



WWCC International Student Handbook

International Programs
at Walla Walla Community College

MAINTAINING STUDENT VISA STATUS

International students with an F-1 or M-1 visa must be “in status” with all U.S. immigration policies. Students who do not maintain status will be reported in SEVIS to the Department of Homeland Security.

To keep your F-1 visa status you must do the following:

- Have a valid passport while in the U.S.
- Have a valid visa to enter the U.S. (See the section below on expiration of visa.)
- Have a valid I-20 while in the U.S.
- Attend the school to which you have been authorized to attend.
- Be a full-time student. At Walla Walla Community College, full-time means 18 credits per term for IEP students, and 12 credits per term for college-level students.
- Make satisfactory progress toward a degree program. At Walla Walla Community College, satisfactory progress is a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.
- Follow proper transfer procedures if you want to attend a school other than Walla Walla Community College.
- Limit on-campus employment to 20 hours per week except for approved OPT or CPT. Walla Walla Community College employment policies generally limit on-campus employment to 15 hours per week.
- Not work off-campus except for approved OPT or CPT.
- Report your new address within 10 days of moving to Dept. of Homeland Security (see page on SEVIS policies under “Change of Address”).
- Stay enrolled in classes except for authorized breaks, for example summer quarter after completing THREE consecutive quarters.

EXPIRATION OF VISA: The visa in your passport is used only to enter the U.S. While you are staying in the U.S. this visa may expire. As long as you stay in the U.S., you do not need to renew this visa. However, if your visa has expired and you leave the U.S., you must apply for a new visa before you return to the U.S. Check with your DSO if you have questions about your visa.

Reasons Why Report any F-1 Student to ICE:

- Student enters the United States with a Walla Walla Community College I-20 but fails to report to Walla Walla Community College within 30 days of entering the US.
- Student fails to register for a full course of study for each quarter (except authorized breaks).
- Student fails to make satisfactory progress.
- Student terminates attendance at Walla Walla Community College before completion of the quarter, (except due to illness reported to the DSO).
- Student fails to return to Walla Walla Community College for the next quarter (except authorized break) without graduating or without completing transfer procedures.

CONSEQUENCES If your progress does not meet the requirements of Walla Walla Community College, you may not be able to continue at the college.

STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEVIS)

SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System)

1. SEVIS is a database system used by schools, immigration, ports of entry, and consulates abroad to collect data about international students.
2. All international students in the U.S. should have been entered into SEVIS by August 1, 2003.
3. Information reported by schools in SEVIS includes name, address in the student's home country, address in the U.S., birth date, enrollment status, date of entry to the U.S., major, school transfers, Optional Practical Training, etc.
4. Students who are out of status must be reported within SEVIS as required by U.S. immigration law.

What SEVIS means to you

1. The U.S. government is more closely watching international students since the events of September 11, 2001.
2. It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to talk with the DSO before doing anything that could affect your immigration status.
3. You must be enrolled in 12 credits each term if you are a college-level student and 18 credits each term if you are an IEP student to stay in status with immigration policy.
4. Students who are out of status will be reported within SEVIS as required by U.S. immigration law.

Change of Address

All international students are required to notify USCIS within 10 days of moving.

1. You can file online (www.uscis.gov/addresschange) AND provide your change of address to the DSO.
2. Complete a Walla Walla Community College change of address form to be submitted at the registration counter. Make your change of address form at the Admissions counter.
3. Complete a post office change of address form to be submitted at the Walla Walla post office. This change of address form is available at any U.S. post office.

NOTE: A change of address applies to the residence where you are living and cannot be a P.O. Box or a friend's address.

Travel Outside and Re-entry into the U.S.

1. Check with the DSO before you leave the U.S. Tell the DSO when you are leaving and returning.
2. Check the DSO's signature and date on the travel authorization section of your I-20. Although when properly endorsed, is valid for one year, if the date on your I-20 is more than six months old, please get a new signature and date from the DSO.

3. **DO NOT FORGET TO TAKE YOUR I-20 AND PASSPORT!** We also recommend that you take an enrollment verification letter from the DSO and a copy of your current class schedule when you travel outside the U.S.

4. Please print and submit an updated I-94 card to the DSO any time you exit and re-enter the US.

TRANSFER OF SCHOOLS

Changing from one school to another school is called “transferring.” Below is information about who can transfer and how to transfer.

Who can transfer?

Students who are maintaining status (full-time attendance, over 2.0 GPA, and have no unauthorized off-campus employment) may transfer to another school. See the section below on “How to Transfer.”

If you are out of status, you may not be able to transfer until you apply for reinstatement with USCIS. See “Reinstatement.”

How to transfer?

To transfer to another school, you must do the following:

- Tell the Designated School Official (DSO) that you want to transfer to another school.
- Apply and are accepted by the new school you want to attend. The new school may have a “transfer form.” If so, give the transfer form to the DSO to complete.
- Enroll at the new school in the first term after transferring from the old school. (This is required to maintain status with the Department of Homeland Security.) If you are taking a vacation term, enroll on the first term after your vacation.
- Pick up your I-20 at the new school and sign it within 15 days of starting classes at the new school.

Travel Outside the U.S. and Reentry

If you are planning to visit places outside of the United States, be sure to bring your I-20 to the DSO so the back of the form can be signed before you leave. If you do not, you could have difficulty trying to reenter this country.

Entry into Canada

Most students will require a visa to visit Canada. Most applications can be done online however, depending on your home country, you may also be required to go to a specific office in Seattle to provide biometrics (finger prints etc) as part of your visa application.

Even students who do not require a visa to visit Canada are now required to complete an eTA application. This is similar to the U.S. ESTA. Please refer to the Canadian immigration website for more details and to check travel requirements for your country. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/tourist.asp>

Reentry into the U.S.

To reenter the U.S. after an absence of five months or less, you must have a valid passport or travel document, a valid visa, and a Form I-20 with travel authorization signature. If you need to obtain a new visa in order to enter the United States after a temporary absence, you may apply for it at a U.S. consular office abroad.

Renewal of a Passport

Foreign passports may be renewed in the United States by the designated representative of a foreign government's embassy in Washington D.C., or officials of the consulates located in various U.S. cities. To renew your passport, you should consult your embassy or consulate to determine what procedures are required. Among other things, you may need a letter from an official at Walla Walla Community College certifying your status. You must keep your passport valid at least six months ahead of its expiration date.

US Visa Renewal

If you need to renew your visa, do so in your home country. It is NOT possible to renew a U.S. visa in the United States.

VOCABULARY

1. **Appeal:** to make a request to change a decision. Students may make a formal appeal to the Vice President of Student Services if they have been suspended from Walla Walla Community College.
2. **Assessment:** to determine the value of something. An assessment of students' English skills will be made when they arrive at Walla Walla Community College.
3. **ICE: Immigration and Customs Enforcement.** ICE (part of the Department of Homeland Security) is the organization that regulates and monitors international students after they arrive in the U.S.
4. **College catalog:** booklet that lists college programs and courses. The Walla Walla Community College catalog lists all the programs, degrees and courses at Walla Walla Community College for a 2-year period.
5. **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)** CPT is a program that allows students to work off-campus in a position which is required by their degree program at Walla Walla Community College. The degree program, such as business administration, must have the practical training as a regular part of the curriculum. CPT must be approved by the DSO and CPT documents must be sent to BCIS as required. For more information, go to DSO.
6. **Department of Homeland Security (DHS):** The Department of Homeland Security is responsible for keeping the U.S. safe from terrorism. DHS manages immigration issues within the U.S.
7. **Emergency:** an unexpected danger. Use a phone to call 911 if there is an emergency.
8. **Enrollment/enroll:** to officially become a member of a something such as a school or course. Students must enroll in courses before the first day of each term.
9. **Full-time:** International students in the IEP are considered to be full-time students if they are enrolled in 18 credits or more. College-level international students are considered to be full-time students if they are enrolled in 12 credits or more. 10. **GPA: Grade Point Average.** Colleges and universities in the U.S. grade students by using a 4.0 grade point average. 4.0 = A, 3.0 = B, 2.0 = C and 1.0 = D 11. **IEP: Intensive English Program.** The IEP was designed to prepare students for college-level study.
12. **In status:** within the law. Being in status with immigration law is very important for international students.
13. **Maintaining status:** obeying the law. For international students, maintaining status with immigration law means to be a full-time student who is making satisfactory progress toward a degree.
14. **OPT: Optional Practical Training.** OPT is a program that allows students to work off-campus usually after they complete their degree program. Students must apply to ICE and receive an Employment Authorization Document before they can begin OPT.
15. **Out of status:** not in compliance with the law. International students fall out of status with immigration law if they are not enrolled full-time or if they are not making satisfactory progress toward their degree.

16. **Probation:** a period of time in which someone is watched or tested to see if they can continue. Students who do not make satisfactory progress for THREE terms will be put on probation.
17. **Program guides:** a list of courses needed to complete a program at Walla Walla Community College. The program guides for all degrees are available in the counseling office or from your advisor.
18. **Registration/register:** to become a member of a something, such as a school or course. International students must register and pay before the start of each term at Walla Walla Community College.
19. **Reinstatement:** to put someone back in a position they were in before. International students must apply for reinstatement if they are suspended from Walla Walla Community College.
20. **Satisfactory progress:** to successfully move toward a goal. To keep their student visa, international students must make satisfactory progress, which is at least a 2.0 GPA, at Walla Walla Community College.
21. **Class Schedule:** a booklet that lists all the classes offered during one term at Walla Walla Community College. Class Schedules are available in the Admissions office.
22. **SEVIS:** Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. SEVIS is the database system that monitors information about international students and exchange visitors in the U.S. All I-20s are now issued from the SEVIS database.
23. **Suspension/suspended:** removing someone from a school or job for a short period of time. International students who are not enrolled full-time or do not make satisfactory progress in their classes for THREE terms will be suspended from Walla Walla Community College. To return to school after suspension, students must apply to ICE for reinstatement.
24. **Warning:** the act of telling someone that something bad or dangerous is going to happen. International students who are not enrolled full-time or do not make satisfactory progress in their classes for ONE term will get a warning letter from Walla Walla Community College.

EMPLOYMENT

The rules about employment for international students are controlled by the Department of Homeland Security. Be sure you read this section if you want a job.

ON-CAMPUS STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

International students are allowed to work on-campus according to the Department of Homeland Security.

1. To be able to work on-campus you must do the following:
 - Be in status with immigration policies.
 - Your U.S. student visa allows you to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week when school is in session and full-time during school break periods (up to 40 hours per week)
 - Be attending classes fulltime at Walla Walla Community College.
2. To apply for work on-campus you must do the following:

- Inform the DSO you are interested in working.
- Meet with the student employment coordinator at the Student Job Center.
- Complete all forms required by the student employment office for employment and tax purposes. *Meet with the DSO for assistance with the employment forms.*
- Follow all rules and policies of the student employment office.
- Have the level of English required for the position for which you are applying.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

For international students with an F-1 or M-1 visa, the only off-campus employment allowed by the Department of Homeland Security is Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Students interested in OPT or CPT must apply to immigration for approval. See the section on Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is work authorization for employment in the student's field of study that is not part of the student's academic program. It may be granted at four times in a student's career: 1) during summer or other vacation periods; 2) after the completion of all course requirements, but before completion of the thesis or dissertation; 3) part-time during the academic term (20 hours per week or less); or 4) after the completion of the degree. The USCIS will authorize a total of twelve (12) months of optional practical training for each degree completed.

Eligibility: A student must have been maintaining their student visa status for at least nine months before he/she is eligible for OPT. IEP students are not eligible for OPT.

When to apply: Students must apply for OPT within 30 days of your DSO entering recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record, and may apply up to 90 days before you complete your degree, but no later than 60 days after you complete your degree.

SOCIAL SECURITY

International students may get a social security card if they are going to work on-campus. This social security card does not permit international students to work off-campus. The social security card is free.

To apply for a social security card you will need to take these documents to the Social Security office:

- an application for a social security card
- a letter from a Designated School Official (DSO)
- your passport, I-94, and I-20 (bring originals and an extra copy of each)
- a letter of employment from Walla Walla Community College

Social Security office contact information:

Social Security Office	Telephone: 866-366-7814 Ext 22801
880 NE Rose St	Hours: M, T, Th, F – 9am-4pm, W 9am-12pm
College Place, WA 99324	Closed on Federal and State Holidays

You can also visit www.socialsecurity.gov for additional information

The Social Security office will contact USCIS (immigration) to check your status. It will take about 2-4 weeks for your status to be checked and your card to be mailed to you.

BE SURE YOU HAVE A GOOD MAILING ADDRESS! You may use the International Programs office as your mailing address for your social security card. Be sure to use the complete address below:

Your name
c/o International Programs
Walla Walla Community College
500 Tausick Way
Walla Walla, WA 99362

Students must take their social security card to the campus employment office. Students may not start working on-campus until they have received their social security number.

PLEASE BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

TAXES

Filing a US Tax return as an international student can seem confusing. Most international students are considered non-residents for tax purposes, but it is important that you file your report each year.

If you did NOT work or receive any income, you must file Form 8843.

If you DID work or receive income, you must file Form 8843 and usually Form 1040NR-EZ.

The International Programs Office staff will have a workshop to give you the income proper tax forms and explain the vocabulary. Don't miss it!

Additional information about understanding tax returns for international students can be found online at sites: <http://www.internationalstudent.com/tax/>

All forms and instructions for filing are available on the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) website: <https://www.irs.gov/>

CULTURAL INFORMATION

STUDY TIPS

General Study Tips

1. Learn to manage your time. You should learn to anticipate the demands on your time. If you know what you must do and how long it will take you to do it, you will be better able to make and implement plans that will allow you to complete all of your tasks. This method will help you to avoid crisis.

2. Pay attention and concentrate in the classroom.
3. Read every assignment twice.
4. Read assignments before you go to the class. Reading assignments before class improves understanding of the classroom lecture and work.
5. Set regular, daily study times. Regular study hours help to develop a routine which is important to good study habits.
6. Do not study any one subject for too long.
7. If you become tired or distracted while studying, take a short break and then come back to your assignment.
8. If you have a question, ASK IT.
9. Form a study group with several classmates. Group review and discussion of the material helps you to better understand and retain the information.

Tips on Note Taking

1. Write only the important ideas and concepts.
2. Mark the main ideas. Use a highlighter, circle, or underline the main ideas.
3. Always write down important quotes, names, dates, and definitions.
4. If you must be gone for a day, borrow someone else's notes and copy them.
5. Review the notes from the day before for each class.
6. Occasionally review all of your notes, handouts, etc. for the entire course.
7. If you miss a day of class, if you are not sure your notes are correct, or if you aren't sure you are taking notes of the important points of the lesson, ask one or several of your classmates if you may borrow their notes. This is perfectly acceptable behavior and it is not a sign of failure or a sign of stupidity.

Expectations of Behavior in the U.S. Classroom

1. You are expected to remain silent while the professor or another student is speaking.
2. Before speaking in some large American classrooms, you must raise one hand above your head and wait for the professor to recognize you. This may not be necessary in small college classes. Watch your classmates to discover the proper behavior if you are unsure what to do.
3. In most college classes there will be no assigned seating, so you may sit anywhere you choose to (unless the professor instructs you to do otherwise).
4. If you arrive before your professor, it is acceptable to remain seated when he/she arrives.
5. If the professor asks you a question, you do not have to stand to answer it.
6. Many college professors do not require you to address them as "Professor Smith." First names are used more often, but it is wise to ask the professor if you are not sure.
7. It is expected that you make eye-contact with the professor if he/she is speaking to you. This is polite and shows interest and integrity in North American Culture.
8. You are expected to arrive on time for class and to leave after class has been dismissed by the instructor, unless you have made other arrangements.

9. All college instructors and professors have an office and have office hours. The correct time to discuss any problems you are having with the class or any questions you have is during the instructor's office hours. Occasionally, an appointment is necessary to meet with the professor during his/her office hours. If you are unsure whether or not you need an appointment, ask the instructor. Instructor's office hours are posted on their office door.

10. Finally, and most importantly, ATTEND CLASS! Once you get behind in your course work, it is very difficult to catch up. If you must miss class you need to contact your instructor and complete the work that was given while you were gone.

Culture Shock

Anyone living in a new country can experience culture shock, which is the overwhelming feeling of the strangeness of a new place. You don't even have to travel around the world to get culture shock; you can get it traveling to different regions or between a rural area and a city in your own country. The first thing to know about this is that you are not the only person or the first person to feel this way.

Understanding culture shock a little better will help you get over it. Culture shock can be described in four stages.

The first stage, with feelings of euphoria, is the easiest. In the first stage you may love everything about the United States. Everything will be new and wonderful and exciting. It is a time of discovery and adventure that can be very fun.

In the second stage, the excitement has been replaced by melancholy. Things in the U.S. won't seem so new and exciting and you will begin to notice things you really don't agree with or like about American culture. It is during this time that you will probably have the worst time of your entire stay. Homesickness and depression are normal emotions to have at this time.

Fortunately stage two will eventually become stage three. Stage three is acceptance. All the things that made you sad or angry in stage two now don't seem so bad. You will be able to say "That's just the way Americans are," or "That's just how America is." You will be able to see differences between your culture and the culture here not as good or bad, but simply as different.

Finally you will begin to adapt to life here. Everyday life begins to get easier in the fourth stage of culture shock. Once you start adapting to life here, you begin to get over culture shock. This is the stage in which many people make lasting connections with American friends or hostfamilies, can appreciate and talk about cultural differences, and face less cultural barriers to their personal and academic goals. Getting here is a great reward for making it through the first three stages!

The emotions like homesickness and sadness that you will feel at times are a perfectly normal part of the adjustment. You will be lonely and homesick and depressed and angry and bored and anxious and probably a million other things before you go home. All of these emotions are perfectly normal.

One remedy for these emotional changes and upheavals that you are going through is to talk. It really does help to talk to someone about how you are feeling, especially around holidays and special times that are difficult when you are on your own. Find a friend or someone you trust and feel comfortable with and talk about how you are adjusting to your new life here in the United States.

Even if talking does not seem to work for you, do not give up. Everyone adjusts in a different way. It may take a little time before you become familiar enough with U.S. culture to begin to feel at home here, but it will happen. Once it does, and you begin to build a support system of friends, time will go by very rapidly. Before you realize it, you will be back on the plan and returning home.

One important thing you need to do is maintain contact with your family and friends at home. They are having a difficult adjustment too; they must learn to adjust to life without you around.

The most important things to remember are (a) you will adjust, (b) your feelings are normal, (c) if you are feeling overwhelmed, talk to someone; do not keep your feelings inside, and (d) relax, have fun, and enjoy your studies and your stay in the United States.

If you need help or need to talk to someone about how you are feeling, contact the staff in the International Programs office or in the Counseling Department.

American Holidays

The following are holidays which are generally observed in the U.S. Those marked with * are official holidays, where government offices, such as the post office, and most businesses, such as banks, are closed. Typically, most stores and restaurants are open on these days, offering shoppers sales and discounts. You will find most of the American holidays are celebrated on a Monday, providing workers with a three-day weekend.

SEPTEMBER

***LABOR DAY – FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH**

Established by Congress in 1894 to celebrate the contribution of the labor movement to the productivity of the country, this holiday is frequently viewed as the end of summer vacation, and is celebrated by picnics and outings.

OCTOBER

***COLUMBUS DAY – SECOND MONDAY OF THE MONTH**

This holiday commemorates the landing of the Italian navigator, Christopher Columbus, on American soil on October 12, 1492. His 'discovery' of the North American continent supported the theory that the earth was round.

HALLOWEEN – OCTOBER 31

Halloween was originally designed as the day that the dead return to mingle with the living. The name comes from "All Hallows Eve." Today, Halloween is not taken seriously, and is celebrated by

children dressing in costumes and parading throughout the neighborhoods, knocking on doors and shouting “Trick-or-Treat!” It is customary to hand out candy to these children. The most common symbol of Halloween is the jack-o-lantern (pumpkins that have been carved to resemble faces).

NOVEMBER

***VETERAN’S DAY – NOVEMBER 11**

This is a day of observance for those who have served in the U.S. armed forces. It is marked by speeches, parades, and the laying of wreaths at the graves of veterans and soldiers.

***THANKSGIVING DAY – FOURTH THURSDAY OF THE MONTH**

Thanksgiving was first celebrated in the U.S. in 1621 by the colonists and Indians in giving thanks for a plentiful harvest. However, it was first declared a national holiday in 1863 by Abraham Lincoln. Americans typically celebrate this holiday by preparing large meals with traditional turkey and pumpkin pie.

DECEMBER

***CHRISTMAS – DECEMBER 25**

Christmas is a Christian holiday commemorating the birth of Christ. During the Christmas season cities and homes are decorated, parties are given, cards and gifts are exchanged, and Christmas carols are sung. One of the most common traditions is the Christmas tree, decorated with various types of ornaments and lights. Very few stores are open on this day.

JANUARY

***NEW YEAR’S DAY – JANUARY 1**

Celebrated to welcome in the New Year, many Americans take the opportunity to visit friends and attend parties and other festivities. Much of the celebrating is done on New Year’s Eve, with midnight being the highest point of the evening because it signifies the end of the old year and the beginning of the new one. On New Year’s Day itself, people usually relax, eat, watch football games on T.V., and enjoy the holiday.

***MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY – THIRD MONDAY OF THE MONTH**

This is a day honoring Martin Luther King Jr., a famous African American who championed civil rights and promoted non-violence in the U.S. during the 1960s.

FEBRUARY

VALENTINE’S DAY – FEBRUARY 14

This was originally a day honoring St. Valentine, but it has become a secular holiday celebrating romantic love. People typically send cards or flowers and give candy in heart-shaped boxes to loved ones.

***PRESIDENT’S DAY – THIRD MONDAY OF THE MONTH**

This holiday honors two U.S. presidents born in February. George Washington was the first president of the United States, and is frequently called the “father of our country.” The other president that is celebrated is Abraham Lincoln, who is considered to have been one of the greatest

U.S. presidents, primarily because he presided over the country during the Civil War and enforced many policies that significantly influence American life today. Among Lincoln's achievements is the Emancipation Proclamation, a document declaring all slaves in the confederate states free.

MARCH

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

St. Patrick is the patron saint of the state of Ireland, and the early Irish settlers introduced the holiday in order to honor him and show pride in their ancestry. Traditional symbols of St. Patrick's Day are four-leaf clovers and leprechauns. Wearing green on St. Patrick's Day can protect you from getting pinched!

EASTER SUNDAY – SOMETIME BETWEEN MARCH 22 AND APRIL 25

The most significant Christian holiday, Easter falls on the Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Christians believe that on Good Friday (the Friday preceding Easter) Christ was crucified, and on Easter Sunday he rose from the dead. There are many traditions and symbols associated with Easter. Ham and lamb are common Easter foods. The Easter Bunny is the most famous secular Easter symbol. Eggs have long been symbolic of Easter-rebirth and of new life.

MAY

MOTHER'S DAY – SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

This is a day that honors mothers. People send them flowers, cards, small gifts, take them out to restaurants, and do small tasks for them. *MEMORIAL DAY- LAST MONDAY OF THE MONTH This holiday honors those who died in military service; it originated after the U.S. Civil War. Families visit grave sites and decorate them, and there are often parades and prayers for peace.

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JUNE

FATHER'S DAY – SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

This is a day that honors fathers. People send them flowers, cards, small gifts, take them out to restaurants, and do small tasks for them.

JULY

***INDEPENDENCE DAY – JULY 4**

On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress declared that the 13 colonies were free from British rule and dominance, and the Declaration of Independence was signed. This holiday is marked by parades, picnics, and community fireworks displays.

Making Friends

Most Americans are not like how they are portrayed in films and television programs. Believing these unreal images of Americans can lead to some embarrassing situations. Most Americans are probably very similar to people in your own country.

In this society many friendships are casual and are not permanent. Americans have many interests and activities, so the friendliness expressed at any particular occasion may be a one time thing.

Having friends or acquaintances of the opposite sex does not imply an emotional attachment. Holding hands with someone of the opposite sex or a casual hug is not always an invitation to greater intimacy or an exclusive relationship. When you meet new people a friendly hello or hi and a firm handshake will go a long way.

General Tips:

1. Treat everyone with the same respect that you would like to receive.
2. Be friendly! Try to be outgoing and talk to new people.
3. Be patient; friendships should develop naturally.
4. When meeting people shake hands firmly, be friendly, and say “hi” or “hello.”
5. Americans like to make eye contact with the person they are talking to, or if eye contact is uncomfortable for you, try looking at a point just over the shoulder of the person talking to you. Not making eye contact may be considered impolite or like you are lying.
6. As you become friends with Americans they will begin to talk about their personal life. Once you have gotten to know someone well and are friends with them, it is acceptable to talk about personal issues.
7. Remember to keep your physical distance. Americans prefer to have one arm length between themselves and whoever they are talking to.
8. Always use “please” and “thank you.”
9. Americans are very concerned with personal hygiene. Americans often shower or bathe and use deodorant once a day.
10. Schools and most businesses require appointments. Always be on time for appointments.
11. If you are invited to someone’s home for dinner, a gift is not required.
12. If you receive any gifts, a thank you card is appreciated. Invitations marked **RVSP** means that you should tell the host whether you are coming or not.
13. Call friends before going to visit their house to make sure that your visit is at a convenient time.

Living with a Host Family

Living with a host family will be a new, exciting, and sometimes frustrating experience for you. Living with a host family is not like living on your own or with your natural family. The following is a list of ideas and topics you may want to talk about with your host family. There are also hints on things you can do to make your stay more enjoyable for yourself and for your host family:

Things for you to remember:

1. You will have a business meeting with your host family. The host family will discuss their ideas about hosting. This is your time to ask questions and understand more about your host family.

2. Your host family in the U.S. will treat you like you are a member of the family and not like a guest. As a member of the family, you will be expected to keep your area (your bedroom and bathroom) clean. You may also be expected to clean up after yourself in other areas of the house. You should not be a live-in baby-sitter or house keeper. If the chores assigned to you seriously interfere with your studies, talk to your host parents or contact the International Programs office.

3. As a member of the family you may be expected to take part in family activities. Taking part in these activities will make getting to know your host family easier. It will also help you avoid some misunderstandings, for example, many families might feel hurt if you did not participate in a family member's birthday party.

4. American families are not all the same. They are different races, have different religions, may celebrate different holidays, and have different customs and rules for their house. This is what makes the United States so interesting.

You may have disappointing and frustrating times with your host family. If you need help in communicating with your host family, contact that International Programs office

Things to talk about with your family, and some helpful hints:

1. Be sure to find out about bathing customs. Many families set a time limit for the use of hot water because of the cost and/or the wait for a new supply of hot water

2. Find out what is the appropriate time to wash clothes, use the kitchen, watch T.V., take a bath, etc. Every family has its own rules, so finding out about this will help you avoid misunderstandings.

3. Most families want to know where you are going and when you will be coming back. If no one is home when you leave, and if you have not already told someone in the family, leave a note that says where you have gone and when you will be back.

4. If you need some time alone in your room, explain this to your host family. They will understand, but if you don't explain, they may misunderstand or begin to worry about you.

5. Share your culture with your host family. They want to understand and learn about your culture. Talking about your customs with your host family can help avoid embarrassing situations and it is also fun to share about where you come from.

If you need to talk to someone about how you are feeling, or any problems that you are having with your host family, contact the staff in the International Programs office.

MONEY MATTERS

When you arrive in Walla Walla you will want to open a checking and/or savings account at a bank. Bank accounts allow you to access your money without having to carry large amounts of cash with you, and help you keep a fairly accurate record of what you spend. There are many banks in Walla Walla to serve you. Choose one whose plan is best suited to your needs, but be sure you understand what is required of you. Ask questions!

The two main types of accounts are Checking Accounts and Savings Accounts.

Checking Account: This is the most useful account for students. A checking account is a convenient way for you to pay for something without having to carry cash with you. These accounts usually come with a "debit card" which you can use anywhere that accepts credit cards or to withdraw

money from an ATM. Where a credit card allows you to spend money you don't have and pay it back later, with a debit card you can only spend money that you already have in your account. Most banks no-longer issue paper checks when opening a checking account unless you request it.

When you use your debit card, you should also make a record of it so that you know how much money you have. You do not want to spend more money than you have in your account. If you do, you will be charged extra fees by the bank.

Savings Account: Some banks require you to open a savings account in order to open a checking account. This is an account where you put money if you have no immediate use for it. You can, however, make withdrawals at the bank, or at an automatic teller machine (ATM).

Transfer of Funds:

Transfer of funds from abroad often takes time. It can take up to two or three weeks for money to arrive, so it is a good idea to plan ahead and budget accordingly. **Electronic Wire Transfers** are used to send money electronically. Contact your bank or financial institution for more details. Another option is **Western Union**. They can send money to many locations overseas within 24-53 hours. However, Western Union does not reach every country and city abroad and the fee for sending the money is comparatively high. For more information, call 1-800-325-6000.

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs): ATMs are very common in America. You can find them outside banks, at grocery stores, and in shopping malls. They are usually open 24 hours a day, and allow you to get cash when you need it. To use an ATM, you will need to get an "ATM card," or debit card from your bank. Most banks include these with a checking account. When you receive your card, you will also get a personal identification number (PIN) or code number. You should memorize this password or number. NEVER GIVE THIS NUMBER TO ANOTHER PERSON! Without it, no other person can use your card to get money from an ATM, even if they steal it.

Remember that many banks **charge a fee each time you use an ATM**. Ask your bank about ATM fees.

Bank Statement: Each month the bank will send you a list of all your debit card transactions, ATM withdrawals, and deposits for the last month. When you receive this statement, you should review it to make sure everything looks correct. If something does not look right, check your records, then call your bank.

Banking Glossary

Account: money kept in a bank by an individual or family, and the record of it.

Balance: amount of money currently in your account.

Check: small, preprinted slip of paper used in place of cash to pay for things. It is written on the balance in your checking account. Checks usually look something like this:

Cancelled Check: A check that has been returned to the bank and paid out of your account. It is returned to you in your statement for your records. Most banks do not offer this service.

Bounced Check: a check which is returned to you because of insufficient funds in the bank. Knowingly writing checks for which there are insufficient funds is illegal, and you will be fined if you are caught.

Cash a Check: take a check to your bank to receive the money it is written for.

Deductions: small amounts of money deducted automatically by the bank from your account for services they render or penalties you receive. Also known as a "Service Charge." **Deposit:** To put money into your account.

Endorse: to sign your name on the back of a check which is being paid to you.

Interest: money earned on a savings account and sometimes on a checking account. Earnings are based on a percentage of the account balance.

Minimum Balance: the smallest amount of money allowed by a bank to keep the account open, without incurring a service charge.

Overdraw: to use your debit card or write checks for more than you have money to cover. 55

Withdraw: to take money out of a bank account.

Credit Cards:

Major credit cards, such as Visa, Master Card, or American Express, allow you to charge purchases, buy on credit and make one monthly payment. These cards are obtained through application at certain banks. Retail stores also have their own credit cards. While credit cards are very convenient, it is important to use them carefully and to keep a record of all expenses charged.

Banking Machines (ATM)

Banking machines provide limited banking service (deposits, withdrawal, balance of bank accounts) and are located outside of your bank, and shopping areas. ATMs are usually available 24 hours a day. To use an ATM, you need to apply for a personal bankcard (or debit card) from your bank.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Finding a Doctor or Hospital

If you are sick you should see a doctor. Here is how to find a doctor, print your insurance cards, and other important reminders.

If you have LowerMark Health Insurance through Walla Walla Community College you can find doctors and print your insurance cards through their CC customized website:
<https://info.lewermark.com/wwcc>

Urgent Care/Hospitals recommended by LowerMark

St. Mary Urgent Care
380 Chase Ave
Walla Walla, WA 99362
509-522-5171

Providence Southgate
1111 S 2nd Ave
Walla Walla, WA 99362
509-897-3700

Providence St Mary Medical Center
401 W Poplar St
Walla Walla, WA 99362
509-525-3320

Nurse Advice Line

If you want to speak with a nurse to know if you should go to the doctor or not you can call MyNurse at 1-866-549-5076. They are available any time of day. This is a service provided by LowerMark. Students with other insurance companies through their country's scholarship programs should find out what their nurse advice line number is.

Pharmacies and Drug Stores

In the United States, most medicines are not given to you by the doctor, but are purchased at pharmacies or "drug stores." When the doctor wants you to take some medicine, he or she will write a "prescription." You will take this prescription to the pharmacy, and the pharmacist "fills" the prescription by selling you the medicine. Many times you can treat your sickness with "nonprescription" or "over-the-counter" medicines, which you can also buy in a pharmacy or at your local grocery store. Some of the pharmacies near Walla Walla Community College are listed below:

Tallmans Pharmacy – 509-525-1010
Albertsons Pharmacy – 509-529-2008
Safeway Pharmacy – 509-522-0227 (Rose St)

Walgreens Pharmacy – 509-529-1570 (Tietan)
Safeway Pharmacy – 509-522-4672 (Plaza Way)
Rite Aid – 509-529-1917
Shopko Pharmacy – 509-525-9207
Bi-Mart Pharmacy

Remember to save your receipts from any prescriptions you buy. You may be able to have your insurance company repay you for your prescriptions.

Medical Specialists Glossary

Family Physician/Practitioner – treats all members of the family for general illnesses, also called a General Practitioner

Allergist – treats people with severe sensitivity/allergies to substances in foods or the environment, such as pollen, dust, peanuts, etc.

Chiropractor – treats nerve, muscle, and other ailments by adjusting the joints and muscles

Dermatologist – treats skin disease

Neurologist – treats conditions of the nervous system, but does not perform surgery

Nurse – provides a variety of health services and assists physicians

Obstetrician/Gynecologist (OBGYN) – Deals with reproduction and the reproductive system of women.

Optometrist – examines eyes in order to prescribe glasses or contacts

Orthopedist – treats the skeletal system, sets and casts broken bones

Pediatrician – treats children from birth through the teen years

Physician – a general term for any kind of medical doctor

Plastic Surgeon – repairs or reconstructs injured parts of the body

Psychiatrist – treats mental, emotional and behavioral problems; this person has a medical degree

Psychologist – same as a psychiatrist, but only has an academic degree

U.S. Postal and Mailing Services

Mail service in the U.S. is provided by the United State Postal Service (USPS). There are also private courier services such as FedEx, DHL, UPS, etc. The USPS is typically the most inexpensive option for sending mail (especially letters).

Where should I mail my letters and packages?

You can mail most of you letters and packages and buy stamps from any U.S. Post Office. Letters with stamps can be placed in any U.S. mailbox. These boxes are located in many places, and they are always blue. You can also buy stamps at most grocery stores. For sending letters internationally it is best to go to the post office to ensure you have the correct stamps.

What if I want to send something quickly? You can send your letters by Express Mail through USPS, or through FedEx, DHL, UPS, Airborne, and other services.

What is a ZIP code? A ZIP code is the five or nine digit number written at the end of your address. It directs mail to the correct post office for processing and helps it to be delivered more quickly. You should always use a ZIP code when sending mail inside the United States.

Post Offices in Walla Walla

128 N 2nd Ave, Walla Walla, WA 99362

905 S 2nd Ave, Walla Walla, WA 99362

TRANSPORTATION

In Walla Walla, the Valley Transit bus system provides transportation throughout Walla Walla and College Place to Walla Walla Community College. Dial-A-Ride arrangements can be made for students with mobility disabilities. For more information, please call:

Valley Transit - 509.525.9140

Dial-A-Ride - 509.527.3779

Walla Walla Taxi Services:

ABC Taxi – 509-529-7726

A-1 Taxi – 509-529-2525

Blaine’s Cab Service – 509-529-8294

STATE AND NATIONWIDE BUS TRAVEL

Greyhound Bus Lines Located at 108 W Main St., Walla Walla, WA 99362 Phone: 509-529-7442, Tickets: 877-433-4775 Website: <https://www.greyhound.com/>

Travel Agents: Contact the International Programs Office for information about travel agents.