



*Florida Institute of Technology*  
High Tech with a Human Touch™

# The International Student's Resource Guide



FIT Orlando  
Answers Your Frequently Asked Questions

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Preparation Tips | Campus Guide | Directory

# Emergency Numbers

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## Fire Department

Orlando ..... 911

## Hospitals

Florida Hospital Orlando ..... 407-303-5600

Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children ..... 407-649-9111

Orange Regional Medical Center ..... 321-841-5111

## City Police

Orlando ..... 911 or 407-246-4141

## Sheriff's Department

Orlando ..... 911

## Highway Patrol

Orlando ..... 911

## This guide belongs to

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

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## DISCLAIMER

Directory lists (for services such as hotels, transportation providers, restaurants, shops, apartments, websites, etc.) appearing in this publication are not endorsed by Florida Institute of Technology. The information they contain has not been included for promotional reasons, nor has any information been purposely left out or omitted. Local businesses and the students who use them are welcome to submit suggestions for new directory listings to be included in future editions of this publication by writing to [mkucharyson@fit.edu](mailto:mkucharyson@fit.edu).



## Welcome!

Congratulations on your admission to Florida Tech and on your decision to attend this wonderful university. On behalf of FIT Orlando, I welcome you to a diverse community of faculty, scholars and staff committed to your success. We are delighted you have chosen to study here.

Leaving your home country, family and friends and introducing yourself to a new culture may lead to anxiety and apprehension. But rest assured that we here to help make your transition as smooth as possible.

Our staff is comprised of people who are dedicated to the well-being of international students. We have extensive training and experience helping students like you meet their educational goals and objectives.

If you need assistance interpreting U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations, we do that too.

I hope this International Student's Resource Guide answers your questions and provides you with access to the resources you need to make the transition from your home country to the United States and Florida Tech. If you have more questions or require further assistance, please contact us.

Again, congratulations and welcome to Florida Tech. I look forward to meeting you!

Sincerely,



FIT Orlando Faculty & Staff  
2420 Lakemont Avenue, Ste. 190  
Orlando, FL 32814  
Tel: 407-629-7359

# Frequently Asked Questions

There is a lot of useful information in this handbook—it covers everything from obtaining your visa to where to shop and dine in Orlando, Fla. But if you're like most people, you won't take the time to read it unless your most pressing questions are addressed first. Well, you're in luck!

International students' most frequently asked questions are answered here:

**Q How do I apply for a student (F-1) visa to come to the United States?**

**A** *Please visit [http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa\\_1750.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html) for visa application information. The procedure is slightly different from one U.S. consulate to another, so you will want to read the information for the particular consulate that you plan to visit.*

**Q When may I arrive?**

**A** *The U.S. consulate or embassy abroad can process your visa up to 90 days before the start date of your academic program. You may enter the country as early as 30 days prior to the program start date that is noted in item #5 on your I-20 or item #3 on DS-2019. You will not be expected to arrive on campus, however, until the arrival date on your I-20 or DS-2019.*

**Q What should I do when I arrive at Florida Tech?**

**A** *In accordance with immigration regulations, you must provide us with copies of your immigration documents upon arrival. These regulations apply to students from outside the United States, as well as to students transferring to Florida Tech from another U.S. school. Questions about class registration, student ID cards and getting settled on campus will be answered during orientation, which is mandatory for all new and transfer students.*

**Q I don't have anywhere to live when I arrive. Who can help me?**

**A** *We have compiled a list of places to live in Orlando close to campus. Also, there are hotels listed that are nearby if you need to stay at one for a couple days when you first arrive.*

**Q May I enroll in online courses?**

**A** *U.S. federal regulations limit the number of online courses that an F-1 student can count toward a full-time course load during a required term. For further details regarding the restrictions on online courses, visit [www.fit.edu/iss/online\\_education.php](http://www.fit.edu/iss/online_education.php)*

**Q I want to come to Florida Tech as a vocational student in FIT Aviation's flight program. Is that possible?**

**A** *Yes. For full details of the M-1 Vocational Visa Program, visit [www.fit.edu/iss/m-1](http://www.fit.edu/iss/m-1)*

**Q Is there public transportation available in Orlando?**

**A** *Because our rail and bus systems are limited, many Americans own cars. However, owning and operating an automobile in the United States can be a task.*

**Q Am I required to have health insurance?**

**A** *There is no socialized or national system of health care in the United States and medical treatment is expensive. All Florida Tech students are required to have appropriate medical insurance coverage. As part of your tuition and fees, you will be charged for student health insurance and you will be automatically covered through Florida Tech's health insurance plan.*

**Q What do I do if I want a family member to visit me?**

**A** *FIT Orlando will assist you in bringing your spouse and children to the United States. The process includes requesting completion of forms I-20 or DS-2019, along with financial documentation. The process is very similar to when you obtained your visa, since your family will be required to apply for the F-2 or J-2 visa from the U.S. embassy in your home country. If you would like to invite family members to visit for a short period of time on a visitor's visa, we can assist you in that process as well.*

**Q Do I have to be enrolled to stay in the United States? What about during the summer?**

**A** *U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requires all international students in F-1 status to maintain full-time enrollment status throughout their program of study. Further details of this requirement can be found in the "Your immigration responsibilities" section of this handbook. Unless it is your first semester, you do not have to be enrolled in the summer. Summer is considered your official "vacation time" from school, so you may remain in the United States and not be enrolled.*

**Q Can I work while in the United States?**

**A** *If you want to work off campus, you will have to apply for permission and F-1's may not work off campus during the first nine months of a program of study.*

**Q How do I obtain a social security number?**

**A** *A social security number will only be issued with verification of an offer of employment. Information on how to apply for a social security number will be covered during orientation.*

**Q Do I need to pay taxes?**

**A** *Every year, international students must file documentation with the Internal Revenue Service, even if they have not worked in the United States. We provides all international students with up-to-date information and resources, as well as complimentary nonresident income tax filing software to assist you in filing your income tax return forms.*

**Q May I transfer to another university?**

**A** *Florida Tech policy states that you are required to attend for one full semester if you enter the United States on an I-20 from Florida Tech. Florida Tech will not release a student until he/she completes one semester of attendance.*



# Preparing to Leave Home

*You have received your acceptance letter to Florida Tech and your Certificate of Eligibility of Nonimmigrant Visa.*

*Now what?*

## Confirm Information

First, make sure all of the information on your certificate (either Form I-20 or Form DS-2019) is correct. If any of the information is inaccurate, it is urgent that you fax a copy of the passport identification page with an explanation of the error to the university's office of admission. You will be sent a corrected certificate before your consular interview.

## Fulfill Medical Requirements

It is your responsibility to have your physician complete the medical history form you may access via your Panther Pass account.

In addition, you must provide proof that you have received two (2) measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccines and one (1) varicella (chicken pox) vaccine. Students at high risk for tuberculosis (TB), or from areas of the world where TB is endemic, are required to be screened for TB prior to attending classes. All students are to be vaccinated for Hepatitis B and/or meningitis before their arrival at Florida Tech, or within their first semester of enrollment. All students must show proof of immunization with a valid shot record issued by a physician, health department or other government agency (depending on country of origin).

If you have not received the required immunizations by the time you arrive on campus, you must do so within the first

two weeks after your arrival at Florida Tech. Failure to show proof of immunization or to receive the vaccinations will result in cancellation of current registration and prevent any future registration.

As an international student who will be living in the United States, it is also a good idea to plan for medical situations (including emergencies) that may arise during your stay in the United States. To prevent complications, it is in your best interest to obtain copies of your medical records and prescriptions, to pack an adequate supply of prescribed medications (in original packaging) and to translate important medical documents into English, if necessary.

## Obtain Visa

It is important to remember that you must obtain a visa that is appropriate to your purpose for entering the United States, usually an F-1 or J-1 student/scholar visa. In other words, if you are coming to the United States to attend Florida Tech, you should not enter the United States with a tourist visa (B1/B2) or via any other visa waiver program between your country and the United States. You will not be permitted to attend Florida Tech if you do not hold a student/scholar visa.

The first step in obtaining a visa is to make an appointment with the U.S. embassy or consulate responsible for issuing nonimmigrant visas for your home country, which may and should be done as soon as you receive your I-20 or DS-2019. Visa applications may be issued up to 90 days before your program start date. Visit <http://usembassy.gov> for a list of consular post websites.

If for some reason you are unable to schedule an interview with a consular officer until after the start date for your program (notated in section 5 on the I-20 or section 3 on the DS-2019), you should contact the Office of Admission. Depending on the circumstances, the university may have to issue you a new I-20 or DS-2019 or defer your attendance until the following semester.

After scheduling your appointment, you should:

- Complete a visa application and, when applicable, forms DS-156, DS-157 and DS-158, which can be found at <http://evisaforms.state.gov>
- Have photographs taken (requirements at [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info\\_1287.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1287.html))
- Obtain valid passport (must be valid at least six months from your date of entry into the United States)
- Compile evidence of ties to your home country that demonstrates your intent to return home (i.e., assured employment, ownership of property, etc.)
- Pay the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) fee and keep receipt. This fee must be paid at least three days before your appointment with the embassy. More information about the SEVIS fee can be found at <https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtml>.
- Obtain I-20 or DS-2019 for spouse or dependent(s) who will accompany you to the United States

During your appointment, you will be asked to provide evidence (receipts, photos, passport, documentation, etc.) that you have completed all of the above. In addition, you will need to provide:

- Applicable visa fees
- Your I-20 or DS-2019 form

- Proof of funding
- Evidence of spouse's and/or dependent's relationship to you and evidence of sufficient financial resources to support them

While each embassy or consular post has their own visa application procedures and processing times, the requirements above are standard. It is a good idea, however, to consult the office where you will apply for specific details regarding documentation and procedures.

When it comes time for your interview, make sure to arrive at the consular post prepared. You should:

- Dress professionally
- Bring translated copies of your academic records with you
- Be ready to talk about your academic plans and aspirations in detail
- Be knowledgeable about Florida Tech, the academic department you are entering and the professors with whom you hope to study
- Be prepared to talk about your career goals (which should indicate your intent to return home)
- Have all required documents with you and have them organized

Once you have been issued your visa, check to be sure that you have been issued the correct visa (an F-1 or M-1 if you have an I-20; a J-1 if you have a DS-2019) and that your visa indicates your school of choice: Florida Institute of Technology. Also be sure to check that your correct name and date of birth are recorded as they appear on your I-20. You will receive a sealed envelope containing your I-20 or DS-2019—DO NOT OPEN IT. The officer at the port of entry (POE) will open this envelope when you enter the United States.

*Immigration laws limit your arrival into the United States to no more than 30 days prior to the report date listed on the Form I-20 or DS-2019.*

If you are a citizen of Canada, you do not need a visa to enter the United States. However, you still need to present your I-20 or DS-2019 form and a valid passport at the U.S. Immigration border crossing or port of entry. You must also present proof of payment of the SEVIS fee.

## Make Travel Arrangements

When making air travel plans, it is recommended that you schedule at least three hours at your initial port of entry into the United States, before your connecting flight into Orlando, to allow sufficient time to pass through immigration and customs inspection and to change currency if needed. New security procedures have slowed this process.

From the Orlando airport, it is about a 25-minute drive to the Florida Tech Orlando campus.

Pay close attention to the “no later than” date in section 5 on the I-20 and section 3 on the DS-2019. You are required to attend Florida Tech by this date.

## What to Bring

Basic items of clothing are recommended, as well as a few family photos and personal hygiene belongings. If you wear glasses or contact lenses, you should bring a copy of your eye prescription with you. Dress is informal at Florida Tech. Classrooms and residence halls are air-conditioned. Many students might want to bring a sweater or sweatshirt when in class. In addition, we ask students to consider bringing national dress, instruments, crafts or other traditional materials with them for cultural events on

## Pre-Departure Checklist

- Confirm admission to Florida Tech by returning your Attendance Confirmation form and \$300 deposit
- Complete all other enrollment requirements as outlined on Panther Pass
- Decline admission offers from other universities and return any official forms
- Check the validity date of your passport
- Carefully read and understand your I-20 or DS-2019
- Pay SEVIS fee at least three days before your visa appointment
- Apply for your student visa at the U.S. embassy
- Buy traveler's checks or obtain enough cash (U.S. dollars) to cover your expenses for a few weeks (must declare with customs if \$10,000 or more)
- Obtain copies of medical records and obtain any prescription drugs you need
- Make travel arrangements (only after receiving your visa)

campus. Shopping trips to local stores will be provided to pick up items such as bedding, towels and other items you may want to use to decorate your living area.

## More Things to Bring or Buy

In addition to the basics, you may be interested to know what typical American college students either bring to college or purchase once they arrive. This checklist may help you better determine what you need to bring from home as well as what you want to buy when you get here in order to feel comfortable and have fun.

### *Bath and Bed*

- Bathrobe
- Bath Towels
- Bathroom Cup
- Brush and Comb
- Cologne/Perfume
- Cosmetics
- Dental Floss
- Deodorant
- Make-Up
- Pillows
- XL Twin Sheets

### *Clothing and Accessories*

- Bathing Suit
- Clothes Hangers
- Flip-Flops/Sandals
- Jeans
- Light Jacket
- Shorts
- Slippers
- Sneakers
- Sunglasses
- T-shirts

### *Décor and Furnishings*

- Bed Raisers
- Clock/Radio Alarm
- Desk Organizers
- Electric Fan
- Floor Lamp
- Photographs
- Posters
- Reading Lamp
- Storage Bins

### *Entertainment and Communication*

- Cell Phone
- CDs/DVDs
- Desktop Computer
- Electronics Adapters
- Notebook Computer
- Portable DVD Player
- Portable Music Player
- Printer
- Stereo
- Surge Protector
- Telephone
- Television
- USB Flash Drive
- Video Game System

### *School Supplies*

- Binders
- Bookbag/Knapsack
- Graph Paper
- Notebooks
- Pens and Pencils
- Ruler
- Scientific Calculator
- Stapler
- Three-Hole Punch

### *Sports and Leisure*

- Bicycle
- Bike Lock
- Frisbee
- Golf Clubs
- Snorkel Mask
- Soccer Ball
- Sunscreen
- Swim Goggles
- Tennis Racquet
- Water Bottle



## Your Arrival

*You may be anxious about the reception you will receive when you reach the United States, but do not worry.*

While there may be some procedures or policies you were not expecting, you will be fine as long as you take your time, have your documentation ready and in order and ask for help when you need it.

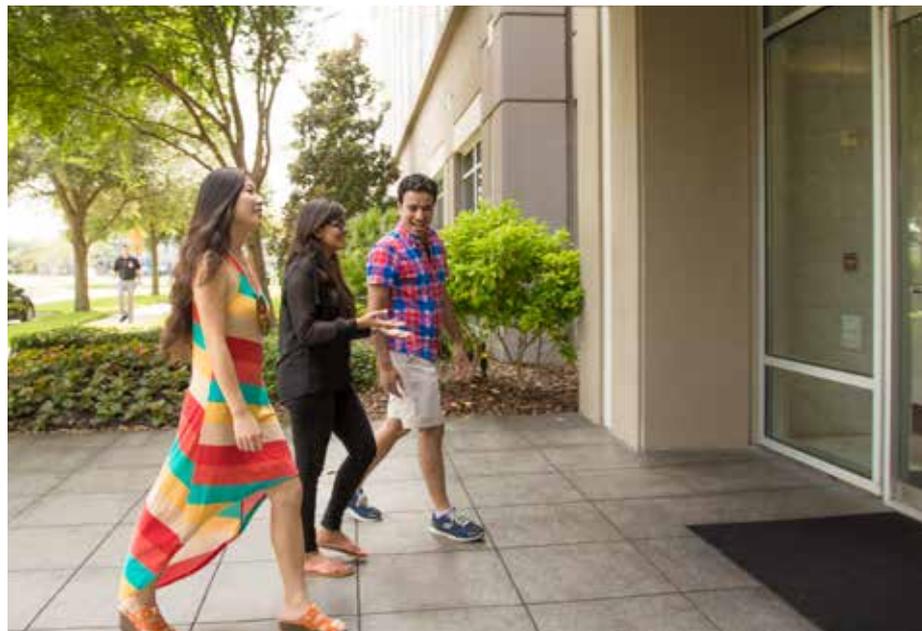
### Immigration Documentation

Do not pack your passport, I-20/DS-2019, financial documents, acceptance letter or other important papers in your luggage. You should carry these items with you during your trip as they will be needed when you arrive at your port of entry.

Upon arrival, you will need to present your passport, valid visa and I-20 or DS-2019. Remember, your passport must be valid for at least six months after your entry date. Be prepared to submit proof of finances if asked.

If the officer at the port of entry cannot initially verify your information, you may be directed to an interview area for secondary inspection, where you will have your documents examined and be asked some questions. Do not be alarmed. This is routine for students/scholars. If for some reason, the immigration officer believes your immigration documents to be unsatisfactory, you may receive a form I-515A. If you do, bring it to your DSO as soon as you arrive. Do not mail any immigration documents before consulting with a member of our staff.

If you are subject to special registration and have a federal identification number (FIN) listed in your passport near your visa, be sure that you receive information from the port of entry officer regarding port of departure procedures that will apply to you.



## Getting to Florida Tech from the Airport

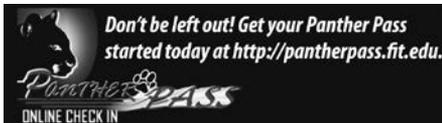
To get from Orlando International Airport, which is approximately 25 minutes away from campus, to Florida Tech, you may choose from among several available options. You may use the shuttle services at the airport or hire a taxi, which is more expensive. The most economical way is to use the shuttle services offered at the airport.

If you arrive early (before the required date of attendance listed on your I-20 or DS-2019, then arriving early should not be a problem as long as your landlord or apartment complex expects you.

## Orientation and Check-in

Several things need to be completed in order for you to transition into the university. Panther Pass is the key to completing all necessary processes. You can complete all processes at your own pace; however please start early as many will take some time to complete.

The Panther Pass program is designed to take you step by step through the process of checking in to the university. Your goal should be to complete the entire process before your arrival on campus. Completion prior to your arrival will ensure that you are prepared for university orientation and will reduce waiting time at university orientation.



*Is it possible to arrive too early? Yes. Remember, the port of entry will not allow you into the United States more than 30 days before the start date indicated on your I-20 or DS-2019.*

## Temporary Places to Stay

### *Close to campus/Orlando airport:*

#### **Western Orlando East Inn & Suites**

Phone: 407-282-3900  
8750 E. Colonial Drive  
Orlando, FL 32817

#### **Home Suite Home Colonial**

Phone: 407-896-1101  
2801 E. Colonial Drive  
Orlando, FL 32803

#### **E Country Inn & Suites By Carlson – Orlando Airport**

Phone: 407-856-8896  
5440 Forbes Place  
Orlando, FL 32812

Orientation will begin promptly after check-in and you will be well on your way to registering for classes and settling in.

## Your Arrival

Detailed orientation schedules will be given to you at the time you check-in.

The following items will be needed when you check-in with FIT Orlando:

- I-20/DS-2019
- Passport
- Visa

If you have a spouse or dependent(s) with you, their documentation will be required at check-in as well. Unfortunately, failure to check-in with FIT Orlando at orientation will result in your being reported to immigration as “not in attendance” and will result in loss of your immigration status. So make sure we see you at check-in!

## FIT Orlando Housing

We have compiled a list of websites that will assist you in finding an apartment.

Apartment rentals vary in price. Be prepared to pay \$800 to \$1,350 a month plus a deposit, first and last month's rents and various other fees. Some apartment rentals are all-inclusive, meaning your water, garbage removal, heat and possibly some other amenities are included in your monthly price; other rentals are not. Also, be prepared to pay deposits for electricity, telephone and other services.

Most housing requires a one-year lease. Read your lease agreement carefully before signing it and know the rules and regulations of the apartment. A lease is a binding contract and you may be liable for the remaining amount of your lease and/or loss of your deposit if you end your contract early.



### Local Housing (options)\*\*

District Baldwin Park Apartments  
2.3 miles away  
Rent \$899 for studio  
407-678-2100

Winter Park Village Apartments  
2.4 miles away  
Rent \$815 for 1 bedroom  
www.winterparkvillage.com

Post Lake Baldwin Park  
0.5 miles away  
Rent \$1,230 for 1 bedroom  
www.postproperties.com

Auvers Village Apartments  
1.9 miles away  
Rent \$853 for studio  
www.auversvillageapartments.com

Azul Baldwin Park  
0.2 miles away  
Rent \$1,241 for 1 bedroom  
<http://azulbaldwinpark.com>

Villages at Baldwin Park  
1.6 miles away  
Rent \$1,329 for 1 bedroom  
www.villageatbaldwinpark.com

Seabrook  
2.3 miles away  
Rent \$900 for studio  
321-594-7114

\*\*More options can be found by searching on the internet or asking your advisor.

## Rental Terms You Should Know

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**Landlord:** An owner of residential premises or his agent who is authorized to manage the residential premises and to receive rent from a tenant under a rental agreement.

**Lease:** A written agreement giving the tenant the right to use the landlord's property, with stipulations about rent, rent payment date, length of occupancy, number of person to occupy premises, rules and regulations regarding pets, storage, etc.

**Property Manager:** Authorized representative of landlord

**Rental Agreement:** Any written agreement or lease specifying rental terms and conditions

**Security Deposit:** A monetary deposit made to a landlord that holds a tenant to the terms of the rental agreement

**Sublease:** The tenant assigns less than the entire property or assigns all of the property for less than the full remaining period. However, the original tenant remains obligated for contracted responsibilities.

**Tenant (Lessee):** A person entitled in a rental agreement to use and occupy the residential premises

**Term:** The time period during which a landlord agrees to rent the property and a tenant agrees to pay rent for that property

**Termination:** Ending a lease or rental agreement, either because the lease or rental agreement has come to its end or because both parties agree to bring the lease or agreement to an end

## Local Services

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### Electricity

Orlando Utilities Commission requires a deposit that varies according to a customer's credit rating. An initial service charge is included on the first bill. To receive OUC service, call 407-423-9018 any time or go to [www.ouc.com](http://www.ouc.com).

### Gas

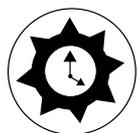
Florida City Gas supplies natural gas to most of Brevard. A \$50 startup fee is required. To begin gas service, call 800-993-7546 or visit [www.floridacitygas.com](http://www.floridacitygas.com).

### Cell Phone

There are several cell phone companies to choose from: AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, T-Mobile and many others.

### Water, Sewer, Trash

Charges for sewer, water and trash vary throughout the county. Deposits are required. Call 772-664-5916.

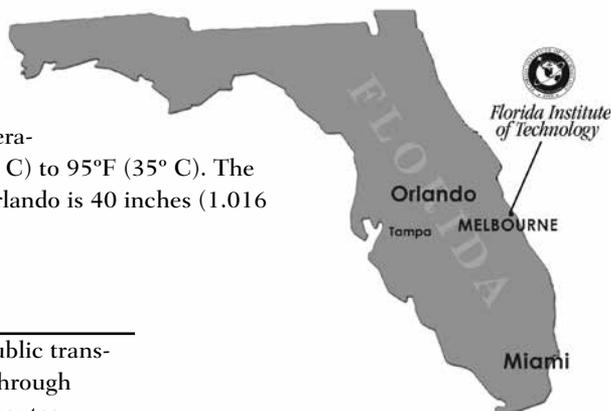


## Day-to-Day Life

### Overview of the Orlando Area

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Located the heart of Florida, the city of Orlando is about a half hour drive from Disney World and Universal Studios. Orlando's weather is warm and humid. The temperature in January ranges from 35° F (1.67° C) to 80° F (26.7° C). July temperatures range from 70° F (21.1° C) to 95°F (35° C). The average rainfall per year in Orlando is 40 inches (1.016 meters).



### Transportation

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LYNX provides inexpensive public transportation in Orange County through fixed-route bus systems. The routes include stops at major shopping centers, government centers, social service agencies, colleges, universities and hospitals. Weekend and evening service is also available in some areas. In addition, there are several taxi services around town and a Greyhound bus station.

Because Orange County's public transportation is fairly limited and not as comprehensive as in many other countries, international students may also choose to purchase a car or motorcycle, which would require licensing. Many students choose bicycling, as it is an easy and affordable form of transportation in and around campus. Used bikes can be purchased from other students or through the newspaper. Cyclists must comply with driving regulations and are encouraged to wear helmets.

### Getting Around

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For LYNX bus routes, visit [www.lynx.com](http://www.lynx.com).

For Greyhound schedule and ticket information: Call 407-292-3424 or visit [www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com).

For Mears Taxi Transportation, visit [mearstransportation.com](http://mearstransportation.com).

For Uber and Lyft download the app.

For Zipcar, visit [zipcar.com](http://zipcar.com).

For Juice Bike Share, visit [orlando.socialbicycles.com](http://orlando.socialbicycles.com).

## Driving in the United States

Students deciding to purchase an automobile and drive in the United States should be aware that laws of vehicle registration, licensing of drivers and traffic regulations are written and enforced by each individual state. Drunk driving laws are strictly enforced in the state of Florida. It is extremely important that you know the rules and regulations of driving.

In short, you must:

- Obtain a license
- Register your vehicle
- Secure auto insurance

All operators of a motor vehicle must have a valid driver's license. To obtain a driver's license, documents must be presented to a Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) office. For a full listing of eligible documentation, visit [www.flhsmv.gov](http://www.flhsmv.gov).

You will be required to pass an eye exam and a written test. A car is not necessary to obtain a driver's license. The DMV office is extremely busy; it may be wise to make an appointment to avoid long, long lines. When you are issued a driver's license, it will only be valid until the end date on your I-20 or DS-2019.

### Nearby DMV Offices

Orlando  
1051 University Blvd. 32817  
407-836-4145

Orlando  
301 Rosalind Ave. 32801  
407-836-4145

Orlando  
2110 W. Colonial Drive 32804  
407-836-4145

For further information, visit  
[www.flhsmv.gov](http://www.flhsmv.gov).

In addition to obtaining a license, you must also register your vehicle within 10 days of establishing residency. In order to register your vehicle, you must provide proof of vehicle insurance and a completed Form 82042 (vehicle identification number and odometer reading). You will also need to provide personal documentation such as your passport, I-94, driver's license, I-20 or Form DS-2019.

If you are buying a new car from a car dealership, the dealership may take care of the car registration for you. If not, they will usually provide you with the forms that you need to take to the registration office. If you are buying a car from a private citizen, you will need to make sure that you receive a bill of sale and the title from the previous owner.

All drivers in the United States are required to have car insurance. Accidents can happen at any time. A relatively small automobile accident can be very expensive. In the event of an accident, automobile insurance will save you money, worry and it will protect you from potential lawsuits. Cost of coverage varies depending on insurance company, age of the car, age of driver(s), number of drivers and other factors.





## Health and Safety

The United States does not have a national health care system. Health care costs, even for minor illnesses or accidents, can amount to thousands of dollars. All Florida Tech students are required to have appropriate medical insurance coverage and will be charged for student health insurance as part of their tuition and fees. International students will be automatically covered through Florida Tech's student health insurance plan.

All students seeking information regarding health insurance benefits and specific details of their coverage should visit [www.fit.edu/iss/healthinsurance.php](http://www.fit.edu/iss/healthinsurance.php) or contact the university's health insurance representative at 321-674-8280.

It is mandatory for all international students to be covered by the university's health plan. Exceptions may be granted only if the student has an insurance plan that meets very strict requirements in order for them to qualify for the waiver. Students may request a waiver of this university insurance fee by completing the form (on Panther Pass) and providing

proof of appropriate insurance to Campus Services within the first two weeks of the beginning of class. If proof of insurance is not provided, students will be billed for Florida Tech's student health insurance. Florida Tech will not accept coverage by an insurance company outside the United States. Before enrolling for coverage in any insurance plan other than Florida Tech's student health plan, please check with Campus Services ([www.fit.edu/campus\\_services](http://www.fit.edu/campus_services)) to verify if it meets the waiver requirements.

All international students who are married or single parents who have one or more children living with them may purchase health insurance for these dependents by completing the appropriate form in the Campus Services Office and paying for the additional insurance at the student accounting office in the comptroller's office. The student health insurance fee will be refunded and coverage will be canceled if the student pays for coverage and subsequently does not enroll or withdraws from the university within the first two weeks of classes.

## Bringing Your Family

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Before you decide that your spouse and/or children should accompany you to the United States, you should be aware that it may be expensive. Major costs include off-campus housing, childcare and insurance. While there is a bus system servicing the surrounding area, it is limited and it is the only public transportation system in the area. Finding housing near a bus line can be very difficult. Spouses may feel isolated and alone.

Childcare or after-school care centers are expensive and usually have a waiting list. It may not be possible to find a center to take care of your child immediately.

Family members who accompany you must be covered by medical insurance,

which is not included in your university health fee. You will need to demonstrate your ability to cover their living expenses while in the United States. We estimate expenses as \$5,000 per year for the first family member, \$7,500 for two and \$10,000 for three or more dependents. U.S. consular officials may require proof of your ability to cover these expenses for the duration of your academic program. Dependent spouses of international students in F-1 status are not eligible to be employed in the United States under any circumstances. We strongly recommend that spouses and/or children not accompany you to the United States until you have completed one academic year.





## Education in the United States

Public schools in the United States provide free education for children between the ages of five and eighteen. To enroll your children in public school, please contact Orange County Public Schools at 445 W. Amelia St., Orlando FL 32801 or visit [www.ocps.net](http://www.ocps.net). To register a child for the first time in any Florida school, you will need:

- Child's birth certificate
- Immunization records on HRS 680 form for MMR (mumps, measles and rubella), DPT (diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus) and OPU (polio)
- Proof of physical examination within the last year, or one scheduled within 30 days
- Proof of residence, including lease or rental agreement, utility bill, etc.
- Every first grader must provide evidence of successful completion of kindergarten

You may register your child at any time. Each school has a designated attendance area and the family's address determines which school the student will attend. Contact the Orange County Public School's Office to determine which school your child will attend.

## Orlando Area Public Schools

Audubon Park Elementary

Grades: K-5

1750 Common Way Rd.

Orlando, FL 32814

407-897-6400

Glenridge Middle School

Grades: 7-8

2900 Upper Park Rd.

Orlando, FL 32814

407-623-1415

Winter Park High School

Grades: 9-12

2100 Summerfield Road

Winter Park, FL 32792

407-622-3200

For further information, visit

[www.ocps.net](http://www.ocps.net)

## Orlando Area Private Schools

The families of children attending private schools must pay tuition. Costs vary depending on the age or grade and on the school.

Trinity Preparatory School of Florida

Grades 6-12

5700 Trinity Prep Lane

Winter Park, FL 32792

407-671-4140

The First Academy

Grades PreK-12

2667 Bruton Blvd.

Orlando, FL 32805

407-206-8600

## Bringing Dependents to the United States

In order to bring dependents to the United States, you must be maintaining status as an F-1 or J-1 student and must show that you have sufficient finances to support your family here without any of them being employed. Your spouse and unmarried minor children (under age 21) are eligible to apply for F-2 or J-2 visas. No other family members are eligible.

To begin, provide your DSO a copy of your passport, Form I-94, your Form I-20 or DS-2019 and evidence of your financial support for your family (currently \$5,000 for spouse and \$2,500 for each additional dependent). After review, a dependent Form I-20 or DS-2019 will be issued for the purpose of bringing your family to the United States. You will then need to send them to your family with instructions for them to apply for F-2 or J-2 visas at the U.S. consular office. In addition to the Form I-20/DS-2019, they will have to present valid passports, evidence of their financial support, evidence that they

intend to return to their home country at the conclusion of your studies in the United States and any other information that the consular officer specifies.

If the consular officer is satisfied that your family members are bona fide student dependents who intend to return home and that they have sufficient funds for their support here, he or she will issue F-2/J-2 visas to them. Your dependents may then come to the United States and will be admitted to the country for duration of status. That means they may remain here with you until you complete your studies. Your family may remain in the United States in F-2 or J-2 status only while you are here in F-1 or J-1 status.

*A note of caution:* Do not allow your family to come to the United States in any other immigration status or before they have received the Form I-20 or DS-2019 and F-2 or J-2 visas. If they do, they run the risk of being denied admission to the United States at the port of entry and will be required to return home.





## Money Matters

### Overview

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Your I-20 or DS-2019 was issued to you based on the funding information you provided. Please remember that funding varies from student to student year to year; some students require more money than others depending on course of study and interests. You should not assume that you can get by on less funding than is indicated on your I-20 or DS-2019.

Housing deposits, rent, household necessities, tuition, books and supplies will require major expenditures after your arrival. We recommend that you bring at least \$5,000 in U.S. dollars to cover your initial costs. The safest way to bring money with you is in the form of traveler's checks. You may also choose to bring a bank draft or a check to deposit into an account that you can open at a local bank. Please note that it may take a few days for a check to "clear" and the monies you deposit may not be immediately available for you to use.

Money management is one of the greatest challenges that international students and scholars face when they arrive in the United States. Most students and scholars live on a limited budget. You must get used to a new currency, adjust to the value of a dollar and estimate living expenses. The best practice is to start budgeting from the moment you arrive. If you intend to live off campus, you will need to keep in mind that you will have "start-up" costs when renting a place to live. Bills often take a month or two to arrive so be prepared and do not spend more than you can afford.

### University Expenses

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Students are responsible for making all necessary payment arrangements with the university through the Office of the Bursar. All students are expected to either pay their full semester's expenses or contract a payment installment plan. Students making full or contractual partial payments may pay online by credit card or by cash, check or credit card at the Office of the Bursar. For further information, contact the Office of the Bursar, 321-674-7428, toll free in the U.S. at 800-676-9250 or online via ACCESS (TRACKS user name and password are needed).

Whether you receive an assistantship from the university, a scholarship from an outside agency or family support from abroad, if for any reason you are not prepared to make payment at the required times you must consult the supervisor of Student Accounting to finalize your registration. Students receiving scholarships from their home government or other agency may arrange for direct sponsor billing tuition, fees, insurance, room and board.

Failure to make payment arrangements may result in deregistration and ultimately lead to problems with your immigration status. A student may not register for a subsequent semester until all financial obligations for the current semester have been met.

### U.S. Currency

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U.S. currency is based on the dollar (\$1), which is comprised of 100 cents. There are six denominations of coins and six denominations of bills representing different amounts.

## U.S. Coins

penny



**Penny:** the only brown coin; worth 1 cent

nickel



**Nickel:** a silver coin; larger than a penny; worth 5 cents

dime



**Dime:** the smallest U.S. coin; silver in color; worth 10 cents

quarter



**Quarter:** a silver coin; larger than a nickel; worth 25 cents

**Half-dollar:** the largest U.S. coin; not commonly used; worth 50 cents

**Dollar coin:** a silver coin slightly larger than a quarter; not commonly used

## U.S. Bills

There are \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 bills. They are all similar in size and color, although the U.S. Mint is in the process of changing the appearance of the bills. The easiest way to identify them is just by looking at the number printed on the bill.

## Opening a Bank Account

Once you arrive at Florida Tech, you will want to open a bank account. During orientation, it may be possible to find local bank representatives on campus to provide you with information outlining their bank's services. When you do open an account, you will need to take your student ID card, your I-20/DS-2019, your passport and the funds that you wish to deposit. Open a checking account so that you can write checks to pay your bills each month and pay for items you wish to purchase.

Some students also wish to open a savings account. Some savings accounts pay interest each month on the amount



## Everyday Expenses Estimator

*Note, these are only estimates*

In addition to tuition and fees, you will incur everyday expenses to pay for food and other necessities, as well as for luxuries and entertainment. Here are some typical costs students must consider:

**Books and Supplies:** from \$800 to \$1,500 a year

**Cable TV:** \$65 a month (if not on campus)

**Cellular Phone:** from \$50 to \$100 a month depending on service

**Clothes:** at least \$10 per item depending on where you shop

**Internet Access:** from \$25 to \$60 a month depending on service

**Groceries:** about \$50 a week for one, up to \$150 a week for a family

**Health Services:** about \$200 for a routine doctor's visit (if not covered by insurance)

**Meals (restaurant):** from \$10 to \$25 a meal

**Movies:** \$5 with a student ID, and up to \$8.50

**Personal Transportation:** anywhere from \$2,500 to \$10,000 for a decent used car, \$80 a month for gas, insurance from about \$1,000 to \$3,000 a year

**Public Transportation:** about \$6 for a taxi ride to the mall, ten-ride bus pass for \$5

**Rent (apartment):** from \$650 to \$1,200 a month depending on location

**Taxes:** sales tax is 6%

**Telephone (off campus):** \$30 a month for unlimited local basic service, \$40 a month for unlimited long distance

## MONEY MATTERS

that is in the account; others do not. You can withdraw money as needed from a savings account, but you cannot do so by writing a check. Many banks offer debit cards, also known as check cards, when you open a checking account. The card will come with a personal identification number (PIN). Do not let anyone else know your PIN and don't let anyone use your card. The debit card allows you to make purchases and have the purchase amount automatically deducted from your checking account balance. It can also be used to withdraw money from an automated teller machine (ATM). Remember, debit cards are not credit cards—you can only spend the amount of money you have available in your checking account.

### Credit Cards

Banks, websites, department stores and gasoline companies all issue credit cards that can be used to buy goods when you do not have money available at the time. You are billed each month and are required to pay at least a portion of your balance each month. If you do not pay the entire balance, interest (or finance charges) accrues on the unpaid balance. Interest rates are extremely high. Credit cards are convenient, but they can be costly if you are not careful.

### Transferring Funds to the United States

There are several options available to help you transfer funds from your home country to the United States to cover your expenses for the year. You should check with your bank to discuss the solution that best suits your needs.

Some of the most efficient and effective ways to transfer funds include:

- Traveler's checks
- Bank checks (also called cashier's checks) drawn on a U.S. bank in U.S. dollars
- Wire transfer from your bank at home to your U.S. bank

## Taxes

### *Sales Tax*

Nearly every item that you buy, except medicine and some basic grocery items, will have sales tax added to its price. In the Melbourne area, sales tax is approximately 6%. You should not rely on the price that you see on an item's price tag because most of the time you will need to add sales tax to that price.

### *Federal Income Tax*

Collection of Federal Income Tax in the United States is the responsibility of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Foreign students in the United States are subject to federal income taxation on any wages earned in the United States. In addition, all students must pay taxes on teaching, graduate and research assistantships. More detailed information about taxes will be provided to you upon your arrival at Florida Tech.

### *Social Security Number (SSN)*

Everyone who has earnings in the United States must obtain a Social Security number, the number used by the U.S. government to identify wage earners for tax purposes. It should be noted that recent legislation passed by the Social Security Administration does not allow foreign students to apply for a Social Security number, unless they can provide evidence of employment in the United States.



## Cultural Adjustment

*When people move to a different setting, they must make adjustments to their usual behavior and attitudes and adapt to new cultural norms.*

We recommend that you attempt to “step outside” yourself, to observe your own reactions to being in a new culture and then to compare these reactions with those of other people from different countries. Your observations can result in an increased self-understanding and may help you to gain insights into the various factors that have made you who you are. If you are able to keep the perspective of an outside observer 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.

### Culture Shock

Some new students experience culture shock when they first arrive. Culture shock is 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 to the United States. Signs of culture shock include interruptions in normal sleep patterns, anxiety, frustration and excessive anger over minor issues. It is common to become dependent on fellow international students who are experiencing the same feelings and have the same language and customs.

### 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 return 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 all over again.



## Ways to Cope With Culture Shock

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### *Maintain Perspective*

You should remember that thousands of individuals who have come to Orlando and Florida Tech from other countries have felt the way you feel, and they survived!

### *Evaluate Expectations*

Ask yourself if your reactions to the culture are the product of the way things are, or the way you expected them to be. Usually it's a combination of both.

### *Keep an Open Mind*

People here may do or say things that people in your country 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 the values of your country.

### *Avoid Being Judgmental*

Try to avoid evaluating or judging others' behavior according to standards of your country. This may make it easier for you to adapt to your new environment. Visit your DSO. A discussion with your DSO can help you to get a useful perspective on culture shock and how it can be a useful opportunity for personal growth.

### *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 representative of the group to which you are perceived to belong (stereotype) and not as an individual. On many occasions, you may be referred to as a "foreign student" or "a student from country X." This should not be taken personally, as it probably has nothing to do with you as a person. Rather, it stems from a lack of experience with people from other countries. As you learn to better express yourself

and relate to American students, however, they will open up to you and the awkwardness will fade.

### *Seek Guidance from Others*

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 that may seem unfamiliar. Please contact your DSO if you do not know anyone from your home country and they will help you 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.

### *Ask Yourself*

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?

## American Expressions, Idioms and Slang

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**Awesome:** amazing, fantastic

**Barbecue (Bar-B-Que/BBQ):** an outdoor party that features meat with sauce cooked over an open fire

**Beat:** very tired

**Beat around the bush:** to be evasive; not to speak openly about something

**Big deal:** sarcastic term to play down or belittle what someone has done

**Biggie:** something that is very important

**Blow it:** to do badly, e.g., “I really blew that exam.”

**Bogus:** inferior quality; phoney

**Boonies:** the countryside, far from the city

**Bounce:** to leave a place

**Break the ice:** to get acquainted, to make an awkward social situation comfortable

**Broke:** to be without money

**Bummer:** bad or sad situation; also bummed, bummed out: feeling very bad

**Burbs:** diminutive of suburbs, residential area outside of the city

**Chill:** to spend relaxed time, to “hang out” (“Come chill at my apartment.”)

**Chill out:** to slow down, to relax

**Cold feet, to have:** to be nervous; to be uncertain about doing something

**Come again?:** “Please repeat what you just said.”

**Come off it:** to stop what you are doing or saying

**Cool:** (adj.) term denoting approval for something or someone

**Cool it:** to slow down; to relax

**Cop out:** (v.) to quit; deny responsibility for; (n.) an excuse

**Couch potato:** person who spends all leisure time watching television

**Cram:** to study frantically just before a test; also eat a lot, to stuff yourself

**Crash:** to sleep or stay temporarily at someone’s place; also to go to a party uninvited

**Cut it out, knock it off:** a request or command to stop doing something

**Date:** (v.) to go out with another person; (n.) the person with whom you go

**Down to earth:** practical, straightforward; simple and honest

**Drag:** (n.) boring or unpleasant thing, (adj.) not much fun

**Drive a hard bargain:** to hold out for the best terms in a trade

**Drop in, drop by:** to visit unexpectedly

**Drop off:** to deliver to designated location

**Drop out:** (n.) someone who didn’t graduate from school; (v.) to quit before completing a goal

**Dutch treat, go Dutch:** each person pays for his/her own food or entertainment

**Fat chance:** very little chance

**Fed up:** sick of; disgusted with or tired of something

**Fishy:** suspicious; “There’s something fishy about his story.”

**Flunk:** to fail an exam or a course

**Freak, freak out:** to show great emotion, positive or negative

**Funky:** a term denoting approval, often used to describe items of clothing or design

**Get it together, get one’s act together:** to get organized

**Get on one’s nerves:** to cause irritation

**Get with it:** to conform with the situation; make the necessary adjustment; also to “get with the program”

**Give me a call, call me:** “Telephone me”

**Go for it:** to take an active part in something, try to achieve some specific goal

**Greeks:** members of fraternities or sororities

**Gross:** term denoting something crude and extremely unpleasant or disgusting

**Had it:** to reach a limit of tolerance; “I’ve had it!”

**Hang around:** to wait, doing nothing in particular

**Hang in there:** “Don’t give up”; “Keep trying”

**Hang on:** in reference to the telephone, “Do not hang up the receiver. I’ll be back”; also “Keep trying”

## More American Expressions, Idioms and Slang

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**Hang out:** (v.) to spend time relaxing, not working or doing anything in particular; (n.) a place in which to spend leisure time

**Hang-ups:** inhibitions or worries about things

**Hassle:** (n.) trouble, difficulty; "Catching the 7 a.m. bus every morning is a hassle;" (v.) "Don't hassle me"

**Have it in for someone:** to have a deliberate intention to cause trouble for another

**Have it made:** to be assured of success

**Put one's foot in one's mouth:** to say something for which you are embarrassed

**Hit it off:** become friends

**In a bad way:** the situation is getting very bad

**In a big way:** very much, a term to show emphasis as in, "he was hurting in a big way"

**In your dreams:** not possible; "It'll never happen"

**Keep in touch:** to phone or write occasionally

**Keep your fingers crossed:** a good luck gesture or expression

**Know one's stuff:** to be knowledgeable in a certain subject

**Lay off:** to stop bothering or nagging

**Make ends meet:** to budget within one's income

**Mess around:** to play, relax

**No way:** a response to a suggestion of something that is wrong or that one does not wish to do

**Off the wall:** crazy

**On me:** "I'll pay," also, "I'll pick up the tab [pay]"

**Out of it:** not adjusted to the rest of the group, not fitting in; dazed

**Out of sight:** exclamation of approval

**Peeved:** irritated; disgusted

**Piece of cake:** easy

**Pot luck:** dinner where each person brings something to eat

**Psyched:** mentally prepared

**Pull an all-nighter:** stay up all night studying

**Pull strings:** to use personal influence to achieve an objective

**Rain check:** a deferred acceptance of an invitation with a promise to accept at a later date; "I can't make it this Sunday but I'll take a rain check."

**Ripped off:** to be cheated of money

**Uptight:** nervous

**What's up?:** "What is new?" "What is happening?" Often used as a greeting in very informal settings





## Common Academic and Florida Tech Related Terms

Here are some common academic and Florida Tech related terms you will hear in and around campus on a daily basis.

**ACCESS:** A single sign-on system for easy access to PAWS, email, and other important university information

**Adjunct Faculty:** visiting or part-time instructors

**Audit:** to take a course without credit

**Bachelor's Degree:** a degree received after completing four years at a university in a specific study

**CANVAS:** online learning system; professors post lecture notes, course information, changes to schedules, discussion boards, professors can post your grades

**Commencement:** graduation ceremonies held at the end of fall and spring semesters

**Course Numbers:** numbers that indicate the level of the course

**Diplomat:** a volunteer student, faculty, staff member or friend of the university who agrees to assist new international students on or before their arrival in the United States

**Dual Major:** When a student earns two different university degrees at the same time

**FAFSA:** Free Application for Federal Student Aid that students complete each year to see if they are eligible for money from the government and/or scholarships

**GSA:** graduate student assistant, usually teaches labs and helps professors administer exams

**IT:** information technology, also known as tech support

**Jungle:** the Botanical Garden on campus that contains over 300 species of plants and 200 species of palm trees, nice to walk through between classes

**Major:** a focus on a specific field of study, interest or career

**Minor:** a secondary focus on a different field of study, interest or career

**Orientation:** a week filled with events to help new students adjust to campus life

**Panther Cash:** spending money "stored" on a student ID card that may be used for purchases in the bookstore, laundry facilities, photocopy services, printing in the library and special services at the health center

**PAWS:** Panther Access Web for Students, an online student account students use to register for class, access records and financial aid information, and make payments to student accounts

**PDH:** Panther Dining Hall; the main residential dining room; located in the center of campus

**PPL:** Panther Prep Leader; students of various majors who help new students adjust to college life during orientation

**RA:** resident assistant, an upper-classman who is responsible for students living on their floor in a residence hall

## Immigration Responsibilities

[www.fit.edu/isss/responsibilities.php](http://www.fit.edu/isss/responsibilities.php)

All international students and scholars are responsible for knowing the rules and regulations pertaining to their status.

Failure to comply with the rules can result in serious consequences, including loss of your immigration status in the United States. These are your basic responsibilities as an international student or scholar:

- Maintain a valid passport at all times, provide your advisor with a copy
- Attend the school whose I-20/DS-2019 you enter the United States on
- Know the expiration date of your visa and provide the DSO with visa renewals
- Know your program completion date on your I-20 or DS-2019, follow correct procedure for timely extensions
- Carry full course load—12 credits for undergraduates, 9 for graduates. Follow correct procedures for less than full time course load
- Make normal academic progress
- All F-1 and J-1 students, unless officially sponsored by their home government or agency that guarantees student's health insurance coverage as part of their contract with Florida Tech, must enroll in the Florida Tech health insurance plan (and your dependents if necessary)
- Report the DSO with changes in status within 10 days of a move, extension, transfer or program change
- File nonresident tax forms each year by deadline
- Obtain official work permission and approval, including RA and TA College Roll positions and all forms of off-campus employment. Adhere to proper terms of employment. Apply for Curricular Practical Training, Optional Practical Training in a timely manner
- Obtain travel signatures before leaving the United States

- Notify your advisor if you are leaving school for any reason
- Obey state and federal laws
- Depart from the United States in a timely manner

By law, Florida Tech is required to keep the following information on file: your name; date and place of birth; country of citizenship; current U.S. address; current academic status, including the start and end dates of your academic program; type of degree program and field of study; employment requests/approvals; termination date and reason; registration of number of credits per semester; and copies of immigration documents and passport. Designated School Officials (DSOs) are required to report any changes related to international students in SEVIS within 21 days.

## Immigration Terms To Know

We understand that immigration regulations can often seem confusing, complicated and involve unfamiliar terms or concepts. To help you understand the essentials, we offer you this glossary of immigration terms to guide you through the process. Our office also offers workshops throughout the academic year, which cover important areas such as employment, taxes, etc.

### *Completion Date*

Refers to the date the student completes the requirements for his or her degree program; i.e., it is the date the student finishes the last class, turns in a required thesis or dissertation, or otherwise meets the requirements for the degree. It is not the date of graduation, which may follow the completion date by weeks if not months.

### *Department of Homeland Security (DHS)*

DHS is responsible for securing American borders and managing the immigration process. Under DHS, the newly

created United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) focuses exclusively on providing services such as efficiently processing applications for U.S. citizenship, administering work authorizations and other permits and providing services for new residents and citizens.

### *School Official (DSO)*

An employee or agent of an educational institution who has been authorized by USCIS to verify information and certify documents for F-1 students.

### *DS-2019*

A certificate of eligibility issued by an authorized Exchange Visitor program. The certificate enables eligible individuals to obtain a J-1 visa to study, conduct research or teach in the United States. The J-1 exchange visitor, while traveling and re-entering the United States must also carry the DS-2019. The DS-2019 form functions as a record of J-1 status throughout the exchange visitor's stay in the United States. It is an important government document that should be kept at all times as a part of the exchange visitor's permanent records.

### *Duration of Status (D/S)*

"Duration of Status" or "D/S" is the length of time for which individuals in F and J status are admitted into the United States. D/S allows students to remain in the United States as long as they are pursuing full-time studies and are otherwise complying with all immigration regulations. D/S is not, however, for an indefinite period of time. D/S is based on the completion date on your I-20 or DS-2019, plus a 60-day grace period for F-1 students and a 30-day grace period for J-1 students.

### *Employment Authorization Document*

Known as the "EAD Card," it is a photo ID card issued by USCIS to

nonimmigrants, which grants employment authorization for specific periods of time.

F-1 students need to apply for an EAD card to have permission to do optional practical training and off-campus employment (based on economic hardship).

J-2 dependents may also apply for an EAD card to have any type of employment.

### *F-1 Student*

A nonimmigrant who is admitted into the United States to pursue a full course of study. F-1 student's educational expenses are usually met by personal, family or university funds.

### *F-2 Dependent*

A spouse or child of an F-1 student. F-2 spouses and children may not be employed while in the United States. F-2 spouses may not study full time. F-2 children may study full time only if it is in elementary or secondary school.

### *Grace Period*

F-1 students have 60 days to remain in the United States beyond completion of studies to either prepare for departure or begin any authorized practical training; J-1 students have 30 days.

### *I-20 (SEVIS I-20)*

A certificate of eligibility issued by an authorized educational institution enabling eligible individuals to apply for F-1 or M-1 student status. The student, while traveling and re-entering the United States, must also carry the I-20. This document reflects the student's biographical data, school and program information and financial resources. The student should keep the I-20 as a part of his or her permanent records.

**IMPORTANT:** *A nonimmigrant may have more than one "visa" but will always have only one "status."*

## CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

### *I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record)*

The Form I-94 arrival/departure record provides nonimmigrants evidence that they have been lawfully admitted to the United States. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) gathers travelers' arrival/departure information automatically from their electronic travel records (CBP will still issue a paper form I-94 at land border ports of entry). To retrieve your I-94 admission record, visit the following CBP website:

<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html>.

### *J-1 Student*

A nonimmigrant who has been selected to participate in an exchange visitor program. J-1 students generally are financially sponsored by an educational institution in the United States or abroad, a U.S. or an international government, or a private agency in support of international educational exchange. For individuals holding J-1 status, there is usually a "two-year home country residency requirement" and "health insurance." (Refer to J-1 Scholar section under each heading.)

### *J-1 Scholar*

A nonimmigrant who has been selected to participate in an exchange visitor program.

### *J-2 Dependent*

A spouse or child of a J-1 student or scholar. J-2 dependents are eligible to apply for employment through USCIS.

### *M-1 Student*

A nonimmigrant whose primary intent is to pursue vocational or technical training.

### *Nonimmigrant*

A person who is in the United States temporarily to pursue a specific activity or purpose (e.g., study, travel, business). Most nonimmigrants, including all F-1 and J-1 students and their dependents, must have an established residence abroad to which they intend to return.



### *Passport*

A formal permit to travel abroad from and return to the issuing country. With few exceptions, it is issued by one's country of citizenship. All individuals, except Canadian citizens, in F and J status are required to have a valid passport at all times. It is your responsibility to extend or replace your passport BEFORE it expires.

### *PDSO and DSO (Primary Designated School Official and Designated School Official)*

Responsible for Florida Tech's compliance with the immigration regulations as well as any system alerts generated by SEVIS. Point of contacts for students/scholars.

### *Responsible Officer (RO) and Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO)*

Responsible Officers in charge of overseeing and hosting the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program and reporting to the U.S. Department of State.

### *Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)*

An Internet-based database for electronically tracking and reporting foreign students and exchange visitors in the United States. I-20s for F-1 students and DS-2019s for J-1 students/scholars are generated using SEVIS.

### *Special Registration*

A system that enables the U.S. government to keep track of nonimmigrants that come to the United States every year. Currently, there are three categories of nonimmigrants who will have to do special registration: 1) citizens or nationals of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Syria will be registered at the point of entry; 2) nonimmigrants who have been designated by the State Department; and 3) any other nonimmigrant identified by immigration officers at airports, seaports and land ports of entry will also need to register in accordance with 8 Code of Federal Regulations 264.1(f)(2).

### *State Department*

The U.S. Department of State oversees diplomatic affairs and foreign relations for the United States. It is also responsible for issuing visas to foreign nationals who wish to enter the United States and regulates the Exchange Visitor Program, which includes J-1 students.

### *Status*

Once nonimmigrants enter the United States, they are classified by USCIS according to the purpose of their visit. This classification is known as “status.” Students are in either F-1 or J-1 status and their dependents are in F-2 or J-2 status. USCIS regulates nonimmigrants according to the rules specific to that status. For example, one of the requirements of F-1 status is full-time study. A person’s status also determines how long he or she may remain in the United States.

### *Visa*

An official notation placed in the passport granting permission for an individual to enter a particular country. The visa indicates the purpose of someone’s visit. The visa is also valid for a specified number of entries to the United States: one, two or “M” (multiple) until its expiration date. The visa does not indicate how long a person may remain in the United States, but only whether a person may enter the United States to pursue a particular type of activity (visit friends, study, work). Only U.S. consulates and embassies outside of the United States issue visas.





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## Important Websites

Florida Tech Home Page  
[www.fit.edu](http://www.fit.edu)

College Catalog  
[www.fit.edu/catalog](http://www.fit.edu/catalog)

FIT Orlando  
[www.fit.edu/orlando](http://www.fit.edu/orlando)

Student Handbook  
[www.fit.edu/studenthandbook](http://www.fit.edu/studenthandbook)

## Hospitals and Emergency Care

Florida Hospital Orlando  
601 E. Rollins St.  
Orlando, FL  
407-303-5600

Arnold Palmer Hospital for  
Children  
92 W. Miller St.  
Orlando, FL  
407-649-9111

Orange Regional Medical  
Center  
1414 Kuhl Ave  
Orlando, FL  
321-841-5111

## Pharmacies

CVS  
4801 New Broad St.  
Orlando, FL 32814  
407-894-5263

Walgreens  
2251 N. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-702-1154

## Places to Eat

**CARIBBEAN**  
Pollo Tropical  
2251 N. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-702-1154

Mi Viejo San Juan  
7229 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407- 380-2061

**CHINESE**  
Chi Pan Asian  
4856 New Broad St.  
Orlando, FL 32814

China Plate  
937 N. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-737-1111

Pei Wei  
3011 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-563-8777

**COLOMBIAN**  
Oh Que Bueno  
1125 S. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-447-5026

**CUBAN**  
Café Caobana  
73 S. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407- 243-9140

El Punto De Tripletas  
1112 N. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407- 380-5063

**GERMAN**  
Germans Restaurant &  
Bierhouse  
7868 W. Irlo Bronson Hwy.  
Kissimmee, FL 34747  
407- 507-2649

Hollerbach's Willow Tree  
Café  
205 E. 1st St.  
Sanford, FL 32771  
407-321-2204

Schumann's Jager Haus  
25 W. Church St.  
Orlando, FL 32801  
407-985-1950

**GREEK**  
The Greek Corner  
1600 N. Orange Ave.  
Orlando, FL 32804  
407-228-0303

Olympia Restaurant  
8505 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32817  
407-273-7836

Mediterranean Blue  
435 E. Michigan St.  
Orlando, FL 32806  
407-422-2583

**INDIAN**

Moghul Fine Indian Cuisine  
401 N. Semoran Blvd.  
Winter Park, FL 32792  
407-599-9001

**ITALIAN**

La Bella Luna  
4886 New Broad St.  
Orlando, FL 32814  
407-895-0025

Fatto In Casa  
3201 Corrine Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-960-7728

Il Pescatore  
651 N. Primrose Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407- 896-6763

Olive Garden  
3675 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407- 896-0498

**JAPANESE**

Seito Sushi  
4898 New Broad St.  
Orlando, FL 32814  
407- 898-8801

Bikkuri Sushi, Noodle & Grill  
1915 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407- 894-4494

Kiko Japanese Cuisine  
110 S. Semoran Blvd.  
Winter Park, FL 32792  
407-677-5800

**LEBANESE**

Cedar's Restaurant  
7732 W. Sand Lake Rd.  
Orlando, FL 32819  
407- 351-6000

**MEXICAN**

Colibri Mexican Cuisine  
4963 New Broad St.  
Orlando, FL 32814  
407-629-6601

Garibaldi Mexican Restaurant  
929 N. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-275-5035

Tijuana Flats  
2914 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-897-7121

Gringos Locos  
2406 E. Robinson St.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-896-5626

Baja Burrito Kitchen  
2716 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-895-6112

**MIDDLE EASTERN**

Halal Gyros & Cheesesteak  
7310 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-923-7434

Hubbly Bubbly Falafel Shop  
3405 Edgewater Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32804  
407-985-5841

Aladdin's Restaurant  
1015 State Road 436  
Casselberry, FL 32707  
407-331-0488

**THAI**

Sea Thai  
3812 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-895-0985

Royal Thai Restaurant  
1202 N Semoran Blvd  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-275-0776

Kabooki Sushi  
3122 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-228-3839

Thai Golden Palace  
649 N. Primrose Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-896-5849

**Places to Visit  
(attractions)**

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Mennello Museum of  
American Art  
900 E. Princeton St.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407 246 4278

Central Garden Zoo and  
Botanical Garden  
3755 U.S. 17  
Sanford, FL  
407-323-4450

Disney World  
Lake Buena Vista  
407-824-4321  
www.disneyworld.com

Downtown Disney  
Orlando, FL  
407-939-2648  
www.downtowndisney.com

GatorLand  
14501 S. Orange Blossom Trl  
Orlando, FL 32837

Lake Eola Park  
195 N. Rosalind Ave.  
Orlando, FL

Orlando Science Center  
777 E. Princeton St.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-514-2000

Ripley's Believe It or Not  
8201 International Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32819  
407-363-4418

Harry P. Leu Gardens  
1920 N. Forest Ave.  
Orlando, FL  
407-246-2620

SeaWorld Orlando  
7007 SeaWorld Dr., Orlando  
407-351-3600  
www.seaworld.com

Universal Studios  
1000 Universal Studios Plz.  
Orlando  
407-363-8000  
www.universalorlando.com

**Places of Worship  
(churches, etc.)**

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**AFRICAN METHODIST**

**EPISCOPAL**

New Bethel Ame Church  
4201 Columbia St.  
Orlando, FL 32811  
407-295-6152

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD**

Evangel Assembly of God  
5838 Hoffner Ave.  
Orlando, FL 32812  
407-275-0046

**BAPTIST**

North Park Baptist Church  
2047 Prospect Ave.  
Orlando, FL  
321- 972-5900

Faith Baptist Church  
500 North Bumby Ave.  
Orlando, FL  
407- 894-4031

Elim Baptist Church  
4315 Rixey St.  
Orlando, FL  
407-894-7316

Orlando Baptist Church  
500 S. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL  
407-277-8671

Brush Arbor Baptist Church  
2304 N. Goldenrod Rd.  
Orlando, FL  
407-678-2284

**CATHOLIC**

St. Margaret Mary Catholic  
Church  
526 N. Park Ave.  
Winter Park, FL  
407- 647-3392

Good Shepard Catholic  
Church  
5900 Oleander Dr.  
Orlando, FL  
407-277-3938

**CHARISMATIC**

Christ Church of Orlando  
Old Cheney Highway  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407-8656-4999

**CHRISTIAN—DISCIPLES  
OF CHRIST**

Christian Church Disciples  
924 N. Magnolia Ave.  
Orlando, FL 32803

**CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Orlando Church of Christ  
210 N. Goldenrod Rd.  
Orlando, FL  
407-823-7370

**EPISCOPAL**

Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
1603 Winter Park Rd.  
Orlando, FL  
407-894-1641

**GREEK ORTHODOX**

Saint George Orthodox  
Church  
24 N. Rosalind Ave.  
Orlando, FL 32801

**INTERDENOMINATIONAL**

Summit Church  
735 Herndon Ave.  
Orlando, FL  
407-897-8130

**ISLAM**

Islamic Society Central Fla  
1586 N. Goldenrod Rd.  
Orlando, FL 32807  
407- 273-8363

**JEWISH**

Congregation Geshar Shalom  
6969 Venture Circle  
Orlando, FL  
407-782-6177

Congregation of Reform  
Judaism  
928 Malone Drive  
Orlando, FL  
407-645-0444

**LUTHERAN**

St. John Lutheran Church  
1600 S. Orlando Ave.  
Winter Park, FL  
407-644-1783

**METHODIST**

First United Methodist  
125 N. Interlachen Ave.  
Winter Park, FL  
407-644-2906

Azalea Park United Methodist  
50 Willow Dr.  
Orlando, FL  
407- 277-3472

**NAZARENE**

Colonial Church—The  
Nazarene  
2209 Walnut St.  
Orlando, FL  
407-894-5391

Union Park Church of the  
Nazarene  
1670 N. Chickasaw Trail  
Orlando, FL  
407-273-6300

**PENTECOSTAL**

Word of God Pentecostal  
Church  
1733 Mercy Dr.  
Orlando, FL  
407- 295-5040

**SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST  
CHURCH**

Patmos Chapel Seventh Day  
Adventist  
821 West Swoope Avenue  
Winter Park, FL  
407-629-7005

Orlando Central Seventh Day  
Adventist  
624 N. Broadway Ave.  
Orlando, FL

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST**

First Unitarian Church of  
Orlando  
E. Robinson St.  
Orlando, FL  
407-898-3621

## Places to Shop (for Food)

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### ASIAN

Eastside Asian Market  
12950 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32826  
407-615-8881

Super Oriental Markey  
2100 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-898-6858

Asian Market at UCF  
12066 Collegiate Way  
Orlando, FL 32817  
407-823-9033

Woo Sung Oriental Food Mart  
5079 Edgewater Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32810  
407-295-4077

1st Oriental Supermarket  
5132 W. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32808  
407-292-3668

Lotte Oriental Market  
1725 W. Oak Ridge Rd.  
Orlando, FL 32809  
407-855-0992

### BRITISH (UK)

The British Shoppe  
809 N. Mills Ave.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-898-1634

### GOURMET/SPECIALTY

Cavallari Gourmet  
1954 West State Road 426  
Oviedo, FL 32765  
407-365-8000

The Ancient Olive  
324 N. Park Ave.  
Winter Park, FL 32789  
321- 972-1899

Williams-Sonoma  
142 S. Park Ave.  
Winter Park, FL 32789  
407-628-5900

Kernel Encore of Orlando  
601 N. Primrose Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-897-7022

Gigi's Cupcakes  
Colonial Plaza Marketcenter  
2562 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-893-9846

Charlie's Gourmet Pastries  
3213 Curry Ford Rd.  
Orlando, FL 32806  
407-898-9561

### MIDDLE EASTERN

Middle East Market and Deli  
8100 S. Orange Blossom Trl  
Orlando, FL 32809  
407-855-6555

Middle East Market  
8100 S Orange Blossom Trl  
Orlando, FL 32809  
407-855-6555

### LATIN AMERICAN

EL Ranchito Meat Market  
5214 Satel Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32810  
407- 296-3388

### SUPERMARKET

Wal-Mart Neighborhood  
Market  
3838 S. Semoran Blvd.  
Orlando, FL  
407-277-4314

Publix Supermarket  
1501 Meeting Place  
Orlando, FL 32814  
407- 897-7363

## Places to Shop (for Clothes & More)

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The Florida Mall  
8001 S. Orange Blossom Trail  
Orlando, FL 32809  
407-851-7234

Target (*discount department store*)  
718 Maguire Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-895-1025

The Mall at Millenia  
4200 Conroy Road  
Orlando, FL 32839  
407-363-3555

Winter Park Village  
(Shopping center)  
400 North Orlando Avenue  
Winter Park, FL 32789  
407-571-2700

Baldwin Park Shops  
New Broad St.  
Orlando, FL 32814

Orlando Fashion Square Mall  
3201 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407- 896-1132

Ross (*accessories, clothiers*)  
2756 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-896-8885

Wal-Mart (*discount department  
store*)  
3838 S Semoran Blvd  
Orlando, FL

## Sporting Events

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### SOCCER

Orlando Lions  
12950 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32826  
407-615-8881

### BASKETBALL

Orlando Magic  
2209 Walnut St.  
Orlando, FL  
407-894-5391

### FOOTBALL

Orlando Predators  
12950 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32826  
407-615-8881

**Arts & Entertainment**

**THEATRE**

Dr. Phillips Center of  
Performing Arts  
12950 E. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando, FL 32826  
407-615-8881

Shakespeare Theatre  
812 E. Rollins St.  
Orlando, FL 32803  
407-447-1700

House of Blues  
1490 E. Lake Buena Vista  
Orlando, FL 32830

Blue Man Group  
Universal Orlando Resort  
6000 Universal Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32819  
407-258-3626



# Campus Map





*Florida Institute of Technology*

FIT Orlando

2420 Lakemont Ave., Suite 190, Orlando, FL 32814

[www.fit.edu/orlando](http://www.fit.edu/orlando)