

Living in the U.S. (a handbook of resources)

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Student Responsibilities

Student Conduct

Students attending Clark College are expected to accept their responsibilities as adults and obey College rules and regulations set forth in the Code of Student Conduct, adopted by the Board of Trustees. The code is written in the Clark College Catalog and on the Clark College website at www.clark.edu. Violations of the code may result in disciplinary action.

Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes for which they are registered. Instructors have the right to withdraw those students who do not attend the first day of class. If you are unable to attend your class because of illness or other serious circumstances please tell your instructor. It is your obligation to arrange for the make-up work deemed necessary by the instructor. Class attendance can sometimes be a factor in grading for a course.

Smoking Policy

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the Clark College campus. Students may not smoke on school property nor in their cars when parked in school parking areas.

Financial Obligations

The College expects students to meet their financial obligations. College staff will follow procedures to take legal action to make sure the college is paid. Admission to or registration with the college, conferring of degrees, and issuance of grade reports or academic transcripts may be withheld for failure to meet financial obligations.

Academic Honesty

Absolute honesty is expected of all students in all academic work at Clark College.

Academic cheating or plagiarism or abetting cheating or plagiarism is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Cheating includes turning in any schoolwork product (homework, term paper, exam or test

answers) which has been totally or partially completed by another person, as the students' own work.

If you take someone else's ideas or words and present it as your own, you are plagiarizing. Examples of intentional plagiarism include: Copying a sentence from a book and claiming it as your own writing, summarizing or paraphrasing someone else's ideas without citing the source, or buying or borrowing a paper to hand in as your own work. Accidental plagiarism may be forgetting quotation marks around someone else's words or neglecting to include a source citation because you are not aware you need to. However, both intentional and accidental plagiarism are serious offenses and subject to disciplinary action.

Money and Banking

Personal Checking Accounts

It is extremely useful to have your money deposited in a local bank because paying your bills can be most conveniently done by check, especially if you pay by mail.

To open a checking account, bring your passport and proof of your current address in the U.S. with an amount of money (cash, traveler's checks, bank cashier's checks, preferably in U.S. dollars).

The banks that have the most branch locations and services in Vancouver and nearby states are listed with their downtown addresses below:

First Independent Bank	U.S. Bank	Washington Mutual
1220 Main Street	1607 Main Street	1205 Broadway
(360) 699-4247	(360) 695-1311	(360) 750-3010

Cash Machines (ATM)

Bank cash machines (ATMs) are widely used throughout the United States to withdraw cash from one's checking or savings accounts. They are easy to use, conveniently located in supermarkets and shopping centers, and are open 24 hours a day.

When you open a bank account, you may also get a cash machine card that will let you access your accounts with a personal identification number (PIN). You should memorize this number and not tell anyone your PIN, including your closest friends. It is not wise to let anyone else use your cash machine card.

Each time you use the cash machine, you will get a transaction ticket that indicates how much money you withdrew or deposited, the date of the transaction and the balance in your account after the transaction. Keep your transaction ticket until you receive your next bank statement so that you can verify each transaction and date you used the cash machine.

There is a cash machine on the Clark College campus next to the Cashier's Office in the Penguin

Union Building.

Health Insurance and Medical Care

All International Students must have Medical/Health Insurance coverage while in the U.S. Clark College currently has agreed to offer health insurance to our students from the Lewer Agency. Each quarter, the \$222.00 fee is automatically added to your tuition bill when you register. You may elect to continue the insurance coverage during the summer months if you are taking a summer break. Coverage can also be purchased for your children and spouse.

If you have your own medical insurance which provides coverage that is similar to the Lewer Agency, please see your International Student Advisor to sign a Medical Insurance Waiver Form.

Dental and optical insurances are available for additional cost.

Clark College maintains a Student Health Center staffed by nurse practitioners who specialize in outpatient adult health care. The Center is open weekdays during business hours, is very low cost and we will address most non life-threatening situations.

To get the most benefit from your Lewer Agency Insurance, you should follow these guidelines to obtain medical care:

Life Threatening Illness or Major Injury

Students should go immediately to the hospital for emergency treatment of a life-threatening illness or injuries resulting in broken bones, severe bleeding, etc. If admitted to the hospital, the student will be required to pay the first \$50 of medical expenses for the duration of the treatment for this illness or injury. If treated and released from the hospital, the student will be required to pay the first \$100 of medical expenses for the duration of the treatment for this illness or injury.

Immediate Medical Care

If you need medical attention right away, but you are not in great danger, you can go to an urgency care facility during the hours below. Fees start at \$50.

Family Care and Urgent Medical Clinics

Cascade Park (East Vancouver)
406 SE 131st Avenue, Suite A-101

Vancouver

(360) 253-2822

Monday – Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Saturday: 8:00 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Hazel Dell (North Vancouver)

7701 NE Highway 99

(360) 574-2900

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Saturday: 8:00 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Minnehaha (North Vancouver)

4421 NE St. Johns Road, Suite F

Vancouver

(360) 695-9922

Monday – Saturday: 8 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Minor Illness or Injury

For treatment of minor illness or injury such as: rashes, flu, colds, sprains, etc., students should try to obtain treatment from the Clark College Health Center. The Health Center is equipped to provide routine treatment and several diagnostic tests. (See the section titled “Support Services” in this manual for a list of services offered at the Clark College Health Center.) Most services are at no cost to the student. If there is a charge, the student should process a claim for reimbursement from The Lewer Agency.

If you would like to see a private physician for a minor illness or discomfort and can wait for a few days or a week for an appointment, ask your host family or friends for a referral. Or, ask the International Student Advisor for help.

Prescriptions

Costs of medications prescribed by the Clark College Health Center are 100% reimbursed (paid back) by The Lewer Agency after a \$50 deductible per illness or injury. (The student must submit a claim for reimbursement to The Lewer Agency.)

Costs of medications prescribed by an outside doctor are 50% reimbursed by The Lewer Agency. (The student must submit a claim for reimbursement.)

Note: Students should refer to The Lewer Agency brochure for additional information regarding the coverage and exclusions of this policy.

Serious Injury or Illness

If you are seriously injured or sick and your life is in danger, go directly to the emergency room of an acute care hospital. They are open 24 hours a day.

Southwest Washington Medical Center (East Vancouver)

400 NE Mother Joseph Place (just off Mill Plain Boulevard)

(360) 256-2000

Memorial Campus Health Center (Downtown Vancouver)

3400 Main Street

(360) 696-5041

Legacy Salmon Creek Hospital (North Vancouver)

2211 NE 139th Street

(360) 487-1000

Safety

You will find that living in the U.S. and studying at Clark College is safe; but no matter where you live or travel you should be cautious and aware of your surroundings.

Remember that you are the person most responsible for your safety. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to ask for help. Remember, Clark College is in the business to serve students. It is every staff member's job to help you.

Be Alert

Your first line of defense in any situation is to be alert and aware of everything around you. If you are confident and aware of what is going on around you, you will often be able to avoid unsafe situations.

Personal Information

Always protect your personal information such as passport, visa, I-94, credit cards and bank documents. Identity theft is a problem all over the world and it comes in many forms. You may get e-mails from companies asking for personal information. Remember that your bank and credit card company already have your personal information. They will not ask for your password unless you go to their online system.

Valuables

Never leave your personal belongings (backpack, purse, computer, cell phone, books, etc.) unattended. It only takes a second for someone to steal something while you walk to the bathroom or go to a vending machine. This rule also applies to automobiles. Even if the car is locked, you should never leave your valuables out in plain sight.

Campus Security

Security Officers are on the Clark College campus to prevent criminal activity and enforce the college's rules and regulations. They are on campus 24 hours a day every day of the week. Please report any suspicious on-campus activities to the Security Office at 360-992-2133.

911 Calls – Emergency Only

Call 911 if you are in trouble or see a crime in progress. You do not need coins if calling from a pay phone. Try to relax and tell the operator your language. They have many interpreters.

911 is for emergency only. When operators answer the phone they will ask, "Police, Fire or Ambulance?" Then they will ask "What city?" Try to slow down and speak clearly so they can help. Do not hang up. You may hear some clicking noise while they transfer your call to the right agency, but you will not be disconnected.

Housing Safety

Always keep your doors locked whether you are at home or away. Keep it locked even if you

leave for just a few minutes to pick up mail or go to the laundry room. Use locks on your windows.

Never open the door to a stranger. If you did not invite the person, do not open the door unless it is the police. You will be able to tell when you look out of your window or through the door's "peep" hole. The police officer will show you an official badge.

Do not leave notes on your door saying you are not at home.

Get to know your neighbors.

On the Street

Tell your roommate or host family where you are going and when you plan to return.

Do not go out alone or accept rides with strangers. Do not hitch-hike.

Do not use headphones when walking or jogging. They make it difficult to hear an approaching car or stranger.

Plan where you are going and walk confidently with your head up. Be aware of who and what is around you. Change direction if you think you are being followed, and go to the nearest store, restaurant or pay phone.

Keep your passport in a safe place at home. Carry a photocopy of your passport and other ID. Do not carry large amounts of money.

Do not argue or fight if you are robbed. Yell loudly to attract attention.

Never give money to a person who approaches you on the street. Sometimes these people have drug and alcohol addictions and you would be making their problems worse. Other times they are trying to trick you into giving them money. They might say "I lost my wallet and I need money for gas for my car. I will pay you back."

Night Time Safety

After dark, always go out with friends. Never go alone.

Walk on well-lit, busy streets. Avoid places where there are no people around, such as parks.

Taxi cabs are a good way to get home at night. Make sure you have the number of a cab company when you go out.

The drinking age in the U.S. is 21. You will need ID to purchase liquor or get into a nightclub or bar.

If you plan to drink alcohol be sure to arrange a ride home. Make sure your friends know where you live.

Know your drinking limits. Do not drink too much alcohol. Do not accept drinks from strangers or leave your drink unattended. Date rape drugs are sometimes put into drinks when women are not paying attention.

Drugs

Drugs such as cocaine, heroin, marijuana and nightclub drugs such as Ecstasy and GHB are illegal. Do not use or possess drugs at any time. International students caught with drugs will be deported.

Dating and Relationships

If you do not know your date well, stay in public places with other people nearby. Tell your friend or host family where you are going. Be prepared to find your own way home if needed.

If you want to stop a friendship, be very clear that you do not want to see the person anymore.

If someone is bothering you, tell him or her to stop. Do not worry about hurting their feelings or being nice. If they are still bothering you then tell someone nearby.

Assault is illegal in the U.S. A husband cannot hit his wife, a boyfriend cannot hit a girlfriend, and a roommate cannot hit you.

Sexual assault or rape is when someone forces or pressures you to have sex or touch you in a sexual way when you do not want to be touched. Even though we usually think that rape happens when a stranger attacks, the fact is that most sexual assaults happen with someone we know.

To try to stop an unwanted sexual advance or any behavior that makes you feel uncomfortable, be clear, direct and firm. Tell your date your limits. You have the right to say NO.

You may feel embarrassed or ashamed, but rape is never your fault. Get medical treatment immediately and report it to the police or a rape counselor.

Laws in the United States

These are a few reminders of United States laws that may be different than in your own country. Please be aware of the following:

1. Pedestrian Right-of-Way--Cars, motorcycles and bicycles are required to give the right-of-way (that is, to yield) to pedestrians who are at an intersection. All vehicles must stop or slow down to allow people who are walking to cross the street safely.
2. Speed Zones--Many foreign countries do not have speed controls on highways or streets. In the US, there are many "speed zones" marked by signs that indicate the maximum speed allowed ("25 MPH," "30 MPH," etc.). Speed laws are enforced. If you "get a ticket" for speeding, you must pay a sizeable fine (lots of money) and your

insurance rates may go up. The speed limit on California highways is varied and is posted at different intervals.

3. "Drunk Driving"--Don't drive if you have been drinking any alcoholic beverages! If you are caught, you will be taken to jail. You will lose driving privileges, have your name and crime printed in the local newspaper, and pay a large fine (a lot of money).
4. "Jay Walking"--If you are walking, you are supposed to cross the street only at intersections. If you try to cross the street anywhere else, you may be ticketed for jay walking.
5. Seat Belts--It is the law to fasten your seat belt while in the car. Even if you are a passenger in a car, it is your responsibility to fasten your seat belt. If you do not, you may get a ticket (not the driver).
6. Stop signs--Many people get tickets for not stopping completely at a stop sign. The law states that you must come to a complete stop for 3 seconds.
4. Parking Laws--Parking laws are also enforced. Be aware of the following:
 - a. NO PARKING SIGNS--If you are in a "no parking" area, you may get a ticket and have to pay a fine. Your car may be towed away to a central garage and you will have to pay a fine, towing costs and storage costs to get it back again.
 - b. PARKING METERS--"Parking meters" are boxes on posts in the sidewalk marking parking places where you will have to pay for parking. Please read each meter to find out when the meters are enforced. Most places you will not have to pay on Sundays or after 6:00 p.m., Monday – Saturday. If you park in a metered parking place, put coins in the slot until you have the desired time and be back to your car before it expires.
 - c. PARKING ON CAMPUS--You can park anywhere on campus that does not have a F/S painted on it. Parking is free.

Transportation

By Bus

C-Tran operates public bus service within the City of Vancouver, in the Clark County area and also to downtown Portland, Oregon via I-5 and the Max transit mall via I-205. Schedules and route maps are available at the C-Tran Customer Assistance Office, in the Office of International Programs, the Clark College Bookstore, and near the receptionist in the Baird Administration Building.

C-Pass

C-Tran offers a C-Pass to all Clark College students who show a current Student ID Card with a

C-Pass endorsement. The cost is \$15.00 each quarter. You pay for the card in the Clark College Bookstore and show them your registration form. Then take your receipt to the Security Office to get your card. A valid, endorsed, Student ID Card will permit you to travel on C-Tran buses for free on week days during the academic quarter. Students will be required to pay the standard fares to travel during weekends and quarter breaks.

A valid, \$3.00 Student ID card may be used for identification and as proof of student status at businesses offering student discounts, but it does not provide the C-Tran benefit.

For bus riding assistance, call C-Tran Customer Service at (360) 695-0123 or ask any C-Tran bus driver for information.

Cabs/Taxis

Sometimes a cab is the most convenient and safe way to travel. Below is a list of cab companies in Vancouver with approximate costs for traveling locally by cab.

Vancouver Cab Company	(360) 693-1234
Yellow Cab Company	(360) 693-3333

Clark College to Cascade Park area:	\$20 – \$22
Vancouver to Portland (downtown to downtown)	\$25 – \$27

Driving in the United States

Driver's License

If you are planning to own and drive a car, you must obtain a Washington State driver's license. To apply for a driver's license, bring your passport or any documentation that establishes your date of birth to the Department of Licensing office, located at:

East Vancouver	1301 NE 136 th Avenue (360) 260-6288
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North Vancouver	8000 NE 13 th Avenue (360) 576-6060
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The licensing offices are open Tuesdays, Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 am to 5 pm, Thursday, 9:30 am to 5 pm, and Saturday, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. If you do not have a Social Security number, you should tell the clerk that as an F-1 or M-1 student you are ineligible for a Social Security card. They will give you a waiver form.

If this is your first time to apply for a driver's license, you will have to take a written test and a driving test and pay a testing and a licensing fee.

To pass the written test you will need to study the driver's guide prepared by the Department of Licensing; it may be obtained at either of the offices listed above. Take the driver's guide home

to study. Then, when you are prepared, return to the Licensing office before 4:30 pm Tuesday through Friday and before 2 pm Saturday to take the test. No appointment is necessary. The test consists of multiple-choice questions based on the driver's guide.

After you pass the written test, you will get a learner's permit. If you have a driver's license issued by your home country or from another state in the U.S., you will not need a learner's permit. Ask someone to help you practice driving and familiarize yourself with the city streets, speed limits and signs in residential areas and downtown Vancouver, or take a driver's education course. If you have never driven a car before, a driver's education course is recommended. See the International Student Advisor for information on driving schools.

When you are ready to take the driving test, return to the Department of Licensing office during the times listed above to schedule a driving test appointment.

If your address changes after you receive a driver's license, you must report the change to the Department of Licensing within 10 days.

Similar regulations apply in Oregon. If you reside in Oregon, contact the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles for specific information.

Automobile Information

If you buy a car in Washington State, it must be registered through the Department of Licensing, and the law requires you to insure it for the proper amount. Laws in Oregon may vary slightly.

Automobile Registration

To register a used car, you must prove ownership of the vehicle with a certificate of title. The seller should sign the certificate transferring ownership to you, the buyer. Also, you should have a bill of sale or receipt indicating the amount paid for the vehicle. Take these documents (transfer of title and bill of sale) to an Auto Licensing Service (see the yellow pages in the phone book for locations) for registration. Be prepared to pay a registration fee and sales tax. Every year, as long as you own the car, you must renew your car registration. You will receive a notice in the mail when it is time to renew your car registration. If you move after you register your car, you must notify the Department of Licensing of your new address.

Automobile Insurance

Washington State law requires you to have the proper amount of insurance when you register your car. You must keep proof of insurance in your car at all times. Most insurance companies issue an insurance card for this purpose. Penalties for driving a car in the U.S. without insurance are severe.

Campus Parking

Clark College does not require a parking permit for students to park on campus. You may park in any designated parking space except those marked for the handicapped, Faculty/Staff, or visitor, or in any other areas that are specifically marked "no parking." Cars parked in these areas will receive a parking ticket and fine. The North parking lot (above Gaiser Hall) is for compact cars only. The speed limit in all lots is 10 miles per hour. For your safety and the

safety of others, please do not exceed the recommended speed limit. If you are involved in a parking lot accident, you must report it to the Security Department.

U.S. American Holidays

JANUARY 1--NEW YEAR'S DAY. The main celebration usually occurs the night before, on New Year's Eve, when there are many parties. Alcoholic beverages are consumed, and sometimes guests are given streamers and confetti (torn-up bits of colored paper) to throw, and noisemakers to make noise at the stroke of midnight, when the New Year officially begins. Embracing and kissing everyone is not uncommon. On New Year's Day, families gather for dinner and there are parades and football games.

JANUARY, 3rd MONDAY--REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.'S DAY. This is a day celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. who policies of nonviolent protest, was the dominant force in the civil rights movement during its decade of greatest achievement, from 1957 to 1968.

FEBRUARY 14--VALENTINE'S DAY. This is a day for lovers, especially, and friends to exchange cards or gifts. Cards for lovers are very sentimental. Cards for friends are often humorous. Small children exchange "valentines" in school.

FEBRUARY, 3RD MONDAY--PRESIDENTS DAY. This is a day celebrating the birth of two of the United States President's: First President of the U.S. George Washington honored as Father of the U.S. and Abraham Lincoln, also called "Honest Abe" who is associated with the final abolition of slavery.

MARCH 17--ST. PATRICK'S DAY. This is a day dedicated to the patron saint of Ireland, and the shamrock is its customary symbol. Many people, especially children, make a point of wearing something green.

MARCH OR APRIL--PALM SUNDAY. A Christian holiday, the Sunday before Easter.

LATE MARCH OR APRIL--EASTER SUNDAY. Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For children, colored hard-boiled "Easter eggs" and candy and chocolate eggs are hidden by the mythical "Easter Bunny." The children hunt for the eggs and keep the ones they find.

MAY, 2nd SUNDAY--MOTHERS' DAY. Gifts, cards and special attention are given to mothers and grandmothers.

MAY, LAST MONDAY--MEMORIAL DAY. Homage is paid to those who have died in wars. Many families remember their deceased loved ones

JUNE, 3rd SUNDAY--FATHERS' DAY. Fathers and grandfathers are honored with cards and gifts.

JUNE 14--FLAG DAY. Flags are flown to mark the adoption of the American flag.

JULY 4--INDEPENDENCE DAY (usually called "the Fourth of July.") Parades, fireworks displays (private fireworks are illegal in Stockton and many other cities in the US) and flags commemorate the signing of the US Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. Many families have picnics.

SEPTEMBER, 1st MONDAY--LABOR DAY. This holiday usually marked by nothing more than a day off from work, honors labor in the United States.

SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER--ROSH HASANAH (Jewish New Year) and YOM KIPPUR (Jewish Day of Atonement.) Marked in synagogues and Jewish homes.

OCTOBER, 2nd MONDAY--COLUMBUS DAY. Commemorates the discovery of North America by Christopher Columbus in 1492.

OCTOBER 31--HALLOWEEN. This is a holiday for children. Children wear costumes to school, and usually there is a parade at the school, and prizes for the best costumes.

NOVEMBER 11--VETERANS DAY. This day, on the date that Armistice was signed after World War I, honors veterans of the armed services.

NOVEMBER, 4th THURSDAY--THANKSGIVING DAY. This harvest celebration stems from thanksgiving and harvest festivities in the original American colonies. It is customary for families to gather together and have a large meal that includes turkey, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie.

LATE NOVEMBER OR (USUALLY) DECEMBER--HANUKKAH. An eight-day Jewish holiday marking the rededication of the temple in ancient Jerusalem.

DECEMBER 25--CHRISTMAS. This major US holiday began as a Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ; however, it is a widely celebrated as a day of feasting and gift-giving.

Conversion Charts

Distance

1in = 2.54 cm

1cm = 0.39 in

1m = 3.3 ft. = 1.1 yd

1 ft = 0.3 m

1 km = 0.62 miles

1 mile = 1.6 km

Weight

1 kg = 2.2 lb (pound)

1 lb = 0.45 kg
1 g = 0.04 oz (ounce)
1 oz = 28 g

Volume

1L = 0.26 US gallons
1 US gallon = 3.8 L
1 L = 0.22 imperial gallons
1 imperial gallon = 4.55 L

Temperature

$^{\circ}\text{C} = (^{\circ}\text{F} - 32) \div 1.8$
 $^{\circ}\text{F} = (^{\circ}\text{C} \times 1.8) + 32$

Boiling Water ($212^{\circ}\text{F} = 100^{\circ}\text{C}$)
Normal Body Temperature ($98.6^{\circ}\text{F} = 37^{\circ}\text{C}$)
Freezing Point for Water (32°F or 0°C)

Time Changes

In the United States, there are two different time changes, “Daylight Savings Time” and “Standard Time”. “Daylight Savings Time” is used between April and October, so in the spring, we “spring forward” (set the clocks one hour ahead). “Standard Time” is used during the other months, so in the fall, we “fall back” (set the clocks back one hour).

Time Zones

There are four distinct time zones in the United States (excluding Alaska and Hawaii):

Pacific	Clark College	12:00 noon
Mountain	Denver	1:00 p.m.
Central	Chicago	2:00 p.m.
Eastern	New York	3:00 p.m.

Please see the following website for more accurate information: www.worldtimeserver.com