International Student Handbook

Center for Global Education

North Central College

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Welcome to North Central College

This is the beginning of an exciting and challenging educational experience. All of us in the Center for Global Education join the faculty, staff, and students in welcoming you to North Central College (NCC). We hope that your experiences here at North Central College will be successful, both academically and personally.

This year North Central College is welcoming many new international students from a variety of countries. **The Center for Global Education (CGE)** will be your home away from home, so please feel free to stop by or contact us if you need any help. We will be happy to assist you regarding a variety of topics, including student visa matters, social and cultural adjustment, housing arrangements, health questions, financial matters, student activities, and nearly any other academic and personal concerns you may have. We are committed to making this a rewarding educational endeavor for you.

Please read this handbook carefully. It is designed to make your transition to North Central College, the town of Naperville and surrounding areas of Chicago, and to the U.S. as easy as possible. We hope it will be a useful reference. For details on many of the subjects regarding academics and campus life, you are advised to refer to the *North Central College Student Handbook* and the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

The Center for Global Education is open from Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm. We are located at 48 E. Jefferson House. Our phone number is (630)-637-5132. If you wish to meet with Jack or Jesús regarding a specific issue, we would encourage you to make an appointment. Their office hours and contact information can be at the Center for Global Education. Be sure to bring your passport and travel documents with you when you visit the office, especially if your question is about visa regulations. We are always glad to answer your questions and we look forward to the year ahead.

Professor Jack Shindler, Director	ext. 5287
Mr. Jesús Velasco, International Student Advisor	ext. 5299
Ms. Kate Pope, Director, English Language Institute	ext. 5271
Ms. Kimberly Larsson, Director of Study Abroad	ext. 5289
Ms. Whitney Pier, Study Abroad Advisor	ext. 5899
Ms. Megan Otermat, Asst. Director of International Admission	ext. 5293
Ms. Rebecca Pugh, Office Coordinator	ext. 5132

Again, Welcome to North Central College!

Office Hours

CENTER FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION

Dr. Jack Shindler

Director of the Center for Global Education

Different office hours each term. Please stop by.

Ways To Make An Appointment:
Call: Extension 5287
E-mail: jhshindler@noctrl.edu

Mr. Jesús Velasco

International Student Advisor

Different office hours each term. Please stop by.

Friday: No office hours

Ways to Make an Appointment:
Call: Extension 5132 or 5299
E-mail: jevelasco@noctrl.edu

ACADEMIC ISSUES

*** Please note that many of the topics listed in this section may not be covered in full detail. For more specific information, please consult the **Undergraduate Catalog and NCC Guide to Writing,** and remember to always visit us and ask questions if you are unsure.*

Advising

The Center for Global Education serves as your advising center, for issues academic, personal and international. Professor Shindler will probably be your first academic advisor. He will assist you with course selection, degree requirements and registration. As your studies progress, and/or you desire an advisor from the discipline in which you are majoring, please consult with Professor Shindler to arrange an advisor change.

Classes

If you have any concerns regarding class attendance, declaration of major, dropping or adding courses, enrollment verification, final grades, transcripts, incomplete grades, registering for classes or withdrawing from the term, please make an appointment with Professor Shindler immediately.

Enrollment

If you are an F-1/J-1 student, you are required by the United State Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations to maintain full-time studies. At North Central College, this is defined as eight (8) course credits each term. Withdrawal from a course, which results in less than full-time study, is **NOT PERMITTED**. Consult the International Student Advisor if there are any questions about this. See the *Undergraduate Catalog* for complete academic regulations. Students on a **WAIT LIST** for a class receive no course credit until their name is removed and they are officially enrolled in the class. Be sure that you have met with your advisor and visited the registrar's office to actually enroll in that class with the appropriate registration/add slip.

Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of all College students; cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable. For definitions, regulations, and penalties please see the *Statement of Responsibilities* in the NCC *Student Handbook.* Included there are also details regarding North Central College's alcohol and drug policies, smoking restrictions and more.

Resources

Computer Labs

Computers can be found in Rolland Center, Carnegie Hall**,** Oesterle Library, Benedetti-Wehrli Stadium, and the Writing Center as well as all residence halls.

All students have access to the College's network, including email, web browsers and Microsoft applications. Bring a flash drive to save your work. It is possible to tap into the network from the residence halls using data ports and a Network Interface Card.

Rolland Center (Boilerhouse Cafe – ext. 5567)

The Rolland Center is the coffee house, cyber café and lounge area all in one. It offers Starbucks coffee, salads and sandwiches. There is also internet connection available, an acoustic stage, a plasma TV, and a convenience store.

Myers Language Resource Center (LRC)

Larrance Academic Center (LAC), Lower Level, Room 2 (ext. 5129)

If you need news from home, this center offers satellite broadcasts from countries/regions other than the U.S. Check the LRC for schedules. More importantly you can use the Center for audio and video tapes and practice in English or other languages.

Oesterle Library (ext. 5700)

The Library is your resource for research materials and access to other library collections. With your student ID you can check out books, use the computers, and utilize other library resources. Through interlibrary loan, students can borrow books from many other institutions as well. In the library, there are private study rooms, a lounge, a computer lab and an art gallery. You can make copies for $.10 each page.

Tutors - Academic Advising

Larrance Academic Center (LAC), Main Level (ext. 5798)

Having trouble with a specific subject? Don't wait until it reaches crisis levels, or until the night before an exam. The Academic Advising Center offers free peer tutoring in most subjects. You can get help with study skills, test taking, etc. See Professor Shindler for referrals or to arrange ESL tutoring.

Writing Center

Larrance Academic Center (LAC), Upper level, Room 17 (ext. 5351)

This Center provides you with support for all your writing needs. The Center can help you develop, organize, and revise your essays, teach grammar and mechanics, and assist you in preparing scholarship, graduate school, or job applications. Particular assistance is given to ESL students and there are ESL writing tutors available; please ask Professor Richard Glejzer (ext. # 5292) for their schedules.

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 professors by listening quietly. They do not 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.

During the first class meeting, 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.

At the time of the first class meeting, your professor will specify "due dates" for various assignments.
These dates are firm, and you must hand in your 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 work out an arrangement that is mutually agreeable. Not all professors will be open to an arrangement.

One thing you need to know about studying in the U.S. is that speaking and learning in English will be exhausting and frustrating, particularly in the beginning. Sometimes, 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, watch television, listen to the radio, and read newspapers and magazines. Interacting with U.S. culture will greatly enhance your ability to understand your fellow students and professors on the academic level. The more proficient your English becomes, the more successful you will be.

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 ask 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. Our academic terms move quickly. Do not wait until after mid-term exams to ask for help! Remember how much effort it took to get the opportunity to study at North Central College, and then 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 North Central College is divided into four terms (fall, winter, spring, and summer) of approximately 10 weeks each. Scholarships cover only three terms (fall, winter, spring). At the end of each term, there is final exam period. There is a break between each term.

*** 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 by a certain date.

*** Credit Hours:** The quantity of work a student does at North Central College is measured in credit hours. The number of credit hours for a course is usually based on the number of hours the class meets each week. To complete your degree, you must have a specific number of credit hours.

*** Grades:** The quality of a student's academic work is measured by letter grades; A (excellent), B (above average), C (average), D (lowest acceptable), F (failing). North Central College is adopting a plus/minus grading scale for all undergraduate and graduate courses so letter grades will be A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, and F. Under certain circumstances, letters such as I (incomplete), N (no grade), S (satisfactory), or U (unsatisfactory) may appear in grade reports. These letters are not grades and are not included in the calculation of a grade point average.

The grade points and generally accepted percentage rates for each grade are assigned as follows:

Grade	Grade Points		Percentage	Grade
A	4.000		93-100%	A
A-	3.700		90-92%	A-
B+	3.300		87-89%	B+
B	3.000		83-86%	B
B-	2.700		80-82%	B-
C+	2.300		77-79%	C+
C	2.000		73-76%	C
C-	1.700		70-72%	C-
D	1.000		60-69%	D
F	0.000		Below 60%	F

However, individual instructors may establish a different percentage range for each plus/minus grade. Individual course syllabi (outline of your course) identify the standard applied in that course. Each student should make sure he/she understands the standards being used in his/her courses.

*** Final:** An exam given at the end of a term, usually on all the academic material covered in class.

*** Major:** The field in which you are pursuing your degree.

* **Minor:** A second emphasis in your degree program.

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

*** Quiz:** A short test given during the term, often unannounced.

On-Campus Information

Living and learning on an American campus are closely involved experiences. All new students, international and American, will visit many offices and departments during the first few weeks while they are getting settled and finding their way around. You may refer to the *Campus Map* (hand out) to find the appropriate office or department you need for residence, academic or technology issues, student activities and services. You are always welcome to visit the CGE if you need assistance.

Athletic Facilities

A weight room, swimming pool, and an indoor track are located in the Res Rec Center and Merner Field House. Tennis courts and an outdoor track are adjacent to the Field House. Students may use all of these facilities during open hours by presenting a student ID to the attendant on duty. Athletic facilities are also available at the Naperville YMCA located downtown on Washington Street, and, at the Edward Fitness Center located just behind Edward Hospital on Washington Street. Both facilities are within walking distance of the North Central College but DO require a membership fee.

Bookstore (ext. 5635)

The Bookstore is located beside our office at 100 E. Jefferson and is open Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Tuesdays until 7:00 p.m. Extended hours are held during the beginning of each term. Students can estimate that books for one term will cost approximately $350. The Bookstore stocks school supplies, personal toiletries, North Central College apparel and gifts.

Business Office (ext. 5682)

All your bills for tuition, room, board, and fees should be paid at the Business Office in Old Main, 3rd Floor. Any questions about student accounts or questions regarding your bill should be directed to JoAnn Krisch in the Business Office. It is open Monday-Friday, from 8am-5pm.

Campus Safety (ext. 5910)

The Office of Campus Safety is located at upper floor of the "Blue House" at 224 E. Chicago Avenue. The Office of Campus Safety provides escort services to students and guests, controls parking enforcement, can unlock residence halls or academic buildings on campus, and can help you with any safety and security issues. If you have an **emergency**, dial **5911**.

Career Development Center – White Activities Center, ext. 5141 or 5143

The Career Development Center is vital to helping you write an American style resume, practice your interviewing skills, locate possible job opportunities both on and off campus, and research current trends in U.S. job markets. Plan ahead as you prepare for the job search process – freshman year isn't too early!

Housing (ext. 5858)

Over 1,200 students live on-campus and participate in educational and social programs designed to support academic learning while providing opportunities for social, spiritual, and personal development. The Office of Residence Life, located on the second floor of Benedetti-Wehrli Stadium, is responsible for your room and roommate assignments. For more information about each of our residence halls, please go to www.noctrl.edu and look under "Student Life", "Campus Living", and then "Residence Life."

As an on-campus student, you must follow the rules and regulations for your specific residence hall. If you have any problems or concerns regarding your room or roommate, please contact the Resident Assistant (RA) on your floor or the Hall Director of your building, and please let us at CGE know as well. Make sure to stay well informed about events, programs, and activities on your floor, in your residence hall, and on-campus. Participating in these events will help you to become more involved in life on-campus and make it easier for you to introduce yourself and make new friends here at North Central College.

D-Term /Spring Break/Summer Housing

You may live in your dorm room during D-Term (around Nov 28- Dec. 16) for no extra charge. You are responsible for your own housing during the Christmas vacation (around Dec. 17-Jan. 3) in order to stay in you residence hall during this time, please consult with the International Student Advisor. If you would like to live on-campus during the summer term (around June 11-August 3), and will be an NCC student that next fall, please contact the office of Residence Life and fill out an application for Summer Housing. There is an additional charge, not including meals or the technology fee and they may require you to me taking classes. International students may also request on-campus housing during Spring Break for no additional charge.

Immunizations

All international students must visit the Dyson Wellness Center and are required to have the proper immunizations for the duration of their stay at North Central College. Some immunizations can be done at the Wellness Center or at Edward Hospital on Washington Street. Please remember that incomplete immunization records will prevent a student from registering for classes for future terms. Immunizations all cost money and YOU are responsible for that charge. Your student account will be billed If you have any questions or would like to make an appointment at the Dyson Wellness Center, please call x5550.

International Club

All international students are strongly encouraged to join the *International Club*. This organization provides a network of friendship and support for North Central College international students and sponsors a variety of on-campus activities and events, as well as off-campus trips. The first International Club meeting will be held on the second Thursday of each term and then every other week.

ITS (Information Technology Services) Carnegie Hall, office 110 – ext. # 5440

The Information and Technology Services Office can assist you with both your telephone hook-up/PIN number access, as well as any computer issues you may be having. Please visit the ITS office during the first week of classes with questions regarding Merlin, Blackboard, and other computer programs available to students.

Linens

You may purchase a linen packet from the CGE. The linen packet includes a pillow, bath towel, hand towel, washcloth, fitted sheet, flat sheet, and a pillowcase. The CGE will schedule a shopping trip during Welcome Week for you to purchase any other necessities for your room. We will also show you how to use the convenient Cardinal Shuttle system to get to the shopping mall or other shopping areas.

Lost and Found

The Department of Campus Safety will attempt to return all found property to rightful owners. If you believe something was stolen from you (camera, computer, flash drive, etc.) please visit Campus Safety.

Mail (ext. 5120)

All students living on campus **must** have a student mailbox, located in Old Main. Your mailbox assignment and key will be given to you in the mailroom, located on the first floor of Old Main. Important correspondence from the CGE, other campus offices, and from home will be directed to this mailbox. Remember, your campus mailbox number must be written on ALL mail/packages sent to you here at NCC. ** Please check your mailbox **every day**.* *

Scholarships and Loans

Renewable International Student Scholarships, available for partial tuition remission, are awarded to incoming degree-seeking students at the time of admission. These scholarships are based primarily on academic merit. For more information, please contact the International Admissions Counselor at msotermat@noctrl.edu . Additional smaller scholarships are available to students after completion of one year at North Central College. Amounts of these scholarships vary each year. Applications will be available in the CGE during Winter Term. The International Club maintains an emergency loan fund from which international students may receive temporary assistance of up to $500 during times of financial distress. Please see Professor Shindler or Jesús Velasco for more information.

Telephones and Fax Machines

All residence hall rooms have a telephone jack and voice mailbox. Students must provide their own telephones. Students must dial 9 and then use a calling card for all domestic long-distance and international calls. All on-campus and local calls within Naperville are free. **For questions about telephone service, please go to the ITS (Information Technology Service) office in Carnegie Hall, office #110, ext. #5440.** You can use Office Max or Kinko's Copy Center for faxing documents domestically or internationally.

Office Max is located on the corner of Ogden and Royal St. George in the Cress Creek Shopping Center (630-717-7511). Kinko's is located in the Iroquois Shopping Center on Ogden Avenue (630-369-7373). Students may also pay to use the fax machine in White Activities Center (WAC). Official faxes to your home institution, insurance company, etc. made be sent from the CGE.

Transfer

Please inform the Center for Global Education if you intend to transfer to another college or university. If the new school requires a transfer form, we can prepare it for you. If you are a new transfer student, to North Central College from another U.S. institution, you must report to the CGE during the *first week* of the term to complete the USCIS transfer procedures.

Wellness Center (ext. 5550)

North Central College Wellness Center is located on the second floor, north end of Benedetti-Wehrli Stadium. The Wellness Center focuses on the physical and emotional well-being of the student. It offers confidential medical services, counseling services by appointment, guidance in health choices, and educational programs. Walk-in nursing services for illness and injury are available 8am-4pm, Monday through Friday when classes are in session. During the academic year walk-in physician services are available on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8-10 am, first come, first serve. Counseling services are available by appointment only for individual, couple, or group assistance with a variety of major or minor issues. Counseling appointments are available from 8am-8pm, Monday through Friday. It is important to remember that all the personal counseling services are totally confidential.

Things to do during your first weeks here

Your first weeks at North Central College 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 Center for Global Education (CGE).** Bring all of your immigration documents with you (Passport, I-20 or DS-2019, I-94 card, HTH insurance information) and fill out the *International Student Registration Form*. **ALL NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS MUST REPORT IN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

2. Attend the New International Student Orientation Program (this is REQUIRED).

3. Show proof of GeoBlue health insurance (this is REQUIRED). GeoBlue Health Insurance is required for your entire stay in the U.S. unless you have a plan that is from the U.S. already.

4. Meet with your academic advisor and register for classes. Your first academic advisor will be Professor Shindler, who will assist you with course selection, degree requirements, registration, and other important academic issues.

5. Employment

Students must have a social security number for employment on-campus and authorized off-campus employment in order to file their annual Federal Income Tax return. If you do not have a social security number, please let prospective employers know that you are an international student and will need to obtain a social security number before you can begin working. When offered a job, please stop by the Center for Global Education to pick up the correct employment packet. This will detail the number of steps you need to take BEFORE you can begin working. **Never begin working without contacting us first! Most of you cannot work off-campus (non- North Central College paycheck)- talk to us first!!!** The information packet will walk you through what you need to do to begin working and what you need to apply for a social security number. We will arrange a trip to the Social Security office for students to apply in person. Your social security number will be sent to you by mail and may take up to four weeks to receive once you have applied. When you have received your social security number **YOU MUST BRING IT TO THE CGE IMMEDIATELY AND TO HUMAN RESOURCES AS WELL**. You may not begin working until you have obtained the card. Offices on campus have been informed of this policy and are usually able to wait a few weeks for you to start working.

6. Once you have finalized your class schedule, visit the Business Office on the 2nd floor of Old Main to check the status of your student account and pay your bills for each term. New international students are given 30 days from the beginning of the term to pay their bill.

7. Meet your RA, make new friends, explore Naperville, get lost, go into Chicago, buy your books, and study!

ADJUSTING TO A NEW CULTURE

As a new international student at North Central College, you will be faced with a multitude of changes, decisions, and adjustments; perhaps the most exciting and challenging of these will be your on-going adjustment to life in the U.S.

Culture Shock: A Learning Process

There appears to be a pattern of cultural adjustment which occurs over a period of several weeks or months. Most of you will spend your first days or weeks here settling in. During this initial period you may feel excited, eager, and happy to be in the U.S. Everything is challenging and very exhilarating. For some of you, however, the novelty may soon wear off, and you may miss your accustomed ways of dealing with school or work, social relationships, and everyday life. If English is not your first language, speaking and listening to English every day and trying to understand how things are done here may seem to require an overwhelming effort. These stages are often referred to as the beginning of a process called **culture shock**.

Culture shock usually includes 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.

You may feel homesick and idealize your life back home while being highly critical of life in the U.S. You may become frustrated, angry, anxious and depressed. You may have minor health problems and disruptions in your sleeping and eating patterns. Your motivation may start to disappear, and you may find yourself wanting to withdraw from your new friends. **This is a natural reaction to living in a new culture, and there are ways to cope with it**.

During this stage, it is important to recognize what is happening and to realize that your reactions are very common. Instead of withdrawing, it might be best to reach out to new friends, classmates, teachers, and others for help. This may be especially difficult. Perhaps in your culture it is not acceptable to share your problems with people outside your family. However, you are faced with obstacles unlike those you have faced in your own culture. The family support system which you relied upon at home is not easy to replace.

Adjustment to another culture can be a long and difficult process. Common concerns among international students may include struggles with thoughts of going home early before completing your studies, anger at not finding what one had expected, and frustration about language differences. **Acknowledging such feelings rather than ignoring them may be helpful in adjusting successfully to the U.S.**

To help yourself get through this period, there are things you can do to feel better. Most people find that contacting other students from your home country who are studying here at North Central College is a big

help. Joining the International Student Club is also a good way to meet students from other countries as well as American students interested in other cultures. To speak your own language, share a traditional meal from home, and talk about adjusting to differences in life here will ease some of the difficulties.

When you are feeling depressed, it is easy to sit inside and do nothing, but this strategy can make you feel even more isolated. Get out and explore! Take the train into Chicago and discover some of the world famous attractions in the Windy City. Explore Naperville, walk along the riverwalk, and spend an afternoon or evening in one of the many shops or restaurants. Athletic activities or other kinds of exercise such as walking, running, or team sports may also be helpful, especially if you invite others to join you. Introduce yourself to classmates and residents where you live and participate in as many campus events as you can. Understand that as time passes you will be able to enjoy your new surroundings. Misunderstandings and mistakes, which in the past would have become major obstacles will be easily understood and solved. You will again become relaxed, regain your self-confidence, and enjoy your life in the U.S.

Common American Customs

Invitations and Punctuality

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 just for you only unless your hosts specifically invite your family or friends. Bringing guests of your own without asking your host's permission is considered impolite. A written invitation 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. (*Répondez s'il vous plait*, French for "please respond"). You may respond by telephone, email, or letter; 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. Being on time is very important in American culture. If dinner is at six o'clock, then American's really expect to be eating at six o'clock!

Sharing a Meal

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 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. For example, you may ask "Would you please pass the rolls?" Asking for more food is considered to be a compliment to the host.

Some Important American Values

Cleanliness

Americans put a great deal of emphasis on personal cleanliness. The standards of personal cleanliness which a person maintains determine (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

A very 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 primarily as members of a close-knit, tightly interdependent family, religious group, 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 their spent psychological energy. Americans have great difficulty understanding people who 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 which 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 or others than people from many other cultures. To Americans, being honest is usually more important than preserving harmony in interpersonal relationships.

Friendship and Dating

While many Americans are fairly open and warm people who are quick to make new acquaintances, their mobility and sense of individualism means that their relationships are often casual and informal. This is not

to say that Americans take friendship lightly. It just means that while Americans know a lot of people; their lasting friendships are often few.

Women's Independence

Comparatively, women in the United States are generally less inhibited than women from other countries. They are not usually shy with Americans or international visitors. Their relaxed and more independent attitude may be misunderstood by people whose native culture is more restrictive of women's activities. It is not unusual, for example, for unmarried women to live by themselves, to share living space with other single women, or to go to public places unescorted.

F-1/J-1 Basics

In order to maintain your legal status in the U.S., please be sure to observe the following requirements.

1. Your I-20 (F-1) / DS-2019 (J-1) must be valid at all times. If you will need a program extension you must have a valid reason and apply well before your I-20/DS-2019 expires, so plan ahead!

2. If you decide to change your major, you MUST make an appointment with the CGE. You will receive a new I-20/DS-2019. (Exchange students usually will not change their major while at NCC.)

3. Your passport must always remain valid for at least 6 months into the future. If it will expire during your stay, inquire with your Chicago Consulate or Washington D.C. Embassy to extend your passport.

4. Your I-94, Arrival/Departure Card should be noted **F-1 or J1, D/S**. If the card has another notation, please consult the CGE. THIS CARD IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT! DO NOT LOSE THIS CARD. It is alright if your visa expires **as long as** you stay in U.S. with a valid I-20/DS-2019.

5. Students in F-1/J-1 status must maintain full-time enrollment. At NCC this is 8 course credits each term (6 graduate). Consult the CGE before dropping or withdrawing from **ANY** course mid-term. Failure to maintain full-time enrollment results in a violation of your status.
   By the 10th day of each term, all international students' schedules must be finalized with a minimum of eight (8) undergraduate credit hours. If you have any questions about whether or not you are in full-time status, please report to the CGE immediately.

6. International students may NOT work without CGE approval, and in **MOST** instances approval from USCIS. This means contacting Jesús BEFORE even 1 hour of work or training. You also may not switch to a different job without contacting him again. **F-2, L-2 and H-4 dependents may not work. J-2 dependents are eligible for employment.**

7. When traveling outside the U.S., **BE SURE** your passport, I-20/DS-2019, and visa will be valid upon re-entry. **Students must obtain a travel endorsement/signature on their 1-20/DS-2019 from the CGE before traveling in order to re-enter the U.S.** The USCIS recommends you secure a travel endorsement each time you travel.

8. Students who are transferring to NCC **MUST** report to the CGE with in the first two weeks of the term. Bring the I-20/DS-2019 from your old school, the new NCC I-20/DS-2019, your passport, and I-94 for completion of the USCIS transfer notification. Failure to do so results in a violation of status.

9. All F-1/J-1 students **MUST** maintain sufficient health insurance for the duration of their studies at North Central College. North Central College requires all international students to purchase the HTH health insurance policy and show proof upon arrival.

10. International students must notify the CGE and Registrar of all address changes **within 10 days of moving**.

11. A copy of your passport, I-94, visa, I-20's/DS-2019, HTH insurance documentation, Social Security card and any Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) **MUST** be kept on file at the CGE.

Employment for F-1 students

(J-1 exchange students may do On-Campus Employment ONLY)

There are four employment options for F-1students. Each type of employment is explained **BRIEFLY** below. For any type of employment, you MUST have a social security number AND you will have to file a Federal, State, and Local income tax return.

On-Campus Employment

As an international student you are permitted to work on campus for a **maximum of 20 hours per week while school is in session**. You are not permitted to start working on campus more than 30 days prior to initially starting classes at North Central College. You may work on-campus provided (1) you are maintaining F-1 status; (2) you do not work more than a TOTAL of 20 hours per week (including any off-campus work you may have been authorized to perform) while school is in session; and (3) you do not displace a U.S. resident. You may be employed full-time during holidays and vacation periods, including an annual vacation term, provided you are eligible and intend to register for the next term. The 20-hour-per-week limit on your employment while school is in session applies to any type of authorized employment. Employment is terminated upon completion of your studies. Please stop by the Center for Global Education to pick up an On-Campus Work packet.

F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Curricular Practical Training for F-1 students is intended to provide hands-on practical work/internship experience in situations where the work serves as an **integral part of a student's academic program**, prior to completion of that program. Students that have been in F-1 status **for one academic year** may apply to participate in this type of training. However, graduate students in programs which require training are not bound to the one academic year in F-1 status requirement. Please stop by the Center for Global Education to pick up a CPT packet. Currently the MBA program at North Central College does not permit its students to participate in internships.

Although authorized part-time curricular practical training employment is permitted with no penalties until completion of a degree, students who have received one year or more of full-time curricular practical training are ineligible for optional practical training (this includes practical training immediately after graduation).

F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Optional Practical Training for F-1 students is intended to provide hands-on practical work experience complementary to the academic program. An F-1 student is eligible for 12 MONTHS of this type of training for each degree earned. **You can apply for OPT anytime during your last final term here at NCC; the earlier, the better, as the application process through USCIS can take 90-120 days. You must apply**

for optional practical training no later than 60 days after your program end date, but before graduate is better. You may apply as early as 90 days prior to your program end date. Please stop by the Center for Global Education to pick up an OPT packet.

Optional practical training/academic training 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 term or session
2. Part-time while school is in session provided that optional practical training does not exceed 20 hours a week
3. Part-time or full-time **after** completion of all course requirements for the degree, but, **before** the completion of a course of study (excluding thesis or the equivalent), if the student is in a bachelor's or master's degree program, this is known as *Pre-completion OPT*
4. Full-time after completion of the course of study, this is known as *Post-Completion OPT*

*Optional practical training/academic 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 at least one full academic year of study before being eligible for optional practical training/academic training. Optional practical training/academic training after completion of studies may not be part-time.**

While on optional practical training (OPT), individuals are still considered to be F-1 students at North Central even though they may be working elsewhere in the United States. All F-1 regulations still apply to you and any changes in employer and/or address should be reported to JesusVelasco at jevelasco@noctrl.edu within 10 days.

Employment Based on Economic Hardship
If employment opportunities are not available or are otherwise insufficient and a student is experiencing economic hardship due to unforeseen circumstances beyond their control, the student may apply to USCIS for an off-campus work permit after having been in lawful F-1 status for at least one academic year. USCIS requires that the student make a "good faith effort" to locate employment on campus before applying for employment based on economic hardship. J-1 students are also eligible for off-campus employment when necessary because of serious, urgent and unforeseen economic circumstances. Proving extreme financial hardship is very difficult as international students must prove financial resources for admission to begin with.

IMPORTANT

For the LAST THREE types of employment, there is a USCIS APPLICATION PROCEDURE. If you are interested in any of these types of employment, you must make an appointment with Jesús and follow the

proper application process. Remember all employment, including on-campus work, requires **tax documentation** and you must see Jesús to complete this paperwork.

Off-Campus Information

Making your way in your new world…

Driver's License

If you are interested in obtaining a driver's license from the State of Illinois, please come to the CGE office for more information. You should also consult the Cyber Drive Illinois website, http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/ for information about the driving test and required procedures. You should also read the "Rules of the Road", same website, under Publications/Motorist. You will need take four forms of ID (passport, a piece of mail or bill receipt (proving mailing address), SS card, I-94, cancelled check) and visit the Secretary of State Driver's License Facility at 931 West 75th Street. Here you will be required to take a vision test and a written test about Illinois motor vehicle regulations and traffic signs. After you pass the written test, you will be issued a temporary instruction permit which authorizes you to practice for your road test only when there is a licensed driver seated in the front seat with you. Once you have developed your driving skills, contact the office above at (630) 369-9010 for hours of operation and to schedule a road test. If the road test is NOT taken in your vehicle, then the vehicle which you are taking the test in MUST be insured for you to drive it. **You will not be allowed to take the road test without proof of insurance for the vehicle you are driving!** An international driver's license may be used here until it expires, but not all foreign drivers licenses are valid. However, not all students are permitted by their sponsor to drive while in the U.S. Also, purchasing auto insurance is REQUIRED. For students here for 1 year or less, driving usually isn't worth it.

* The Secretary of State Driver's License Facility can also issue **5-year State of Illinois ID cards**.

Driving Lessons

Driving lessons are available at the following driving school:

Excel Driving School
412-B W. 5th Avenue
983-9235

Post Office

The nearest United States Post Office is located on the corner of Washington and Benton. You can obtain mailing supplies and stamps here. It is open Monday through Friday, 8:30am-5:30pm and Saturday mornings. Currently it costs 41 cents to mail a letter and 26 cents to mail a postcard in the United States. Rates will vary by the weight of the letter or package. U.S. mailboxes for sending mail are *blue*, and many are located on street corners or near shopping areas. You can register or insure valuable documents/letters before sending for an additional fee. These services sometimes allow for a return receipt, a postcard that is

sent automatically to you when the letter is delivered to the addressee. The U.S. Postal Service will also ship packages both within the U.S. and overseas. However, there are also private companies which can ship packages, some will provide overnight guarantees. Rates will depend on the weight and destination of the package. United Parcel Service, UPS (1-800-742-5877), Federal Express (1-800-247-4747, International or 1-800-463-3339, Domestic) and DHL (1-800-225-5345) are several private companies that provide shipping services.

Taxes

All international students (and accompanying dependents) are required to complete an income tax return every year by **April 15th**. For most of you, this will mean completing the form 1040NR-EZ (U.S. Nonresident Alien Income Tax Return). 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 Center for Global Education will host a tax preparation session in the winter term of each year (usually in February) to assist students with this process. This is extremely important if you intend to apply for another visa to enter the U.S. in the future for any purpose, such as for work (H1-B), visiting (B-1/2) or even F-1/J-1. Consuls in the overseas visa offices might ask to see copies of your tax returns, as evidence for your means of support.

The U.S. tax system encompasses many different types of taxes (e.g., income tax, Social Security tax, sales tax, 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, practical or academic training, and any compensation received for labor. International students do not have to pay social security taxes on interest paid to them by U.S. banks. Be sure to inquire at the CGE about the applicability of any tax treaty that might exist between your country and the United States. The **Publication 519** is a U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens and essential for individuals from nations having tax treaties with the United States.

Important Dates

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.

Transportation

Campus Shuttle: Schedules may be found in Jesus' office or by contacting the Office of Campus Safety.

Bus: *Pace Bus* provides passenger service to Fox Valley Shopping Center, Walmart and other destinations. Buses leave from the Naperville Metra Station near campus. Schedules are available in the CGE. You can purchase a one-way ticket for $1.50. For more information, check www.pacebus.com. The Greyhound Bus is a cheap way to travel around the United States, buses

depart from downtown Chicago, check www.greyhound.com for more information on schedules and bus stations.

Train: Metra train service to downtown Chicago is available from the Naperville train station daily. There is fast train service which takes about 38 minutes into Chicago and regular service which takes about 1 hour and 10 minutes. The final stop for all Chicago trains from Naperville is Union Station, downtown Chicago. Metra schedules are available in the CGE or the train station. The fare to Chicago is $6.75 one way, but weekend roundtrip tickets are only $8.00. Check the train schedules closely, not all trains going to Aurora stop in Naperville. (www.metrarail.com) *Amtrak* train service (www.amtrak.com) is also available to many other areas of the United States from *Naperville Train Station* and *Union Station* in Chicago. The Naperville train station is located one block from the CGE at 105 East 4th Avenue.

Airplane: Chicago has two major airports: O'Hare and Midway. When booking flights, be sure to verify which airport will service your flight. O'Hare is a much larger airport and handles the majority of international flight service. Midway is a convenient airport for cheaper flights within the United States, especially using Southwest Airlines (www.southwest.com). Transportation to and from O'Hare can be arranged through 303 Taxi at (630) 368-0303 and American Taxi at (630) 790-8294. The price should be about $50.00, call ahead to make reservations. Private taxicabs to/from either airport can be very expensive.

Naperville Shopping, Dining, and Events

Naperville has a large variety of shops and restaurants located in the downtown area as well as in the surrounding suburbs. Naperville also has specialty stores, shopping malls, museums, a riverwalk, and many activities and events throughout the year. Included in your welcome packets was information about Naperville, discount coupons, and maps of the city. You can find lots of specific information about Naperville, including a list of restaurants by ethnic region, at www.visitnaperville.com. Check it out, it is great website and will keep you up to date about all that is going on in Naperville!

Travel

During D-Term periods or vacations, you might decide to explore other areas of the United States. Air travel in the U.S. is inexpensive compared to many parts of the world, and because the country is so large there is a lot to see. Ask the CGE for travel agent recommendations. Another great way to reserve a cheap flight is on-line! Try www.expedia.com, www.travelocity.com, www.priceline.com, and www.kayak.com for low prices on airline travel.

If you have a valid driver's license and a major credit card, it is possible to rent a car for "road trips." Most highways are free, and toll roads are inexpensive. Some car rental companies may not rent to people under 25 years old, and some may charge an extra fee for under-age drivers. Agencies near campus are:

Budget Car Rental	1115 E. Ogden Ave.	637-2260
Enterprise Rent-A-Car	910 E. Ogden Ave.	355-5572
Hertz Rent-A-Car	1019 E. Ogden Ave.	369-9072

No travel permission is required for trips in the U.S., but we are always interested in where you might be for extended periods. Please stop by the CGE and keep us informed of your itinerary. The CGE also has a U.S. Road Atlas and other U.S. travel resources to help you plan you holidays! Let us know if we can offer any travel suggestions.

TAXI

If you need to book a taxi, to the airport, or anywhere else, we recommend that you use the following services.

American Taxi – 630-920-9480
Bills Limo- 630-961-5500 or 1888-851-0200

Travel outside of the U.S. requires a signature (travel endorsement) on your Form I-20/DS-2019.

Chicago

The city of Chicago, third largest city in the U.S., is a quick, easy trip from Naperville on the Metra train. The city is a major cultural, economic, social, educational, and tourist center.

There are so many things to see, places to go, restaurants, museums, festivals, concerts, and shopping you may never get tired of going into the Windy City. The CGE has some information and brochures on things going on in Chicago and how to get there. The International Club plans field trips each year, which are a great orientation to the city. Don't be afraid to explore Chicago with a friend or group of friends. Public transportation is inexpensive and easy to use and taxicabs are plentiful. It is also a great city for walking and renting bicycles.

Some Major Downtown Attractions

Chicago Cultural Center & Visitor Information Center
Adler Planetarium ♦ Field Museum of Natural History
Art Institute of Chicago ♦ Greektown
Grant Park Summer concerts ♦ John Hancock Observatory
Buckingham Fountain ♦ Chinatown
Sears Tower Skydeck ♦ Museum of Contemporary Art
Museum of Science & Industry ♦ Lincoln Park Zoo
Navy Pier ♦ North Michigan Ave. Shopping
The beaches and lakefront ♦ Shedd Aquarium
The Chicago Symphony ♦ Lyric Opera House
White Sox & Cubs Baseball ♦ Bears Football ♦ Blackhawks Hockey

…and so much more

A Small Note on Safety

The city of Chicago is safe, if you use common sense.

♦Travel in pairs or small groups.

♦Call ahead to confirm museum and event schedules.

♦Don't open your wallet in public areas.

♦Stay aware of the people around you.

♦Try not to read a street map on the street – this tells people you are vulnerable or lost. Step into a restaurant or shop, the shop-keeper will probably be able to give you directions.

♦Do not travel alone late in the evening.

Weights, Measures & Temperatures

Length

1 millimeter (mm) = .0397 in

1 centimeter (cm) = 10 mm = .3937 in

1 meter (m) = 100 cm = 1.0936 yards

1 kilometer (km) = 1,000 m = .6214 miles

1 inch (in) = 25.4 mm

1 foot (ft) = 12 in = .3048 m = 30.48 cm

1 yard = 3 ft = .9144 m

1 mile = 1,760 yd = 1.6093 km

Volume/Capacity

1 liter (l) = .2642 US Gallons (Gal)

1 US dry Pint = .55061 l

1 US liquid Pint = .4732 l

1 US Gal = 8 US Pints = 3.7854 l

Mass/Weight

1 gram (g) = .0353 ounces (oz)

1 kilogram (kg) = 2.2046 pounds (lbs)

1 ounce = 28.35 grams

1 pund = 16 oz = .4536 kg

1 short ton = 2,000 lbs. = .9072 tone

Cooking

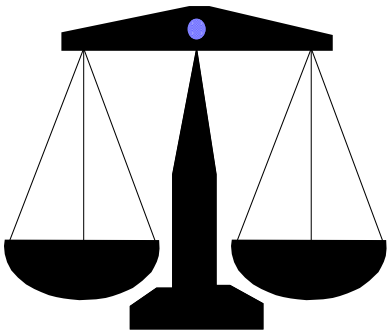
1 teaspoon = 5 ml

3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon

1 US cup = 16 tablespoons

1 US Gallon= 128 fluid oz. =

16 cups = 8 pints = 4 quarts



Area

1 hectare = 10,000 m^2 = 1.1960 yd^2

1 square km (km^2) = 100 ha

1 square inch = 645.16 mm^2

1 square foot = .093 m^2

1 square yard = 9 ft^2 = .8361 m^2

1 acre = 4840 yd^2 = 4046.86 m^2

1 square mile = 640 acres = 2.59 km^2

Conversion °F to °C

- Subtract 32
- Divide by 1.8

Example: 80°

80-32=48

48÷1.8 = 26.66°C

Equivalencies

212°F = 100°C

32°F = 0°C

Conversion °C to °F

- Multiply by 1.8
- Add 32

Example 27°C

27 x 1.8 = 48.6

48.6 +32 = 80.6°F