



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

For Applicant and Continuing Students

# International Student Handbook

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## Welcome to Kentucky Christian University

*The International Student Handbook (ISH)* has been prepared in an attempt to provide you with the information you will need to begin/continue your studies at Kentucky Christian University and to explain those situations most frequently encountered by KCU's international students. Please take the time to read the handbook very carefully.

Designated staff members advise international students and scholars on a wide range of topics that include immigration matters, social and cultural differences, financial matters, and personal concerns. We strive to help students and scholars adjust quickly to life in the United States.

Contact information for the Coordinator of Special Services for Students is located on the back cover of this handbook. Whenever you have a question or concern, we encourage you to make an appointment whenever possible. (If your question is about immigration, please make sure to bring your passport).

**IMPORTANT: There are other University rules and regulations must be followed. Please consult the *Kentucky Christian University Student Handbook* for those rules and regulations.**

If your plans change and you decide not to attend Kentucky Christian University, you are required by Immigration and Naturalization regulations to return the Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20) to the KCU Admissions Office.

If you want more information about Kentucky Christian University, we encourage you to visit our homepage at [www.KCU.edu](http://www.KCU.edu).

Again, welcome to KCU and best wishes as you learn and grow spiritually, academically and socially throughout the year.

### FIRST THINGS FIRST: THINGS TO DO BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN

Your first weeks at KCU are very important and very busy. There are a number of things you **must** do before classes begin. The following list will help you organize your time and remember what must be done:

1. **Check in with the Coordinator of Special Services for Students (CSSS).** Bring all your immigration documents with you (Passport; I-20; I-94 Card). **ALL STUDENTS MUST REPORT IN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** (The office location is listed on the back of this handbook).
2. **Attend the International Student Orientation Program.** The CSSS will advise you of the designated time and place for this meeting.
3. **Buy University Student Health Insurance (mandatory for all international students).** You will purchase this insurance during registration.
4. **Meet with your academic advisor.** You will be assigned an academic adviser from the department in which you are majoring. Your adviser will help you plan your academic program, select courses, and advise you on other important academic issues.
5. **Register for classes.** New and returning students have scheduled times for registration.

6. **Attend all mandatory student meetings.** New international students must follow the Welcome Weekend schedule of events and attend all listed events (Fall Semester). Returning international students must follow the Returning Students schedule and attend all listed events (Fall Semester).

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **I-20 A/B: Immigration and Naturalization Form (Certificate of Eligibility) for F-1 Visa.**

### Uses for the I-20 A/B:

1. To obtain an F-1 Visa from American Embassy/Consulate in your home country.
2. To enter the country for the first time.
3. To re-enter after a short visit outside the United States.
4. To transfer to another school.
5. To extend expected graduation date.

- **I-94: Arrival/Departure Record**

The I-94 is the small white card in your passport on which the visa classification and the expiration date of your authorized stay is written when you enter the United States.

**All students should have F-1 written as the visa classification.**

D/S stands for *duration of status*, which means the period during which the student is pursuing a full course of study, plus one year for practical training, and 60 days in which to depart the country.

### **PASSPORT:**

A passport is your country's identification of you as a citizen. Your passport must remain valid at all times. It is not allowed to expire. You may renew it by contacting your embassy/Consulate within the United States.

### **VISA: Stamped Page in Passport**

A visa normally is a stamp placed in your passport by an official of the United States (or the country you are entering) permitting your entry. You must have a valid visa to enter the United States. However, unlike a passport, once in the U.S., a visa is allowed to expire.

## IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS

### **Applying for a Student Visa**

Upon receipt of your Certificate of Eligibility (I-20) you will need to make an appointment with the American Consulate or Embassy having jurisdiction over your place of permanent residence. Although you may apply at any U.S. consular office abroad, it may be more difficult to qualify for the visa outside the country of permanent residence.

Before you apply for the visa, you should understand the process and the rules governing visas. Many visa applications are denied. In some countries, **most** applications are denied. It is often because the student did not know the rules or was not prepared. We do not want this to happen to you. Please read what follows very carefully.

The consular officer will take a very legalistic view. In the United States, it is considered important to be **impersonal** when administering laws. This is considered rude or improper in many countries, but not in the

U.S., where the ideal is to apply laws equally to all regardless of status or sex. Do not try to negotiate or discuss personal matters.

Be sure that your passport is valid at least 6 months beyond the date you expect to depart the United States.

The most important rule may seem strange to you. The consular officer who makes the decision on your visa application is required to think of you as someone who plans to come to the U.S. permanently and you must prove that you intend to return to your country after completing studies. U.S. law very clearly states that F and J visas may be given only to persons who intend to remain in the U.S. temporarily. This rule is the number one reason for denials of student visa applications.

The other important rules are (1) you must have a definite academic or professional objective. You must know what you are going to study and where it will lead. Be ready to say what you want to study and what kind of career it will prepare you for in your home country. Be prepared to explain why it is better for you to study in the U.S. than at home; (2) you must be qualified for the program of study; (3) you must be definite about your choice of schools. If you do not seem certain that you want to attend KCU, you will not get a visa; and (4) you must be adequately financed and have documents to prove it. You may not plan to use employment as a means of support while you are in the United States.

U.S. Government officials are convinced more easily by written documents than by spoken statements. When possible, have papers to show your connections to your home country. If your family owns property, take the deeds. If you have a brother or sister who studied in the United States and then returned home, take a copy of the brother or sister's diploma and a statement from an employer showing that they have returned home. If possible, show that an individual or company in your home country will give you a job when you return. If you cannot get a **promise** of a job, try to get a letter saying that you will be **considered** for a job, or that the company needs people with the kind of education you are coming to the United States to receive. With papers, show ties to your home country. If your family owns a business, take letters from a bank, describing the business, to the visa interview with you. Do not emphasize any ties you may have to the United States or to family members in the United States. Your visa application is stronger and better if at least part of your financial support comes from your home country, even if most of it comes from the United States.

Do not speak of working in the United States unless employment is authorized on your Form I-20. Though limited work permission is possible for F-1 status, employment **is not guaranteed** and cannot be used as part of your financial support for visa purposes.

Read your Form I-20. Some of the rules you must obey are printed on page 2. Be aware of these rules – especially the requirements that you study full-time. Look at the date entered in item #5 for reporting to the school. You must apply for the visa in time to reach the school no later than that date.

There is no time limit on how soon you can apply for the student visa. The sooner you apply the better. Consular offices get extremely busy during the late summer months (July, August, and September).

## **Maintaining Your Status**

**The responsibility for maintaining your immigration status lies with you. There are several important things you must do to maintain status:**

1. **Keep your passport valid!** Your passport must be valid for a minimum of 6 months past your expected completion date at all times. (For example; if your I-20 expires on December 31, 2002, your passport

should be valid until June 30 of the following year). Renewal applications must be made with Embassy or Consulate of the country issuing the passport. You will need a certification of student status from KCU (this can be obtained from the Coordinator of Special Services for Students (CSSS). Addresses of embassies and consulates are available from the Coordinator of Special Services for Students (CSSS).

2. **Maintain full-time enrollment and normal progress towards your degree.** Twelve credit hours per semester is a full course load.
3. **Do not work off-campus without INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) approval.** You are not eligible to work off-campus until you have been a full-time student for at least one academic year. At that point you may be eligible provided there is a legitimate “economic necessity”. You have to make an appointment with the Coordinator of Special Services for Students (CSSS) to discuss your eligibility. Please know that INS approves very few students for off-campus employment. Therefore, it is important that you have enough financial support to fund your entire stay at Kentucky Christian University.
4. **Do not work more than 20 hours per week on campus.** As an international student the only employment you are permitted to engage in during your first year of study is on-campus employment (if available). You are not permitted to work more than 20 hours per week while school is in session. Working more than 20 hours per week is a violation of your student status and could lead to any number of INS penalties including deportation. During summer and other breaks there is no hour limitation.
5. **Notify INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) of transfer to another school or a change in educational program.** Please see the Coordinator of Special Services for Students if you plan to transfer to another school. Your new school will want certification that you have been in proper student status and are eligible to transfer. Most schools will have a transfer form of some sort to be completed by the original school. You must report to the international office of your new school within 15 days of the beginning of classes to have your transfer processed.
6. **Obtain extensions, as needed, for permission to stay in the United States.** INS regulations state that F-1 students may stay in the United States for duration of an educational program or series of educational programs (for example, from an undergraduate degree through a master’s degree) plus the duration of optional practical training and then an additional 60 days. However, students who do not complete the stated educational program within the time indicated on their I-20 form must request a program extension prior to the completion date. Those who do not request a program extension are out of status and must be reinstated by the INS. There are new laws that severely penalize non-immigrants who violate their status through overstays. **Please make sure your I-20 does not expire.**

### **Application for a Social Security Number**

Students must have a social security number to obtain money from an assistantship, for employment on and off campus, and for filing the annual Federal Income Tax return. Upon arrival in the United States each student will be issued KCU identification number. This is used to register for classes, obtain a Kentucky Christian University I.D., etc.

During the international student orientation you will be instructed on how to apply for a permanent social security number. You will need your passport, I-94, I-20, and letter from the CSSS office. Your new social security number will be sent to you by mail.

When you receive the new number **YOU MUST REPORT IT TO THE CSSS AND TO THE KCU REGISTRAR.**

## I-94 Entry Permit

You must be in possession of your I-94 card at all times. If you lose it, you must complete an application form (I-102), which can be obtained from the CSSS or the INS. A fee of \$ 85.00 must be submitted with application. After details of your entry are verified, a new I-94 will be mailed to you.

## Visa Expiration/Renewal

This procedure is only necessary when you intend to travel outside the United States and your visa is expired or if you have violated your status since entering the United States. To renew your visa you will need a valid passport, a properly executed I-20, proof of financial support and/or letter of certification. You must visit the American Consulate/Embassy Office in the country you are visiting in order to get the renewal date issued. A student visa cannot be renewed in the United States. If you are traveling in Canada, Mexico or other contiguous U.S. territories for less than 30 days, you do not need to get your visa renewed.

## Changing Programs

Anytime you change majors (i.e., Teacher Ed to Social Work), or degree levels (i.e. Bachelor's to Master's) you must obtain a new I-20. To do so you will need to meet with the CSSS staff member and bring the following documents: (1) a copy of the application to the new program; (2) a letter of acceptance to the new program; and (3) proof of financial support for the new program. You must do so no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> day after starting the new program.

## Traveling Outside the United States

F-1 visa holders need the following documents to re-enter the United States after a temporary absence:

1. Page 4 of form I-20 with proper endorsement.
2. A valid passport and U.S. visa.
3. Verification of adequate financial support.
4. Verification of enrollment.

**NOTE:** a new I-20 is required only if there has been a change in you field of study, degree level, in the source or amount of funding or if all the endorsement lines on page 4 are complete. Requests for a new I-20 or for a signature on page 4 must be made **at least one week (7 days) before your planned departure.**

## Optional Practical Training/Academic Training

Optional practical training/academic training is an opportunity to gain work experience to complement your academic program. F-1 students are entitled to one year of practical training. When it is time for you to do practical/academic training, you need to make an appointment with the CSSS staff member to get the necessary paperwork processed. F-1 students must bring your I-20, a letter from your department or advisor saying that you have completed all of your course work/degree requirements, your passport, and a completed form I-538 and I-765. **You must apply for optional practical training no more than 120 days prior to and no later than 60 days after your graduation or INS will not authorize your practical training.**

Optional practical training for F-1 students falls into four categories: (1) during the student's annual vacation and at other times when school is not in session if the student is eligible, and intends to register for the next semester; (2) while school is in session provided that optional practical training does not exceed 20 hours per week; (3) full-time after completion of all course requirements for the degree, and (4)

full-time after completion of the course of study. Optional practical training under the first three options would occur before completion of a course of study, while the last option would occur following completion of a course of study. Students must complete one full academic year of study before being eligible for optional practical training.

A student working full-time in optional practical training after completion of studies may attend school (full-time or part-time) provided practical training is the primary focus. Optional practical training after completion of studies may not be part-time.

### **Curricular Practical Training**

F-1 students who have co-ops or internships as part of their degree requirement may be authorized for **curricular practical training**. In addition, graduate students may be authorized for curricular practical training if the employment is an integral part of a thesis or dissertation. Again, after discussing with your department or advisor, you need to make an appointment with the CSSS staff member to get the paperwork processed. Curricular practical training must be part of your degree requirement. You are not limited in the amount of curricular practical training you can use. However, if you use 12 months or more of curricular practical training on a full-time basis, you are not entitled to any optional practical training after you graduate.

### **A FEW WORDS OF ADVICE**

1. I-20 requests submitted to the CSSS require at least three business days to process. Plan accordingly!
2. Bring your passport and all relevant immigration documents (I-20, passport, I-94) and financial documents when you come to the CSSS with any requests.
3. Always see the CSSS or the Registrar before you consider contacting the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The INS is a very busy agency and the officer answering your call may not have the time required to fully understand your problem. If necessary, the CSSS can contact the INS for you.
4. If at any time you are uncertain about status, check with the CSSS immediately. The CSSS is here to help you!

**SPECIAL ATTENTION:** All Immigration regulations set forth in the *International Student Handbook* are subject to change.

## **HEALTH CARE ISSUES**

### **Student Health Insurance**

All international students are required to carry the KCU Student Health Insurance policy. Insurance fees will be included on your bill. Students are responsible for paying this fee each semester. Medical expenses that are not covered by the student insurance policy (e.g. deductibles, co-pays, noninsured services, dental services, prescriptions) are the responsibility of the international student and their sponsor.

### **Compulsory Health Screening**

All international students are required to have the following:

1. Measles, mumps and rubella vaccinations – 2 rounds/doses, the first before 2 years of age and the second after 6 years of age;
2. A tetanus-diphtheria booster within the past 10 year (prior to enrollment);
3. A chest x-ray within one year of enrollment to check for tuberculosis.

These three health screenings are to be completed before registration. If that is not possible, the international student has 15 days from registration to complete these screenings. Contact the Campus Nurse at registration or the first day of classes to make arrangements for these screenings to be scheduled.

### **Campus Health Center**

If you have a health question or problem, you will want to go to the Campus Nurse located in the McKenzie Student Life Center.

### **TIPS ON TRAVEL**

1. Travel with your passport, visa, and I-20 in your carry-on luggage. You will go through inspection at the port of entry before you claim your checked baggage.
2. Your sponsor should be willing to meet you at the airport. In the event that your sponsor cannot make those arrangements, your sponsor must contact the Coordinator of Special Services for Students to make arrangement to be met at one of the four airports within a reasonable driving distance from KCU: Cincinnati, Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, Louisville, Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, or Huntington, West Virginia.
3. Keep important items such as prescription eyeglasses, medications, etc. with you in your carry-on luggage.
4. To avoid unnecessary delays, make sure your ticket is confirmed at least one month prior to your departure.
5. You should work with your sponsor every step of the way regarding flights, travel to campus, etc.
6. Shop around for ticket prices and make sure to check for baggage regulations before deciding what airline to take to the U.S.
7. Arrive at the airport at the appropriate time before the intended flight.
8. Make sure your schedule allows sufficient time for connecting flights.
9. Carry sufficient money for unexpected expenses or events such as missing your flight. You may also want to carry an extra change of clothing in you carry-on luggage in case of unexpected delays.
10. Find out from the bank how much cash (American Dollars) you can carry. The amount of cash you carry will depend on your country's exchange control regulations, but avoid carrying a lot of cash with you. It is safer to carry Traveler's Checks.

All articles brought into the United States, including gifts for other persons, must be declared to U.S. Customs at the time you enter. If all the articles you have to declare are entitled to free entry under the exemptions allowed, you need not fill in the reverse side of the *declaration form*. Instead, you will orally declare articles brought with you to the Customs Inspector. If the inspector deems it necessary, you may be required to make a written declaration and list articles brought with you.

Personal effects (e.g., wearing apparel; articles of personal adornment; toilet articles; and photographic equipment) may be brought in free of duty and internal revenue tax, if for personal use and not for others or for sale.

In addition, articles up to \$100 in total value for use as bona fide gifts to other persons may be brought in free of duty and tax, if you will be in the United States for at least 72 hours and have not claimed this gift exemption in the past 6 months.

## KCU STUDENT ID

A Kentucky Christian University student identification card is required to check books out of the library, to use certain facilities or equipment, to attend University athletic events, to eat in the cafeteria, and to record your chapel attendance. Carry your KCU student ID card with you at all times! (The cost to replace a lost student ID is \$10.00.)

## TAXES

All international students are required to complete an income tax return annually. For most of you, this will mean completing the form 1040NR-EZ (U.S. Nonresident Alien Income Tax Return) and a form 8843. You are required to file an income tax return even if you have no income from U.S. sources, or if your income is exempt from U.S. taxes due to treaties between the U.S. and your home country.

The U.S. tax system encompasses many different types of taxes (e.g., income tax, Social Security tax, sales tax, and personal property tax) and three layers of taxation (local, state, and federal). You have obligations at several levels.

Sources of U.S. income may include on-campus employment, scholarships, graduate assistantships, practical or academic training and any compensation received for labor. Foreign students do not have to pay taxes on interest paid to them by U.S. banks.

Note that "income" is not limited to wages paid to you in cash, but also includes that portion of your scholarship or assistantship that is applied to your housing and meal expenses. The portion applied to your tuition fees, books, and supplies is not counted as income. The CSSS office will help you make these distinctions. Be sure to inquire about the applicability of any tax treaty that might exist between your country and the United States at the CSSS office.

## IMPORTANT DATES

**August 1:** Pre-payment of all fall semester charges must be wired to campus no later than August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**August 1:** All paperwork required for admission and registration to Kentucky Christian University must be submitted prior to August 1<sup>st</sup>. These include but are not limited to:

- International application (including student essay)
- High School and college transcripts
- 3 personal references
- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), ACT or SAT score
- Financial Certification form (and accompanying bank documents)
- Affidavit of Sponsorship (and accompanying bank documents)
- KCU Housing Form
- KCU Student Health Information, Physical & Immunization Form

**October 15:** Payment for the spring semester paid no later than October 15<sup>th</sup> for returning students.

**December 15:** For new spring semester students pre-payment for all semester charges must be wired to campus no later than December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**April 15:** The last day on which residents and nonresidents who have earned wages from U.S. sources may file their U.S. federal income-tax returns.

**June 15:** The last day on which nonresident students who have no wage income from U.S. sources may file their income tax returns.

## IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

**519: *U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens*,** an IRS publication, essential for individuals from nations having tax treaties with the United States.

**8843: *Statement for Exempt Individuals and Individuals with a Medical Condition*.** This one-page document must be completed and returned with the 1040NR and 1040NR-EZ. It verifies nonresident alien tax status.

**1040NR: *U.S. Nonresident Alien Income Tax Return*,** the longer version of the return completed by many nonresidents. This form is distinct from the 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ filed by residents for tax purposes. It is not interchangeable with those forms. The IRS publishes an instruction booklet to accompany the form.

**1040NR-EZ: *U.S. Income Tax Return for Certain Nonresident Aliens with No Dependents*,** a simplified version of the 1040NR. Most F-1 students may file the 1040NR-EZ. The IRS publishes an instruction booklet for this form.

**W-2: *Wage and Tax Statement*.** A form issued annually by employers (normally during the month of January). Copies of the W-2 must be filed with federal, state, and local tax returns.

**W-4: *Employees Withholding Allowance Certificate*.** A form completed by employees at the time of hire to indicate how much tax is to be withheld from the paycheck.

**1042S: *Foreign Persons U.S. Source Income Subject to Withholding*.** A form used to report total scholarship/fellowship payments, income tax withheld and other information relating to grant payments.

**W-8BEN: *Certificate of Foreign Status of Beneficial Owner for United States Tax Withholding*.** Typically used by universities for students who have received “unqualified scholarships”.

The IRS provides information through free publications and a telephone information line. The phone number of general tax information is 1-800-829-1040 (ask for Technical Division). To order any of the federal publications or forms mentioned here, contact the IRS Tax Forms and Publications division at 1-800-820-3676.

## ACADEMIC ISSUES

### TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

Students / Applicants must submit a TOEFL score of at least 500 (Paper-based) or 173 (Computer-based).

#### The Paper-Based TOEFL measures:

- Listening Comprehension – the ability to understand spoken English.
- Structure and Written Expression – the ability to recognize written English.
- Reading Comprehension – the ability to recognize written English.

#### The Computer-Based TOEFL measures:

- Listening – the ability to understand English as spoken in America.
- Structure – the ability to recognize language that is appropriate standard written English.
- Reading – the ability to understand short passages that are single topic and style to academic texts used in North American colleges and universities.
- Writing – the ability to write in English on an assigned topic.

In the absence of a TOEFL score, one of the following is required:

1. Completion of two years of English study at the postsecondary level.
  - Grade equivalency minimum score “C”
2. The “A” Level English exam, short for “Advanced Level-General Certificates of Education.”
  - In an academic context, examinations are aimed to determine the ability of a student and are usually written although some may be practical or have practical components and vary greatly in structure, content, and difficulty depending on the subject.
  - In some cases a diploma is received by those who pass the examination.
  - “A”-Levels are graded from A to E along with a fail grade.
  - Students/Applicants must show proficiency and earn a grade not less than “C”.
3. A standardized test score (*English version*)
  - ACT – minimum score: 17
  - SAT – minimum score: 810

### **Cultural Differences in the Classroom**

In many cultures, there is a great difference in status between students and professors. Students show their respect for their professor by listening quietly. They do no question what the professor says. In the United States, it is quite acceptable for students to ask questions and to engage in discussions with the professor. This is not disrespectful. In fact, professors view participation in class discussions as a sign of interest in the subject matter.

There are a few rules students are expected to observe. **It is very important to come to class on time.** If you are late, enter quietly and sit down. If you know that you will have to miss one or more classes, let your professor know ahead of time. Make sure you do not miss any assignments.

Your professors will inform you of their office hours and when and how they can be reached. If you have a problem with the material presented in class, do not hesitate to see the professor during office hours and ask for help. Even if you do not have a problem, it is a good idea to drop in and talk to your professor. It gives both of you a chance to get to know each other. This may be particularly important if you have trouble understanding the professor, or he or she has trouble understanding you. Often, all it takes is a little time to get used to the other person’s style of speaking.

You professor will specify “due dates” for various assignments. These dates are quite firm, and you must hand in you assignment by that date in order to get full credit. If you know that you cannot meet a deadline for an important reason, contact your professor ahead of time and try to workout an arrangement that is mutually agreeable.

One thing you need to know about studying in the United States is that for some, speaking and learning in English is sometimes exhausting and frustrating, particularly in the beginning. International students have to spend much more time than their American counterparts to complete the same assignments. This can lead to stress and a feeling of inferiority.

The most important thing you can do to improve your level of success in the classroom is to improve your English skills. **Your English will not improve if the only people you talk to outside the classroom speak your**

**native language.** You have to speak to Americans whenever possible, watching television, listening to the radio, and reading newspapers and magazines is also an excellent way to improve your skills. Interacting with U.S. culture will greatly enhance your ability to understand your colleagues and professors on the academic level. The more proficient your English becomes, the more successful you will be in the classroom.

If you are feeling pressure, you have to take the initiative and ask for help. You must ask to join study groups or ask professors questions. No one will approach you to find if there is anything you do not understand. However, classmates and professors are usually willing to help if they know you are having problems. Be prepared to do whatever it takes to help yourself. Remember how much effort it took to get the opportunity to study at KCU and put twice as much effort into your work to make the most of your stay here!

### Definitions of Important Terms

**Academic Year:** The academic year at Kentucky Christian University is divided into two semesters (fall and spring) 15 weeks each. At the end of each semester, there is a final exam period. There are breaks (i.e., Spring Break; Easter Break; Fall Break; Thanksgiving Break; Christmas Break) scheduled throughout each semester. The dormitories are closed for all breaks of 5 days or more (i.e., Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, Spring Break and Summer Break). You and your sponsor must arrange for transportation and lodging for you during the breaks lasting 5 or more days.

**Major:** The field in which you are trying to get your degree.

**Grades:** The quality of a student's academic work is measured by letter grades, only letters A through E are used in the calculation of a grade point average.

A	4.0	WD	Withdrew from all classes
A-	3.6	WP	Withdrew with a passing grade
B+	3.4	WF	Withdrew with a failing grade
B	3.0	I	Incomplete
B-	2.6	IP	In Progress
C+	2.4	R	Course Retaken
C	2.0	P	Passing
C-	1.6	S	Satisfactory
D+	1.4	U	Unsatisfactory
D	1.0	NC	Audit
D-	0.6	BR	Academic Bankruptcy
E	0.0		

**Mid-term:** A test given around the middle of each semester.

**Final:** An exam given at the end of a semester, usually on all the academic material covered in class. The final exam schedule is published each semester.

**Quiz:** A test given during the semester, sometimes unannounced.

**Credit Hours:** The quantity of work a student does at KCU is measured in credit hours. The number of credit hours a course is worth is usually based on the number of hours it meets each week. To complete your degree, you have a specific number of credit hours.

**Assignment:** Out-of-class work required by a professor; for example, reading books, writing papers, or doing a lab report. Your professor will expect the assignment(s) by a certain date.

**Registrar:** The Registrar keeps the official record of a student's academic information, such as courses taken and grades received.

**Transcript:** The record of courses taken and grades received by a student. Official transcripts are important documents and must be requested, in writing, from the Office of the Registrar.

## CULTURAL ISSUES

“Culture shock” is a term used for a sense of disorientation and confusion that most people experience when they arrive in another country. New visitors to a different culture have left everything they consider “natural” and familiar and are expected to function in a new country right away. Culture shock is a normal and temporary part of the process of adapting to a new environment and is not a reason to be overly concerned.

Getting acquainted with social and cultural difference is a very important process because it will help you to build successful relationships with Americans. What follows are some common American customs you will probably encounter:

### Social Invitations

While you are here, we hope that you will meet and spend time with Americans and their families. These suggestions may help you feel more comfortable when you are invited out.

The invitation is usually for you only unless your hosts specifically invite others. Bringing guests of your own without asking your hosts' permission is considered impolite. If you receive a written invitation it will include the date, time, place, and description of the occasion. You should always answer a written invitation, especially if it says R.S.V.P. (French for “please respond”). You may respond by telephone or note and prompt notice is appreciated. Never accept an invitation unless you really plan to go. If you must decline an invitation, it is enough to say “Thank you for the invitation, but I am unable to attend.” If an unavoidable problem makes it necessary for you to change plans, be certain to tell the host as soon as possible before the time when you are expected. Make sure you get directions to the place where the event will be held.

When accepting an invitation for a meal, be sure to explain to your host if there is anything you are not supposed to eat. This courtesy will help the host to plan for food and beverages that everyone can enjoy. If you must refuse something after it has been prepared, refuse politely. Never hesitate to ask for any food on the table (“Would you please pass the rolls?”) since asking for more food is considered to be a compliment to the host. Being on time is very important in American culture.

### Personal Cleanliness

Americans put a great deal of emphasis on personal cleanliness. The standard of personal cleanliness that a person maintains determines (to a large extent) how he or she is accepted in society. Most Americans are very sensitive to the smells and odors of the human body – sometimes their own, but especially someone else's. For this reason, most Americans bathe once a day and sometimes more during hot weather or after strenuous exercise. They use deodorants and antiperspirants, and they wash their clothes frequently. Most Americans are also very concerned about having clean hair and fresh breath.

## Individualism and Privacy

The most important thing to understand about Americans is their devotion to “individualism.” They have been trained since very early in their lives to consider themselves as separate individuals who are responsible for their own situations in life and their own destinies. They have not been trained to see themselves as members of a close-knit, tightly interdependent family, tribe, nation, or other collectivity.

Closely associated with the value they place on individualism is the importance Americans assign to privacy. Americans assume that people need some time to themselves or some time alone to think about things or recover spent psychological energy. Americans have great difficulty understanding internationals that always want to be with another person or who dislike being alone.

## Directness and Assertiveness

Americans generally consider themselves to be frank, open and direct in their dealings with other people. Americans will often speak openly and directly to others about things they dislike. They will try to do so in a manner they call “constructive,” that is, a manner that the other person will not find offensive or unacceptable. If they do not speak openly about what is on their minds, they will often convey their reactions in nonverbal ways (without words, but through facial expressions, body positions, and gestures). Americans are not taught that they should mask their emotional responses. Their words, the tone of their voices or their facial expressions will usually reveal when they are feeling angry, unhappy, confused, or happy and content. They do not think it improper to display these feelings, at least within limits.

Americans are generally more direct and open than most people from many other countries. They will not try to mask their emotions. They are much less concerned with avoiding embarrassment to themselves and others than most cultures. To Americans, being “honest” is usually more important than preserving harmony in interpersonal relationships.

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

As a recipient of the KCU International Student Scholarship, certain additional guidelines are set forth:

**Scholarships:** International Tuition Scholarships will be limited to a maximum total of 12 scholarships of \$13,000 (awarded only to those with some affiliation with KCU such as missionary, Sonlight, etc.), 8 scholarships of \$7,500 and 6 awarded at the \$5,000 scholarship.

**Housing Issues:** All International Students who are receiving full or partial tuition scholarships are required to live in a dormitory and purchase the normal meal plan. This policy will be enforced upon arrival and will not be altered after arriving. Married students will be considered for Apartments on campus. Only the student, spouse and their children will be housed in the Apartments.

**Roommate:** All students receiving an international scholarship will be housed with a roommate.

**Long-distance Phone Calls:** International students are encouraged to use pre-paid calling cards to make long-distance and/or international calls. The international student and/or his/her sponsor must pay long-distance phone bills. The University will not be responsible for the phone bills of international students.

**Dress Code:** International students are required to follow the same dress code as national students. These standards of dress apply on campus and at University sponsored events off campus such as field trips, athletic events, choir tours, banquets, concerts, etc. Students will always dress modestly. This

means that clothing should not be too small or too tight for the individual. Females' skirts and/or dresses cannot be more than 3 inches above the knee when the student is standing straight (i.e. "at attention"). Females' shorts cannot be more than 6 inches above the knee. If a University official (e.g., Resident Assistant/RA, Student Services Staff member, faculty member, etc.) determines the clothing of a student does not comply with the University's standards that item of clothing should never be worn again while the student is enrolled at KCU. Noncompliance will result in disciplinary actions as stated in the *Student Handbook*. Hair must be clean and well groomed. Male students' hair should not fall below the collar. Extreme hairstyles and nonhuman hair colors are not acceptable. Male and female students cannot wear nose rings, lip rings or studs, eyebrow rings or studs or tongue studs.

**Consequences for Noncompliance:** International students are subject to the same consequences as national students when they do not comply with University rules and regulations. Consult your *Student Handbook* in regards to those rules and regulations. Should you need clarification, please seek assistance from a Student Services staff member such as your R.A., Director of Women's Services, Director of Men's Services, Director of Residence Services, Coordinator of Special Services for Students, or Dean of Student Services.



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