

Jacksonville University - International Student Services

# International Student Handbook

## 2020-2021



**JACKSONVILLE  
UNIVERSITY**

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## Contact Us

### Office Information

#### **Division of Student Life - International Student Services**

Jacksonville University  
2800 University Boulevard North  
Jacksonville, FL 32211-3394  
P: 1.904.256.7533  
F: 1.904.256.7066

### Visit us On-Campus

#### **International Student Services**

Davis Student Commons 324  
Jacksonville, FL 32211-3394  
1.904.256.7533  
Open Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. thru 5:00 p.m.  
Appointments are preferred, but walk-ins are welcome  
Email [lrattin@ju.edu](mailto:lrattin@ju.edu) for an appointment

### Our Staff

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Updated Summer 2020 - Valid thru Summer 2021 - Email [studentlife@ju.edu](mailto:studentlife@ju.edu) for the newest version

## Welcome and Introduction

On behalf of the office of International Student Services and the Division of Student Life, welcome to all of Jacksonville University's International Students! We have written this handbook for you, as one of many tools to help ease the transition to JU and to the United States. We hope it will help you settle in to your new environment and prepare you for your life at JU. This handbook contains a wide variety of information which international students studying in the US on student visas should be familiar with. Please take the time to read all information carefully and let us know if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas for changes or additions.

International students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the United States Federal Government rules and regulation, as well as the JU Student Code of Conduct and other university policies contained in The Green Pages Student Handbook of Jacksonville University available through the MyJU portal. [Click on this link to visit the MyJU portal.](#) The US Federal Government rules and regulations vary depending the type of scholarship assistance international students receive. Careful attention should be paid to both the US Government and JU University regulations governing the stay of international students. If you break the law, or a JU policy, you can and will be held responsible, even if you didn't know that what you were doing was not allowed.

## JU On-Campus Resources

| If you have questions about...   | You should contact...  |
|--|--|
| Academic Issues, curriculum requirements, difficulty with English, changing major                          | <b>Academic Advising</b> - Howard Building - 1st floor                         |
| Admission, admissions status   | <b>Admissions Office</b> - Frisch Welcome Center                               |
| Student clubs, activities, Student Government (SGA)  | <b>Student Engagement &amp; Leadership</b> - Davis Student Commons - 2nd Floor |
| Tuition, Billing, Federal Income Tax, tax charges on scholar ships, student health insurance               | <b>Controller's Office</b> - Howard Building - 1st Floor                       |
| Financial Aid, Scholarships  | <b>Student Financial Services</b> - Howard Building - 1st Floor                |
| Community activities, employment, I-20 signatures, immigration paperwork, transfers in or out, Visa issues | <b>Student Affairs Office</b> - Davis Student Commons - 3rd Floor              |
| Tutoring, help with writing, help with coursework  | <b>Academic Support Center</b> - Swisher Library - 3rd Floor                   |
| JU ID cards, campus safety concerns  | <b>Campus Security</b> - Security & Purchasing Warehouse - 1st Floor           |

| If you have questions about...   | You should contact...  |
|--|--|
| Course registration, transcripts, verification of Full Time Student Status | <b>Registrar's Office</b> - Howard Building - 1st Floor  |
| On-Campus housing, dining plan, roommate issues                            | <b>Residential Life</b> - Offices in each residential area - Botts, Williams, North, Oak, Apt. 1 - 1st Floor |
| Personal Counseling, issues with anxiety, just need someone to talk to     | <b>Student Counseling Center</b> - Health Sciences Complex   |

## Immigration Information

### SEVIS

*What is SEVIS?*

SEVIS (short for **S**tudent and **E**xchange **V**isitor **I**nformation **S**ystem) is the the system which collects and stores information related to visitors on F, M, & J visas. The system is designed to electronically track and monitor international students and their dependents while in the US. SEVIS stores data including:

- Name
- Place of Birth
- Country of Citizenship
- Foreign address
- Start and End date of study
- Field(s) of study - majors, minors, and degree programs
- Employment authorization
- Date and port of entry to the US

The following pieces of information need to be reported to International Student Services as soon as they occur so that they may be updated in SEVIS:

- Change of Address (must be reported within 10 days or student faces a fine and immediate deportation.)
- Visa classification, or change in issue date or end date of visa
- Change in degree (major or minor) or program level (ESL, Bachelor's, Master's, etc.)
- Academic disciplinary actions taken due to criminal conviction

### Immigration Documents

There are several documents that will be extremely important to you during your stay in the United States. As a non-immigrant in the U.S., it is very important for your to be familiar with your immigration documents. The following documents should be kept in a safe place which is easy to access:

- Passport and Visa (if your passport expires but your visa is still valid, get a new passport and keep your old passport with the valid visa)
- Form I-20 (your current I-20 is needed for travel and verification, your old I-20s should be kept safe but separate.)
- DS-2019
- I-94 Arrival/Departure Record. [Click this link to visit the site where your I-94 can be printed.](#)

## Maintaining your Immigration Status

Like many nations, the US has laws governing foreign nationals residing temporarily within its borders. The many forms, numbers, fees, and deadlines can seem like a lot at first, but by following all the instructions in this document, you will maintain your status.

If you have questions concerning your status, please contact the International Student Services office - we are here to help you navigate these systems and processes. However, note that as a student visa holder, it is ultimately your responsibility to abide by US immigration regulations. Here are some things you keep in mind for maintaining your status:

### **Full Time Enrollment**

F-1 and J-1 Students are required to be enrolled "Full Time" and make satisfactory academic progress for the duration of their academic program. Undergraduate students are full time at or above 12 credit hours per semester, graduate students are full time at or above 6 credit hours per semester. Only one online class can be used to meet these credit hour totals.

In addition to being registered Full Time, F-1 and J-1 students are required to remain in "Good Academic Standing" for the duration of their academic program. Undergraduate students are in good academic standing with a GPA at or above 2.0, graduate students are in good academic standing with a GPA at or above 3.0.

### **Reduced Course Loads**

There are two specific circumstances where F-1 and J-1 students may be registered for a Reduced Course Load (RCL) but still be classified as "Full Time" and eligible for any F-1 or J-1 Benefits if they are otherwise eligible. Talk to the International Student Services office before dropping below full time, as both of these circumstances are limited and have strict guidelines that must be followed.

An illness or other medical condition may justify an RCL or an interruption of a student's program. The condition must be substantiated with medical documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist. RCLs for medical conditions will not be granted for more than 12 months during a single course of study.

The other reason an RCL can be configured is for a student completing their final term of a course of study who does not need 12 credit hours to complete their course of study. Carefully consider the consequences of electing this option, as there are other reasons you may want to remain enrolled full time, and any student who is granted this RCL cannot return to school under the same level.

### **Travel Outside the US, Visas, and Re-Entry**

If you plan to travel outside the US, please be sure to follow the following procedures:

- Check that your passport is valid and will be valid. Your passport must have at least 6 months left before it expires at the time you re-enter the US, and at all times while in the US. Some countries allow passports to be renewed while in the US but the process varies by issuing country.
- Ensure that your visa will be valid on the day that you re-enter the US. Your visa needs to be valid at the time you enter. You do not need your visa to be valid once you enter the US but it is good to keep it valid whenever possible, and it is not possible to renew the visa in the US.
- Verify that the information (including end date) on your I-20 or DS-2019 is correct, and ask International Student Services to update any incorrect information before you travel.
- If you are an F-1 student bring your I-20 to International Student Services at least one week before you travel to sign the I-20 Travel Endorsement. These signatures are good for one calendar year, but we recommend that you get them signed more often as unexpected travel delays or global events can complicate or delay travel.
- If you are a J-1 student bring your DS-2019 to the Registrar's office to get a travel signature. Your signature should be no older than 6 months.
- While you are outside the US take great care not to lose any of these documents as you will need them to re-enter the US.
- Upon re-entering the US, present all relevant documents to Immigration and Customs Enforcement at the US border, and upon being granted entry go to the DHS website and get your new I-94 entry record. This has your I-94 number, a very important piece of information needed for everything from applying for OPT to getting a Driver's License.

### **Employment and Internships**

Do not work without written authorization from USCIS and the International Student Advisor or in the case of a J-1 visa holder, without written authorization from your J-1 program sponsor.

### **Taxes and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**

JU students have three types of taxes to consider during their time here:

- Income Tax - If you get a job anywhere - on campus, off campus, OPT, Paid CPT, etc. that income is taxable. When you get the job, you will fill out a W-4 form which will let the company you work for know enough about you for them to estimate how much you'll have to pay in taxes each year. That is paid automatically, so when you get your first paycheck, look closely to see why it may be less than you think! At the end of the year, you'll be given an IRS Form W-2 which lets you know

how much tax has been paid on your behalf. If you made any money by working in this manner, you have to fill out IRS form 1040 to confirm you've paid enough in taxes. This process is much easier than it sounds, and there are many resources to help and this only applies if you're working and making money.

- School Tax - **This does not apply to every student!** If you receive a scholarship from anywhere - JU, a foreign government or entity, that scholarship is taxable. However, the Bursar's office calculates and automatically withholds the correct amount for you, so no additional work is needed.
- Sales Tax - This tax is levied similarly to a VAT. Sales tax is added automatically to the cost of goods and services that you buy in stores, online, etc. In Duval County, the sales tax is 7%, but this

### **Program Extensions and I-20 Changes**

If you are an F-1 student and at any point during your studies you realize that you will be graduating later than the Program End Date on your I-20 contact the International Student Services office immediately. While any change to a program that results in changes to your I-20 should be submitted to and approved by International Student Services as soon as you know about the need for the change, extensions are especially important, as failure to request an extension before your I-20 end date will result in your I-20 ending and you being unable to complete your degree program.

If you are a J-1 student, you should contact your program sponsor to request an extension of stay.

### **Completion of Studies or Transfers**

All F-1 Visa holders are allowed a grace period of 60 days upon completion of their studies to do one of the following things:

- Enroll in a new degree program
- Apply for a change of status
- Apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- Leave the country

If you want to continue your education, you can do so either at JU (this is a SEVIS Change of Level) or at another institution (this is a SEVIS Transfer). Your new I-20 must be issued within 60 days of your previous I-20 end date and your program must start within 5 months of the new I-20 being issued.

If you want to apply for H-1B, Permanent Residency, or other change of status, you must work with an immigration attorney and submit this change of status request within 60 days of your I-20 end date.

If you want to apply for OPT you must do so no later than 60 days after your program end date, although we recommend you do so much earlier - usually 90 days before your program end date.



If you don't do any of these things your F-1 status will expire 60 days after your I-20 end date. This is true even if your F-1 Visa is still valid. It is possible to have a valid visa but be out of status and this is one of the ways this can happen.

### **Reinstatement Requests**

Any F-1 student who has failed to maintain their status may request reinstatement to lawful F-1 status at the discretion of the USCIS. However, keep in mind that this is a request and will only be granted under limited circumstances. The same applies to J-1 Students. If you fall out of status for any reason, contact International Student Services immediately to discuss your options but keep in mind that any option presented will come with sacrifices, downsides, and costs.

### **Renewing your Visa or Passport**

As a continuing student at Jacksonville University, if at any time during your stay in the US your passport has less than 6 months of validity, you are considered "out of status" and eligible for deportation. Check with your country's nearest embassy or consulate to find out what your options are, but keep in mind that the process of renewing your passport abroad can take months. Furthermore, if your student visa stamp in your passport expires, your status **will** remain valid as long as you meet all other requirements, however if you leave the United States you will be unable to re-enter in F-1 Status if you do not renew your visa. F-1 and J-1 Visas cannot be renewed inside the US and must be done abroad, and this process can require extensive documentation and take time, so plan accordingly if you're leaving the US with an expired or soon-to-expire F-1 Visa.

## **Employment**

Your entry into the United States is covered by the F-1 or J-1 Visa and Status that you entered on. This is a **student status** meaning that your education should be your primary focus. However, there are limited opportunities for students at JU on F-1 or J-1 status to work legally while in the US, subject to regulations and restrictions. **Do not work without talking to International Student Services first, and acquiring permission and required authorization!** Doing so can result in the cancelation of your F-1 or J-1 Status and deportation.

## **Social Security Number**

A Social Security Number (SSN) is a number, issued by the United States Social Security Administration which required for any person to be employed and to receive payment for their work. A number of documents are required to get a SSN, and one of them is a letter from a Designated School Official. For this reason, if you are interested in getting a SSN, email International Student Services to discuss the application process. Keep in mind that the process can take several weeks so if you know you are going to need a SSN, the sooner you start the process the better.

## Employment Opportunities

There are four ways that a student can work while in the United States. Those four are:

- On-Campus Employment (F-1 and J-1)
- Financial Hardship (F-1 and J-1)
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (F-1 Only)
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) (F-1 Only)

### **On-Campus Employment**

F-1 and J-1 Students are eligible to work on campus. F-1 Students are able to work jobs that are considered "University Work Study" and which are directly student facing or student service positions. Undergraduate F-1 Students are required to wait until they have completed one full year of study at JU before they are eligible to work. J-1 students are able to work under the terms of a scholarship, assistantship, or fellowship. Both F-1 and J-1 students are restricted to a maximum of 20 hours per week while courses are in session and 30 hours per week during official university breaks. A minimum GPA of 2.0 is required to be maintained in order to continue on-campus employment. All employment must be approved by International Student Services before beginning work.

### **Financial Hardship Work Authorization**

F-1 and J-1 students are eligible to apply for a Financial Hardship work authorization, but doing so is discouraged for a number of reasons. The main reasons are that there is a non-trivial cost associated with applying (\$410) and that the requests are rarely approved. Because both F-1 and J-1 students are required to provide proof of ability to pay for their studies in the US before a visa is issued, authorizations issued for Financial Hardship must demonstrate a need that is not only severe but "unforeseeable." If you are interested in learning more about this, contact International Student Services.

### **Curricular Practical Training**

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a structured training available for F-1 students to engage in work or volunteer opportunities that an integral part of the academic curriculum. CPT is approved by the International Student Services office but does require a substantial amount of documentation to confirm that the employment is integral to the curriculum. The primary requirement is that the employment be directly related to coursework, which can be accomplished in one of the following three ways:

- The internship or employment is required for, and listed as a course requirement in the syllabus for a regular course at JU, or
- The internship or employment is done as a part of an approved "Independent Study" course which is directly related to the student's course of study and is approved by a professor, or

- The internship or employment is done as a part of an approved “Internship Experience” course which is directly related to the student’s course of study and is approved by a professor. CPT is approved one academic term at a time and is good for only a specific job. Other restrictions are in place and documentation is required. For more information, contact International Student Services.

### **Optional Practical Training**

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment available for F-1 students for practical training directly related to the student’s major area of study that may be used after completion of the student’s course of study. Unlike CPT, OPT is approved by the USCIS and requires a complex application with supporting documentation be submitted in a timely manner. OPT allows for up to 12 months of employment and the application must be submitted between 90 days before and 60 days after the I-20 end date. The cost to apply is \$410 and it can take several months to approve, so if you are interested in OPT, you should contact International Student Services between 6 and 4 months before your I-20 ends so that you can begin to prepare your application. Be aware that leaving the country between your I-20 end date and your OPT approval it puts you at risk of being denied re-entry and forfeiting your OPT application without a refund. Because this application is through USCIS, you will be issued an Employment Authorization Document and you may not start work until you are in possession of this card.

## **Information About Jacksonville University**

Regardless of your level of study or time in the US, there are times when you may need assistance as a student at JU. Because of this, several offices on campus are in place specifically to assist students. Below is a non-exhaustive list of offices and services available for all students in need. Please read the list below to see if you think you would benefit from the services offered by any of these offices:

### **Academic Advising Center**

Academic advising is an on-going process that assists students to develop and pursue educational and career goals and to achieve academic success. Academic advisors inform, support and encourage students to become self-directed in their educational planning.

The Academic Advising Center is on the first floor of the Howard Administration Building.

### **Academic Support Center**

The Academic Support Center provides currently enrolled JU students with quality academic assistance which can reinforce or expand on what is received in the classroom. The goals of the center are to provide tutoring, present study skills and strategies, offer standardized test preparation, give workshops as requested, and counsel students in retention strategies. If you feel

that you need help to be successful academically, contact the Academic Support Center - it is located on the 3rd floor of the Swisher Library.

## **Student Counseling Center**

The Student Counseling Center (SCC) is committed to the development of the whole person: academically, personally, socially and ethically. They believe that a student's intellectual and personal development are inseparable, and strive to help students reach his or her potential as individuals, both academically and personally.

The SCC offers many services to the individual JU student and to the JU community. Individual counseling is available to students on a short-term basis (up to 10 sessions). Group counseling is offered for students with similar issues who have an interest in participating. Groups generally consist of 5 - 10 participants. Crisis intervention is provided for students who require immediate intervention.

To make an appointment, simply call the SCC at 256-7180 during office hours (Monday - Friday, 8:30 - 5:00) or email [scc@ju.edu](mailto:scc@ju.edu). The Student Counseling Center is located in the Health Sciences Complex.

## **Student Inclusion**

The office of Student Inclusion serves as an integral part in the ongoing development of educational opportunities for all students within the Jacksonville University community on matters related to race, cultural diversity, equity and inclusion. The office is located on the third floor of the Davis Student Commons.

## **Health Insurance and Healthcare**

Immunizations and Medical Records are required of all students in advance of enrollment. Prior to registration, these records must be on file in the Admissions Office.

Aetna insures all JU students as a group, and the cost of this insurance is charged to your JU student account. The insurance is required and cannot be waived, even if proof of other insurance can be provided. To access your JU insurance information and Insurance Card, visit [aetnastudenthealth.com](http://aetnastudenthealth.com) and enter JU. Your information will be there and you can click "Get your ID card" to get access to your card.

Jacksonville University has a partnership with an off-campus health care provider, Care Spot - Arlington. This agreement allows JU students access to urgent health care services. Students requesting treatment must present a valid JU ID and a valid health insurance card at the time of service. You will be expected to pay the required co-pay. The University provides transportation for

residential students through a local taxi service to and from Care Spot – Arlington for students without their own transportation. Please contact the Residential Life Office for access to this service.

Care Spot is open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. every day. Students needing medical attention outside those hours, or in case of an emergency, rescue services are always called.

## Student Organizations and Clubs

Jacksonville University has over 60 student organizations and clubs on campus. With all of these different clubs and organizations, you will find many ways to meet new people, improve your leadership skills, build self-esteem, face responsibility, and accomplish goals that will enhance your future endeavors. Getting involved in different organizations in college is a great way to improve your resumé and make you stand out when applying for jobs after graduation.

For more information about how to get involved, visit the Student Engagement and Leadership office located on the second floor of the Davis Student Commons.

## Adjusting to Jacksonville and the US

Jacksonville, commonly referred to as “The First Coast” or “The River City” has a population of about 900,000 people, making it the most populous city in Florida and the 12th most populous in the US. Jacksonville is the city with the largest area in the contiguous United States covering 874 Square Miles (2,265 square km). The city is situated on the banks of the St. Johns River and operates the largest urban park system in the US. Jacksonville is becoming a city full of culture and diversity, and whether you are interested in sports, music, the arts, or outdoor attractions, there is something for everyone to enjoy in Jacksonville.

## Banks

While in the US, you should keep most of your money safely deposited in a bank, except for a small amount of money that you need for daily expenses (although many businesses are moving away from using cash for transactions and having cash on your person is becoming less necessary over time.). Keeping large amounts of cash on your person or at your residence can be dangerous. To protect your money we recommend that you open a bank account. While it is easier than ever to have a foreign bank account and live in the US, some institutions charge fees or restrict access to money, and having a US-based bank account can insulate you from these issues.

There are several banks located near campus. A bank official can explain many kinds of financial services that banks offer, including checking accounts, savings accounts, foreign currency conversion, bank drafts, money orders, credit cards, traveler’s checks, safe deposit boxes, and others. Explaining that you are an international student and that you do not have a social security number (if you don’t have one) early in your conversation will make for a much easier conversation.

Some banks which JU students have used in the past include Bank of America, Compass Bank, Fifth Third Bank, and Wells Fargo. These banks are listed purely as options, and JU does not and can not endorse any banking institution over others.

### **Savings Accounts**

If you have a large amount of money that will pay your expenses for several months or more, you may consider putting this money that you do not need immediate access to into a savings account. Banks use money in savings accounts to make investments and pay you interest (a percentage of how much money you have in your account) if you keep your account with them as long as you maintain a minimum balance set forth by the bank. You can apply for a Savings Account at the "new accounts" desk of the bank.

### **Checking Accounts, Checks, and Debit Cards**

People who want to use their money to make purchases, pay bills, or receive direct deposit payments for employment will need a checking account. While checks are becoming less and less used in US culture, some places still use them, so you may want paper checks.

On the other hand, Debit Cards are becoming more of a necessity for conducting regular business like shopping in the US. A Debit Card is different from a Credit Card, in that the debit card is linked directly to your bank account, so money you spend will be deducted from your account directly. This means that you can only spend as much money as you have instead of accruing a balance and paying it off at the end of the month.

Many banks issue bank cards (like debit cards) which can only be used to make deposits and withdraws from an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **Credit Cards**

Credit cards are a financial instrument like a Debit Card which allows you to pay for purchase without having to carry cash. However, unlike a Debit Card which is linked to your bank account, a Credit Card allows you to spend money up to your credit limit, even if you don't have enough money to pay for the purchase when it is made! This makes them good for emergency situation, but can cause you to go into debt if not used carefully. Also, if a credit card is lost or stolen, someone could use the card to purchase items or services that you cannot afford, so reporting the card lost or stolen immediately is very important. Some people choose not to have a credit card but this makes some transactions in the US like renting a car, getting a hotel room, or purchasing an airline ticket more difficult.

### **Money Transfers**

Money transfers can be made from your home country by sending money to the Jacksonville University operating account at Fifth Third Bank. The international routing number is Swift #FTBCUS3CXXX and the account number is 7450332627; Orthodontics Operating Account number is 7450440073. The money should be specified for a specific student and the student's ID number should be stated.

## Shopping

There are several places and ways to shop in the US and in Jacksonville - the most convenient way to shop is often online. If you live on campus you can get most online vendors to mail your goods to the JU Post Office, just make sure you've signed up for a P.O. Box.

If you prefer to shop in person, there are a few different options

### **Malls**

Malls are large buildings or groups of buildings with many different types of stores. These are sometimes social locations in addition to retail locations, and students might go in a larger group to "hang out" even if they aren't planning to purchase anything, as there are restaurants, coffee shops, etc. Some local malls include The Avenues Mall, St. John's Town Center, the Orange Park Mall, and the St. Augustine Outlets.

### **Mini Malls**

Mini-Malls or Strip Malls: Mini-malls are smaller than Malls, and usually contain a slightly different type of store, but are more functional and less social. A Mini-Mall might contain a mix of different types of stores listed below, as well as restaurants, banks, and gas stations. Sometimes referred to as "Shopping Centers" or "Plazas" they vary in size and store-type, and there are hundreds around Jacksonville. For example, the "Lake Lucina Shopping Center" is less than 1/3 of a mile (about 0.5km) from the main gate of JU, and has a grocery store, several restaurants, a cell phone store, an auto parts store, and a beauty supply store, among others.

### **Grocery Stores**

Most shopping for food to be cooked or consumed at home is done at large grocery stores. There are very few small, specialty food stores like bakeries, butchers, or produce markets - instead there are large stores which contain most or all common ingredients. Many also serve freshly made food and have pharmacies in addition to packaged food. Some types of stores like this are Publix, Winn-Dixie, Save-A-Lot, and Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market.

### **Big-Box Stores**

These are variety stores which sell a little bit of everything - electronics, appliances, sheets, towels, pillows, clothing, shoes, board games, and many other goods, but usually lack the variety of a specialty store. Many even have sections for groceries, though again they have a smaller variety than a dedicated Grocery Store. Stores like Target or Wal-Mart are in this group.

### **Specialty Stores**

These are stores which have a much larger selection of a specific type of good. For example Best Buy sells electronics - they have a much larger selection of TVs, Appliances, Computers, etc. than Target or Wal-Mart, but they **only** sell electronics. There are stores that vary in size for almost everything you could want, including clothing, tools and hardware, books, home goods, beauty and grooming supplies, pharmacies, and many others.

## On-Campus Dining

Aramark provides the food-service on campus. There are several dining options for students who are on campus:

### **Riverview Dining Hall**

Located in the Kinne University Center it is an all-you-care-to-eat location with several specialty stations making new foods every day, and some recurring favorites like pizza, hamburgers, and deli-sandwiches.

### **Starbucks**

Located across the hall from Riverview Dining Hall it is a full-service coffee shop with quick-service food you can grab and go.

### **Currents**

Located in the Davis College of Business it is a coffee shop which also has grab-and go salads, sandwiches, and bakery items.

### **Chick-Fil-A**

Located in the Davis Student Commons it is a fast food restaurant serving fried and grilled chicken nuggets and sandwiches, French fries, salads, and milkshakes.

### **POD Market**

Located across the hall from Chick-Fil-A it is a small convenience store with pre-packaged food and drink items as well as essential consumable items like non-prescription medicine, laundry detergent, and toiletries.

### **Waves**

Located in Oak Hall it is a quick service late night option which has similar pre-packaged food items like POD Market, as well as freshly made rice bowls.

## Restaurants

Restaurants off campus come in a variety of cuisines, styles, and price-points. Some inexpensive restaurants like McDonalds offer food for \$1 or less. Some very expensive restaurants offer meals which could cost over \$100 per person. Most places are somewhere in-between these two extremes. It is important to research menu offerings and pricing before going to a restaurant. Something else to keep in mind - a frequent comment we get from international students is that if you find a restaurant that has cuisine from your home country you'll likely find something very different from what you get at home. For instance, food from a Chinese Restaurant in the US might be unrecognizable to someone who is used to authentic Chinese cuisine. There are several common types of restaurants, with some of the most common types listed below:



### **Fast Food/Drive Thru**

This type of restaurant is known for its fast service and low cost. If you're in a car you can drive thru and pay and get your food without leaving your vehicle! If not, you can go inside, walk up to a counter, order and pay, and get your food in a few minutes. Examples are McDonalds, Burger King, Taco Bell, and Wendy's.

### **Fast Casual**

Usually a little more expensive and slower than "fast food," fast casual restaurants let you order at the counter and pay, and leave with your food, but it may take a bit longer to cook the food, or the food may be prepared in front of you. Examples include Subway, Chipotle, Moe's, Panera, and Hunan Wok (a Chinese Food restaurant near campus that is a student favorite.)

### **Hybrid**

Like a fast-casual restaurant, you order at a counter, but then you sit down and food is brought to you by a server who can also take additional orders, bring you refills on drinks, and do other things that you might expect from a "sit down" restaurant. Examples include Tijuana Flats, Bento, Maple Street Biscuit Co., and Tabouleh (a Mediterranean and Middle Eastern restaurant near campus that is a student favorite)

### **Sit Down**

A restaurant where you enter, wait to be seated, and receive full table-side service from a server. These are usually a little more expensive, but be careful because some Sit-Down restaurants which are very nice can be extremely expensive or even have a required dress code! Examples of more affordable sit-down restaurants near JU's campus are University Diner, Wing Depot, Lupita's, Bono's, and EJ's Pizza.

### **Delivery**

Some restaurants offer delivery (pizza restaurants are the most common) but with smart phone apps like GrubHub and DoorDash, many restaurants listed above can be delivered to campus, often right to your building or apartment.

### **Food Trucks**

A mobile kitchen in a truck or van, food trucks are very popular in Jacksonville and can be found most places where people congregate: sporting events, concerts, they can even be found in neighborhoods with fewer restaurant offerings like Springfield. Even JU brings food trucks to campus occasionally. If you find one you like, find them on social media to see where they'll be.

## **Transportation Around Jacksonville**

Jacksonville is a large city, and while students may be able to walk or bike to some close locations, getting around the larger city requires a motor vehicle. Some options are given below, but each student should choose the best option for them.

## **Busses & Public Transportation**

Public Busses are provided around Jacksonville by The Jacksonville Transit Authority (JTA). They also provided elevated monorail service around downtown, but the service area is very limited and the bus is their most popular option. Bus stops are located on University Boulevard in front of Terry Concert Hall and the residence halls. It costs money each time the bus is boarded, however you must have exact change and fares differ to outskirts of the city. Read the bus schedule carefully to know how many exact fares will be needed and to ensure that you're returning from your trip with enough time. For schedules and fare information you can visit the Jacksonville Transit Authority at [www.jtafla.com](http://www.jtafla.com), or call (904) 630-3100.

## **Taxis and Ride Sharing Services**

If you want to go somewhere more quickly than the bus travels, or want more flexibility with your travel schedule you may choose to use a ride-share or Taxi. Taxis (Cabs) are hired cars available to pick up on student or a group of students wherever they request. Rates for each company vary so it is best to call ahead to get fares. Many taxi companies also rent Limousines (Limos). These are much more expensive, larger cars (or SUVs) which are typically used for special occasions. Ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft function similar to Taxis but can be accessed through a smartphone application. While these services are popular and relatively inexpensive, there are advantages and disadvantages compared to conventional Taxis. Advantages include:

- Ride sharing services use a smartphone app and do not require you to call a dispatch service
- If you leave an item in a ride share you can contact the driver through the app (although there is no guarantee your items will be returned.)
- Apps give estimated cost and travel time before you decide if you want to book your trip.

Disadvantages include:

- Unlike taxi drivers, ride share drivers are not licensed or trained in the same way, and are driving their own car.
- If you are trying to get a ride when JU's gates are closed, it can be harder to direct a driver to your location
- Because a ride-share car is a private vehicle and not marked like a taxi, it can be harder to find your car and easier to make a mistake like getting into the wrong car.

If you are taking a ride share, taxi, or lim, let someone know where and when you're traveling, and be sure to check your surroundings when you leave. Always be careful and alert when you travel

## **Purchasing or Leasing a Car**

Some students who have the means choose to purchase a car, although this can be quite expensive. While a Florida Driver's License is not required if you have a valid international license, you may choose to get a Florida license as it is a good form of identification which is more widely accepted around the US than a foreign license or passport. However, if you own or lease a car, you must properly register, tag, title, and insure your car for you to drive it legally. Authorized car dealers will assist you with completing paperwork, but extreme caution should be taken if buying a car from an individual or any unauthorized or non-reputable dealership. Automobile insurance can be expensive, and it's against the law to drive without it. The Florida Joint Underwriter's Association insures international students, as do most major insurance companies in the US.

## Transportation Outside Jacksonville

The US has a series of interstate highways which serve major cities by car or bus. If you don't own a car, you can rent a car, but most rental agencies require you to be 21 years old or older, and require a credit card. Renting cars can be expensive and while it is convenient, it is often far too expensive to rent for long-term or in-town use.

### **Busses**

Greyhound is a national bus provider, and does long-distance bussing around the US. There is a greyhound station in Florida (although it is about 20 minutes away by car, so keep that in mind when booking travel.) Because busses make frequent stops and travel on public roads, they are often the slowest way to travel long distances, but that also means it's one of the most affordable. Visit [greyhound.com](http://greyhound.com) for more information. There are other bus services which might have less expensive fares but limited service areas.

### **Passenger Rail**

Amtrak is the largest passenger rail provider in the United States and also has a station in Jacksonville, although it is about 30 minutes away, so keep that in mind when booking travel. Because passenger rail service in the US often shares tracks with cargo trains, service is slower than air travel but faster than busses. Another advantage of Amtrak is that passengers can book private rooms for longer journeys which include beds, restrooms, and showers. Reservations should be made in advance of travel to ensure you have a seat. You can visit [amtrak.com](http://amtrak.com) for more information.

### **Air Travel**

The fastest way to travel long distances in the US is typically by air. The Jacksonville International Airport is the only commercial passenger airport in Jacksonville. Many major airlines fly in and out of Jacksonville. Airline reservations must be made in advance, and typically the farther in advance you book the less expensive the fare. Despite its name there are no international flights from JIA, so if you would like to fly outside the United States you'll need to fly through a more major airport, so plan your journey accordingly. You can visit the airport's website at [flyjax.com](http://flyjax.com) for information or to book travel.

## International Student Responsibilities

International students who obtain a student visa are required to remain in-status for the visa to maintain its validity. Some (but not all, this is not an exhaustive list) very important components of remaining in-status are

- Providing copies of the passport, visa, I-20 or DS-2019 and I-94 to International Student Services upon arrival and copies of extended passports and renewed visas.
- Reporting all changes of address and phone number to the Registrar and International Student Services (and the exchange program sponsor in the case of J-1 students) when the change occurs. Change of address must be reported within ten days to remain in status.
- Keeping your passport valid six months into the future.
- Requesting an extension to your program in the United States before you reach your program end date (if you will require additional time to complete your degree requirements).
- Maintaining full-time enrollment for the fall and spring semesters each academic year. Full time is defined as 12 hours per term for Undergraduate students, 6 hours per term for Graduate students, or enrollment in the ELP Program.
- Following international student employment eligibility requirements as contained herein by obtaining appropriate permission for on-campus or off-campus employment in advance.
- Assuring all documents are in order two weeks before leaving the United States: Ensuring your I-20 or DS-2019 travel signature is valid and possession of a valid visa. If your visa is expired or will expire while out of the US, you will need to request a visa renewal at the US Embassy or Consulate abroad before returning to continue your studies.
- Completing Internal Revenue Service Form 1040 NR and/or 8843 every year whether or not income, including scholarships and/or interest on checking and/or savings accounts, was earned in the United States.
- Notifying International Student Services of any changes in major and additions of major(s) or minor(s).
- Attending required International Student Meetings.
- Activating your JU student email and checking your inbox on a daily basis. Electronic mail is the University's official mode of communication with students and staff.
- Adhering to all state, local, and federal laws, as well as the JU Student Code of Conduct.
- Contacting International Student Services with questions about your status. The sooner we learn about problems the easier it is to help you fix them!