

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

International Student Handbook

Fall 2018 / Spring 2019

Center for International Programs

☎ 610-436-3515

Mitchell Hall, 3rd floor – 675 South Church Street

WEBSITE: <http://www.wcupa.edu/international>

EMAIL: international@wcupa.edu



Welcome to West Chester University of Pennsylvania!

The Center for International Programs orientation is designed to provide general information about WCU, West Chester, government immigration regulations, and American cultural issues that will assist students as they settle into both the academic and social spheres.

This handbook is intended to assist newly admitted students in making their stay at WCU both meaningful and rewarding. It has been designed, when used in connection with other WCU publications, to smooth your transition into American life and your academic studies. We hope that you will take the time to read the entire booklet. It is very important that you familiarize yourself with certain specific requirements concerning your status as a student in the United States.

We, at the Center for International Programs (CIP), are ready to help facilitate the “settling in” process. The CIP assists students with immigration matters and acts as a liaison between the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and all international students and visiting scholars at WCU. If you are in need of services that the CIP provides, you can visit our office to set up an appointment. We will make every attempt to meet your needs in a timely fashion. However, some patience on your part may be required due to the large number of international students the office helps daily. The CIP staff consists of the following personnel:

Peter Loedel, Ph.D. - Director

Angela Howard, PDSO, RO - Senior Associate Director

Charity Alinda, DSO, ARO - Assistant Director of International Programs

Helene Daniele Clay - Administrative Support/ Coordinator, National Student Exchange

Nora Maurer - Associate Director of Education Abroad

Lisa Drusedum - Education Abroad Coordinator

Becca Seeley - Graduate Assistant, International Student Services

Natalia McKay - Graduate Assistant, Education Abroad

Please visit our office whenever you have questions about living and learning in the United States. We will do our best to assist you.

Again, welcome to WCU and best wishes for a successful academic career and a memorable stay!

Sincerely,
The CIP Staff

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	2
Academic Calendar	4
Telephone Directory	5
Immigration	6
Employment	15
Addresses, Mail & Personal Records	17
Academic Matters	18
American Classroom Culture	21
Computer Facilities	22
University Bookstore	23
Career Center	25
Multicultural Affairs	25
Sykes Student Union	26
Counseling & Psychological Services	27
University Policy on Storm Closings	28

Academic Calendar
2018 – 2019

2018 Fall Term

First Day of Classes	Monday, August 27
Labor Day NO CLASSES – University Closed	Monday, September 3
Reading/Writing Days – NO CLASSES	Monday – Tuesday, November 19-20
Fall/Thanksgiving Break – NO CLASSES	Wednesday – Sunday, November 21-25
Last Day of Classes	Monday, December 10
Final Examinations	Tuesday - Saturday, December 11 – 15
Commencement – Undergraduate	TBD
Commencement – Graduate	TBD

2019 Spring Term

First Day of Classes	Tuesday, January 22
Spring Break	Monday – Sunday, March 11-17
Last Day of Classes	Monday, May 6
Final Examinations	Tuesday – Saturday, May 7 – 11
Commencement – Undergraduate	TBD
Commencement – Graduate	TBD

The University's Academic Calendar is subject to change.

Please visit the university website (wcupa.edu) for a more detailed an up-to-date academic calendar.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

*All students living in the residence halls will receive a WCU telephone directory.
Students living off campus may pick up the WCU directory in Sykes Student Union.
The telephone directories are usually available in October.*

WCU Information and Assistance	610-436-1000
Bookstore	610-436-2242
Bursar's Office	610-436-2552
Career Development Center	610-436-2501
Computer Information/Help Desk	610-436-3349
Dining Hall	610-436-2730
Graduate Office	610-436-2943
Health Center	610-436-2509
Housing (On Campus)	610-436-3307
ID Cards (SSI Service Center)	610-436-2266
Library	610-436-2946
Off Campus and Commuter Association	610-436-2279
Public Safety	610-436-3311
Registrar's Office	610-436-3541
Sykes Student Union	610-436-2984



IMMIGRATION

Foreign students are required to abide by the United States immigration regulations throughout their stay in the United States. Every international student admitted to the U.S. for the purpose of study is issued an F-1 or J-1 Visa. The privilege of receiving a student visa from the U.S. government carries with it a number of responsibilities which the student must maintain.

Almost everything you do in the U.S. will be tied to your immigration status.

It is your responsibility to be informed about immigration rules and any changes that occur during your stay in the U.S. During your stay, should you have any immigration problems or questions, please seek advice from the CIP. The CIP is the first place you should come if you have an immigration problem. If you find yourself in a situation which you believe may jeopardize your status, please contact the CIP.



DOCUMENTS

Passport – The passport is the legal document issued by your country of citizenship. It must be kept valid at all times during your stay in the U.S. and must be valid for at least 6 months to re-enter the U.S. or apply for a visa. Passports can usually be renewed by your home country's Embassy or Consulate in the U.S. It is important that you safeguard your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, you should report the loss immediately to the local police and the nearest embassy or consulate of your home country.

VISA – If you entered the U.S. as a student you may hold either an F-1 or a J-1 visa. Your U.S. visa may expire while you are in the U.S. You cannot and need not renew it while you are in the U.S. The phrase “Duration of Status” (D/S) on your passport admission stamp or I-94 keeps you legal. A new visa will be required if the original one expires and you travel outside the U.S. and then attempt to re-enter. You must present the form DS-2019 (J-1) or I-20 (F-1) to obtain a new visa. Required documents will also include evidence of adequate financial resources, acceptance letters or proof of continued enrollment, current grades, class schedules, and a letter from the CIP.

I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) – The Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record is now automated to streamline the admissions process for individuals lawfully visiting the United States. Form I-94 provides international visitors evidence they have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. which is necessary to verify alien registration, immigration status, and employment authorization. The automation means that affected visitors will no longer need to fill out a paper form when arriving to the U.S. by air or sea, improving procedures and reducing costs.

Students are required to provide the CIP with a hard copy of the I94 found at www.cbp.gov/94. Please print a copy and submit to the CIP within the first week of the semester.

I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility) – The I-20 (for F-1 status) is a multi-purpose document issued by a government approved, U.S. educational institution certifying that:

- You have been admitted to a full-time study program
- You have demonstrated sufficient financial resources to stay in the U.S.
- You are eligible to apply for an F-1 student visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate

The I-20 is used for identification purposes and proof of your legal and academic status. Please review the F-1 regulations on page 3 of the I-20. The completion date entered in section 3 on page 1 of your I-20 is based on your particular major and degree level. This is an estimate of time the University feels it may take you to fulfill all degree requirements.

This document is controlled by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services and can only be produced through the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). SEVIS is the Department of Homeland Security database developed to collect information on F, M and J visa holders.

No blank SEVIS form exists. Each I-20 is printed with a unique identifier known as a SEVIS ID number in the top right-hand corner, which consists of an “alpha” character (N) and up to 11 numbers.

This form must be valid at all times while you are in the U.S., and it must accurately reflect the institution and program of study in which you are enrolled. Extensions or updates may be made by contacting the CIP. After your initial entry, a travel signature less than 12 months old is required in order to re-enter the U.S. in student status. Once you have been issued an I-20 form, you should make sure it is in a safe place. Signing the I-20 means that you understand all the rules and regulations that you will have to follow once you are in the U.S.

F-1 Form Changes – Page One

Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement		I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status OMB NO. 1653-0038	
SEVIS ID: N0004705512			
SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Doe Smith		GIVEN NAME John	
PREFERRED NAME John Doe-Smith		PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH UNITED KINGDOM		COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP UNITED KINGDOM	
DATE OF BIRTH 01 JANUARY 1990		ADMISSION NUMBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON INITIAL ATTENDANCE - Updated Form I-20 or Name Conversion		LEGACY NAME	
SCHOOL INFORMATION		Class of Admission	
SCHOOL NAME SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies		SCHOOL ADDRESS 9002 Nancy Lane, Ft. Washington, MD 20744	
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Rita Feet International Scholar Advisor		SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE BAL214F4444000 03 APRIL 2015	
PROGRAM OF STUDY			
EDUCATION LEVEL MASTER'S		MAJOR 1 Economics, General 45.0601	
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH 72 Months		MAJOR 2 None 00.0000	
PROGRAM START DATE 01 SEPTEMBER 2015		Description of Other Costs, School Funding, and Funds from Other Sources, if specified	
FINANCIALS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS	
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees \$ 23,000		Personal Funds \$ 3,000	
Living Expenses \$ 6,000		Scholarship and Teaching Assistantship \$ 29,000	
Expenses of Dependents (1) \$ 3,000		Funds From Another Source \$	
Other \$		On-Campus Employment \$	
TOTAL \$ 32,000		TOTAL \$ 32,000	
REMARKS Orientation begins 8/25/2015. Please report to ISSF upon arrival.			
Remarks: Space for comments		Number of dependents	
SCHOOL ATTESTATION			
I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.			
SIGNATURE OF: Rita Feet, International Scholar Advisor		DATE ISSUED 05 May 2015	
PLACE ISSUED Ft. Washington, MD			
STUDENT ATTESTATION			
I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above, and that I am not seeking employment in the United States. I am not seeking employment in the United States pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status.			
SIGNATURE OF: John Doe Smith		Student's name pre-prints on form	
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN		SIGNATURE	
ADDRESS (city/state or province/country)		DATE	

ICE Form I-20 A-B (3/31/2018) Page 1 of 3

F-1 Form Changes – Page Two

Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement		I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status OMB NO. 1653-0038	
SEVIS ID: N0004705512 (F-1)		NAME: John Doe Smith	
EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION			
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	TYPE		
EMPLOYMENT START	SEVIS ID, (Class of Admission), and Name		
EMPLOYER NAME	EMPLOYER LOCATION		
COMMENTS			
CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION			
REQUESTED VISA TYPE	REQUEST/PETITION STATUS	RECEIPT NUMBER	BENEFIT START DATE/REQUEST DATE
EVENT HISTORY			
EVENT NAME			
OTHER AUTHORIZATIONS			
AUTHORIZATION	START DATE		END DATE
TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT			
This page when properly endorsed, may be used for reentry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each certification signature is valid for one year.			
SCHOOL OFFICIAL	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED PLACE ISSUED
		X	
		X	
DSO's name does NOT pre-print on form			

ICE Form I-20 A-B (3/31/2018)

Page 2 of 3

Dependents

Eligibility

- Refers to a spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age.
- Their visa status will derive from your status as a principal student or scholar (F-1/J-1).
- Dependents must show documentation of relationship to you and the availability of funds while in the US.
- They must make known the intention to leave the US once your program or employment is complete.
- Spouses may choose to apply for a primary visa on their own if eligible (i.e. full-time student or employee).
- Children who turn 21 during your family's time in the US must depart the US or apply for a different principal visa.

Restrictions

F-2 Dependents

- ❖ Cannot work in the US under any circumstances
- ❖ Spouses may engage in part-time study
- ❖ Children may only engage in full-study at the K-12 level

Maintaining your visa status and enrollment

Students must be aware of and comply fully with the following:

- PLEASE CHECK YOUR WCU EMAIL REGULARLY.
- **DO NOT** let your passport expire, it must be valid at all times.
- You must maintain a valid, unexpired I-20 Form at all times. This includes an I-20 Form with the correct level and major, current funding and correct personal information.
- Your visa must be valid for ENTRY in the US only. If your visa expires while you are here, you can remain as long as your I-20 is valid.
- You must complete a full course of study during normal enrollment periods (Fall & Spring semesters).
- You must be enrolled for your courses by the beginning of each semester. The CIP is required to report under-enrollment to DHS (Department of Homeland Security) within 30 days of the end of the registration period. Any student who is not enrolled will be reported and will be considered out of status.
- If you will not be enrolled full-time, you must receive prior approval for the CIP advisor. You and your academic advisor must complete the reduce course load form and submit it to the CIP prior to dropping below a full course load.
 - Reduced Course Load options are limited to the following conditions:
 - You can only have a reduced course load due to academic difficulty for one semester per degree.
 - You can have a reduced course load due to medical reasons for two semesters per degree (12 months).
 - Medical reasons must be substantiated by a United States medical doctor or a U.S. board certified psychologist.
 - You can have a reduced course load in your last semester before graduating if you need less than a full course load to graduate
- Making changes:
 - You must report any change of address or residence to the CIP within 10 days of the change. This information will be sent electronically to DHS.
 - If you change your name, you must report it to the CIP and Office of the Registrar in person and provide legal documentation of the name change.
 - You must apply for an extension of your program of study prior to the expiration date on your I-20 or DS-2019. F-1 students must complete the Certificate of Eligibility. Requests for extensions should be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the expiration date of the I-20.
 - You must obtain a new I-20 if you change your academic program from one degree level to another, or one major/field of study to another. You must also obtain a new I-20 if your source of funding changes. **This must be produced within 15 days of beginning the new program or degree level.**
- Prior to traveling outside the U.S., make sure that your I-20 has been endorsed within the last 6 months by a Designated School Official (DSO)—all of whom can be found at the CIP.

- You are **NOT** allowed to work off campus without authorization. F-1 students are allowed to work on campus up to 20 hours per week when school is in session and 40 hours when classes are not in session. J-1 students are only allowed to work on campus up to 20 hours per week with their J-1 program sponsor's authorization.
- If you intend to transfer to another educational institution, you must notify the CIP in advance by completing the Transfer out Form and meeting with an advisor.
- If you need to withdraw from classes, or are asked to leave the university, you must report this to the CIP. If you report to the CIP prior to your withdrawal, you will have 15 days to leave the United States. If you do not report to the CIP, your status ends immediately.
- The normal grace period to remain in the U.S. following degree/program completion is 60 days for F-1 students and 30 days for J-1 students.
- You must maintain health insurance coverage while being a student at WCU.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Authority cite: 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(f) (6) (i) (G)

Distance Education is defined by the Department of Homeland Security as a class taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing.

F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per semester may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class.

- The WCU Office of the Registrar has identified WCU Distance Education classes on the online Class Schedule under the heading "Instruction Mode".
- Even if you are authorized for Reduced Course Load, you are still required to follow the online or distance learning class regulation.
- If your course of study is in a language study program, you are **not** eligible for online or distance education classes.
- **Last semester:** If you only need one course to complete your program of study in your last semester, and you are in the U.S., then that course **cannot** be online or distance learning.
- Full-time enrollment minimum requirement:
 - Undergraduate: 12 credits
 - Graduate: 9 credits

Acceptable Online Class Enrollment Examples

Undergraduate	Graduate
3 credit regular/hybrid class	3 credit regular/hybrid class
3 credit regular/hybrid class	3 credit regular/hybrid class
3 credit regular/hybrid class	3 credit online class
3 credit online class	
TOTAL CREDITS: 12	TOTAL CREDITS: 9

UNACCEPTABLE Online Enrollment Examples

Undergraduate	Graduate
3 credit regular/hybrid class	3 credit regular/hybrid class
3 credit regular/hybrid class	3 credit online class
3 credit online class	3 credit online class
3 credit online class	
TOTAL CREDITS: 12	TOTAL CREDIT: 9

Employment

On-Campus Employment – All F-1 or J-1 students are eligible to begin on-campus work no earlier than 30 days before their start date on their I-20 and must end before or on the end date of their I-20. The CIP does not assist students in finding jobs.

International students are eligible to apply for university employment whereby certain departments make employment opportunities available to students. Please note that it is at the discretion of the department and the availability of funding. Once you find a job that you are interested in, call or visit the office and ask if the job is still available. You will probably have to complete an application and possibly be interviewed. While taking classes, students can work for 20 hours per week. Students may be employed full-time (over 20 hours per week) during vacations and semester breaks.

On-campus employment means employment performed on the premises of the school or at an affiliated off-campus location. On-campus employment may be of a type normally performed by students such as work in the library, bookstore, dining hall, or a graduate assistantship.

Under no circumstances are students permitted to accept off-campus employment without the authorization of the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) – *to do so will violate USCIS law and would seriously jeopardize your F-1 visa status.*

Students working on-campus are automatically authorized to work – but must apply for a Social Security Number in order to receive pay.



Off-Campus Employment (F-1 Visas) – There are two types of off-campus employment work permission for F-1 visa holders. All require prior approval by the Department of Homeland Security. Approval can take several weeks so please plan ahead and make an appointment with the CIP.

1. **Curricular Practical Training (Internship)** – this employment is primarily given in conjunction with credits through your academic major department. If you are required to have the choice of obtaining internship/practicum credits, you can also obtain work permission for an off-campus location to gain work experience
2. **Optional Practical Training** – this is 12 months of work permission given after completion of studies or slit during the semesters. OPT can only be applied for after a student has attended at least 2 semesters of school work.

OPT STEM 24-Month Extension

You are eligible to apply for a one-time 24-month OPT extension, beyond the initial 12 months of OPT, if you meet all of the following conditions:

- You are currently approved for post-completion OPT
- You completed a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree in a science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) field.
 - Visit the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement website for the **STEM Designated Degree Program List**. Eligible degrees are listed by their Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code. Your degree's CIP code is listed on the primary major line in the top left corner on the second page of your I-20.
- You have a job offer from an E-Verify employer.
- You have not previously received a 24-month OPT extension after earning a previous STEM degree.

Contact the Center for International Programs for more details.

Addresses, Mail and Personal Records

Address Reports:

- All International students must register a permanent (foreign address) and local address with the CIP and the Registrar's office. Once you have accommodations, you must inform the CIP of your address and phone number. The CIP maintains this information for immigration purposes. By signing the I-20/DS-2019 you have given the CIP permission to release information to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) upon their request.



- Moving or Changing your Address: *You must report your address change to the CIP in writing within 10 days of moving.*

Mail:

- On-Campus: Mail delivered to other on-campus addresses is FREE.
- Off-Campus: Mail needing to be delivered off-campus can be brought to the WCU Post Office located on 887 Matlack Street.
- You should not send cash through the mail, but otherwise you can be fairly sure that your letter or package will be delivered safely. For additional protection, you may insure your package at the post office.

Confidentiality of Personal Records:

All college records must be kept confidential with the exception that college personnel may have access to records and information as necessary to perform their assigned responsibilities. Such records and information may not be transferred to a third party.

Academic Matters

Course Registration

Registration for courses is one matter you must attend to each semester. A schedule of classes of available online approximately 3 months prior to the beginning of Spring semester and in February of each year for the following Summer and Fall semesters. Here is what you need to do:

1. **SEE YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISOR**: Each student has a faculty member in the department of your major who is appointed or selected as your “advisor”. Your advisor will assist you in selecting classes and telling you the requirements for your program. (If you are not sure of your requirements, please refer to your advisor or online catalog (<http://catalog.wcupa.edu/>) for a list of requirements.)
2. **SCHEDULE ONLINE YOURSELF**: The schedule of classes and course descriptions are available on myWCU. You will need your WCUID and password.
3. **PAY YOUR BILL ON TIME**: Once your schedule has been made, you will be billed for your classes. Please note that you must pay before the due date!

Academic Help

Academic Advisor – Each student is given an academic advisor in your department to assist students in class registration and other academic advice. See your department for your advisor and make an appointment with him/her as soon as you can.

Professors – All WCU professors have office hours to be available for students in their classes. If you are having difficulty understanding material covered in class or want some advice, visit your professor during these hours. The first day in class you will receive a syllabus with the office hours and best ways to reach your professor. It is very common for students to email or call professors.

Library – (www.wcupa.edu/library.fhg) The Francis Harvey Green Library is located in the Academic Quad. The primary mission of Library Services is to provide materials and information in support of the academic programs of West Chester University. The collection includes: Instructional Media, Children’s Literature, Special Collection and Archives, Government Documents, Presser Music Library, Mather Cartographic Resource Center. There are computers, copy machines, reference materials, inter-library loan service, online resources and much much more. Please visit the website for more information.

RECEIVE HELP WITH WRITING PAPERS...

The Writing Center

FHG Library Room 251

610-430-5664

The writing center offers free tutoring services to all WCU students. At every stage of the writing process, tutors help students find strategies for solving writing problems and help them become better writers.

A FEW OF WCU ACADEMIC POLICIES...

Policies for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs are listed in the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs. Here are a few to be aware of:

1. **Change of Major:** If an Undergraduate student wishes to change/his/her major – please contact the department of the NEW major you wish to change to. Usually each department has a Change of Major Form for a student to complete. Once the new major is approved, please bring a copy of your letter verifying the change so we can update your I-20.
2. **Grade Scale:** Undergraduates are graded A,B,C,D,F, - a C being average and F failing a class. Graduate students are graded on a scale of A,B,C, and Fail. A “C” is not acceptable in most graduate programs. At WCU grades are assigned by professors based upon a criterion that is usually specified in the course syllabus provided at the beginning of class. The percentages provided below represent an approximation of the grading system utilized by most professors to assign grades. You should use this chart only as a guide, as different professors may use different criteria.

Grades	Numeric Values	Percentages
A	4.0	93-100%
A-	3.7	90-92%
B+	3.3	87-89%
B	3.0	83-86%
B-	2.7	80-82%
C+	2.3	77-79%
C	2.0	73-76%
C-	1.7	70-72%
D+	1.3	67-69%
D	1.0	63-66%
D-	0.67	60-62%
F	0.0	59% or lower

3. **Academic Probation:** All students are required to maintain a good grade point average (GPA). Undergraduate students are required to maintain a 2.0 GPA and Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. If a student fails to meet this requirement, they will be placed on Academic Probation for one semester and are expected to bring up their GPA. If a student does not increase his/her GPA, he/she will be dismissed from the university. Any graduate student receiving a grade of “F” will be automatically dismissed from the university.

OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION...

Academic Honesty

WCU expects all students to be academically honest. Professors insist that their students fulfill course requirements in an ethical manner. Plagiarism is a very serious offense and punishment could be as harsh as expulsion. If a professor assigns you to do a research paper, you are not allowed to copy sources without giving credit to them. Also, you must complete examinations without taking or giving assistance. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please consult the official WCU Student Handbook or ask your professor.

Classroom Participation

Many international students come from educational systems where speaking to the professor during or after class may not be acceptable. This is not the case at most American universities, including WCU. Here there is a great deal of interaction between teachers and their students. In fact, most professors encourage students to join in class discussions and express their opinions. Many instructors include class participation in determining a student's grade and will lower the grade if the student does not ask questions or make comments in class.

Attendance

Ideally, you should attend every lecture, seminar, and laboratory session for which you are enrolled. However, professors understand that absences do occur and usually accept a valid excuse (e.g. illness, emergency, etc.). Keep in mind that certain professors will assign lower grades to students who accumulate too many absences.

American Classroom Culture

Syllabus

Includes:

- Professor contact information
- Learning objectives
- Class meeting times
- Due Dates
 - Class readings
 - Quizzes
 - Oral Presentations
 - Research Papers

Types of Exams

- *Multiple Choice*- students are asked a question and given 3-5 answers to choose from
- *Short Answer*- A question which requires a sentence or two to answer fully
- *Essay*- a question which requires anywhere from 1 to 5 paragraphs to adequately answer it

Teaching Approaches

Teacher-centered Approach

- More likely in physical and biological sciences
- Lecture
- Instructor is a source of knowledge and directs the learning process
- The student listens, takes notes, reads assignments, and memorizes content (shown through tests and papers)
- Technology is used in addition to lecture to highlight key concepts
- Written and oral exams as evaluation
- Instructors perform all evaluations

Learner-centered Approach

- More likely in social sciences, education, and humanities
- Lecture- and discussion-based
- Instructor presents content and encourages dialogue and analysis
- Student listens, takes notes, participates in discussion, and demonstrates understanding
- Technology is used to enhance lecture and discussion through imagery and internet resources
- Written and oral exams, presentations, participation, papers, quizzes, and group projects as evaluation
- Instructors evaluate students, and students evaluate each other and instructors

In American classrooms, students' opinions are highly valued, and it is helpful to have support for your perspective by referencing credible sources of relevant information.

COMPUTER FACILITIES

Information Services provides computing resources for a wide variety of users, both academic and administrative. Many of the University's administrative functions, such as registration, grade reporting, and billing, depend heavily on the campus-wide transaction processing system that provides centralized access to University data from workstations located throughout the campus. **MyWCU** is the student's portal entry to course registration, grades, and many other academic activities. MyWCU can be found on the University Web site's home page at **www.wcupa.edu**. Computing is also a vital instructional and research tool. Information Services offers students and faculty a wide range of computing resources, from mainframe to microcomputers, printers, plotters, graphics workstations, digitizers, and optical scanners. Many of these facilities are available at various campus locations, but the Academic Computing Center in the Peoples Building serves as a focal point for instructional computing activity. A valid WCU Identification (ID) card is required to use the Academic Computing Center. For further information contact the Academic Computing Center at 610-436-3349.

Computing facilities throughout the campus are joined by the Information & Technology Services Network. This network offers electronic mail capabilities for all campus workstations, connection to the Internet, and access to the University's main library catalogs. All WCU undergraduate students are provided computer accounts. ResNet Central is the service that provides network connectivity for all students within residence halls and South Campus apartments. This connection provides direct, high-speed access to resources such as campus e-mail and the Internet. The ResNet Helpdesk is a one-stop support line for all West Chester University students; for further information contact ResNet Central at 610-436-2660.

The Information Services Network provides high-speed access to software applications (programming languages, spreadsheets, word processors, faculty developed programs, etc.) and electronic communication capabilities to workstations. Student laboratory facilities are available in the Academic Computing Center and in each of the nine residence halls, South Campus apartments, and in Sykes Student Union.

Major hardware facilities include an IBM mainframe, numerous NTAS file servers, PCs, Macintosh, SUN, and DEC workstations. Letter-quality laser printers also are available for student use.

ResNet Central is located in Brandywine Hall 003, 610-436-2660. Academic Computing Services is located in Peoples Building, 610-436-3349. West Chester University's Web site address is **www.wcupa.edu**.

UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE

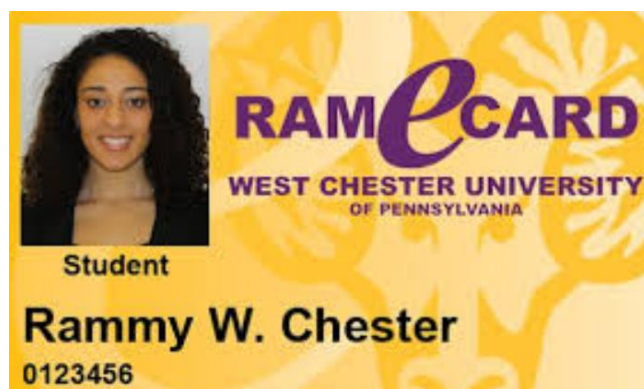
“The Official Bookstore of West Chester University”

The Student Services, Inc. (SSI) Bookstore is located on the ground floor of Sykes Student Union. The Bookstore sells both new and used textbooks for all WCU courses as well as school and art supplies. Textbooks may also be purchased on the store's Web site. The SSI Bookstore also stocks best sellers, a variety of general interest literature, and a wide selection of reference books, as well as study and teacher aids. SSI Bookstore offers a complete line of official WCU imprinted clothing and an array of gifts that can be purchased on the store's Web site. Greeting cards, groceries, snacks, and laundry supplies are also available in the Bookstore. Services offered include film processing, special orders for computer software and general interest books (at no extra cost), UPS shipping, and daily book buybacks. All major credit cards, SSI EZPay, and personal checks, accompanied by a valid ID, are accepted. The Bookstore hours are as follows: Monday - Thursday from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., and Sunday 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. (hours are subject to change). For additional convenience, the store offers extended operating hours at the beginning of each semester. For more information call 610-436-BOOK, Email: bookstore@wcupa.edu or visit the Web site at www.wcucampusstore.com.

SSI SERVICE CENTER

The SSI Service Center is located on the ground level of Sykes Union. Students with a valid RAM e-CARD can cash personal checks, payroll checks, and money orders. A limit of \$50 is placed on all personal checks and \$250 on payroll checks. There is a 25-cent check-cashing fee charged for each check cashed. The Service Center also sells tickets to most on-campus events and can accept VISA, MasterCard, Discover, and the RAM E-CARD for ticket purchases. An Automatic Teller Machine, located next to the center. There is no service fee for the use of this ATM. Students must refer to their own bank regarding their ATM fees. (Fees and hours are subject to change without prior notice.)

WCU Identification Card (Ram eCard)



For students: All currently enrolled students of West Chester University are entitled to a Ram eCard. *First year undergraduate students* attending the orientation program will have their picture taken during the orientation and will receive their Ram eCards when they move into their residence hall or attend the second part of orientation. *Transfer undergraduate students* attending the orientation program will have their picture taken during the orientation and will receive their Ram eCards at the end of the orientation day. *All other students* (including transfer students NOT attending the orientation program) may obtain their Ram eCard from the Ram eCard office.

Initial Undergraduate Student ID	\$15 (no charge with proof of paid orientation)
Initial Graduate Student ID	\$15
Lost/Stolen Student ID Replacement	\$18
Damaged Student ID Replacement	\$13 (only with exchange of damaged ID, otherwise Lost/Stolen Fee applies)
Change of Photo/Name	\$13.00 (only with exchange of previous ID, otherwise Lost/Stolen Fee applies)

Forms of Payment: Cash, Check/Money Order (made payable to: *SSI Ram eCard*), Ram Bucks, Credit/Debit Card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover only; \$2 administrative fee may apply)

Take care of your Ram eCard! Your Ram eCard should be treated with the same care as a credit or ATM card. The magnetic stripe on the back of your card should be protected from scratches, cuts, and other obstructions such as stickers, tape, or clips which can all keep the card from functioning properly.

If your card becomes lost, stolen, damaged, or will no longer swipe, get a new one as soon as possible!

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The professional staff of the Twardowski Career Development Center assists students in defining career goals, relating academic preparation to these goals, and eventually helping in the search for internships and part-time/full-time career opportunities. These services are available throughout the entire calendar year in Lawrence Center, second floor. A career information library is available for browsing and research. Graduate school reference material is maintained for students considering graduate school. Other activities of the Twardowski Career Development Center include seminars, on-campus interviews and job fairs with potential employers, resume critique, resume referral, electronic resume databases, and a job posting system. Additional information is available at <http://www.wcupa.edu/cdc/>. The Twardowski Career Development Center is located in 225 Lawrence Center, 610-436-2501, or e-mail cdc@wcupa.edu.

MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

The Lawrence A. Dowdy Multicultural Center is dedicated to the development of multicultural sensitivity, understanding, and appreciation of diversity among students. The Lawrence A. Dowdy Multicultural Center also serves as a resource for other university offices regarding multicultural students. The office is located on the ground floor of Sykes Student Union. It serves as home-base for multicultural organizations. For more information please visit the Lawrence A. Dowdy Multicultural Center website at: https://www.wcupa.edu/_SERVICES/stu.mca/

SYKES STUDENT UNION

The Student Union, as a facility and an operation, is designed to encourage all members of the campus community to participate in a wide variety of cultural, social, education, and recreational programs. Building highlights include a 350-seat theater, coffee shop, and bookstore, all on the ground floor. The first floor offers a dining area with seating for 350, and outdoor terrace, and a large food servery. Also included on the first floor is a 5,000 – square foot multipurpose room designed for dances, concerts, banquets, and lectures as well as the student union administrative offices, Information Center. Also located in the Student Union is a Copy Center, Center for Student Involvement, various Student affairs offices, Off-Campus and Commuter Services, and Computer Lab. Sykes Union is completely wireless for Internet use.

For information concerning Sykes Union please call the Information Center at (610) 436-3360/2984 visit WCU website.

Standard Academic Year Hours		
	Open	Close
Sunday	10 a.m.	12 a.m.
Monday	7:30 a.m.	12 a.m.
Tuesday	7:30 a.m.	12 a.m.
Wednesday	7:30 a.m.	12 a.m.
Thursday	7:30 a.m.	12 a.m.
Friday	7:30 a.m.	1 a.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.	1 a.m.

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

The Department of Counseling and Psychological Services (the Counseling Center) is located on the second floor of Lawrence Center, 610-436-2301. Services are available to all currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students. The Counseling Center includes licensed psychologists, consulting psychiatrists, and graduate-level trainees with whom students may discuss their concerns in strict confidence.

Since the Counseling Center provides services for a wide range of concerns, each student's experience will be tailored to his or her needs. Students may wish to improve their interpersonal skills, resolve personal conflicts, or clarify their educational or vocational choices. Any of the following approaches may be implemented to address a student's concerns:

1. Individual psychological counseling consists of a one-to-one experience where the focus is on resolving personal conflicts and conflicts with others, and on improving the student's expertise at making meaningful choices. It may also help people avoid choosing behaviors that restrict personal growth and undermine their well-being.
2. Group counseling consists of a small number of peers with one or two counselors. Such groups meet once each week to help group members learn about themselves. Groups may or may not have a specific focus. Past groups with a focus have included students who have experienced the death of a parent, bad habits which block personal growth, eating disorders, and assertiveness training. General counseling groups have included those for interpersonal problem solving and for female students.
3. Individual vocational counseling consists of a one-to-one experience that focuses on clarifying the student's choice of concentration and vocation. Vocational choice is most solid when it is the outgrowth of understanding oneself. Such understanding is advanced by the thoughtful exploration of values, interests, and abilities.
4. Testing may include psychological or vocational interest tests which can clarify educational and vocational planning. The student and counselor can determine whether such testing might be helpful.
5. Consultation services for staff and faculty are available on a limited basis. Psychologists may be able to assist with crises, program planning, group and interpersonal communications, and referral to other agencies.
6. Outreach presentations are given, upon request, by counselors throughout the year in residence halls, classes, student organizations, and special interest groups.

University Policy for Storm Closings

When storm conditions affect the operation of the University, announcements are made via local radio and TV stations either by school/university name or via a system of code numbers keyed to affected schools. The University's code numbers and applicable prefixes are **853** for cancellation of day classes and **2853** for evening classes.

On Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, a one-hour delay means that the 8 a.m. class is cancelled. A two-hour delay means that both the 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. classes are cancelled. On Tuesday or Thursday, either a 90-minute delay or class cancellation will be called.

Although information about class cancellations, delayed openings, and University closings will be broadcast on many radio and TV stations, stations do not always provide detailed information. The most accurate and detailed information can be obtained by calling the University's Information Line at 610-436-1000 or by viewing the West Chester University homepage at <http://www.wcupa.edu>. Decisions regarding daytime classes, delayed openings, or University closings will generally be broadcast by 6 a.m. Decisions regarding evening classes will generally be broadcast by 1 p.m.

Although classes may be delayed or cancelled, all essential personnel must report to work. Please do not call Public Safety for school closing information as such calls will tie up phone lines needed for emergencies.





WCU Goes Global!

