask the University Police Department to verify the identify of the SNAP officer, so there is no doubt of your safety. This service is free. Call the UPD for more information. IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

**Emergency Phone Numbers**

University Police Department: ..... 392-1111

Alachua County Sheriff's Office: ..... 367-4000  
Gainesville Police Department ..... 334-2400

**Alcohol Awareness:** Florida has strict laws concerning the use of alcohol, specifically regarding drinking alcohol while driving, and underage drinking.

**Drunk Driving:** If you are driving a car, moped, or bicycle, and are under the influence of alcohol (or any illegal drug), you may be arrested for "driving under the influence" (or DUI). Penalties are severe, even for the first offense.

**Underage Drinking:** Florida's laws prohibit the sale of alcohol to anyone under age 21. The penalties for this are also severe. Possession of alcoholic beverages by a person who is under age 21 is illegal. Being arrested for the sale or possession of alcoholic beverages by underage persons can result in a jail sentence and/or a fine and possible suspension of driving privileges. Misrepresenting your age or using a "fake I.D." is also illegal and punishable by law.

**Open Container Law:** It is also against the law to have open containers of alcoholic beverages while driving, whether or not you are consuming them or are "under the influence".

**Traffic Laws:** Florida has many traffic regulations that affect not only drivers of automobiles, but also bicyclists, moped and scooter drivers, motorcyclists, and pedestrians.

**Pedestrians:** Persons on foot must obey pedestrian traffic control devices ("Walk/Don't Walk" signs, crosswalks, intersection crosswalks, etc.). Don't walk in the street if there is a sidewalk. Be aware of traffic as you walk and as you wait at an intersection to cross. Never step in front of a moving vehicle. They may not see you, and if you are not in the pedestrian crosswalk they may think they do not have to stop for you. In fact, you are required to yield

the right-of-way if you are not in a pedestrian crosswalk. Never cross diagonally across an intersection.

**Vehicles:** Vehicles must yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk. Every driver must exercise caution to avoid hitting any pedestrian or bicyclist. Drivers should exercise extreme caution when observing any child or incapacitated person near the roadway. If a bicyclist is in a crosswalk, the bicyclist has the same protection as a pedestrian, and must obey the pedestrian rules while in the crosswalk.

**Bicyclists:** A bicyclist riding on sidewalks or in crosswalks must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, and must give an audible signal before passing or overtaking a pedestrian. Bicyclists are considered vehicles, and must obey all traffic laws as if they were cars. Never run stop signs, traffic lights, ride against traffic (on the wrong side of the road, not in the flow of traffic), or ride at night without a light. It is required to use an attached front headlight on your bicycle if you ride at night, and to have a red rear reflector attached to the bicycle. It is recommended to wear a protective helmet when riding a bicycle. A bicycle helmet is an inexpensive safety device that can be easily purchased in stores such as Wal-Mart for approximately \$25. Wearing a helmet may protect you from head injuries or even death if you are in an accident. It is also recommended to use hand and arm signals to indicate to drivers your intentions, although you cannot trust drivers to see you. Give a warning to a vehicle to alert them to your presence if you feel they may hit you. You may not carry another person on your bicycle, unless you have a permanent and regular seat attached to carry a child, or a bicycle trailer. If you must ride on the roadway, and cannot keep up with the speed of the cars, you are required to stay as far as possible to the right of the roadway. The brakes on your bicycle must be able to stop you within 25 feet from a speed of 10 miles per hour on a dry, level, clean pavement. You cannot wear a personal stereo headset while riding your bicycle. You must keep at least one hand on the handlebars at all times. It is highly recommended that you purchase a "U-Lock" or other heavy-duty bicycle lock to protect your bicycle from being stolen. It is also recommended to have a personal identification number engraved on your bicycle's frame to identify it.

**Mopeds:** Mopeds must not drive on the sidewalk or in crosswalks. You must follow the same traffic rules as cars. If your moped travels less than 30 miles per hour, has less than 50 cc engine power, or less than two brake horsepower, and you are 16 years of age or older, you do not have to wear a helmet, although it is strongly recommended. You must carry liability insurance, the same as an automobile, and you must have a permanent tag on your moped. Do not run a red light or a stop sign. The fines for these offences are very high. To operate a moped without a light or brakes is illegal. If you were to be arrested and convicted for operating a moped with a driver's license that is suspended or revoked, for reckless driving, or for driving under the influence (DUI), you could be sentenced to serve a jail term, which, consequently, could cause immigration problems.

### **Mandatory Safety Belt Laws**

Florida State law requires the driver and front-seat passengers to wear seat belts. If a front-seat passenger under 16 years of age is not restrained by a child restraint device or fails to wear a seat belt, the driver of the car will be charged with violating this law. If a front-seat passenger 16 years of age or older fails to wear a seat belt, the passenger will be charged with violating this law. Wear lap belts around your hips, not your stomach. Fasten them snugly. Wear a shoulder belt only with a lap belt. More than half of the accidents that cause injury or death happen: 1) at speeds of less than 40 miles per hour (mph), and 2) within 25 miles of home. All children 5 years old or younger must use a child restraint device when riding in a motor vehicle. Traffic accidents are the number one killer of young children in this country. Over 90 percent of deaths and 80 percent of injuries to children in car crashes could be prevented by using approved child restraints. Infant carriers or children's car seats must be used for children 3 years old or younger. Children's car seats or safety belts may be used for 4- and 5-year olds. All infant carriers and car seats must be approved by the U.S. Government. The North Central Florida Safety Council at 3710 NW 51st Street (377-2566), has an approved list of U.S. Government-approved child safety seats. In a crash, you are far more likely to be killed if you are not wearing a safety belt. Wearing both the shoulder belt and the lap belt makes your chances of living through a crash twice as good. In the event of

an accident, safety belts: 1) keep you from being thrown from the vehicle (your risk of death is five times greater if you are thrown from a vehicle in a crash); 2) keep you from being thrown against parts of your car, such as the steering wheel or windshield; 3) keep you from being thrown against passengers in the car, or their being thrown against you in a crash; and 4) keeps you, the driver, behind the wheel, where you can control the car.

**Leaving Children Unattended or Unsupervised in Motor Vehicles:**

NEVER leave a child younger than 6 years old unattended or unsupervised in a motor vehicle. It is a violation of Florida traffic laws to leave a child unattended in a car for more than 15 minutes. However, you should never leave a child alone in a car, or anywhere else for that matter, for even a second! It is a violation of state law to leave a child unattended for any period of time if the motor of the vehicle is running or if the health of the child is in danger. Also, a child left alone in a closed car may suffer heat stroke or even death in Florida's hot climate. (Animals left in a closed car may also suffer heat stroke or death if left in a closed car for even minutes.)

**False or Altered Driver Licenses:**

It is illegal to use a "fake" driver license, or to alter your own driver license. If you use another person's license as your own, it is a misdemeanor criminal offense. The penalty will include fines, revocation or suspension of your license, or a jail sentence. It is a felony to alter your own driver license, for example, to make your date of birth different to make you of legal drinking age. A felony is a criminal offense for which you will be arrested, in addition to fines, and revocation or suspension of your license. Additionally, it is a felony to use a false name to apply for a driver license, or to give false information when applying, or to obtain a license under fraudulent circumstances. The penalty is immediate arrest, and a maximum fine of \$5,000 and imprisonment up to 5 years, and your driving privileges may be suspended for one year. If you drive without having a valid driver license, or let someone drive your car or know of someone who drives without a license, this is also illegal. The person driving without a license, and possibly the person knowing about it is subject to punishment.

## **Child Care**

If a child is between 5 and 18 years of age, he or she should be placed in school. If a child is younger than that, the parents may decide to take care of the child at home. There are also childcare centers for younger children. If the parent needs assistance in caring for the child, whether school age or younger, on a weekend or an afternoon, then some type of childcare may be appropriate. It is illegal to leave children unattended for long periods of time. Parents sometimes take their children to day care centers so they may run errands. There are many childcare centers in Gainesville. Some places have age limitations. The term "babysitting" usually refers to childcare in the family or babysitter's home. "Day care" normally refers to a more formal arrangement where the parents leave their children daily. Child care, day care and babysitting are expensive.

### **Child Care Centers**

*What to Look for in a Child Care Center:* Childcare centers are staffed with people who have different qualifications. Some may have educational certification, while others may not. Parents may want to research a center thoroughly before sending their children there. Friends are often excellent sources of information about which childcare centers have the best reputations. Childcare centers are in the "Yellow Pages" of the city phone book under "Child Care Center." Baby Gator: The most demanded child care center for the University community is the Baby Gator Nursery (392-2330, 392-7900), an educational research center for child development. Baby Gator is located on Village Drive, adjacent to Corry Village and the Holland Law Center. The Center can accommodate 110 children who are between the ages of 3 and 5. Baby Gator charges a fee for their care and has a waiting list. Baby Gator maintains current lists of other recommended child care centers in Gainesville.

## **Schools**

School care differs from childcare. School lasts during the day hours; attendance is part of the child's progression in education, and is required by law. The Alachua County School system requires that children be at least 5 years of age by September 1 of that school year in

order to begin public school. State law requires that children attend school until they reach the age of 16. Schools are categorized as "public" or "private." "Public" refers to those schools funded by taxpayers and the government, and they are free. "Private" refers to those independent institutions that charge tuition and may have special admissions requirements. These private schools are sometimes affiliated with churches. Most international students send their children to public schools.

### **Public School Registration**

In order to register a child for school, a parent must present the following documents to the Alachua County School Board (955-7300), located at 620 East University Avenue: 1) the child's passport and visa; 2) the child's immunization record (translated if necessary and approved by the Alachua County Health Department); and 3) proof of a physical examination. Proof of diphtheria, polio, and MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) immunization is required by the School Board. Parents should call the School Board to see whether the list of vaccinations has changed when their child is ready to enter school. If proof of these vaccinations is not available, the Alachua County Health Department, located at 730 North Waldo Road (955-2415), will re-vaccinate individuals with these required "shots" at a charge. The immunization records must be translated into English before the Health Department will verify them. The Health Department does not translate documents or perform physical examinations. Physical exams must be verified on the Alachua County School Health form available from the School Board. The Urgent Care Centers (located in the "Yellow Pages" of the city phone book under the heading "Hospitals") or private physicians can perform the exam for a charge. The Urgent Care Centers and physicians have copies of the Health Form in their office. The parent should also make arrangements to meet with the Bilingual Education Director at the School Board, who will test the child for fluency in English, and will recommend an appropriate school with adequate facilities.

### **Independent Schools**

At independent schools, parents pay for the child's tuition. Each school has its own philosophy of education and therefore may impose different teaching methods. Each school determines its own tuition rates and entrance requirements. A list of private schools may be

found in the "Yellow Pages" of the telephone directory under the heading, "Schools -- Private."

### ***P. K. Yonge Laboratory School***

This a school affiliated with the University of Florida. It teaches children in elementary and high schools. Parents must place their child's name on a waiting list in order to attend the school. Because the waiting list is often months or years long, parents should add their child's name to the list immediately if they are interested in having their children attend the school.

### **Transportation To and From School:**

The county provides bus service to different areas. The School Board has updated information about the current routes. Parents of children who do not live on a bus route may drive their children to school individually or in "car pools" (where different parents take turns driving each week), walk with their children, or permit their children to walk or ride by themselves. If parents permit their children to go to school unattended, they should emphasize the importance of safety to their children. We advise parents to accompany their children to school.

### ***Safety:***

The county hires traffic police officers to assist students in crossing the street when they walk to school. Nevertheless, children should be instructed to cross the street only when no cars are in sight. They should also be warned not to speak to strangers. Other safety precautions, such as walking together in groups, should be taken. Some parents pin identification cards to their children's clothes, so the children may be identified if they should become lost. This is especially important for children who have not mastered the English language. It is also important to teach children how to call their home telephone number or the 911 emergency number and inform the person at the end of the line of their name, location, and need.

### **The School Day**

Except for kindergarten, the school day lasts from approximately 8:00 a m to approximately 2:00 p m, with recess and lunch times in between. Starting and ending times for the school day may vary from school to school because of the school bus schedules. Many parents pack lunches in lunch boxes or paper bags for their children, although it is also common to purchase lunches in the school cafeterias, too. For more information, contact the School Board.

## TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

### ON CAMPUS AND AROUND GAINESVILLE

The City of Gainesville operates buses that drive around the city on pre-set routes. The fare is 50 cents per ride. Buses do not run on Sundays. Before renting a place to live, you should find out if it is located on a bus line. ISS obtains copies of the bus schedules. It is also possible to order them from the Gainesville Regional Transit System, at 100 S.E. 10th Avenue (334-2600). Bus routes around campus stop at the commuter parking lot on North-South Drive, the fraternities, family housing areas, the health center, and various other points around campus. Students may purchase bus passes for a semester or year, or can pay 25 cents per ride. For more information about the campus buses, call the Traffic & Parking Office that is located at 354 North-South Drive (392-2241). Permanently or temporarily disabled students may use the Handi-Van, a special van equipped with a hydraulic lift which enables wheelchair-bound persons to board easily. Disabled students should call the Traffic & Parking Office to summon the driver. Passes for the semester or year must be purchased from the Traffic & Parking Office to use the van.

### **Bicycles**

Bicycles may be the best form of transportation around campus because they are quick, easy to ride, and easy to park. Bicycle parking areas surround all school buildings. However, bicycle riders should be aware of a few essential points when riding their vehicles. **1) The first rule: LOCK YOUR BICYCLE!** Bicycle thieves will take bicycles that are unlocked. Various types of locks may be purchased in stores. UFIC and the University Police Department (UPD), located at Museum Road & Newell Drive (392-1409), can show you literature about the different kinds of locks which are recommended. The UPD will also engrave student numbers on bicycles, so that the bicycle can be identified if recovered.

### **2) The second rule regarding bicycles: FOLLOW THE BICYCLE TRAFFIC LAWS.**

The UPD is very strict about issuing tickets. The most commonly violated regulations are: 1) failure to stop completely at a stop sign, and 2) riding the wrong way down a one-way

street. These tickets are usually \$80, regardless of the violation, no matter if you are driving a car, riding a bike, or driving a moped! The UPD has brochures on bicycle safety, violations and fines. You may want to stop by the UPD office get this free information. 3) If bicyclists do not pay their tickets, their driver licenses will be suspended. Furthermore, if you a stopped for future violations, and have outstanding tickets, you can be arrested

### **Mopeds**

Mopeds appeal to many students because they are inexpensive, easy to maneuver, and easy to store. Although it is not necessary to obtain a license to drive most mopeds, it is important to remember that traffic rules are strictly enforced in Gainesville, and that police officers will issue tickets to violators. Riders may want to wear helmets when riding their mopeds for safety. The UPD also has a brochure on moped safety, and traffic laws which apply to mopeds. There are also some moped laws you should be aware of: 1) moped operators must have at least a restricted State of Florida driver license, 2) if the moped has an engine with more than 50 cc's engine displacement, then it is a motorcycle and requires a special motorcycle license.

### **Cars**

Do you really need a car? It may seem that everyone here needs a car, and that everyone has one. In fact, many students do not own cars, and it is quite possible to live in a city like Gainesville without having one. Cars are expensive to buy, repair, and maintain. Traffic and parking violation tickets can also be very costly. Cars will require continuous expenditures such as vehicle registration, insurance, and fuel. It is imperative for drivers from other countries to be familiar with the Florida Vehicle Laws governing driving in Florida. Failure to do this can result in traffic tickets or serious accidents. Some of the most commonly violated rules are those which deal with speed limits and parking. Traffic tickets are a minimum of \$52. Parking tickets can range from \$5 to \$100 depending on the violation. The state of Florida enforces strict penalties for drivers who operate vehicles under the influence of alcohol. These include hundreds of dollars in fines, weeks of community service work, revocation of your driver's license, mandatory attendance at driving school and a possible jail

term! Don't drive drunk! Please see the section on Safety for other advice on drinking and driving dangers. The UPD also has brochures on the traffic laws, drunk driving penalties, and other related topics.

Driver's Licenses: Drivers who hold only international driver's licenses, or who move to Florida and will drive a car or moped, must obtain a Florida state driver's license within 30 days of arriving in Florida. The Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles has two Gainesville Division of Driver Licenses offices. The Northwest Driver Licenses office is located at 5830 NW 34th Street (955-2111 for information), just behind the Highway Patrol Station on Highway 441, and across from the Department of Motor Vehicles. The office is open Tuesday through Friday, between 7:00am and 6:00pm. Drivers who receive a driver license for the first time must take a written test, a road test, and a vision test. Learner's permits are available for those people who have not held a driver license before. Applicants must bring with them two legal documents containing matching names and dates of birth. A passport, an I-94, and a letter certified from UFIC are acceptable forms of identification. Florida Driver's Handbooks are available from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles offices, and the UPD.

Automobile Registration: The Alachua County Tag office is located at 5801 NW 34th Street (374-5263), across from the Northwest Driver Licenses office. You must register your automobile with the Alachua County Tag Office when you purchase it, or once you arrive in Florida with your car from another state. Upon registering your vehicle, you will receive a license plate or "tag." The registration charge depends upon the weight of the automobile, and other factors. Florida Motor Vehicle Regulations are available at the Tag Agency. Owners must renew their registration annually. Automobile owners must bring a certificate of title of the vehicle, proof of insurance, and a driver's license to the Tag Agency to apply for a tag, title and registration. All of these are handled at the Alachua County Tag Agency. The office is open Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a m and 5:00 p m.

Automobile Insurance: State of Florida law requires all automobile owners to have car insurance with a minimum of at least Personal Injury Protection (PIP) and property damage. PIP insurance covers 80% of your medical expenses, or 80% of your passengers' medical expenses in the event of an accident. Florida has a "no-fault" insurance law in which no matter who is at fault in an accident, your own medical expenses will be covered (up to 80%; health insurance usually covers most of the other 20%, less your deductible). Property damage insurance covers damage to another car, a house, or other personal property, if you are at fault. Liability insurance protects you from being sued by someone else in the event of an accident for their injuries or personal property damage up to the limits of your coverage. Collision insurance, usually for newer cars, compensates for damages to the insured driver's car in cases of a collision with another car. Comprehensive insurance covers losses caused by vandalism, fire, broken windshield, theft, or other abuses. ***Failure to have automobile insurance is against the law***, and leads to fines, possible imprisonment, and having your driver's license revoked or suspended. Many private companies offer automobile insurance at different rates. A listing of these agents can be obtained from the "Yellow Pages" of the telephone book under the heading "Insurance--Automobile." When purchasing car insurance, it is important to consider that the amount of insurance purchased should depend on the value of the car. It is wise to compare prices and the extent of coverage with at least two automobile insurance agents before choosing a policy. Insurance rates vary with the company; these depend on the value of the car, the age of the driver, and past driving records of the driver. You should choose the type of insurance coverage that best meets your driving needs, and meets the state law requirements.

Mandatory Safety Belt Usage Laws: State of Florida law requires the driver and front seat passengers to wear seat belts. If a front-seat passenger under 16 years of age is not restrained by a child restraint device or fails to wear a seat belt, the driver of the car will be charged with violating this law. If a front-seat passenger 16 years of age or older fails to wear a seat belt, the passenger will be charged with violating this law. In a crash, you are far more likely to be killed if you are not wearing a safety belt. The section on Safety has more information regarding safety belt laws.

Buying an Automobile: Because new automobiles are expensive many students purchase used cars if they decide they need a vehicle. It is wise to be cautious and curious when buying a used car. Prospective buyers should ask many questions about the condition of the vehicle. An organization called "Consumer Reports" prints an annual Buyer's Guide for automobiles, which lists the automobile make, year, and repair record of models. The Public Library carries copies of this magazine. You should always take the used automobile that you want to buy to a mechanic before you buy it. For a fee, he will inspect the vehicle for mechanical problems. This informs the prospective buyer about possible problems they may encounter before they buy the car. This small investment may save hundreds of dollars in avoided repair bills. It is important for international visitors to choose a car that they can sell when they leave. If you buy a car from an individual, insist on a written receipt or bill of sale. The seller may have to accompany you to the Tag Agency to fill out forms. A used or new car dealer must give you a receipt or bill of sale. In addition, you need the title to the car, which proves your ownership. The seller or car dealer must sign the title over to you. Never buy a car for which the seller does not have the title! Many automobile salesmen will make promises they cannot keep to car buyers, or will coerce customers to purchase a car. You are the customer and should choose the item you want. Be sure to have the salesman's promise in writing. "Buyer beware." It is not a good idea to purchase automobile from an automobile salesman by yourself. They are very skilled at manipulating customers. Ask a friend who has previously negotiated for a car to go with you so that he/she can bargain with the salesman. Unlike prices of goods in stores, the prices of automobiles can be negotiated. If you have any questions regarding buying a car feel free to contact the ISS.

### **Traveling Outside of Gainesville**

When you must travel to other parts of the country or state, you can choose several modes of transportation. These include airplane, rental car, ride sharing, bus, and train. Large airports located within driving distance of Gainesville include Jacksonville Airport (located off of Route I-95) and Orlando Airport (located off the Bee Line Expressway). They are both two hours away. Passengers must arrive early -- perhaps even an hour early -- to guarantee their

seat on the plane. Airlines sell more tickets than seats, and the last passengers to arrive may lose their seats if the flight is overbooked.

**Rental Cars:** Some people prefer to rent an automobile or van when driving a distance. Rental car agencies are listed in "Yellow Pages" of the telephone book under the category, "Automobile Renting and Leasing." You must hold a valid driver's license in order to rent an automobile. Some companies require you to have a major credit card before they will lease a car to you, or may require a cash deposit.

**Ride Sharing:** The J. Wayne Reitz Union (JWRU) Ride Board is a board on which people seeking and offering rides exchange information. It is located on the ground floor of the Reitz Union. The riders usually contribute to the cost of gas when they share a car. Be careful before accepting rides with a stranger; be certain you feel comfortable about riding with the person before you leave. Also give a friend the name of the person you are riding with, the automobile tag number and description of the car, your destination and expected arrival time. Call your friend upon your arrival at your destination to let them know you arrived safely.

**A Caution about Hitchhiking:** "Hitchhiking," or hiking along a road or highway with a sign posting your destination, is extremely dangerous in this country. Many people have been robbed, raped, or killed while hitchhiking. People who wish to travel are advised to find other means of transportation besides hitchhiking. DO NOT HITCHHIKE!

**Bus:** The Greyhound Bus Station is located at 516 SW 4th Avenue (376-5252). They have bus service within Florida and around the country.

**Train** The Amtrack Railroad does not have a station in Gainesville, but does have one in Waldo, located on Waldo Road (State Road 24). It takes about 20 minutes by car to reach the station. Amtrack's toll-free number is 1-800-872-7245. The Waldo ticket station's number is 468-1403.

## MONEY MANAGEMENT

Most foreign students, like many American students, live on limited budgets. It is important to manage money wisely in order to insure that it lasts as long as possible. Because it takes time for newcomers to adjust to the value of the dollar and to estimate daily living expenses, these students should be cautious about spending money. Here are some hints about managing money:

Budget carefully: If you pay all bills at the beginning of the month, you will know how much remains for other expenses. Set aside the amount of money for rent, utilities, food, and other monthly expenses.

Keep accurate records: Keeping track of expenditures by category (for example, for books, recreation, and food) can pinpoint areas of heavy spending which might help you budget your money more wisely.

Transportation: An apartment close to campus may save hundreds of dollars annually on car expenses. Cars are very expensive to maintain and park. You can rent a car for special occasions. Bicycles and mopeds are the most common forms of transportation around Gainesville for most students.

Credit: Although credit is a convenience for purchasing large items, it is easy to overextend oneself financially with it. Some credit card companies charge 18-21% interest per year, which may total to hundreds of extra dollars annually over the worth of items purchased. You should evaluate whether you need expensive items before you purchase them on credit.

Buy Used: Weekend garage and yard sales are advertised in newspapers daily, and are good places to purchase appliances for reasonable prices. You can bargain for a lower price at these sales.

Meals: Although dining out is pleasant and convenient, this can double your food bill. By making bagged lunches at home for school and eating at home you can save money.

Take Advantage of Sales and Coupons: By watching the newspaper for sales of items a student needs, he/she can save up to 50% on these items. The *Paper Mint*, a book of coupons distributed in Gainesville, and manufacturer's coupons can also save money on items. More information about the *Paper Mint* can be found in the "

Shopping: See section below, "Some Characteristics of Shopping in the United States."

## **U.S. Currency**

American currency is based on the decimal system, where 100 cents are equal to one dollar, \$1.00. Currency is issued in the forms of bills and coins. Coins are metal and are either silver or copper-colored. They come in six different sizes: **1 cent**, a penny, is made of copper; **5 cents**, a nickel, is silver colored, and larger than a penny; **10 cents**, a dime, is the smallest silver coin; **25 cent**, a quarter, is silver-colored and larger than a nickel; **50 cents**, a half-dollar or 50-cent piece, is silver and larger than a quarter, but not common; **100 cents**, silver dollar, comes in two forms: the Susan B. Anthony silver dollar, which is the size of a quarter, and the older silver dollar, which is the largest coin (both are rarely seen in circulation). Bills are paper money. All U.S. paper money bills are the same size and the same green color. Denominations include \$1 (commonly called a dollar), \$2 (not commonly in circulation), \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, and larger amounts. Paper money for these larger amounts is not usually seen in public circulation.

***Banks & Banking Services:*** Because it is not wise or practical for people to carry large amounts of money with them or keep it in their homes, the money is usually deposited in a bank. In Gainesville, there are several banks that offer checking and savings account services, as well as other services such as wire transfers and dollar exchange, which are important for international students.

**Automatic Teller Machines** (or ATM's): Most banks in Gainesville have an automated teller service. This automatic teller is a computerized device through which bank customers can make deposits or withdrawals at any time of the day, any day of the week. To operate an automatic teller, you need a particular plastic card that the bank provides. Instructions for operating the automatic teller are given on the teller itself. Automatic tellers are located at the banks themselves and at other locations, especially at supermarkets. Some banks are part of the "HONOR" network of automated tellers, which means that you may use your card in different cities through Florida. Withdrawals and deposits made with the automatic teller will be subtracted automatically from the customer's savings or checking account. You may be charged a fee each time you use your ATM card. Because this may lead to confusion or

mistakes in judging the balance in your account, you should retain your receipts after making a transaction, and enter all transactions, and any service charges, in your record.

Savings Accounts: Money which is not used for routine living expenses is normally kept in a savings account. Savings accounts earn relatively low interest rates (between 5 and 6 per cent). You may usually withdraw any amount from a regular savings account (also called a "passbook account") whenever it is necessary.

Savings Certificates: Banks also offer "savings certificates," "certificates of deposits" or "CD's," and "money market certificates," which require specified minimum deposits for specified minimum time periods. These usually earn higher rates of interest than regular savings accounts. A savings certificate or money market certificate is a prudent investment if the customer is certain that they will not need the money until the designated time period (which may be 90 days, six months, one year, or longer) has elapsed. You may be charged a penalty fee for withdrawing part or all of your investment before its maturity date.

Checking Accounts: Banks offer different types of checking accounts. Some banks charge a fee for each check written, while others will not charge per check if the customer maintains a minimum balance of \$500. Select a bank whose checking account policies and services best meet your needs. You must pay to have personalized checks made, which have your name, address, and phone number on them. The bank sends a monthly statement of checks that you have written, so that you have a record of these checks. It is important to be sure that the record of the amount remaining in the account coincides with the bank's record. The statement will also reflect amounts subtracted from the account by the bank for service charges or for the printing of personalized checks. If you use an automatic teller card to withdraw or deposit cash, these transactions will also appear on the monthly statement. Be sure to enter the transactions when they are made so that you will have an accurate record of your account balance. You are penalized for checks that are written for an amount that is greater than the amount of money you have in your account. Checks such as these are called "returned checks," "bounced checks," or "overdrafts," and your bank and the place you wrote the check will charge you a penalty fee, plus you will have to pay the returned check amount in cash. Some stores may revoke your check-cashing privileges for writing returned checks.

Writing a check for which you know you do not have funds is called a "bad check", and is illegal. You can be arrested for writing a bad check.

**How to Write a Check:** Here are the steps to follow when writing a check. Refer to the following diagram for illustrations of these instructions:

1. Write the date you are "issuing" the check.
2. Write the name of the person or business to which you are making the payments (the "payee").
3. Write the amount of the payment in numerals (150.50), at the far right on the line with the name of the "payee." Put the first numeral directly after the printed dollar sign, not leaving any space for another person to alter the amount of the check by writing in an additional numeral.
4. Spell out the number of dollars included in the payment, and write the number of cents in the form of a fraction, on the next line. (For example, "One Hundred-Fifty and 50/100) Begin writing on the far left of the line, and fill the entire line with your writing, or draw a line to fill in any blank space.
5. Sign your name as it is printed on the check.
6. Note the purpose of the payment in the check register. (If you make a deposit to your account, be sure to also indicate this in your check register.)

Sample Check

Check Number_____	Date:_____
Pay to the order of:-----\$150.00	
<u>One hundred fifty dollars -----00/100 dollars</u>	
Purpose_____	Signature_____

***Reminders When Writing a Check:***

1. Write the check at the cash register only when you are ready to pay for your purchase.
2. Always record in the check register: the date, the check number, the amount, and the person or business to whom you are writing the check. Compare this record with the monthly statement the bank sends you.
3. When depositing a check or cash in the bank, use a deposit slip. Deposit slips are located at the back of your checkbook, or the bank can give you a blank deposit slip. If you want to mail a check for deposit, sign your name on the back of the check exactly as it appears on the front of the check. Add the words "For Deposit Only" on the back of the check, as well as your account number, so that no one else can cash the check if they find it.
4. If you have a bank card to use at an automatic teller machine, do not print your code number or your personal identification or access code on your card or in your checkbook. If your wallet or purse is stolen or lost, someone else can easily use this information to take money out of your account.

***How to Cash a Check Written to You:*** When someone writes you a check, you must sign your name on the back of the check exactly as it is written to you, only when you are ready to cash or deposit the check! This is called "endorsing" the check. You can sign your bank signature below, if it is different from the first signature. Many banks ask you to write your bank account number on the back of the check, and may ask you to show proof of identification. Caution: The bank will normally "hold" the check until it "clears." This means that the bank will not allow you to use the money until they are certain that the funds exist. This "hold" can take between one week and one month, which can cause problems for students who bring all their money in the form of one check. Be certain that you have enough cash with you to pay for routine expenses while a large check is clearing. Writing a check is written proof of a purchase, and can be the equivalent of a receipt. (If you may have to return a purchase, however, you should save the receipt, as many stores will not accept merchandise for exchange or refund without the receipt.)

***Cashing A Sponsor's Check Written to the University:*** Sometimes students receive sponsor checks for tuition which are written to the University of Florida. You should bring these checks to Student Financial services

***Cash:*** Cash is the easiest way to pay for purchases, but because it can be stolen so easily, most people carry only small amounts of cash with them. People who need cash withdraw it from the bank. Some supermarkets will also cash checks if you hold a check-cashing card for that store. At the University, the J. Wayne Reitz Union and the Hub Campus Shop and Bookstore cash checks for students who have a picture identification and fee card. It is important to always obtain a receipt for large purchases when you pay in cash. Unlike paying with checks or credit cards, if you pay with cash, you receive no receipt unless you ask for it.

***Traveler's Checks:*** If someone is traveling outside of Gainesville, their personal checks will often not be honored by businesses in other cities. Traveler's checks are a safe alternative to carrying cash. These may be purchased at banks for a small charge, and can be used at restaurants, stores, and hotels around the world. Traveler's checks can also be replaced if they are lost. It is important to keep the numbers of your checks in a safe place so that you may refer to them in case the checks are lost or stolen. The most popular Traveler's check companies are American Express and Citicorp. The checks require two signatures made at different times in order for them to be valid. The first signature is made when you purchase the check; the second signature is made when you wish to use the check. The second signature, made at the time of purchase, demonstrates that the check belongs to the person who originally signed the check.

***Wire Transfers:*** Wire transfers are immediate transfers of funds from one bank to another. Because banks communicate by telephone or telegram, the funds can often be received the day after a wire transfer is requested. The person who sends a wire transfer must know the name, address, and number of the bank to which he/she is sending the money. He/she must indicate the name of the recipient of the money. When the recipient claims the funds, he/she must show picture identifications, such as a driver's license or a passport, in order to receive

the money. The recipient may pay \$20 or more for the cost of the service. Wire transfers must be made in U.S. currency. Banks may hold wire transfer funds from two days to a week. ISS has a list of the banks that will do wire transfers, their numbers and addresses, and the length of time they will hold funds. Some banks will handle wire transfers for persons who are not customers of the bank.

## SHOPPING

### **Some Characteristics of Shopping in the US:**

There are several types of stores in Gainesville, such as specialty stores, supermarkets, department and convenience stores. Since prices and quality vary, it is helpful to become acquainted with those stores where you can shop most conveniently and economically. Such information is available from people who live here, from newspaper advertisements in the *Gainesville Sun* and *The Independent Florida Alligator*, and from the "Yellow Pages" of the city telephone book. The "Yellow Pages" of the Gainesville telephone book can be a shopper's guide. By looking at the category of items you need, you can immediately see the stores which carry these items. You can also call the different stores to ask whether they carry a particular item, and to compare the prices for the same item in other stores. Calling around ahead of time is the most efficient method to locate what you want for the best price without having to travel to each store. If you do call a store, be kind enough to ask all of your questions at the beginning, so the clerk won't have to go back and forth from the phone to the product to give you the information you need. If you are courteous to the clerk, you may get helpful information regarding unannounced sales, etc. Newspapers often advertise sales that the stores are having. A "sale" is when merchandise is sold for a reduced price.

Most stores operate on a "self-service" basis, where the customer uses one of the baskets or carts provided and selects the merchandise desired. The merchandise is then taken to the cashier, who totals the amount of the purchase and adds the appropriate sales tax. If the shopper needs help in making selections, they normally ask a clerk to help them. It is important to keep the receipt one receives when paying for a purchase. If an item is unsatisfactory, a person can usually return it if the merchandise is still in brand new condition and if the customer still retains the sales receipt. The receipt proves that the customer made the purchase. Newcomers should be aware of some important conditions regarding shopping in the United States. The first is to NEVER put merchandise in one's pocket or purse. This action is known as "shoplifting," and is a criminal offense. Most businesses will take all possible legal actions against shoplifters, even if the item stolen is small and inexpensive. Being arrested once for shoplifting can result in a court hearing, a fine, and publicity in the

newspapers, not to mention problems with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Another condition is that prices in stores are fixed. One cannot bargain for a lower price. Most products in supermarkets have electronic devices that read a bar code on the package and automatically records the price of the item and its appropriate sales tax. At the time of the printing, Florida's sales tax is 6%.

***Paying for Purchases:***

A shopper can pay for items in several ways.

Cash or check: The most common methods of purchasing items are by cash or personal check. (Please refer to these specific areas in the "Money Management" section of the handbook). It is not a good idea to carry large amounts of cash with you. Most stores require some form of personal identification if a customer writes a check. Normally customers use a driver's license and a credit card or a University of Florida fee card. Other stores have their own check cashing card which shows that the customer's credit has been approved. Customers must apply for a check-cashing card before writing a check for a purchase. Some stores permit checks only for the amount of purchase, while others will cash checks for over the amount of purchase. When purchasing expensive items, many consumers pay in installments. The customer makes weekly or monthly payments until the item is purchased. You are normally charged an extra "finance charge" for this privilege.

Lay-Away: Another method of purchasing expensive items is to use a "lay away plan." The lay away plan does not permit the customer to take the item home until it has been completely paid for.

Credit Cards: Credit cards allow customers to purchase items by "charging" them, take their purchases home, and pay for them later, usually within 30 days. Interest is charged to the customer for this privilege. Some stores issue their own credit cards, such as Sears and JC Penney's. Other credit cards may be used in several places, such as American Express, VISA, and Mastercard. Customers should always read the provisions of the credit card carefully. Purchasing by credit card may seem deceptively easy, but it is a way to put yourself in deep financial trouble if you do not exercise control. Do not purchase on credit unless you have

the cash to pay for it. Use credit cards as a convenience when you are not carrying enough cash. Make it a habit to pay off your charges within 30 days of charging your purchases.

Store Sales: All stores have "sales" periodically when regular merchandise is sold at reduced prices. The purpose of the sale is to stimulate consumer buying and a rapid turnover of goods, and to clear store shelves for the next season's merchandise. Sales are advertised in newspapers. Sometimes sale items may not be returned; the consumer should ask what the specific store policy is about return of sale items. Returning Merchandise-- If a customer wishes to return an item to the store of purchase for some reason, he/she should return the item immediately with a sales receipt. The item should be unused. Some items are not returnable, such as bathing suits and underwear.

Sales Tax: Most states charge a sales tax on "luxury" items. Florida's sales tax is 6%. Expect to see an entry for tax when you receive a bill for merchandise or for meals in a restaurant.

Coupons: Many shoppers use discount coupons which can be found in newspapers and other news magazines when purchasing items. These offer discounts on brand name products, and are usually valid to use for a specific size and quantity of a product. Most coupons must be used by a certain expiration date. Some coupons are only valid for use at certain stores while others can be used at any store where the product is sold. In order to receive a discount, the customer gives the cashier the coupons when paying for purchases. Some stores offer "double coupon" discounts on particular days, or if a minimum amount of merchandise is purchased. The *Paper Mint* is a book full of coupons which is published several times each year in Gainesville. Different businesses in Gainesville advertise their services in the *Paper Mint*, and include coupons to encourage consumers to patronize their business. The *Paper Mint* is delivered to Gainesville residents. Residents who have not received their copy can write to PM Publications, Inc. 915 NW 56th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32604, or call 331-8235, to ask for their copy, or you can stop by and pick one up.

Generic products: Generic brands (or "Brand X") are usually less expensive than brand name products, so consumers should compare the discount to see whether the brand name is actually cheaper with the coupon or not.

## **Shopping Areas**

Shopping centers, also called "malls," are stores clustered together, so that consumers can visit several places when only making one stop. There are several major shopping centers in Gainesville, and a number of small shopping centers and plazas.

Oaks Mall: The largest shopping center is the *Oaks Mall*, located west on Newberry Road, which houses several large department stores such as *Burdines*, *Belk*, *Dillard's*, *J.C. Penney's*, *Sears*; many small shops; restaurants and a food court; and the *Oaks 6* movie theatre.

Oaks Mall Plaza: Next to the Oaks Mall is the *Oaks Mall Plaza*, which has *Toys R Us*, the *Oaks 4* movie theatre and some other small shops.

Gainesville Shopping Center, located on the corner of NW 13th Street and NW 23rd Avenue, contains *Kash & Karry* grocery store, *K-Mart*, and a number of small stores.

Albertson's/Walmart Plaza: Just across the street from the *Gainesville Shopping Center* are *Albertson's Plaza*, with *Albertson's* grocery store and small shops, and *Wal-Mart Plaza*, with *Wal-Mart* discount store, *Books-A-Million*, and other shops, and *Sam's*, which is a warehouse discount store..

The Gainesville Mall, located on the corner of NW 6th Avenue and Main Street, contains a *Publix* supermarket, a *Belk*, and many small shops.

Millhopper Shopping Center, located between NW 16th Avenue and NW 43rd Street, contains *Publix*, *Kash n' Karry*, and several other specialty stores.

Thornebrook Village, located behind *Millhopper Shopping Center*, contains many small shops which are somewhat expensive.

Butler Plaza, and Winn Dixie Plaza, near the Archer Road - SW 34th Street intersection. Butler Plaza has a *Publix* grocery, *Wal-Mart*, *Litchfield Cinema*, and many other stores. Winn-Dixie Plaza has Winn-Dixie grocery and other stores.

Royal Park Plaza, located on Newberry Road and SW 40th Street, has *Royal Park Cinema* movie theatre, and *Scotty's*.

West Gate Plaza, located at the corner of SW 34th Street and Newberry Road, has a *Publix*, and *Sunflower Health Food Store*, and many smaller shops.

Newberry Crossing, located at Newberry Road and 76<sup>th</sup> Boulevard, has a *Publix*, *K Mart*, *su*, *Media World* and *T.J. Max* plus other shops.

There are other smaller shopping centers whose addresses may be found in the phone book. Most restaurants are located in or next to the above shopping areas. None of these shopping centers are located very close to campus; it is recommended that students use transportation, as they must travel a distance and carry bags of groceries.

**Convenience Stores:** Convenience stores are small markets which carry limited stocks of various items. These include such chains stores as Little Champ, Sprint and Jiffy Stores. Convenience stores are located nearly everywhere and are therefore convenient; however, the customer normally pays more money for products for this luxury.

### **Where to Shop for Different Items:**

Listed below are some popular shopping areas for food, clothing, and household items. Friends can offer advice about their favorite stores. Some are mentioned in the previous section on Shopping Areas.

**Groceries:** There are a number of large grocery stores or "supermarkets," in Gainesville. These include *Publix*, *Winn-Dixie*, *Kash n' Karry*, and *Food Lion*. Many of these chains have stores in different locations. The telephone book lists these different locations. Some supermarkets include specialty food sections which contain ethnic foods. *Mother Earth Market*, 521 NW 13th Street (378-5224), located closest to campus, and in the *Newberry Plaza*, carries "health" foods and other items at premium prices. Canned and boxed groceries can often be found at reasonable prices at, *Wal-Mart*, *Target*, and *K-Mart*. These stores carry household items at discount prices, including some non-perishable groceries. *Sam's* carries groceries and household goods in bulk sizes (a membership is required to shop there). There are a number of ethnic grocery stores as well, listed in the "Yellow Pages" of the phone. Some ethnic restaurants sell packaged ethnic foods. You can ask friends from your country where they have found ethnic food for sale.

**Liquor:** Supermarkets sell alcoholic beverages, as do convenience stores and liquor stores. Customers must be at least 21 years of age to purchase alcohol; sales clerks will ask you to show identification to prove that you are 21 years old before they will sell liquor to you. Stores will not sell liquor after 2:00 a.m., or before 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. It is illegal to drink alcohol in public places, including parks. It is also illegal to drink alcohol or even have an open container of an alcoholic beverage in a vehicle. These regulations are known as "open container" laws. The penalties for driving while intoxicated are extremely severe in Florida: offenders pay several hundred dollars in fines, are required to donate weeks of their time to community service projects, must register for a driving course, must relinquish their driver's license for a period of time, and may serve time in jail. People who repeat this offense serve time in jail and pay stiffer penalties than first-time offenders.

**Household Items:** Household items such as utensils, cleaning items, tools, furniture, and other household goods may be found at reasonable prices at *K-Mart*, *Target*, *Sam's*, and *Wal-Mart*. *The Salvation Army*, located on East University Avenue, sells used household items at very reasonable prices.

**Clothes:** Many department stores and small stores sell clothes, and their prices can range from very reasonable to very expensive. Many students choose to buy clothes at *Wal-Mart*, *K-Mart*, *Sears*, *Belk*, *J.C. Penney* and *TJ Max*, because the prices are less expensive here than at other stores. Yet other stores may have excellent sales during the year, which make their prices competitive with less expensive stores.

## GETTING ALONG WITH AMERICANS

### **Adjusting to a New Culture:**

When people move to a different setting, they must make certain adjustments or adaptations to their usual behavior and attitudes. It is instructive to observe one's reactions to being in a new culture, and to compare these reactions with those of other people from different countries. The observations can result in increased self-understanding and help one to gain insights into the various factors that have made the person what he is. If you are able to keep the perspective of someone who is observing himself or herself while undergoing an unusual experience, you will be able to prevent yourself from becoming extremely anxious or depressed, and can learn more from the intercultural experience he/she is having. Some new students experience "culture shock" when they first arrive. "Culture shock" is the name given to the feeling of disorientation and confusion that often occurs when a person leaves a familiar setting and moves to an unfamiliar place. The climate and terrain, the language, customs, food, and the culture are different. It is harder to convey your feelings and personality in a different language than your native one. You may feel lonely and may have doubts about your decision to come here. Signs of culture shock include interruptions in normal sleep patterns, anxiety, frustration, and excessive anger over minor irritations. It is common to become dependent on fellow nationals who are also in the in the same situation and have the same language and customs. Here are some ideas which may help students who are experiencing culture shock.

Maintain perspective. You should remember that thousands of persons who have come to Gainesville and the University of Florida from other countries have survived!

Evaluate expectations. Your reactions to the United States and Gainesville are the product of the way things are here and the way you expected them to be.

Keep an open mind. People in the United States and in Gainesville may do or say things that people at home would not do or say. It is important to realize that people here are acting according to their own set of values, not according to your values from your country.

Avoid Being Judgmental. Try to avoid evaluating or judging their behavior according to standards of your country. This may make it easier for you to adapt to your new environment. Visit the ISS. A discussion with one of the international student counselors can help you to get a useful perspective on culture shock and its learning and personal growth possibilities.

Learn from the experience. Moving into a new culture can be a fascinating educational experience. It gives you the opportunity to explore a new way of living, and compare it to your own. There is no better way to become aware of your own values and attitudes, and to broaden your point of view.

Improve your American English. The better you can express yourself, the easier everything will be. Realize that you as an international student will often be treated as a stereotype. Foreigners anywhere are, at first, treated as representatives of groups to which they are perceived to belong, and not as individuals. On many occasions, you may be referred to as a "foreign student" or "a student from country X." You are thus identified by the country you come from. The ways Americans may respond to you will depend on their own experiences with people from your country. It is important that you realize that their comments do not have anything to do with you personally. Contact students from your home country who have already been here for some time. They will be able to explain to you (in your own language) procedures which may seem unfamiliar. Please contact the ISS if you do not know anyone from your home country, and they will help find someone.

Understand your status: Realize how the status of your role here compares to the status to which you are accustomed in your home country. Each society attaches different importance to individual roles or positions in the society. In many countries, the role of "university student" or "professor" is given more respect or "status" than it is in America. If this is the case, it can be difficult to adjust to having a lower social status in this country than you are accustomed to having in your own country. It is helpful to recognize that you are not being downgraded as a person, but that you happen to be in a society where less value is attached to being a student than may be the case in your home country. People here may understand little about your culture, and may therefore misunderstand you and your behavior. They may assume that limited English proficiency is a lack of intelligence, rather than understanding that

English is not your native language. Here are a few questions that international students might want to think about: How do Americans make friends? How is respect shown? How do family members interact? What is the relationship between males and females in different situations? What are the dating patterns? How do people spend their leisure time? How do they deal with conflicts and disagreements? What do they talk about, when and with whom? How often do they "take turns" during a conversation?

### **Thinking about Going Home**

After first arriving in America, it is natural to spend time thinking about the new country and your reactions to it. However, it is helpful to try to keep in mind, that you will be going home after finishing your degree. It is advisable to remember that you will change while you are here. You will learn new ideas, adopt new attitudes, and behave in new ways. At the same time, things will be changing in your home country. Family members, friends, and professional colleagues will have experiences that you will not share, and they also will develop new ideas, attitudes, and ways of behaving. Social, political, and economic situations may change also. This means that when you return home, things will not be as you remembered before you left. You will need to adjust to a "new" culture again. This readjustment will be easier if you prepare yourself before you actually go back home. Try to keep your expectations realistic, try not to pass judgment on people and situations you will encounter after going home. You may experience culture shock again upon returning home.

### **Notable Characteristics of Americans**

The American society is the most culturally diverse society in the world. Even with this diversity, it is possible, in general, to describe attitudes and practices that are common among Americans .in general. The following remarks are only generalizations. Individuals who are exceptions to any or all of them do exist.

Individualism. Most Americans see themselves as separate individuals, and only secondly as representatives of a family, community, or other group. They dislike being dependent on other people, or having others depend on them. Some people from other countries may view this attitude as selfish or self-centered. Others may view it as a healthy freedom from the constraints of ties to family, social class, or clan.

Informality. Americans are taught that "all men are created equal." While they may violate the principle in some aspects of life, in other aspects they adhere to it. They treat each other in very informal ways, even in the presence of great differences of age or social standing. From the point of view of people from other cultures, this type of behavior may reflect lack of respect. From the point of view of Americans, it shows a healthy lack of concern for social ritual.

Limited Friendships. People from other cultures may view friendships among Americans as superficial. Because they are taught to be self-reliant and live in a highly mobile society, Americans tend to avoid deep involvement with many other people. Furthermore, Americans tend to "compartmentalize" their friendships, having their "friends at work," "friends at school," a "tennis friend," and so on. This is sometimes viewed by foreigners as an "inability to be friends." Here it is seen as a normal way to retain personal happiness in a mobile, ever-changing society.

Time consciousness. Americans place considerable value on punctuality. They tend to organize their activities by means of schedules. As a result they may seem to be in a hurry, always running from one thing to the next, and not able to relax and enjoy themselves. Foreign observers sometimes see this as being "ruled by the clock." In this country it is a way of assuring that things get done.

Materialism. "Success" in American society is often measured by the amount of money, status, or the quantity of material goods a person is able to accumulate. Some cultures see this as lack of appreciation for the spiritual or human things in life.

### **Conversations with Americans.**

Another way of describing differences between people from diverse cultural backgrounds, besides comparing their values, is comparing their styles of communication. When people with different communication styles interact, they often misjudge or misunderstand each other. It is helpful if you as an international visitor know something about the communication style of Americans and the way it differs from your own communication style. With that knowledge, the foreigners will be better able to understand what is happening when they are dealing with the local people, and will know some of the ways in which the latter are

likely to misunderstand or misjudge them. Generalizations (subject to exceptions) are made about the ways Americans communicate. In casual conversation (what they call "small talk"), Americans prefer to talk about the weather, jobs, sports, people they both know, classes, or past experiences, especially ones they have in common. Some Americans do not discuss politics or religion, at least not with people they do not know well, because politics and religion are considered controversial topics. Students at universities, however, discuss these subjects often. Sex, bodily functions, and perceived personal inadequacies are considered to be very personal topics, and are likely to be discussed only between people who know each other very well. Many misjudgments and misunderstandings can arise from interactions between people who have different communication styles. Here are some examples: Foreign visitors in the U.S. might think that they hear little but "small talk" among Americans. They may arrive at the conclusion that Americans are not intellectually capable of anything more than small talk about subjects such as the weather, sports, teachers or their own social lives. Many people who regard argument as a favored form of interaction reach the conclusion that Americans are intellectually inferior. Americans may be alarmed by vigorous arguing, with raised voices and use of gestures. They may expect violence, or at least long-lasting anger, to follow from loud disagreements. They may perceive as anger what you consider normal communication. Embarrassment or unease almost always results when someone raises a discussion topic that the other person thinks is inappropriate for the particular setting or relationship.

### **Guidelines for Interacting with Americans**

Men usually shake hands with each other the first time they meet. Men usually do not shake hands with women unless the woman extends her hand first. Women do not usually shake hands with each other. A university setting is usually very informal. Students who meet one another will normally not shake hands at all. A student could shake hands with a professor or staff person if introduced, but not usually with a fellow student.

***American names:*** American names generally have three parts: the first (or given) name, the middle name or initial, and the last (family) name. In most cases, the first name appears first,

then the middle name or initial (if used), and finally the last name. First names are used in the U.S. more frequently than elsewhere. People may call each other by their first names immediately after they have met. When deciding whether to call people by their first name or not, the following general rules apply: Address people of your approximate age and status by first name. This would apply to fellow students and neighbors. If the other person is clearly older than you, you should use Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. and the last name. For example, you would address Marlon Brando as "Mr. Brando." If the older person asks you to use his or her first name, do so. The older person will probably address you by your first name from the beginning. "Ms." (pronounced "Mizz") is increasingly used for both unmarried and married females. If a student is not certain whether or not a woman is married, "Miss" or "Ms." is the appropriate term to use. If the other person has a title such as "Ambassador," "Doctor," or "Dean," use that title and the last name. For example, you would address Senator Edward Kennedy as "Senator Kennedy." Any faculty member can be addressed as "Doctor," whether he holds the rank of assistant professor, associate professor or full professor. Again, the other person might ask you to address him by his first name, and you should abide by that wish. Americans do not use a title followed by a first name. For example, you would not address Elizabeth Taylor as "Miss Elizabeth" but as "Miss Taylor" or, if she asked you to, as "Elizabeth." If you are in doubt about what to call a person, ask the person, "What name shall I call you?" Americans will sometimes be confused about what to call you. If you see that person does not know what to call you, tell him, "You can call me \_\_\_\_\_." Sometimes it is helpful to pronounce your name syllable by syllable. Americans' ready use of first names may make it appear to you that they are oblivious to differences in age and social status, but they are not. There are subtle differences in vocabulary and manner, depending upon the relationship between the people involved. For example, an American is less likely to use slang or obscenities when speaking to a person who is older, whose social standing is higher, and/or whom he does not know well.

***Ritual greetings:*** When two people are first introduced, the dialogue normally goes something like: "How do you do?" "Fine, thank you. How are you?" "Fine, thanks." After the first meeting, there are two kinds of greetings. The more formal is "Good Morning,"

"Good afternoon," or "Good Evening." The less formal is simply "Hello" or just "Hi." You may simply say "Good Morning," "Hi," or whatever is said to you, in response. Any of these greetings may be followed by "How are you?" To this one should answer "Fine, thank you," whether you are fine or not! These ritual greetings are much shorter than those to which people from many other countries are accustomed. People from countries where ritual greetings are more elaborate may have a negative reaction to the American custom, thinking that it reflects coolness and lack of concern for other people. This is not the case! The American casual parting remark "See you later," means "goodbye," and does not mean that the person saying it has a specific intention to see you later.

**Visiting Americans:** You will probably have opportunities to visit an American home. The invitation may come from your major professor or through someone you have met in a class, or elsewhere. The following paragraphs give a general idea of the behavior that is appropriate in such situations. Your prospective host will either phone you, speak to you in person, or send you a written invitation. An arrangement made by telephone is expected to be kept, even if it is made far in advance of the actual event. A written invitation will include the date, time, place, and a description of the occasion. If at the bottom of the invitation it says, "R.S.V.P." ("Repondez-vous s'il vous plait"), you should notify the host whether or not you plan to be present. If it says "Regrets Only," you should notify the host only if you do not plan to be present. It is polite to notify your hostess of any last minute change of plans, and of any dietary restrictions you have. In the United States you should never say that you accept an invitation unless you truly intend to do so. If you do not know what clothing could be appropriate to wear for the occasion, simply ask: "What should I wear?" If you are not sure, ask the host or hostess to describe the type of outfit appropriate. Sometimes "casual" dress can mean a different style of dress to different people. The time of day also can determine what is considered appropriate dress.

**Punctuality:** Punctuality is usually essential, especially if you have been invited for a meal or for a cocktail party. You may be thought inconsiderate and impolite if you do not arrive at the appointed hour. Again, it is a very good idea to notify your hostess if you will be more

than 15 minutes late. Upon arrival, you may find that there is a cocktail hour before dinner. During this period hors-d'oeuvres (small appetizers, usually with crackers) and cocktails are served. You will usually be asked what type of drink you would prefer, alcoholic or non-alcoholic. If you would prefer a non-alcoholic beverage and none is offered, it is acceptable to ask your host for one. It is considered polite to say, "No, thank you" if you do not want something being offered. At the dinner table, if there is any question of proper manners, simply follow the example of your hostess. If you have any dietary restrictions, you should inform your hostess of them at the time you accept the invitation, not when you arrive. If you wish to bring a gift, a bouquet of flowers or a box of candy is always appropriate. Always bring a small gift when you are invited as a houseguest for an extended visit, like a weekend. Unless a special party has been planned, it is polite to leave your host's home from one to two hours after dinner is completed. If it is very late when you finish dinner, leave within an hour. If you are asked to stay longer, feel free to do so. It is considered good manners to write a thank-you note or call your host or hostess after each occasion. Many Americans consider thank-you notes too formal. They prefer to call on the telephone to thank the host for the invitation. Whether calling or writing your host or hostess, you should do so within 24-48 hours after the party. These informal visits are for the pleasure of both the guests and the hosts. If the host or hostess is preparing the meal, it is polite to ask if you can help with any preparations. Guests should offer their help in cleaning up after dinner. Your host or hostess will tell you whether he/she needs extra help or not. Always abide by his/her wishes.

***Gifts:*** In different societies there are different customs concerning the giving of gifts. Sometimes a person will give a gift when the other person does not expect to receive one. Here are some general ideas about gift giving customs in the U.S. Knowing them can help avoid awkward situations. To whom are gifts given? As a rule, gifts are given to relatives and close friends. They are sometimes given to people with whom one has a casual but friendly type of relationship, such as a host or hostess. Gifts are not usually given to teachers or others who hold an official position. The offering of gifts in these situations is sometimes interpreted as an effort, possibly improper, to gain favorable treatment from that person.

Cards, rather than gifts, are given to acquaintances who are not close friends. This is especially true at Christmas, when it is common for people to send a card to most of their acquaintances and business or school colleagues. What gifts are appropriate? Generally, an effort is made to select a gift that the giver knows or supposes is one the recipient needs, wants or would enjoy. It is not expected that people on limited budgets will spend large amounts on gifts. Expensive gifts may be expected only when the people involved have a very close relationship with each other. How are gifts acknowledged? If a gift is opened in the presence of the giver (as is often done), a verbal expression of thanks is appropriate. If a gift is opened in the absence of a giver, a thank-you note should be sent. The note should make specific mention of the particular gift that has been sent.

***Time schedules:*** It is appropriate to contact individuals or businesses at certain accepted times. Below are general guidelines:

Individuals and families. In general, you may telephone individuals or families between 9:00am and 9:00pm. Students generally keep later hours. It is not appropriate to contact people during meal times. Americans eat breakfast shortly after arising, a small meal or sandwich called "lunch" at or near noon, and large meal called "dinner" or "supper" sometime between 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. The meal schedule may vary on Sundays, when all meals may be taken later and the large meal may be in the afternoon rather than in the evening.

Business hours. University business hours are usually 8:00 a. m. to 5:00 p. m., Monday through Friday. Most offices at the University remain open during the lunch hour. Most city businesses open at 9:00 a. m. Closing hours vary; some businesses close at 5:00 p. m or 5:30 p. m. Establishments in the malls will open at 10:00 a. m. and close at 9:00 p. m. Most businesses may open for shorter hours on weekends. Some stores are open 24 hours, and are advertised this way. All businesses should have their hours posted on their storefronts.

Tipping. Tips, or service charges, are not added to the bill in U.S. hotels or restaurants. Nevertheless, tips are often expected and needed by employees. Tips are given for some services rendered, such as a shoeshine. It is customary to tip the waiter or waitress in a restaurant at least 10 per cent of the amount of the check, and from 15 to 20 percent if you receive good service. You do not have to tip in self-service cafeterias, but it is customary to

leave a small tip if a server assists you. You do not tip in "fast food" establishments. In a hotel, the bellboy who assists you to your room with your luggage expects at least one dollar for his services. Taxi drivers expect a tip of 10 to 15 per cent of the fare. Hairdressers customarily get a tip of 10 to 15 percent of the total bill. Generally, if others tip, you should too. Self-service businesses generally do not have tipping.

## **Campus Terminology and Slang**

Americans speak a colorful, idiomatic English that may bear little resemblance to the language you studied in school. Even a native English speaker might be confused by the combination of slang, technical words, and academic terms that characterize campus conversation. Don't use profanity. A typical University of Florida conversation might sound something like this: "I'm really bummed out. The Prof. gave a pop quiz in psych and I flunked. It'll put my GPA in the cellar. If my old man ever finds out, he'll cut off the bucks. The speaker's friend might reply, sympathetically, "That's the pits. You'd better hit the books. It's almost dead week." This conversation, if translated into textbook English, would go something like this: "I'm very discouraged. The professor gave a surprise test in psychology class and I failed. This will lower my grade point average. If my father learns of this, he will refuse to give me more money for school." The friend replies, "That's terrible. You had better study. The semester is almost over." Here are a few of the academic terms and slang expressions you will hear around the University of Florida campus:

"ace": To earn a grade of "A". I'll ace the course."

"bummer": An unpleasant experience. "That movie was a bummer."

"burned out": Exhausted and lacking enthusiasm. "After exams, I felt totally burned out."

"bucks": Dollars. "You can save a couple of bucks by buying something on sale."

"college": A division of the University where a group of related academic departments are administered as a unit by a dean. "The University of Florida colleges are Agriculture, Architecture, Business Administration, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Fine Arts, Forest Sciences and Conservation, Health Related Professions, Journalism and Communications, Law, Liberal Arts and Sciences,

Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Education, and Veterinary Medicine."

"cram": Frantic effort to learn neglected lessons right before a test. "I crammed all night for the exam."

"Dead Week": The week before final examinations. "Professors are not permitted to give unannounced tests or papers during Dead Week."

"drop-add": The process of withdrawing from some courses and adding others to your class schedule during the first few days of the semester. "I decided to drop calculus and add statistics."

"exam": An examination or test. "We've got an exam tomorrow."

"feedback": Response or reaction. "That experiment has been very controversial. There's going to be a lot of negative feedback on it."

"finals": Final examinations given at the end of the semester. "Are you ready for finals?"

"flunk": To fail a test or subject. "I flunked English."

"frisbee": A round, flat object caught and thrown as a recreational activity. "His dog can catch a frisbee as well as he can."

"Greeks": Members of fraternities and sororities. "The Greeks sit together at football games."

"Gators": The nickname of the school's athletic teams and U.F. students generally. The alligator, or "Gator," is the school mascot. "Go Gators!"

"guts": Courage. "It takes guts to register for 18 credit hours."

"Hit the books": To study. "I can't go tonight. I've got to hit the books."

"Homecoming": A University festival held in October. Many alumni return to the University for this event. "Are you going to the Homecoming Parade?"

"I.D.": Identification card. "You'll need to show your student I.D. to see the game."

"Incomplete": An "I" notation on your academic record in place of a grade if you are unable to complete the class requirements and need more time to finish. It becomes an "E" (or failing grade, the same as an "F") if you don't complete the work by the following semester. "I had to ask the professor for an incomplete."

"into": Intense enthusiasm for something. "He's really into chess."

"jerk": An obnoxious person. "He's a real jerk."

"jock": An athlete. "Some jocks at U.F. are on Olympic teams."

"mall": Usually a large shopping complex, enclosed under a roof. "I'm going to the Oaks Mall."

"mid-term": An examination given in the middle of the semester. "Mid-terms are next week."

"on the ball": Alert, quick to respond. "You must be on the ball if you're in that class!"

"petition": The process of making a formal request for a change in some academic regulations applied to you. "I had to petition to drop that class."

"Plaza": The park in front of the campus libraries, which is called the "Plaza of the Americas." "I'm going to eat lunch on the Plaza."

"quiz": A short test. "She gives us a quiz every week."

"red tape": Bureaucratic delay and paperwork. "There is so much red tape involved in withdrawing from a class!"

"rip off": To steal or cheat. "Someone ripped off his bike."

"ROTC": Reserve Officer Training Corps. (Pronounced Rot-see). "He has a ROTC scholarship."

"seminar": A small class involving discussion among the students and the teacher. Also a brief course. "That was an interesting seminar."

"take-out": To order food from a restaurant, but pick it up and take it home rather than dining in the restaurant. (Almost the same as "to go")

"term paper": A research report written for a class. "I must write two term papers for this class."

"to go": To order fast food and take it "to go", instead of eating it in the restaurant.

"withdraw": To voluntarily resign from the University or from some particular course. "I became ill and was in the hospital and lost so many days of class that I decided to withdraw."

## ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

### **Where to Find Out about Current Events:**

Where can you find out about what's happening on campus and in Gainesville? Two newspapers carry local information *The Gainesville Sun*, 2700 SW 13th Street (374-5000), can be found in newspaper bins around the city. Daily city newspapers cost 25 cents, and Sunday editions cost 75 cents *The Independent Florida Alligator*, 1105 West University Avenue (376-4446) the campus newspaper, is found in the *Alligator* newspaper bins around campus and is free of charge. These publications can offer much information about special entertainment events for the week. Each Friday edition of the *Gainesville Sun* has a special section called "The Scene" which listed the many cultural and entertainment events happening in Gainesville each week. In addition, "The Scene" is a useful resource of local restaurants, movie theatres, nature parks, etc.

### **Campus Activities**

The campus is the center of various social, athletic, and cultural activities for students. Lectures, films, plays, sports, and concerts take place all year. Most of them are inexpensive or free. Students usually must show their validated fee card for the semester and a picture I.D. in order to use facilities on campus. A fee card will admit the students to many campus events and will offer discounts to on and off campus events. Spouses can obtain a "spouse card" from the family housing villages or the Student Government office. This card permits spouses to use campus facilities also.

***Campus Clubs and Organizations:*** University organizations and clubs exist for nearly every conceivable interest. There are language clubs, sports clubs, a chess club, religious clubs, clubs for people who like to read science fiction, and many more. Whatever your interests, there are probably people on campus who share them. Clubs established for a particular professional or academic interest, such as the John Marshall Bar Association (for law students) or Sigma Delta Chi (for journalism students) can be found by inquiring at the

academic department that sponsors the club. Most sporting clubs are registered with the Intramural Office in 227 Florida Gym. The Student Activities Center, in 300 Reitz Union, lists approximately 300 clubs and officers for all registered organizations on campus. The major religious groups in Gainesville have active student clubs; ask at the office of the church of your preference about the student organization with which they are affiliated. The undergraduate student catalogue also lists the organizations that are currently operating on campus

***International clubs:*** Volunteers for International Student Affairs (VISA), is a club for international and American students. VISA aims to give people from many different countries a chance to share their cultures. VISA sponsors frequent social events such as monthly coffee houses, beach parties, dances and an International Talent Show. The VISA office is located in the Student Activities Center, 300 Reitz Union (392-1665 x 322). There are also a number of nationality and regional clubs for international students. ISS staff can help you contact these clubs or can offer guidance to students who wish to form their own nationality club.

***Leisure Courses:*** The Reitz Union Programs Office (392-1655), located on the third floor of the Reitz Union, organizes extracurricular mini-courses each semester. These classes are normally offered at a relatively low cost. They are offered in many areas, and are non-credit courses taken for personal enjoyment. Classes are usually held in the evenings. Course offerings are listed in the *Alligator*, and in the Leisure Course Guide, distributed around campus at the beginning of each semester. Interested students may also call the Reitz Union Programs Office for more information.

***The Constans Theatre:*** Located on the Colonnade of the Reitz Union, the Constans Theatre is home of the University's theatre group, the "Florida Players." This student group produces plays each semester. Students can obtain a schedule of the plays in the Union. ***Movies:*** Classic, foreign, and popular films are shown in the Reitz Union Auditorium. They usually cost \$1 on weeknights and \$1.50 on weekends.

**Lectures:** Lectures, usually given by nationally recognized speakers, are frequently sponsored by the college councils, clubs, or the student organization ACCENT. These are advertised in the *Alligator's* "What's Happening" column and on posters around campus. Smaller lectures may be held in the various auditoriums or classrooms on campus; larger lectures are held in the Reitz Union Ballroom, the University Auditorium, the Florida Gym, or the O'Connell Center.

**Concerts:** Popular and classical music concerts are held on campus regularly. Student Government Productions (SGP), other student groups, and other concert promoters, constantly arrange indoor and outdoor concerts with contemporary musicians. Although the majority of concerts cost money, some are free. Popular music concerts held on-campus are usually held at the Bandshell, located between the Flavel parking lot and Hume Hall, the Union Ballroom, the University Auditorium, the Florida Gym, or the O'Connell Center. The Music Department has a brochure of the musical events being offered each semester, including concerts by the University Symphony or the Chamber Orchestra, faculty and student recitals, as well as the Symphonic Band and the Men's and Women's Choral concert. Most on-campus Music Department events are held in the University Auditorium.

**Athletic Events:** The University of Florida's varsity athletic teams excel in intercollegiate competitions. On Saturdays during the fall, football fans dressed in orange and blue, the school's colors, fill the University's football stadium, Florida Field. Swimming, gymnastics, track, tennis, basketball, and baseball competitions are also popular. These athletic events are free or inexpensive if the student shows a validated fee card. More information and schedules for various athletic events may be obtained by contacting the University Athletic Association (375-4683) located in the Stadium.

**Sports Clubs on Campus:** Sports clubs have been organized around sports not usually played in the U.S. They include soccer (called "football" in other countries), rugby, volleyball, handball, and cricket. These and the more common American sports like

basketball, softball, and table tennis are handled through the Intramural Office in 227 Florida Gym (392-0581). These are informal, "fun" sports and not the same as the "varsity" teams on which highly trained athletes play. The India Club sponsors a cricket club. Contact the India Club, through the VISA Office (392-1665, ext. 322), if you are interested in more information about playing cricket. The city of Gainesville also offers athletic leagues. This is mentioned in the section "In Gainesville -- Athletics."

***Indoor Sports Facilities:*** The O'Connell Center houses a pool, weight rooms, a martial arts room, and dance studios. The pool and weight rooms may be used by students who show their validated fee cards to the attendants. Clubs may arrange to use the martial arts room and dance studio. These facilities are not always open; sometimes they are used by other groups. The weekly recreational schedule, which may change for scheduling of special events, is available on tape through the NEXUS tape system. Students may listen to this tape by calling NEXUS at 392-1683 and asking for tape 316, "The O'Connell Center Weekly Schedule." The Reitz Union has bowling alleys, ping-pong tables, and pool tables for student use. Use of these facilities costs a small fee. The games room phone number is 392-1637. The Florida Gym has basketball courts and other athletic facilities for students.

***Outdoor Athletic Facilities on Campus:*** These include a track, pools, a jogging course, a golf course, baseball and soccer fields, and tennis, racquetball, squash, and volleyball courts. You can locate them by looking on a campus map, or call the Intramural Office at the Florida Gym. Lake Wauberg: The University of Florida runs a park next to the Paynes Prairie Preserve, on Lake Wauberg. It is on Highway 441 South, and only UF students and staff are allowed to use it. It has picnic, swimming, and boating facilities. Florida Gym Equipment Room: An equipment room stocked with athletic equipment is located in 112 Florida Gym. Students may check out equipment if they show a validated fee card and a picture I.D.

***Special Campus Events:*** Throughout the year, special events such as the Homecoming Festivities are being offered. They are highly publicized on the radio and in the newspaper.

## **Entertainment & Recreation in Gainesville**

Gainesville offers a variety of amusements for students and their families. Recreational facilities, cinemas, theatres, and other cultural events offer several choices. Events are publicized in the Scene magazine, found in Friday editions of the *Gainesville Sun*, in the *Alligator*, and often on local radio and television stations. Community organizations that meet regularly are also listed in "The Scene."

**Cinemas:** Gainesville has several movie theatres listed in the "Yellow Pages" of the city phone book under "Theatres".

**Theatres:** There are several theatres in Gainesville which may be found in the "Yellow Pages" of the city phone book under the heading "Theatres." The Hippodrome State Theatre (373-5968), located at 25 SE 2nd Place, presents plays regularly, as does the Across Town Repertory Theatre, and the Gainesville Community Playhouse. Santa Fe Community College has a theatre group known as the "Santa Fe" Players.

**Museums and Galleries:** The Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art (392-9826), SW 34th St. & Hull Rd., has permanent collections of art such as the Herman Herzog painting collection, American Paintings Collection Sampler, the Art of West Africa collection, the Art of Papua-New Guinea collection. Changing exhibitions are also on display. The hours are Tuesdays through Fridays from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free. The University Gallery (392-0201), located on campus in 102 FAB (Fine Arts Building), which is at SW 13th Street & SW 4th Avenue, also houses changing exhibits by students and faculty. The Thomas Center (334-5064), located 306 NE 6th Avenue, houses art exhibits. Other local galleries are listed in the city phone book in the "Yellow Pages" under "Art Galleries". The Fred Bear Museum (376-2327), at Bear Archery, 4600 SW 41st Blvd, has hunting-related exhibits.

**Parks:** Several parks in the city offer picnicking, athletic fields, and swimming facilities. A few parks offer jogging trails with exercise stations, and recreation centers. The city phone

book has a section in the center of the book called "Community Interest Pages" which includes a city map showing the city parks. In Alachua County there are several Nature Parks, including Biven's Arm Nature Park, Devil's Millhopper State Park, Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, Morningside Nature Center, and Payne's Prairie Preserve and Camp. The State of Florida has many beautiful parks and recreation facilities located around the state. A listing of these areas may be obtained from the State of Florida Department of Natural Resources (373-3665), or in the "Community Interest Pages" of the city phone book.

***Athletics:*** The Gainesville Recreation Department (334-5067) organizes team sports such as softball and volleyball. The Recreation Department is in the Thomas Center. There also are a number of privately run health and fitness clubs, and martial arts schools in Gainesville. The Gainesville Recreational Soccer League, which is not affiliated with the Gainesville Recreation Department, has soccer games. Several nationality clubs have organized teams for this league.

***Special Cultural Events in Gainesville:*** The annual Spring Arts Festival brings hundreds of thousands of people to the downtown area for a weekend show of arts and crafts and entertainment. The Spring Arts Festival is usually held in April, and admission is free. It is held on NE 1st Avenue, from NE 2nd Street to NE 8th Street. The area is closed to traffic, and artisans display their artwork and crafts. The Fall Downtown Art Festival is held every November. The downtown area around the courthouse is closed to traffic, and artisans display their artwork and crafts. Admission is free. To find out about other annual cultural events in Gainesville, contact the Special Events office at the Thomas Center Cultural & Nature Operations (334-5064), 302 NE 6th Avenue.

***Special Sports Events:*** The Florida Relays, a track and field event is held annually in March at the UF Track. The Gator Nationals, a drag-racing competition, is also held every March at the Gainesville Raceway.

## **Entertainment around the State**

Within a 100-mile radius of Gainesville are several tourist attractions.

The Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Home is about 20 miles southeast of Gainesville in Cross Creek. It is the home of the author of *The Yearling*, and is open to visitors from 10:00 a. m. 11:30 a. m. and 1:00 p. m -4:30 p. m. every day except Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

The historic city of Micanopy, 11 miles south of Gainesville, is the second oldest town in the U.S. Micanopy has been the site of two movies that were filmed there, and has antique shops and historic homes.

St. Augustine, the oldest city in the U.S., is about one hour east of Gainesville on the East Coast. Old St. Augustine dates back to the 1500's and original buildings still stand. The Castillo de San Marcos is a Spanish fort dating from the 1500's. St. Augustine has many interesting shops, and can be toured in horse-drawn carriages. St. Augustine Beach is an attraction for students; just north is St. Anastasia State Park, with campsites on the beach.

Silver Springs and Ocala National Park in Ocala. Juniper Springs near Ocala. Don Garlits Museum of Drag Racing near Ocala

Disney World/EPCOT Center/MGM/ Universal Studios, Florida Wild Waters in Orlando.

Daytona Speedway and Daytona Beach in Daytona.

Weeki Wachee Springs near Brooksville.

Cedar Key, on the west coast, about one hour's drive west of Gainesville, is a quaint fishing village with shops, restaurants, and a fishing pier. Cedar Key holds annual seafood and arts festivals as well.

## APPENDIX A: ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

Academic Advisement Center, 358 Little Hall .....	392-1521
Academics & Housing .....	392-2161
Admissions Office, S201 Criser Hall .....	392-1365
Alachua County Health Department, 730 North Waldo Road.....	955-2415
Alachua County Medical Society .....	376-0715
Alachua County School Board, 620 East University Avenue .....	955-7300
Alachua County Sheriff's Office .....	367-4000
Alachua County Tag & Title, 5801 NW 34th Street .....	374-5263
Alachua General Hospital, 801 SW 2nd Avenue.....	372-4321
Amtrack Train Station, State Road 24, Waldo (reservations) ....	1-800-872-7245 or 468-1403
AT&T .....	1(800)222-0300
Baby Gator Nursery, Village Drive .....	392-2330 or 392-7900
Broward Teaching Center, Broward Hall basement .....	392-2010
Civitan Regional Blood Center, 1221 NW 13th Street.....	334-1000
Cox Cable, 1115 NW 4th Street .....	377-2123
Disabled Student Services, P205 Peabody Hall .....	392-1261
Emergency Medical Center, 6121 NW 1 Place .....	331-4357
English Language Institute, ELI, 313 Norman Hall .....	392-2070
Florida AIDS Hotline.....	1-800-FLA-AIDS or 1-800--352-2437
Gainesville Police Department .....	334-2400
Gainesville Regional Utilities, 301 SE 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave. ....	374-3434
Graduate School, Grinter Hall.....	392-4646
Greyhound Bus Station, 516 SW 4th Avenue.....	376-5252
Handi-Van.....	376-3236 or 392-7627
Housing-- UF Housing Office, Museum Rd. & SW 13th St.....	392-2173
Intramurals Office, 227 Florida Gym.....	392-0581
Linguistics Department, 162 Grinter Hall.....	392-0639
Math Anxiety Group, Counseling Center, P301 Peabody Hall .....	392-1575
MCI .....	1(800)TALKMCI

NEXUS Tape Information (recorded information) .....	392-1683
North Florida Regional Hospital, 5500 West Newberry Road .....	333-4000
Office of Instructional Resources (OIR), 1012 Turlington Hall,.....	392-0365
Office of Student Services, P202 Peabody Hall .....	392-1261
Reading & Writing Center, 2109 Turlington Hall .....	392-0791
Registrar's Office, S222 Criser Hall.....	392-1374
Reitz Union Programs Office .....	392-1655
Shands Teaching Hospital, SW Archer Road .....	395-0111
SNAP .....	392-SNAP or 392-7627
Southern Bell, 903 West University Avenue.....	780-2355
Student Legal Services, 369 Reitz Union .....	392-2196
The University of Florida International Center. ....	392-5323 ex 600
Transportation & Travel-- Regional Transit System, 100 SE 10th Avenue .....	334-2600
U.S. Sprint .....	1(800)366-4700
UF Dental School .....	392-4261
UF Infirmary, Infirmary Building, Fletcher Drive.....	392-1161
UF Student Employment Office, S107 Criser Hall.....	392-0296
UF Traffic & Parking, 354 North-South Drive .....	392-2241
University Athletic Association.....	375-4809
University Police Department, Museum Rd. & Newell Dr .....	392-1111
Urgent Care Center, 3925 NW 43rd Street .....	371-1777
Volunteers International Student Affairs (VISA), 300 Reitz Union,.....	392-1665 x 322

## APPENDIX B: HANDBOOK ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	American College Testing Program
APRIL	Avenues, Places, Roads, Lanes
APT	Advanced Placement Tests
BACCHUS	Boost Alcohol Consciousness and Health of University Students
PLUS	Physically Limited University
CLAST	College Level Academic Skills Test
D/S	Duration of Status
ETS	Educational Testing Service
GMAT	Graduate Management Admissions Test
GPA	Grade Point Average
GRE	Graduate Record Examination
ID	Identification
INS	Immigration & Naturalization Service
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
JWRU	J. Wayne Reitz Union
LSAT	Law School Admission
MBA	Masters in Business Administration
MCAT	Medical College Admissions Test
NW	Northwest
NE	Northeast
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SOTA	Students Over the Traditional Age
SW	Southwest      SE                      Southeast
SWDT	Streets, Ways, Drives, Terraces
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TSE	Test of Spoken English
UF	University of Florida
UFIC	University of Florida International Center
UPD	University Police Department

## **APPENDIX C: MORE SUPPORT SERVICES**

**UFIC Overseas Studies Services, 170 Hub:** The University of Florida International Center Study Abroad Services (SAS) office assists students who are attending the University of Florida through formal Exchange Programs; it also arranges exchange programs for U.F. students who wish to study at other schools. The office is open during normal business hours; the telephone number is 392-5323.