



# **International Student Handbook 2022-2023**



**Welcome to Colorado Mesa University!**

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## Section 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Welcome to Colorado Mesa University

Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, Colorado is dedicated to providing an exceptional educational experience in a student-centered environment featuring small class sizes and a high level of student-faculty interaction. Founded in 1925, the institution has more than 10,000 students, offering a full range of undergraduate programs and a growing number of graduate programs.

### 1.2 Important Phone Numbers and Departments

**Please note** – all phone numbers below and throughout the handbook have a 970 area code unless otherwise noted.

[Online CMU Directory](#) – find faculty, staff, and department contacts

**Academic Departments** - See the full list of [CMU's Academic Programs](#) and review requirements for each program in the [CMU Catalog](#)

#### Student Life & Services

IRIS (Academic requirements, finances, financial aid)	Lowell Heiny Hall, lower level	248.1177
Career Services	University Center, Room 107	248.1404
International Student Admissions and Programs	Rotary Hall	248.1802 270.9769 (c)
Diversity, Advocacy & Health	Lowell Heiny 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	248.1366
Intramural & Club Sports	Maverick Pavilion, Room 107	248.1591
MAVcard Office	1 <sup>st</sup> floor, University Center	248.1059
Student Success Office	Student Life Offices, University Center	248.1340
Outdoor Program	Outdoor Program Office by Res Life	248.1428
Recreation Center	Hamilton/Maverick Rec Center	248.1592
Residence Life Office	Residence Life Office	248.1536
Student Wellness Center	1060 Orchard Avenue, Suite N	256.6345
Student Services	Lowell Heiny Hall, Room 107	248.1366

#### Academic Resources

Bookstore	1455 N 12 <sup>th</sup> St. (connected to the University Center)	248.1422
Educational Access Services	Houston Hall, Room 108	248.1856

Library	John U. Tomlinson Library	248.1244
Registrar's Office	Lowell Heiny Hall, Room 449	248.1555
Student Life	2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, University Center	248.1111
Testing Center	Houston Hall, Room 123	248.1260
Tutorial Learning Center (TLC)	Houston Hall, Room 113	248.1392

**Emergency Numbers** – For any **real emergency**, dial **911** immediately!

Campus Police	Northside of campus at 1060 Orchard Ave; substation on the Southside of the University Center	242.6707
Community Hospital	2351 G Road	242.0920
St. Mary's Hospital	2635 N 7 <sup>th</sup> Street	298.2273
Student Wellness Center	1060 Orchard Ave, Suite N	256.6345

### 1.3 Tips for Success at CMU

1. Attend classes regularly. Many professors give a grade on attendance, and if you miss class frequently, you will be missing important material.
2. Get to know your professors and ask them to clarify anything of which you are unsure. They have office hours, so you can visit them as often as you need.
3. Turn in assignments on time. Points may be lost if assignments are late.
4. Take notes in class in order to retain the information then review your notes later.
5. Ask for help if you need it.
6. If you are struggling with a class or an assignment, visit the Tutorial Learning Center in Houston Hall, Room 113.
7. Always use academic honesty and avoid plagiarism. See the [Student Code of Conduct](#)
8. Get involved on campus. There are numerous clubs and organizations to be a part of that offer fun activities and ways to make friends. There are also community events off campus. Check MAVzone for campus news and events.

### 1.4 Grand Junction and the Surrounding Area

Grand Junction is the largest city in western Colorado with a metro population of about 147,000. It is bordered to the north by the Bookcliffs, a series of high sandstone cliffs. To the east is the Grand Mesa, a large flat-top mountain that reaches higher than 11,000 feet in elevation at the summit. To the southwest of Grand Junction is the Colorado National Monument, a series of colorful sandstone canyons.

Grand Junction's economy is primarily driven by agriculture, with orchards, vineyards, farms and ranches surrounding the city and the nearby towns of Clifton, Palisade, and Fruita. Other important economic interests are retail sales, oil fields, education, and health care. With abundant outdoor recreational activities year-round like river rafting, hiking, mountain biking, skiing, and more, tourism is important to the economy.

CMU is conveniently located near the center of Grand Junction, on 12<sup>th</sup> Street and North Avenue. It is surrounded by residential areas and local businesses, as well as grocery stores, coffee shops, parks, and a public swimming pool. The downtown area with shops and restaurants is also within walking distance.



Grand Junction's weather is relatively mild, and enjoys over 300 days of sunshine a year. Summers are hot and dry, with as much as thirty degrees difference between daytime and nighttime temperatures. The climate in Grand Junction is dry and arid since it is considered high desert. Winters are cold and dry with some snowfall that usually melts quickly and summers are hot. Spring is typically windier than other seasons and has greatly varied weather, with snow possible into early May. Fall tends to be mild and pleasant, with warm days and cool nights.





## 1.6 Local Sights and Activities

Review the [Visit Grand Junction](#) webpage to learn more about the area:

Downtown Grand Junction is home to the Western Colorado Botanical Gardens, the Museum of Western Colorado and some interesting historical buildings on Main Street, including the Avalon Theatre.

On the west side of Grand Junction you will find Bananas Fun Park, Regal Cinemas and movie theaters, as well as the Mesa Mall and other retail stores and restaurants.

To the west of Grand Junction lies the Colorado National Monument, which offers beautiful hiking and biking trails and camping. West of the Colorado National Monument is the McInnis and Colorado Canyons which also provide hiking and mountain bike trails.

The Grand Mesa is one of the world's largest flattop mountains and is located to the east of Grand Junction. The Mesa offers recreational activities year-round, from downhill and cross-country skiing to fishing. The summit is around 11,000 feet.

East of Grand Junction is the small town of Palisade, which is known for its fruit orchards, vineyards, and many festivals, including the Palisade Peach, Bluegrass, and Honey Bee Festival. East on Interstate 70 is the town of Glenwood Springs, a popular tourist destination with its location at the entrance of the beautiful Glenwood Canyon and right next to the Colorado River. In the summer, rafting companies take customers on guided raft trips down the river. Another popular attraction is the hot springs that are open year-round and the Glenwood Caverns accessed by a gondola.

Further away but still within reasonable driving distance are other mountain ranges such as the picturesque San Juan's and the beautiful mountain towns of Ouray and Telluride. Vail, Aspen, Snowmass, Crested Butte, and Loveland ski resorts are all within a few hours' drive. About two hours to the west of Grand Junction in Utah is the town of Moab and Arches National Park, which preserves over 2,000 natural sandstone arches and makes for a great day trip.

## Section 2: Campus & Student Information

This section outlines important offices, resources, and information that you will need to know throughout your time at Colorado Mesa University.

### 2.1 Billing Info, Payment Plans & Deadlines

Tuition and fees are due by the end of the business day on the first day of class unless you enroll in a **payment plan** through MAVzone (please note there is a \$30 enrollment fee each semester to enroll in a payment plan). See [Billing and Due Dates](#) for additional information.

Colorado Mesa University allows a grace period until census date for both Fall and Spring Terms before late charges are applied to account balances.

#### **To view your semester bill:**

1. Log in to MAVzone
2. Navigate to ePay

#### **How to view/print a semester invoice:**

1. Log in to MAVzone
2. Click on the "Student Finance" tab and click "Go to ePay"
3. Click on "My Account" in the top-left, then "Statements"
4. Select date, the most recent is the default

5. Make sure pop-ups are enabled in browser
6. A printable invoice will open in a new tab or window

### **Options for paying your CMU bill:**

- Review [Payment Methods](#)
- Make payment through MAVzone – log in, click on the “Student Finances” tab, then “Go to ePay”
  - Pay with credit card through ePay, or
  - Link your local bank account to your student account through ePay:
    - There is an On Site Banker on campus in the University Center lobby where you can open a free checking account once you arrive
    - When you are ready to link your bank account to your student account, log in to MAVzone, click on “Student Finances” then “Go to ePay”
    - On the right-hand-side of the page, click on the green “Make a Payment” button.
    - Following instructions for paying by webcheck and entering your bank account information.
    - You will need the bank’s routing number that can be found next to your account number on your personal checks (or by calling the bank).
- Visit the Student Accounts Office in Lowell Heiny Hall to pay with cash, check or credit card.
- Pay online with foreign currency via Flywire by peerTransfer at <https://www.flywire.com/school/coloradomesa/>. You must know the amount due before you pay via peerTransfer. You can find out the total amount due by logging into MAVzone per instructions above.

## **2.2 Bookstore**

The CMU Bookstore carries textbooks and supplies required for classes as well as a wide variety of school and art supplies, backpacks, bags, reference books, study aids, general books, greeting cards, and convenience and snack items. The Bookstore also has the largest selection of Colorado Mesa University clothing and gift items available anywhere.

To help keep textbook costs as low as possible, the Bookstore also stocks used books, and offers a buyback service at the end of each semester. Rental and electronic versions of select textbooks are also available, as well as a full range of rental titles through the website: [themaverickstore.com](http://themaverickstore.com)

You can pre-purchase your books online through the Bookstore and pick them up several days before classes start.

Students can charge up to \$75 per credit hour (max of \$900) per semester in Bookstore purchases to their student account. Adding money to this account also allows you to make purchases at the Business Office, in pay-to-park parking lots, at MAVprint, and at the library. You may add money to your MAVcard Flex account at the MAVcard Office or by logging in to MAVzone and clicking on "Campus Life" then scrolling down to "MAVcard" on the left-hand-side.

## 2.3 Campus Dining

In order to meet your campus dining needs, the dining hall has designed several meal plans for your convenience. If you need to purchase a meal plan, or if you would like to make a change to the plan you have already selected, simply contact the MAVcard office.

Traditional meal plan holders will be allowed continual access to the dining hall for the hours specified in their meal plan. You can eat in the dining hall or request a to-go box. You may use the Meal Transfer program to eat at library locations or in Rowdy's instead of the Dining Hall. See your CMU Dining Guide (separate document given to you upon arriving or at orientation) for more information.

There are options for dining whether you live on- or off-campus or in one the on-campus apartments. For students living off-campus, you may purchase a commuter MAV plan which consists of 20, 40 or 80 meals that are loaded to your MAVcard.

Your meal plan A or B comes with \$150 per semester of MAVmoney, a declining balance account that can be used at any of the on-campus dining service locations and several off-campus locations including:

- Dining Hall (University Center)
- Rowdy's (University Center)
- Jazzman's Café (Dominguez Hall)
- Houston Hall Café
- The Scramble (WCCC)
- Chick-Fil-A (University Center)
- Starbucks (University Center)
- The Point (University Center)
- Mountain Grind Coffee (Lucero Hall)
- Yogo Mojo Frozen Yogurt (Lucero Hal)

- Bravo Pizza (Lucero Hall)
- Jimmy John's (1230 N 12<sup>th</sup> St #1)
- Domino's pizza (carry out only at 904 North Ave)

To add more MAVmoney to your MAVcard, log in to MAVzone and click on "Campus Life" or visit the MAVcard Office.

To see all of the dining options and their hours, check out Sodexo's website:

<https://coloradomesa.sodexomyway.com/?>

If you have dietary restrictions, contact Executive Chef Daniel Widhammer:

<https://coloradomesa.sodexomyway.com/contact/index>

Sick trays are also available for students with a meal plan.

## 2.4 Campus Safety

In case of emergency, call 911 immediately. For **non**-emergency circumstances, call the Grand Junction Police Department Substation on CMU's campus at 242.6707. Police services on the Colorado Mesa University campus are provided by the Grand Junction Police Department. The officers that are assigned to the campus have a substation located on campus at 1060 North Avenue, and an office on the south side of the University Center.

Colorado Mesa University offers a Campus Safety Assistants program designed to provide safe travel around campus for both male and female students, faculty, and staff. The service covers all of the main campus and up to two blocks off campus and is available from 6:00 pm – 2:00 am. Contact 260.2683.

Emergency blue telephones are strategically placed around campus. When activated, the phones provide a direct connection via a 911 line to the regional communications center. When the phones is in use, a blue strobe light is activated which not only calls immediate attention to that particular area, but also assists emergency responders for a more direct response. **To use the phones:** press the red emergency button. Wait for the dispatcher to answer and explain the problem. A blue light will flash at the phone so that responding Police/Fire/Medical personnel can more easily locate you.

Colorado Mesa University has contracted with an emergency notification provider to send text messages to cellular phones and distribute voice messages in the event of an emergency situation. While the University encourages you to participate in the emergency notification system, opting to receive the emergency notifications is completely voluntary and only one of the ways the University will attempt to alert the

campus community to an emergency event. The content information you provide for the notification system will not be sold or released to any other party. The University intends to only use the provided contact information to alert the campus community of emergency situations or an event that directly poses a life-safety risk to the campus community. In addition, the emergency notification system will be tested once per term, not to exceed three (3) times per calendar year. Colorado Mesa University does not warrant the successful delivery of each message to each individual recipient. The service depends on the individual cellular and mobile phone carriers to deliver Simple Messaging System or SMS/text messaging to each recipient. There may be a charge by your cell phone provider to receive text messages.

**In case of an emergency, students, faculty, and staff will be notified through one or more of the following channels:**

- Text Message
- Voice Message
- Colorado Mesa University Email
- MAVzone

If you have not signed up to receive voice message or text alerts and would like to, please do the following steps:

1. Log in to MAVzone
2. On the Home tab scroll down to the Channel titled "Emergency Warning System"
3. Click on the "Colorado Mesa University Emergency Warning System Contact Information" link.
4. Update your contact information.
5. Click the "Opt-in/Info Correct" button to complete your registration

## 2.5 Career Services

Career Services provides career and job resources and guidance for student and alumni. To find current on campus job opening through MAVzone, go to the Applications tab on the right side of the screen and search or look for the Handshake app. The first time you access Handshake you will need to create an account. For career and major advice, as well as many more resources go to <https://www.coloradomesa.edu/career/index.html>. Please note that employment regulations for international students are limited by immigration regulations and are available only to students who have maintained their immigration status and academic standing. Please see your International Student Admissions and Programs Office before beginning any employment.

## 2.6 Counseling Services

The Student Wellness Center (SWC) provides behavioral health services and counseling to all CMU students. The SWC is located across from Orchard Avenue, north of CMU tennis courts, at 1060 Orchard Avenue, Suite N. In case of a life-threatening emergency, call 911. In case of a mental health emergency, call 888.207.4004. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call 970.256.6345.

## 2.7 Diversity, Advocacy & Health

As the cultural hub of western Colorado, Colorado Mesa University values a respectful and safe campus culture, free of violence, abuse, and intimidation or discrimination. Working with other University offices, Student Services provides support for students and faculty to ensure CMU's educational experience includes the free exchange of ideas, brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds and interests to promote a balanced exchange of civil dialogue. Our students gain a greater appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity and are prepared to take on leadership roles in society. Student Services staff members specialize in helping students grow and problem-solve so they can make informed decisions in and out of the classroom.

Colorado Mesa University extends its services to anyone regardless of age, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

Colorado Mesa University is a community of scholars in the liberal arts tradition. We believe that all people have something worthwhile to contribute and that these contributions benefit us all. Therefore, we intend that within our academic community all cultural differences will be treated with equal respect and tolerance. We desire that our students have the opportunity to appreciate the diversity of our modern world, and we encourage them to partake in the resources available within our community. We pledge ourselves to provide as many divergent cultural experiences for our students as the resources of the institution and the needs of our disciplines allow.

## 2.8 Hamilton Recreation Center/Maverick Center

The Maverick Center includes the Hamilton Recreation Center, the Maverick Pavilion (separate building that houses the climbing wall, cycling center, gold simulator, and indoor practice fields), El Pomar Natatorium, Brownson Area, and the Health Sciences Department.

Hamilton Recreation Center is designed to provide a variety of programs and services to students that contribute to the overall health and well-being of students. Student fees paid at registration are outlined in the CMU Student Handbook and allow students that



are enrolled in the current semester access to the Recreation Center and be involved in some of the activities such as exercise classes and intramural sports. The MAVcard is used to determine eligibility and required for entering the Recreation Center.

Facilities include the fitness/strength training area that includes an extensive weight room, the Group X and Spinning Room, the Recreation Gymnasium, racquetball courts, an indoor track, El Pomar Natatorium, message therapy, and a climbing wall.

## 2.9 Housing & Residence Life

If you are living on campus, you have the unique opportunity of being part of CMU's residence life. Living on campus allows fast access to all of the university's services and an environment where you will be surrounded with other students and fully immersed in American culture. The residence halls schedule special events that allow students living on campus to have fun getting to know one another. In the residence halls, you will have a Resident Assistant, who is in charge of a certain number of rooms on your floor, and a Resident Director, who oversees that residence hall. Both of these people help to make sure that students are safe. If you have questions or problems regarding residence life, these are the people you should talk to first.

## 2.10 International Student Admissions & Programs

The International Student Admissions and Programs Office is your most important contact as an international student. Send an email or consult the office for an appointment when you have questions about getting a job, after changing your academic or contact information, if you have any questions or problems with your visa or student status, etc. This office can also give advice on how to deal with culture shock, adjusting to your new community, and how to get involved. To stay up to date on current events, immigration changes, etc. please like "Colorado Mesa University International Programs" on Facebook.

## 2.11 MAVcard

The MAVcard uses include library book check outs, access to the Recreation Center, free admission to athletic events (excluding playoffs), access to your residence hall, University Center (after hours) and academic buildings and computer labs, dining hall access with a meal plan, at MAVmoney and Flex locations, and linking to your free U.S. Bank checking account. The MAVcard office is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the University Center.

The FLEXmoney account is a prepaid account that is optional and is directly deposited on the MAVcard. FLEXmoney can be used in several CMU departments around campus



including: The Bookstore, The Office of Student Accounts, Pay-to-Park parking lots, Hamilton Recreation Center, MAVprint, and the Tomlinson Library.

FLEXmoney deposits can be made in the MAVcard Office located in the University Center, the Business Office in Lowell Heiny Hall or online. Students, staff, and faculty may check their FLEXmoney account balance and make a deposit in the Campus Life tab in MAVzone.

FLEXmoney can also be transferred over to the card holder's MAVmoney account. Once transferred to MAVmoney, deposits **cannot** be transferred back to the FLEXmoney account.

FLEXmoney deposits are final and non-refundable unless otherwise noted in the refund policy.

## 2.12 Mentoring

The Mentoring Program encompasses many phases within a student's growth at Colorado Mesa University. Professional mentors actively engage students of all backgrounds in everything from student advocacy and registration, to helping students navigate faculty/student relationships, and aiding students through the college transition process. Mentors are persistent in supporting students as they work to achieve their goals and dedicated to providing students with opportunities to develop "the whole person" by connecting the student with the institution and helping create a sense of community. The mentor's mission is to help students work through the challenges that they will face in their college career. The Mentoring Program aims to support CMU students in achieving a successful college experience in and out of the classroom.

Some students may be required to meet with a mentor during their time at CMU. If you have received a Mentor Contract Hold on your account, please call 248.1765 to set an appointment to meet with a mentor and get your hold lifted.

## 2.13 Student Accounts Office

The Student Accounts Office is where students pay tuition and student fees. This office is responsible for student billing, collection of tuition, fees, payment plans, and other charges. There are various payment options and schedules available (such as the campus payment plan) to ensure bills are paid on time without penalty. Please see more information on how to pay your student bill, payment plans & how to enroll in Section 2.1.

## 2.14 Student Wellness Center (SWC)

The Student Wellness Center (SWC), located north of campus at 1060 Orchard Avenue, Suite N, offers primary care services to all CMU students. In the event medical care is needed after hours, please use the Community Hospital emergency department located one block north at College Place and Walnut Avenue. Eligible students receive a 20% discount on hospital services. Transportation fee (ambulance) are the student's responsibility and charged by the carrier.

Use the SWC for common ailments, any potentially life-threatening condition should be taken care of immediately at one of the local hospitals or by calling 911.

Please call 256.6345 to make an appointment at the Student Wellness Center. You should show your International Student Health Insurance card at the time of the visit. See Section 7 for more information about health care and health insurance.

## 2.15 Student Services Office

The Office of the Vice President for Student Services offers a broad range of services and activities. The office is dedicated to aiding in the success of all students. You should contact this office to seek assistance with issues that are interfering with the successful completion of your academic goals.

## 2.16 U.S. Bank Banking Services

U.S. Bank is CMU's banking partner. Services include setting up a free checking account, receiving a debit/credit card, wire transferring of international funds, online banking, and access to a full service U.S. Bank ATM machine. U.S. Bank ATM machines are installed outside the UC and in the Maverick Center near Brownson Arena. To open an account, you need your passport and I-20. Your home bank may need to know either the SWIFT code or routing number in order to transfer wire funds directly to your U.S. bank account. Check with U.S. Bank or whichever local bank you choose for these numbers.

If you have or wish to open a U.S. Bank checking account, you may link your new MAVcard to your U.S. Bank account. If your MAVcard is linked to your U.S. Bank checking account, it may be used as a debit card at PIN-based (as opposed to chip-based) locations.

U.S. Bank won't have a storefront in the UC but there will be an On Site Banker on campus regularly. If you have questions regarding the banking partnership, please visit the On Site Banker.

For more information on how to pay your student bill online with funds from your U.S. bank account or your credit card, see section 2.1. Also, see section 6 for more information.

## Section 3: Academic Resources

### 3.1 Academic Advising: IRIS Advisors vs. Faculty Advisor

There are two types of advisors on campus that will provide guidance and support throughout your college career. The IRIS Advisors primarily assist first semester freshmen, students with undeclared majors, and first semester transfer students. Faculty advisors primarily work with students in their declared major area of study. Your faculty advisor will be listed on the top section of your degree works report in MAVzone under the Student Academics tab. You can find your faculty advisors contact information in the [Campus Directory](#).

Program sheets for each degree or certificate outline the requirements needed for degree completion. To view a program sheet, login to MAVzone and click on the "Student Academics" tab then look in the "Academic Publications" section and click on "Program of Study."

### 3.2 Academic Integrity

Colorado Mesa University is a community of scholars sharing similar academic values and expectations. The primary academic responsibility of the University is to seek and state the truth as it is understood. To this end, faculty will present course content in a balanced manner that honors different viewpoints, exercises self-discipline and judgment in using, extending and transmitting knowledge, and practices intellectual honesty.

A value fundamental to the principle of independent learning is the requirement of honesty and integrity in the performance of academic assignments, both inside and outside the classroom. **By submitting work which is not your own, you may forfeit the opportunity to continue as a student.** Each student accepts the responsibility of maintaining honor in all aspects of academic study and the support of this principle as it applies to others.

You, as a student, accept the following statements as a part of your obligation to the Colorado Mesa University academic community:

1. Never intentionally represent the works or ideas of others as your own without proper acknowledgment. Examples include a submission of purchased research papers as one's own work, paraphrasing and/or quoting material without properly documenting the source be it from a hard document or internet web page;
2. Never use unauthorized material, falsified, altered, or fabricated information in an academic assignment or campus related activity;
3. Never take someone else's ideas during a discussion or from a lecture without citing the individual and the circumstances of the lecture or discussion;
4. Never infringe upon the rights of other students by removing material from the library without authorization, defacing or destroying library materials, or similarly abusing library privileges. Such acts are considered to be academic dishonesty and will be treated as such;
5. Never give or receive assistance on an examination, quiz, term paper, or project unless specifically authorized by the instructor to do so;
6. Never forge an academic document;
7. Never submit in whole or substantial portions of either written or oral academic work which has previously earned credit, when submission is made without instructor authorization;
8. To respect the rights of other students in the area of computer usage. Specifically, every student has a right to privacy and a fair share of resources. Any abuse of these rights or unauthorized access to another student's computer program is considered academic dishonesty.
9. To take appropriate action, as dictated by personal honor, upon becoming aware of a violation of academic integrity. This includes reporting the violation to the faculty member, the department head, confronting the student(s) involved, or exerting some form of peer pressure or social sanction.

For more information, please refer to the **Student Code of Conduct** found on the Student Services webpage here: <http://www.coloradomesa.edu/student-services/maverick-guide.html>

### 3.3 Academic Major Changes

All students wishing to change their major or emphasis/concentration area must contact the administrative assistant of the academic department that offers the degree they are seeking. You must also contact the International Student Admissions and Programs Office so your I-20 can be updated. If you are changing from an associate or certificate program to a baccalaureate degree, go to the Registrar's Office to submit an application and see the International Student Admissions and Programs Office.

### 3.4 Add/Drop Classes

Students can add/drop classes online up to the published deadline (except for new students who must see IRIS to make any changes). You can see the important registration dates under "Registration News" in the "Student Academics" tab in MAVzone.

### 3.5 Computer Labs

There are various computer labs available for use on campus. Some labs are specialized departmental labs, others are computer classrooms where classes are conducted, and others are located in the residence halls. The main student computer labs are located in the library and are open during library hours. See a list of all labs on campus here: <https://www.coloradomesa.edu/information-technology/getstarted-students/technology-resources.html>

MAVprint - students receive a \$10 printing budget and then are charged per copy for anything beyond this. You may also print from a wireless notebook. See more information about MAVprint here: <https://www.coloradomesa.edu/information-technology/getstarted-students/technology-resources.html>

### 3.6 Educational Access Services

EAS provides support for students with documented disabilities. Their mission is to collaborate with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create an accessible college community. EAS provides academic accommodations and promotes universal design principles, enabling students with disabilities the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of the educational environment as successful and independent learners.

### 3.7 Essential Learning

The Essential Learning requirements are a set of University-wide basic courses that form the foundation of all undergraduate degree programs.

#### **Things to note:**

The Essential Learning Requirements can be found under the Undergraduate Requirements section of the CMU Catalog and online. Students who are pursuing an Associates of Applied Sciences have fewer Essential Learning Requirements. Some majors require specific Essential Learning courses, so students should consult with an advisor before selecting which courses to take.

### 3.8 Graduation Paperwork

Graduation documents are due the semester prior to completion of all coursework. The student should pick up an "Intent to Graduate" and "Graduation Planning Sheet" in the Registrar's Office. The student must then meet with his/her advisor and turn in to the advisor his/her completed program sheet.

### 3.9 Holds

Students may find that at any given time there is a "hold" on your account which will prevent you from registering for classes or altering your schedule. The most common holds are:

- Billing/Accounts hold: this generally means there is a balance on your student bill that needs to be paid.
- Advising hold: All new first-time students have this hold. An Advising hold means that you must see IRIS before adding/dropping classes or making any other changes to your schedule. This hold is only active for your first semester. After that, you are allowed to build your own schedule and make any modifications on your own.
- Health Insurance: All international students must maintain health insurance coverage while they are in the United States. Colorado Mesa University offers a group health insurance plan for all international students that meets the U.S. Dept. of State requirements for insurance coverage. You will be automatically enrolled in this plan beginning one week prior to the start of the semester.

### 3.10 Library

The Tomlinson Library contains ample resources for completing papers and assignments. To find books and articles, you can do a search using the library catalog online. You can also order books from other libraries through Prospector. The library has three floors consisting of two computer labs for student use as well and small study rooms that are available by reservation.

### 3.11 Program Sheets

Each minor, certificate and degree has a Program Sheet that students can use to be sure that they are meeting the requirements for that specific program. Program Sheets specify what type of classes are needed and how many upper level & Essential Learning classes are required. It is recommended that you work closely with your academic advisor or IRIS advisors each semester so that **you can be sure you are meeting your program's requirements**. Program sheets can be found online at:

<https://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/>

### 3.12 Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office oversees registration for classes, address changes, enrollment verification, produces transcripts, enforces add/drop deadlines for classes, and provides special permission slips such as prerequisite overrides. All students (except new students) are encouraged to register via MAVzone. Early registration is open to students currently enrolled at Colorado Mesa University. Registration allows early selection of courses and more time to consult with advisors. It is important that you plan your semester's schedule in advance with alternate sections or classes selected when meeting with your advisor.

### 3.13 Semester Course Schedule

Course schedules are available online approximately three weeks prior to registration via MAVzone or: <http://www.coloradomesa.edu/registrar/reginfo/index.html>. Click on "Look Up Classes" under the "Student Academics" tab.

### 3.14 Testing Center

The Testing Center provides a variety of testing services such as assessment of academic skills in college level courses (ACCUPLACER), Major Field Test (MFT), GRE, CLEP, etc. The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) allows students to use the knowledge they already have to gain credit for classes. The CMU Testing Center offers all CLEP examinations, however only certain exams are accepted for CMU credit. The CLEP exam tests for a comprehensive understanding of a college level class, much like a comprehensive final.

### 3.15 Transcripts

Official transcripts are issued by the Registrar's Office upon receipt of a signed written request, provided that you have no outstanding financial obligation to the University. Unofficial transcripts, in most cases, can be prepared while you wait or printed from MAVzone. A photo ID must be presented to pick up any transcript.

### 3.16 Tutorial Learning Center and Writing Center

The TLC is a FREE academic service for all Colorado Mesa University students. Tutors are available on a walk-in basis for many courses. Do you have a quick question? Do you need homework clarification or feedback on a paper? Are you reviewing for a test? Help is available at the TLC!

At the main campus, come to Houston Hall 113 to meet with a friendly peer tutor. They are open on Monday through Thursday from 8am-6pm, and Fridays from 8am-5pm.

They are also open Sundays from 1pm-6pm! Tutoring at branch campuses and distance tutoring is also available. Check out the website for schedules and locations at [www.coloradomesa.edu/tutoring](http://www.coloradomesa.edu/tutoring) or call 248-1392 with any questions.

The Writing Center serves students across all disciplines and various stages of the writing process. They provide support for students to assimilate into the writing conventions of the university and their specific academic disciplines. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday 10-5 pm in Houston Hall room 223. Tutoring in writing will be located at branch campus also. Workshops for students in APA/MLA and English Language Learner small group tutoring is available.

### **IMPORTANT!**

When writing any papers for any college class, be very careful to cite sources correctly and avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is imitating or copying someone else's work and claiming it as your own. Plagiarism is a serious offence and can result in the professor failing you in the course. If you are using someone else's language, thoughts or ideas in your assignment, make sure to cite it correctly and give the author proper credit. If you are unsure how to cite sources, consult your professor or the Tutorial Learning Center. Please see the section on Academic Integrity in section 3.3 more information.

## Section 4: Student Life & Activities

The International Student Admissions and Programs Office will offer a variety of programming events each semester and often coordinates with other groups and offices on campus.

This section outlines other ways to get involved outside of the classroom while at Colorado Mesa University

### 4.1 Getting Involved

Student life is an important aspect of the American college experience. Getting involved in clubs and organizations, programs, events, and/or intramural and club sports allows you to meet new people and enjoy your college years to the fullest. Plus, enhancing your academic studies with involvements outside the classroom can enable you to meet new people, earn better grades, and become more marketable to potential employers. Being actively involved in campus life will make your college experience transforming



and memorable. For more information on how to get involved, please visit:  
<http://coloradomesa.edu/studentlife>.

## 4.2 Student Clubs and Organizations

CMU has dozens of clubs and organizations to explore, from academic to recreational to religious. College is more than just going to class. Life happens outside the classroom so make the most of your education!

## 4.3 International Student Alliance (ISA)

The International Student Alliance is a club on campus open to any student and is a good way to get involved in college life and connect with other international students as well as domestic students. The club embraces diversity and has regular meetings as well as scheduled events. Like them on Facebook at CMU ISA:

<https://www.facebook.com/isacmu>.

## 4.4 Club Advisory Board (CAB)

The Club Advisory Board (CAB) is a student-run organization responsible for the establishment of new clubs and the allocation of monies to established clubs. There is something for almost everyone, and if there isn't a club that fits your interests, CAB has the tools and information to help students start their own club started with an account and \$50.

## 4.5 Cultural Inclusion Council (CIC)

The student-led Cultural Diversity Board strives to promote and support the ethnic and cultural groups on campus by providing educational resources and support services. The Cultural Diversity Board encompasses 6 different clubs: Black Student Alliance, Gay Straight Alliance, International Student Alliance, Native American Student Alliance, Latin Student Alliance, and Polynesian Club Alliance.

## 4.6 Programming Activities Council (PAC)

The Programming Activities Council is a student-run organization which provides high-quality entertainment to enrich the lives of students outside the classroom. Like them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/cmupac> to stay current with what's happening on campus.

## 4.7 Outdoor Program

The Outdoor Program is an inexpensive way to explore Colorado's great outdoors. This program coordinates a variety of activities including trips, clinics, equipment rentals, and

free weekly outdoor activities. Types of trips that are offered include hiking, rock climbing, snowshoeing, kayaking, river rafting, camping, ice climbing, and more. Trips range from afternoon or one-day excursions to overnight, weeklong, and international trips. In addition, the Outdoor Program rents equipment such as mountain bikes, canoes, and skis to students at reasonable prices. See their website (<http://coloradomesa.edu/op>) for a schedule of trips and activities. Make it a goal to do at least one OP trip before you graduate! Like them on Facebook at Colorado Mesa University Outdoor Program.

## 4.8 Athletics

Colorado Mesa University has a strong winning tradition as a member of the NCAA Division II and Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. The University competes in more than 30 inter-collegiate varsity sports. There is no charge for students to attend Colorado Mesa University regular season athletic events. You must present your Colorado Mesa University MAVcard to gain entrance.

## 4.9 Intramural & Club Sports Program

The Intramural Sports Program offers structured, competitive, and social opportunities in a variety of individual and team sports. Team intramural sports include flag football, volleyball, men's basketball, women's basketball, men's softball, coed softball, indoor soccer, dodge ball, ultimate Frisbee, and inner tube water polo. Individual sports include tennis, racquetball, disc golf, and badminton. Club Sports are organizations that compete with other institutions and offer a competitive opportunity in any given sport for CMU students. Like them on Facebook at Colorado Mesa University Intramural & Club Sports.

## 4.10 MAVrides

Colorado Mesa University offers a program called MAVrides, which offers free rides to CMU students during the Fall and Spring semesters on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 9pm-3am. Call: 970.248.2222.

## 4.11 Sustainability Council

The Sustainability Council is a student-run organization that promotes sustainable values throughout the campus community. The Sustainability Council manage the University Garden and CMU Compost Facility. Keep up to date with Sustainability Council via their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/CMUsustainabilitycouncil> and Instagram account @cmu\_sustainability\_council.

## Section 5: Living in Grand Junction

### 5.1 Living Off-Campus

The campus is centrally located and surrounded by residential areas. Freshman and sophomores are required to live on campus but upperclassman (juniors and seniors), transfers, and those over 21 years of age wishing to live off campus must make arrangements on their own, as the university does not provide services for off campus housing. Some of the local realtors can provide information on rental houses and apartments, and the local newspaper also has a rental section, including rooms for rent or roommates wanted.

### 5.2 Telephone, Cell Phone & Other Electronics

If you live in the dorms, your room is assigned a specific telephone number. In order to utilize that number, you must buy a telephone to connect it into the room's phone jack.

Most students prefer cell phones. The best place to purchase a cell phone is at a service provider's store, where the sales representative can help customers explore different options and answer their questions. Cell phones can also be purchased from the Internet, but it will be up to the buyer to figure out how it works and where to buy service.

Most Americans buy their cell phone along with a two-year contract, which requires a Social Security Number. International students cannot apply for a social security number unless for employment purposes. Because of this, international students must purchase a **pre-paid option** in most cases, but feel free to inquire if a service will provide a contract without a Social Security Number if you have your passport/visa and I-20. Explain that you are international student studying at Colorado Mesa University and on a legal visa status. Take your passport and I-20 with you when you go. Please check with RadioShack in town for their options as well as the AT&T store. RadioShack is located in the Mesa Mall and at 2830 North Avenue. The phone number is 245.6963 and 243.0888. AT&T is located at 2454 Highway 6 & 50 Suite 106 and at the Mesa Mall. The phone number is 263.0368 and 778.4633. Other cell phone providers with stores in Grand Junction include Sprint, Verizon, T-Mobile, and GoWireless, ClearTalk, and Boost Mobile.

Many international students want to buy a laptop or iPad. Recommended retailers are: Best Buy, Radioshack, Target, Wal-Mart or the online product retailers.

## 5.3 Mail

Mail is delivered by the United States Postal Service (USPS) to your mailbox. If you live on campus, you will have a mailbox at your residence hall. Off campus, you usually have the option of either having mail delivered to your home mailbox or you can rent a post office box (P.O. Box) where you will send and receive mail through the post office in town. Mail is delivered Monday through Saturday. Make sure to let family and friends know your local address so they know where to reach you and can send you mail. Be sure to keep your address current in your MAVzone account so that you will not miss any important mail from the University.

## 5.4 Restaurants

Grand Junction has many restaurants to choose from, and many within walking distance from campus. Fast food restaurants, such as McDonalds, Chipotle, Jimmy John's, and Taco Bell etc., are usually the cheapest options for eating out and don't require leaving a tip. Sit-down "chain" restaurants are more expensive and have a slightly more formal atmosphere. A minimum tip of 15% is expected for good service, and most restaurants require a 20% gratuity for groups of six or more people.

Usually the most expensive restaurants, and often the highest quality, are those that are sit-down restaurants and not part of a franchise. Main Street has a variety of interesting restaurants to try, from Japanese food to Italian. Near campus, you can find Jimmy John's, Kannah Creek, Kuniko's, Which Wich, The Ale House, & Four Winds coffee. Other recommendations near downtown include Bin 707, Café Sol, Pablo's Pizza, Main Street Bagels and many more.

## 5.5 Shopping

Mesa Mall on Highway 6 and 50 offers a selection of clothing and retail stores, including Target, Sears, JcPenney, and Cabela's (an outdoor sports store).

Main Street has a variety of charming shops and boutiques with anything from clothing to Colorado souvenirs. Stores on Main Street tend to be more expensive, but the items will also usually be unique. For low-priced, all-purpose retail stores, Wal-Mart, Target, and Sam's Club (membership required) are typically good choices. These stores have a variety of merchandise at low prices, from groceries to clothing, office supplies, and home décor. For grocery shopping, City Market and Safeway are large stores that sell fresh produce, frozen, refrigerated, and packaged foods and they tend to have comparable prices. Other options include Vitamin Cottage and Sprouts Farmer's Market. For information on cell phone and electronic buying, see section 5.2.

## 5.6 Transportation

Grand Junction is nestled on the western slope, about a four-hour drive from both Denver and Salt Lake City. Located at the crossroad of Interstate 70 and Colorado Highway 50, the city is easily accessible from every direction. Whether you are hitting the road or taking to the skies, below are a few options for getting here.

Grand Junction has a bus system called Grand Valley Transit (GVT) that serves Grand Junction and the surrounding areas, including Palisade, Clifton, Orchard Mesa, and Fruita during daytime and early evening hours. Free bus passes are available at the University Center information desk. See the GVT website (<http://gvt.mesacounty.us/>) to find a route to your desired location.

K2 Taxi service is another option for in-town transportation. Their number is 970.242.4652. Sunshine Rides taxi service can be reached at 970.245.8294.

The Amtrak train station is located downtown. You can use Amtrak to travel throughout Colorado as well as the U.S.

Walker Field is the regional airport located in Grand Junction. It is a small airport, but has regular flights to Denver and other major cities. See the Grand Junction Regional Airport webpage for more information: <https://www.gjairport.com/>

## 5.7 Driver's License, Colorado I.D., Social Security Number

To get your Colorado ID or Colorado driver's license, please go to the Division of Motor Vehicle Office at 200 S Spruce St. in Grand Junction, CO 81501 (type this address into <https://www.google.com/maps> to get a map). They are open Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. and their phone number is 248.7010. Call ahead with any questions you have. When you go, be sure to let the DMV staff person know that you are an international student on an F-1 visa studying at Colorado Mesa University.

Be prepared to take a written and driving test (generally scheduled for a future visit) to receive your Colorado driver's license.

As of 2015, there were new policies implemented by the Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles:

- international students will be able to apply for a license or Colorado ID at any DMV office

- they will no longer have to go to the Social Security office to get an ineligibility letter/waiver

You should wait at least 30 days since entering the U.S. to go to the DMV office so their system has time to catch up with SEVP/SEVIS and Customs and Border Patrol.

Go to the DMV office with:

- I-20
- I-94 printed version from: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>
- Passport/visa
- Any driver's license you have from your home country, or international driver's license, if applicable
- Piece of mail that shows your address (a bank letter, cell phone bill, etc. OR if you live on campus, ask Residence Life for a letter to prove your address on campus).
- This page from the International Student Handbook

F-1/J-1 international students do not get a Social Security number until they have been offered an on-campus job or secured an off-campus internship through CPT and should NOT need these for their driver's license.

Remind the person you speak with that you are an international student on a non-immigrant F-1/J-1 visa at CMU.

If the person you are explaining this to seems confused at all, ask NICELY if you could speak to the manager or someone who has perhaps worked with international students before.

Motor Vehicle Division – Mesa County Central Services

<http://clerk.mesacounty.us/mv/>

200 S Spruce St Grand Junction 81501

970-244-1664

Hours: 8 am – 5 pm Monday-Friday

If you need to take driving classes, international students in the past have used this company – A1 Driving School (<http://a1drivingschoolgj.weebly.com/>).

## Section 6: Money and Banking

### 6.1 American Money

*This section was modified from the following original source: Handbook for International Student Studying at the University of Colorado at Boulder.*

The American money system is based on the dollar (\$), on which all paper money (bills) and coins are dependent. "Cash" is the term used for dollar bills and coins. There are 100 cents (or pennies) in a dollar. Coins are fractions of a dollar. The five-cent piece is known as a nickel, the ten-cent piece is a dime, and the twenty-five-cent piece is a quarter. Dollar bills of all value are the same size. The numerical value of each bill is shown in all four corners.

The quarter is the most useful coin, because it can be used in almost any coin-operated machine, such as a washer and dryer in a Laundromat, a pay phone, parking meter, video game, and in vending machines that dispense food, drinks, stamps, tickets, newspapers, etc. Vending machines will take small bills such as ones, fives, and tens but the change you get back will generally be in coins.

**Debit or charge cards** are often used, even for buying small items. They are convenient and safe to use and easier to carry than cash. **Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)** are popular and a convenient way to access cash. If you open up a U.S. Bank account, you can use the U.S. Bank ATM on campus. You can also write a **check** for purchases at most retail locations.

### 6.2 Opening a Bank Account

If you have not already done so, open an account at a local bank or credit union. When you are setting up your account, take your MAVcard, passport, I-20 and any funds you intend to deposit with you.

You are usually required to keep a certain amount of money in your account at all times. If you open a checking account, you will be able to write a check to pay a bill, business, or person. You can also use the debit/credit card that the bank will provide you. The bank will remove those funds from your account to pay the person/business. **It is important to always know the balance in your account so that you do not overdraw or "bounce" checks.** This means that you write a check/change for more than the amount than you have in your account. This often times comes with a large fee.

You can have international funds transferred to your bank account check with your bank for more information. From your local bank, you can then transfer or automatically deposit funds into your CMU student account. See section 2.1 for instructions on how to link your bank account with your student account.

### 6.3 Transferring funds to the U.S.

The best ways to carry or transfer money is with traveler's checks, a bank check (also called a cashier's check) drawn on a U.S. bank in U.S. dollars, or a "wire transfer" from your bank at home to your U.S. bank. Remember that banks usually charge a small fee for wire transfers. Your home country bank may want to know the SWIFT code or Routing Number for your local U.S. bank.

CMU will not accept wire transfers directly to your student account. Instead, we use [Flywire by PeerTransfer](#). See section 2.1 for instructions on how to do this.

## Section 7: Health Care and Health Insurance

*This section was modified from the following original source: Handbook for International Student Studying at the University of Colorado at Boulder.*

**Please remember that for any emergency-related health care needs requiring immediate attention, call 911 or visit the emergency room at the nearest hospital.**

### 7.1 Health Insurance

Medical care is not paid for by the U.S. government and it is expensive if you do not have insurance. When you receive medical care, you are responsible for paying the bill, regardless of whether or not you have insurance and you are responsible for paying any cost that is not covered by your insurance company. A catastrophic illness or car accident, for example, could mean a financial crisis that would make it difficult to reach your academic goals and could put your family under great financial strain.

**You are required to have health insurance.** While studying in the U.S., health insurance that is specifically for international students is important. CMU offers international students an international student group insurance plan. You will be enrolled in the plan your first semester and will see a change in your CMU bill each semester.



Remember that medical insurance never covers 100 percent of all expenses. Read the policy carefully and if you do not understand it, ask someone at the insurance company to explain it to you.

See section 2.14 for details on the Student Wellness Center.

## Section 8: Immigration & Employment Regulations for F-1 Visa Holders

*Items in this section were modified from the following original source: Handbook for International Student Studying at the University of Colorado at Boulder.*

### 8.1 International Student Admissions and Programs Office

This office should be your primary resource for anything related to being an international student. The immigration laws are complex, detailed, frequently change, and are difficult to understand. You should not depend on friends, professors, community members, or family for this kind of information. You should make an appointment with the International Programs Office to get help regarding immigration, regulations, and maintaining status. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to know and abide by the regulation so get good advice!

F-1 students are governed by regulations of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), branches of the Department of Homeland Security.

### 8.2 Passport

For purposes of U.S. immigration law, your passport must be valid for at least six months from the current date at all times. When your passport needs to be renewed, promptly send it or take it to your consulate or embassy in the United States. Contact information and regulations for passport renewal for most foreign embassies and consulates located in the U.S. can be found online. The Registrar's Office can provide you with a letter stating that you are currently enrolled, called a "Verification of Enrollment" if it is necessary for the extension of your passport.

### 8.3 Visa

A visa (the foil in your passport), in conjunction with the Form I-20, gives you permission to apply for entry to the United States (please note that Canadians do not receive the foil visa in their passport). The visa itself has nothing to do with the period of time you

can stay in the United States. Do not confuse the validity of your visa with the length of your approved period of stay here.

The visa must be valid at the time of any entry to the United States; it does not have to be valid for you to remain in the United States. However, if your visa is close to expiring and you are returning to your home country, you must make an appointment with the U.S. embassy in your home country to have it renewed.

## 8.4 Permission to stay in the United States

Permission to stay in the U.S. is indicated on your I-94 Departure Record, which as of May of 2013, is now an electronic process. Generally students can remain in the U.S. until the degree of study is finished as long as you continue to be a full-time student and the program end date on the I-20 hasn't expired.

After finishing your studies, you may remain in the country for 60 days before returning home unless you have applied for Optional Practical Training (OPT) employment. See Section 9 for more information.

### **I-20**

Your I-20 is a record of your legal F-1 nonimmigrant status in the U.S. The I-20 is also used for re-entering the U.S. after a brief visit outside the country. Please be aware of all of the requirements before leaving the country.

Page 2 of the I-20 is used by the P/DSO (Primary/ Designated School Official) to record work authorization and travel signatures.

You must not let the end date on your I-20 expire before you are ready to leave the U.S. If you will not finish your studies by the date listed on your I-20 or have changed your field of study listed on your I-20, please contact The International Student Admissions and Programs Office IMMEDIATELY. You must get an authorized program extension at least 30 days before the expiration date in order to remain in status.

**NOTE:** Keep all your I-20s that you have been issued. They provide a history of your stay in the U.S. and you will need them if you apply for a Change of Status.

## 8.5 Maintaining Student Status

Your eligibility for opportunities such as employment, school transfers, and program changes depends on maintaining lawful status.

**To maintain your status, you must:**

- Remain enrolled full-time (minimum 12 credit hours for undergraduate students and 6 for graduate) during the fall and spring semesters at the institution you are authorized to attend. For undergraduates, a minimum of 9 credits each semester must be in-class (not web) credits. A minimum of 3 must be in-class for graduate students. Students who maintain status are permitted an annual vacation period (summer term) as long as you intend to enroll the following fall term.
- Hold a valid, current I-20.
- Maintain a passport that is valid for at least 6 months in the future (passport agreements between the U.S. and several countries allow for exceptions to this rule).
- Have appropriate authorization for any work and not be employed for more than 20 hours per week on campus while classes are in session.
- Notify the International Student Admissions and Programs Office if you change majors, degree levels, or want to transfer to a different school.
- Report your change of address within 10 days of moving. A PO Box is not an acceptable reportable address; it must be a physical address.

Exceptions to the full-time requirement are made under certain circumstances but you need to see The International Student Admissions and Programs Office for details and permission.

## 8.6 Reinstatement to Student Status

If you do not maintain lawful F-1 status because you did not follow all of the regulations, you do not hold a legal status in the United States. You may be eligible to apply for reinstatement or may need to depart the country. If eligible for reinstatement, expect to pay an expensive application fee, fill out a lengthy reinstatement application, and wait up to 90 days in uncertain status for an answer from USCIS. Please do not jeopardize your future by allowing yourself to fall out of proper immigration status.

### **Some reasons for which you may lose your status:**

- Fail to apply for an extension of a program of study.
- Fail to complete a transfer as required.
- Fail to pursue a full course of study (being under-enrolled without prior permission).
- Withdrawal from school without prior authorization.
- Work without authorization.
- Work more than 20 hours per week on campus while school is in session.
- Fail to report a change of address within 10 days of moving.

## 8.7 Academic Changes

International students, like domestic students, sometimes find themselves in unusual situations or develop new interests that require a change of major, degree program, or university. If you are maintaining status, you may make such changes as long as you follow immigration procedures. If you are unsure of these procedures, consult the International Student Admissions and Programs Office well in advance of any change.

## 8.8 Transferring from One Institution to Another

If you have maintained your student status, you are eligible to transfer to another college or university as long as you follow the proper procedures and the new institution is permitted by the USCIS to enroll F-1 students. Most institutions require similar documents for admission as Colorado Mesa University and these documents can take some time to gather. Please see the International Student Admissions and Programs Office for details on transferring out.

## 8.9 Change of Address

In accordance with immigration regulations, you must notify the International Student Admissions and Programs Office within 10 days of any changes in address. Be certain to keep your address and phone number updated in MAVzone as well. This will ensure that you receive mail and communication from CMU. A post office box is not an acceptable address.

## 8.10 Extension of Stay/Program of Study

F-1 students are granted permission to stay in the U.S. for "duration of status" (D/S). However, if you take longer to complete your program of study than the expected completion date on your I-20, you must apply for an extension of your program of study BEFORE your I-20 expires (see item #3 on your I-20). You will be asked to show the need for extension by meeting with your academic advisor and filling out a form. See the International Programs & Services Office for details on how to apply for an extension.

If you move from one education program to another (from bachelor's to master's), you must report the change to USCIS. The International Student Admissions and Programs Office will issue you a new I-20 showing the new educational level after you have submitted new bank statements, a Statement of Financial Support, and a letter of admissions from the new program. This must be done BEFORE the change in level occurs.

## 8.11 Changing Status

Under U.S. law, you cannot remain in the U.S. in F-1 student status unless you are enrolled full-time (or have been approved for OPT employment after graduation). Before you decide not to enroll in classes, learn everything you can about changing to another immigration status. If you violate the conditions of your current status, you will not be allowed to change to any other status.

As a first step, get the advice of the International Student Admissions and Programs Office. From there you may be referred to an immigration attorney. Changing to another immigration status usually takes months and you must file the application with USCIS while still in a valid status.

## 8.12 Travel within the U.S.

Please be sure to take all of your immigration documents with you when you travel. You do not need to have your I-20 signed before traveling within the United States but you should have your I-20 signed before leaving the country if it has been more than 6 months since the last signature.

## 8.13 Travel outside of the U.S.

Please be sure to take all of your immigration documents with you when you travel abroad and make sure that you have had your I-20 signed on the last page by the International Student Admissions and Programs Office within the last 6 months if possible (within the last 12 months is what's required by USCIS). See the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's "Know Before You Go" to make sure you are prepared and understand the regulations: <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/know-before-you-go>

### **Please verify the following before you leave (if you plan to re-enter the U.S.):**

- Get your I-20 signed by the International Student Admissions and Programs Office (travel signatures should be no older than 12 months but preferably no older than 6 months).
- Verify that the information on your I-20 is still accurate.
- Check to make sure that your passport is still valid.
- Check your U.S. visa (which is stamped inside your passport) to be sure that it is still valid. If it has expired or will soon in the future, you will have to get a new visa from the U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country (special circumstances apply if you are traveling to Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean and will not be gone for more than 30 days. Please consult the International Student Admissions and Programs Office for details).

- If you need to apply for a new visa, contact the U.S. embassy or consulate in advance to find out how long it will take to obtain a visa.
- It is suggested to take a Verification of Enrollment form from the Registrar's Office and a current CMU transcript.
- It is suggested to take evidence of funding for your education and expenses.

## 8.14 International Immigration

You are responsible for keeping your immigration documents in a safe place. NEVER throw away any expired documents (such as an I-20) or correspondence from USCIS. These documents are IMPORTANT because they make up a permanent record for all changes of status since your entry into the U.S., any program or school transfers, program extensions, and permissions to accept work or practical training.

## Section 9: Employment

*Items in this section were modified from the following original source: Handbook for International Student Studying at the University of Colorado at Boulder.*

Employment regulations for international students are limited by immigration regulations and are available only to students who have maintained their immigration status and academic standing. Before beginning any employment, you must apply for a Social Security card. This process usually takes 3-6 weeks. See the International Student Admissions and Programs Office for details on applying and to obtain a verification of eligibility letter. Please see section 5.7 for more information.

### 9.1 On-Campus Employment

On-campus employment is defined as being hired by a department/office of CMU and paid by CMU. If the employer is a private company which is physically located on CMU's campus but provides direct services for students (for example, SODEXO in the Dining Hall), this qualifies for on-campus employment as well.

Students maintaining status can work on campus a maximum of 20 hours per week during school and full-time (40 hours per week) during break. Please contact the International Student Admissions and Programs Office before beginning any on-campus employment.

Students can find listings of on-campus jobs at the Career Services Office and also on

MAVzone. Please note that international students do not qualify for work-study positions, only **Student Assist** positions.

## 9.2 Off-Campus Employment

**NOTE: Do not work off-campus unless you have authorization to do so.**

Working off campus requires special authorization and is available to students only in select situations. Consult the International Student Admissions and Programs Office to see if you qualify. Employment regulations are strictly enforced by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. **Students who work without proper authorization violate the conditions of their immigration status.**

### **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

Many students take part in internships and regular employment in their field of study. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as an "alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school." You qualify for CPT as long as it is "an integral part of an established curriculum." CPT must be directly related to your field of study and can be either part-time (20 hours or less per week) or full-time (over 20 hours per week). Please note that you are eligible to do CPT only after completing 2 semesters and you are able to register for at least one credit hour to account for the experience.

Please make an appointment with the International Student Admissions and Programs Office for information on applying and what type of employment constitutes CPT.

**DO NOT START WORKING UNTIL YOU HAVE A NEW I-20 AUTHORIZING YOUR CPT.**

12 months of full-time CPT makes you **ineligible** for OPT (see next section).

### **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

Students may apply for temporary employment through Optional Practical Training (OPT) while you are still pursuing your course of study (pre-completion) and/or after you have finished your degree (post-completion).

Optional Practical Training must be directly related to your degree of study. The total amount of time you may spend engaging in OPT is 12 months. To request permission to

engage in OPT after having completed your course of study, you must apply during your last semester, preferably within 60 days of completing your program. You **MUST** submit your application while you are still in the United States. You are not eligible to apply for OPT if you have already graduated and have left the United States or if you have completed 12 months of full-time CPT.

**You must have an EAD card (Employment Authorization Document) in your possession before beginning work.**

### **Severe Economic Hardship Employment**

Occasionally students experience an unforeseen financial difficulty after they have begun their studies at CMU. A student facing such circumstances may be eligible for employment due to Severe Economic Hardship. This requires an application and processing fee to USCIS. If you are having extreme and unexpected financial difficulties, talk to the International Student Admissions and Programs Office to determine if you are eligible for the special work permission.

## **Section 10: Living the American Life**

*This section was modified from the following original sources: Handbook for International Student Studying at the University of Colorado at Boulder, International Handbook- Georgia State University, Handbook of International Students: University of Hawai'i at Manoa, and International Students Handbook of University of Wisconsin-Madison.*

Please keep in mind that the information in this section applies to the majority of Americans but as with any culture, there are many differences among individuals.

### **10.1 Individualism**

The United States was founded by people who valued independence. That independent spirit is still evident in this culture today. Many people from the U.S. believe that they are responsible for their own destinies. Being self-reliant is considered more important than relying on family and friends. In the U.S. it is believed that individuals reach maturity at age 18 and should be ready to make independent decisions. Privacy is valued for many of the same reasons. Even among members of a family, issues such as money, marriage, and career decisions may not be discussed out of respect for a person's privacy.

### **10.2 Work Ethic**

"He's a hard worker," or "She gets the job done." These expressions convey the typical American's admiration for a person who approaches a task conscientiously and persistently, seeing it through to a successful conclusion. People from the United States



tend to value being busy, and they often make lists of what they hope to accomplish in a day. Beyond that, they tend to believe they should be doing something most of the time, or at least making plans and arrangements for doing something later. People in the U.S. walk quickly, talk quickly and sometimes pay little attention to formal manners and politeness. They want to “get down to business” rather than make polite conversation. They don’t mean to be rude, they just have a lot to do (or so they think).

## 10.3 Timeliness

For Americans, time is a “resource” that, like water or coal, can be used well or poorly. “Time is money” is a common phrase. Americans are trained to see things as constructive and future-oriented. They admire a “well-organized” person, one who has a written list of things to do and a schedule for them. In the U.S., punctuality is considered very important. If someone is expecting you at a certain time and you know you will be late or unable to make the appointment, it is important to let the person know.

## 10.4 Names

First or given names are used in the U.S. more frequently than anywhere else. The last name is the family name. If someone has a title like “Professor,” “Doctor,” “President” etc. it is correct to use that title and the person’s last or family name. If you don’t know how to address someone you can follow these general rules:

- Address people of your own approximate age and status by their first name.
- If the person is older use Mr. or Ms. and the last name. Ask them “What can I call you?” or “How should I address you?”
- If someone appears uncertain about how to address you, say, “You can call me...”

Be patient with people in terms of helping them pronounce your name. Just like some sounds are new to you, there will be sounds that are new to others. When writing your signature, get in the habit of using your official name. Signing abbreviations of your name can be confusing. Some international students may use nicknames because people have trouble pronouncing their birth names. Being called by a nickname can indicate you are viewed with respect and affection.

## 10.5 Greetings and Invitations

A “hi” (less formal) or “hello”, “good morning” or “good evening” (a little more formal) are standard greetings. People say, “Hi!”/“How are you?” or slang “What’s up?”/“How’s it going?” and then may not wait for a response. This is more of a greeting than a question. You can acknowledge them by simply waving or responding with a kind “Hello” or “I’m fine, thanks.” People usually shake hands when meeting for the first time

and it is not necessary to shake hands with people you already know. If it is inappropriate in your culture to shake hands, do not feel like you are obligated to do so. If someone you know wants to “hang out” and you accept, they are expecting you to show up, but will understand if you cancel. If you can’t make the scheduled arrangement just let the person know ahead of time. It is considered impolite to call and cancel just a few hours before. If you have been invited to something and you don’t want to go, just politely decline at the time of the invite or well ahead of the event.

## 10.6 Gender Roles, Friendship and Dating

In the U.S. gender roles are totally flexible. It is common for both men and women to work outside the home, have equality in their relationships, and share the responsibility of raising children. If you come from a society where roles are clearly defined by gender, this might take some getting used to. In the U.S. there is a growing community of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender Americans. This community of people has become more visible and accepted. Remember to treat the people you meet with the same respect and openness that you want to be treated with.

American students generally have a group of close friends - people they trust, confide in, and share good times and bad times with. Classmates and colleagues are casual friends, or acquaintances. Initially, you will have to make an effort to meet people. You may find that you have more in common with other international students. Close friendships are not formed quickly. It may take a year or two to feel like you have made close friends. Residence halls are a good place to make new friends, along with clubs, on campus activities, and sporting events. See Section 4 for ways to get involved on campus.

If you like someone, tell him or her. Invite them to have coffee or dinner with you sometime. It is ok to be direct in these cases. But don’t worry, even Americans find this difficult. Couples “go out” or visit each other un-chaperoned and may even consider it a “date” to study together. Be safe and don’t go out alone with a person you just met. Instead, meet in a public area where other people are around you. If you don’t like someone, you can simply decline but remember to be polite. Dating doesn’t necessarily imply a long-term emotional commitment or sexual involvement. If you find that you are in a relationship that you no longer want to be in, tell the other person directly what you do/don’t want.

## 10.7 Sexual Harassment & Sexual Assault

In the U.S. sexual harassment and stalking laws legally protect all individuals –including citizens, residents, and visitors – from being victims of sexual and other harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual assault is any sexual contact made without consent. Under U.S. law, individuals have the right to stop sexual contact at any time. This means that when a person says “no” to any type of sexual contact, it violates the law if the partner attempts to emotionally or verbally coerce or physically force that person into continuing the sexual contact.

## 10.8 Alcohol, Smoking, and Illegal Drugs

### **Alcohol -**

In Colorado, it is illegal to purchase or drink alcohol, including beer and wine, until you are 21 years old. It is also against the law to buy alcohol for someone under the age of 21. Being intoxicated in public is not acceptable behavior. Colorado has an “open container” law, which means you cannot be on public streets with an open bottle or can of alcohol. It is illegal to drive drunk. If you are caught, you may have to pay a fine, serve time in jail, or put yourself in a position to be deported. If you are involved in an accident while intoxicated, you could hurt or kill yourself or someone else.

### **Tobacco -**

Students may not smoke or use smokeless tobacco in campus residence or apartments, to including balconies. The State of Colorado has a smoke free building policy and all facilities at Colorado Mesa University are tobacco free. The only place you may smoke is in designated smoking areas and more than forty feet away from residence halls and apartments. If you are a guest in someone’s home, assume that you must go outside to smoke. You must be older than 21 years to purchase tobacco products.

### **Marijuana -**

The possession of marijuana in any form is not allowed on campus. Although the sale and use of marijuana is legal for those over 21 years of age in the state of Colorado, it is NOT allowed on campus. Colorado Mesa University is a substance- free campus and follows federal laws; although marijuana use is legal in Colorado, it remains illegal at the federal level. As an international student under the purview of federal immigration regulations, marijuana use off campus, even if of age, is a risky and unwise choice.

### **Illegal Drugs -**

The manufacture, use, possession, or sale of illegal drugs or narcotics like amphetamines, hallucinogens, barbiturates, cocaine, heroin, and a whole host of others,

are serious offenses under Colorado law and under immigration law. If you are caught dealing or using illegal drugs, you will be in serious trouble with the law and the possibility of prison or deportation is very likely.

**If you live on campus, please remember that Colorado Mesa University is a “dry” campus which means no alcohol or drugs of any kind is allowed on campus, including residence halls.**

**Please note- there is an on-campus bar called The Point where alcohol is served but can only be consumed onsite. Sporting events also serve alcohol, which is only to be consumed at the regulated event.**

**More information can be found in the Maverick Guide:**

<https://www.coloradomesa.edu/student-services/documents/MaverickGuide.pdf>

## 10.9 U.S. Holidays

January 1 – New Year’s Day. Beginning on the evening of December 31, Americans celebrate the New Year.

Third Monday in January – Martin Luther King Jr. Day. This holiday celebrates the life of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., a leader of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement.

Third Monday in February – President’s Day. This is a day to remember past U.S. presidents George Washington, the first U.S. president, and Abraham Lincoln, the 16<sup>th</sup> president who led the country during the Civil War and is credited with abolishing slavery. Both were born in this month.

February 14 – Valentine’s Day. This holiday is a celebration of love and romance. Valentine cards, candy, or gifts are exchanged.

March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day. Named for the patron saint of Ireland, this day is often celebrated with parades and parties. Many people wear green clothing and put up decorations even if they’re not of Irish decent. If you do not wear green on this day, classmates may pinch you as this is the tradition.

Springtime (date varies) – Easter. This is a traditional Christian holiday which also includes the beginning of spring. Children generally decorate Easter eggs and are visited by the Easter bunny.

Last Monday in May – Memorial Day. This holiday is a time that Americans remember all of those Americans who died in war. A traditional weekend to get together with friends and family for a picnic or barbeque.

July 4 – Independence Day. On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was signed. It was a document the United States used to declare its independence from England. Americans celebrate this holiday with picnics and fireworks.

First Monday in September – Labor Day. This holiday recognizes the efforts of American workers. A traditional weekend to get together with friends and family for a picnic or barbeque.

October 31 – Halloween. People often celebrate this holiday by wearing costumes and carving faces on pumpkins. Children dress up in costumes and go door-to-door in their neighborhoods (to homes with an outdoor light on) and say “trick-or-treat” to receive candy.

Last Thursday in November – Thanksgiving. According to legend, the first European settlers of the United States gave thanks for their first harvest season by eating a feast with Native Americans. This is a traditional time for families and friends to eat a big turkey dinner together.

December 25 – Christmas Day. This holiday is traditionally a Christian holiday, marked by religious celebrations. It is also a time for people to exchange gifts, decorate homes, and attend gatherings and parties for the few weeks preceding December 25.

## 10.10 Measurement Equivalents

### **Weight**

1 Kilogram = 2.2 U.S. pounds

454 grams = 1 U.S. pound = 16 ounces

100 grams = 3.5 ounces

28.3 grams = 1 ounce

### **Capacity**

1 liter = 4.22 U.S. cups

1 U.S. liquid gallon = 3.8 liters

1 U.S. liquid quart = .94 liters

1 U.S. fluid ounce = 29.57 milliliters

**Length**

1 meter = 1.0936 yards = 3.3 feet

100 centimeters = 1 meter

91.5 centimeters = 1 yard

30.5 centimeters = 1 foot

2.54 centimeters = 1 inch

1 centimeter = .3937 inch (approx. 3/8 inch)

1 kilometer = .62137 mile (approx. 5/8 mile)

1.6093 kilometer = 1 mile

1 hectare = 2.47 acres

1.4 hectares = 1 acre

## 10.11 Adjusting to Culture Shock

Culture shock is a form of stress experienced by people facing the demands of living in a new culture without yet having developed the necessary coping skills. This information was taken from a presentation by Dr. Nikki Jones, a psychology professor at CMU.

**Why it occurs:**

- Difficulty understanding and lack of familiarity with the verbal and nonverbal communications of the host culture
- Difficulty in understanding the new culture's customs and value systems
- Difficulty in knowing what is socially appropriate and what is not
- Disruptions of people's routines, which may range from waking up, eating breakfast, and going to work. This creates a greater level of anxiety and frustration.

**What does it look like?**

- Negative emotions
- Feeling incompetent
- Lack of confidence and motivation
- Wanting to return home
- Feeling angry toward native people
- Withdrawal
- Physical complaints (difficulty sleeping, tiredness, mental fatigue, headaches, stomach pains, neck and back pains)

### **Five Stages of Culture Shock:**

1. Excitement or Initial Euphoria – excitement and fascination with the new culture, which can last a few days to several months
2. Crisis or disenchantment – problems with transportation, unfamiliar foods, etc. seem overwhelming. Emotions of homesickness, irritation, anger, confusing, resentment, helplessness, and depression occur
3. Adjustment – begin to accept the new culture or you return home. Begin to try new foods and make adjustments in behavior. Begin to see the humor in situations and realize that a change in attitude toward the host culture will make your stay abroad more rewarding.
4. Acceptance – begin to feel at home in the U.S. Become involved in activities and cultivate friendships among native students, and feel comfortable in social situations with natives. You learn the language and may adopt the new culture's style of doing things. You even learn to enjoy some customs that you will miss when you return to your country.
5. Reentry – return home

### **Obvious things that contribute to culture shock:**

- Language
- Climate
- Food
- Religion (hard to find a place of worship)
- Educational system
- Standards of cleanliness
- Attitudes toward women
- Housing
- Clothing/Business dress
- Financial problems

### **Not obvious things that contribute to culture shock:**

- Verbal communication
- Facial expression
- Body language
- Tone of voice
- Values and ethical standards
- How students relate to teachers
- How people make decisions

- How people spend their leisure time
- How people resolve conflicts
- How people express feelings and emotions

**Tips for coping with culture shock:**

- Seek social support and ask for help! Talk to someone who can help you with the problem you are having, ask a friend for advice, come talk to the International Student Admissions and Programs Office, seek help at Student Services, talk to your RA if you live on campus, utilize our free counseling services, etc.
- Positive Problem Solving – look for the positive in the situation, treat your culture shock as a challenge, rediscover what is important about your experience, find out as much as you can about what you are experiencing, and live one day at a time.
- Be aware of how your thoughts impact your feelings – if you have negative thoughts you will begin to feel badly about your experience. Understand that you will have tough times in the beginning (everyone does) but they will get better.
- Change your thoughts – look for the positive in the situation, don't dwell on the negative, catch yourself having negative thoughts and work to challenge them.
- Normalize your feelings of frustration, confusion, and anxiety.
- Be open-minded and tolerant/accepting of unfamiliar aspects concerning the culture.
- Consult resources or people about cultural values or ethical standards.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Remind yourself this is a cross-cultural experience, you need to learn some of the signs and symbols from the foreign culture, be honest with others about what you don't understand and ask questions when you need to.





# **WELCOME TO CMU!**