

# East Georgia

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## STATE COLLEGE<sup>®</sup>

### PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

East Georgia State College  
131 College Circle  
Swainsboro, GA 30401  
[www.ega.edu/admissions](http://www.ega.edu/admissions)

**Welcome!**

欢迎 | Bienvenido | ようこそ | Willkommen | أهال بك | Bienvenue

어서 오십시오 | Bem Vinda | स्वागत हे | Benvenuto | желанный

Welcome!

We are excited that you have considered East Georgia State College and will be joining our “Bobcat” family.

Our College prides itself in providing you access to earning an affordable degree. Now that you have taken the first step, it is time to complete the process and get you to our beautiful campus.

The purpose of this International Pre-Arrival Guide is to guide you the process. Take your time and review all the material. Take one step at a time and before you’ll know, you will be with us!

We are here to assist and get you on the right path to earning your degree! Please contact us in the Office of Admissions if you have any questions or concerns by calling 478-289-2169 or emailing [admissions@ega.edu](mailto:admissions@ega.edu).

Sincerely,

Your Admissions Team

## **WHAT'S INSIDE**

Step 1. RECEIVE: I-20 or DS-2019

Step 2. APPLY FOR: Student Visa (F1 or J1)

Step 3. ACTIVATE: Your "MyEGSC" Account

Step 4. ARRANGE: Housing & Meal Plan

Step 5. PLAN: Your travel to the U.S.

Step 6. ATTEND: International Check-in & Student Orientation

Step 7. SUBMIT: Immunization Forms

Step 8. PAY: Tuition & Fees

Step 9. REQUEST: Waive Health Insurance Plan (Optional)

## STEP 1: GETTING YOUR I-20

### Your Immigration Document

The I-20 Form (Certificate of Eligibility) is a legal immigration document, created by EGSC, allowing you to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy. If you are already attending a high school or college in the U.S., you will need a transfer I-20 once your current program ends in order to continue your studies in the U.S. EGSC will mail out your I-20 to you by standard mail in the US and first class mail outside the US.

Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement	I-20, Certificate of OMB NO. 1653-003
<b>SEVIS ID: N0004705512</b>	
<b>SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME</b> Doe Smith	<b>GIVEN NAME</b> John
<b>PREFERRED NAME</b> John Doe-Smith	<b>PASSPORT NAME</b>
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b> UNITED KINGDOM	<b>COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP</b> UNITED KINGDOM
<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b> 01 JANUARY 1990	<b>ADMISSION NUMBER</b>
<b>FORM ISSUE REASON</b> INITIAL ATTENDANCE	<b>LEGACY NAME</b> John Doe-Smith
<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>SCHOOL NAME</b> SEV2 School for Advanced SEVIS Studies SEV2 School for Advanced SEVIS Studies	<b>SCHOOL ADDRESS</b> 9002 Nancy Lane,
<b>SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL</b> Helene Robertson EDSO	<b>SCHOOL CODE AND DATE</b> BAL214F4444000 05 APRIL 2015

### Your I-20

The Form I-20 is an important document that you should keep safe, as you will need it when you:

- Pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee
  - Before you pay the I-901 Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Fee, you must receive the Form I-20 from the DSO at the school you plan to attend. You will need information from the Form I-20 to pay the fee. The I-901 SEVIS Fee is mandatory and must be paid before you enter the United States.
- Apply for a nonimmigrant visa
  - The Form I-20 lists your program start date, 30 days before which you are allowed to enter the United States. F-1

student visas can be issued up to 120 days in advance of your course of study start date. Your type of student visa must match the type of Form I-20 you have (e.g., F-1).

- Enter the United States
  - You need to have your Form I-20 on hand as you enter the country. Do not pack it away in your suitcase. A U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer will instruct you to present your Form I-20 at the port of entry. You may arrive up to 30 days before the start date listed on your Form I-20
- Change status while in the United States
  - You need a Form I-20 if you are already in the United States as another type of nonimmigrant and you are applying to USCIS to change your status to F.
- Apply for benefits
  - Your Form I-20 proves that you are legally enrolled in a program of study in the United States. Therefore, it may be needed when you apply for the benefits available to F students. If you are eligible to apply for a driver's license or a social security number, remember to bring your Form I-20 with you.

As of July 1, 2016, the redesigned Form I-20 is required for all F nonimmigrant visa applications, entry into the United States, travel and applications for nonimmigrant benefits. The previous version of the Form I-20 (with a barcode) is now invalid. Students please note that your DSOs were responsible for providing an updated, hard copy of the Form I-20 with original signatures to all F-1 students at their schools.

### Standard Mail (USPS)

Please allow approximately 2-4 weeks for standard delivery to US addresses, if you are currently already in the country. Depending on your status, you may be asked to submit a change of status to SEVIS and possibly exit the country to be able to come in under your I-20.

### Global Express Mail (USPS)

If you live outside of the U.S., you can select the express mail option to ensure quick, reliable

delivery of your I-20 with tracking. The shipping fees for express mail service generally range from \$50 to \$100 depending on the country.

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## STEP 2: GETTING A VISA

The type of visa that you apply for will depend on your course of study. While attending EGSC, students will apply for an F-1 type of visa. It is very important that you apply for the correct visa to ensure there are no delays in receiving your visa. You cannot enter the United States until you receive a valid visa.

### F-1 Visa Steps

- Apply to a SEVP Approved School
  - Students need to apply and be accepted by East Georgia State College.
  - Before your I-20 can be sent, you must complete the Financial Certificate and Verification form. You can find a copy of this form in the International Student Packet.
- Pay SEVIS Fee and Receive your I-20
  - Once you're accepted, you will be required to pay the [SEVIS I-901](#) Fee in order to be enrolled in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Then, your school will provide you with a Form I-20. This form will be presented to the consular officer when you attend your F-1 visa interview. If your spouse and/or children plan to reside in the USA with you while you study, they will be required to have individual Form I-20s, but they will not need to be enrolled in the SEVIS.
- Complete the Visa Application
  - Applying for the F-1 student visa may vary depending on the U.S. embassy or consulate you are dealing with. You will be required to pay a non-refundable visa application fee. There is an online visa application available, which allows you to complete and print the [Form DS-160](#) to take to your F-1 visa interview.
- Schedule and Prepare for your interview
  - You can schedule your F-1 visa interview with the U.S. embassy or consulate. Wait times for interview appointments vary by location, season, and visa category, so you should apply for your visa early. An F-1 student visa for the USA can be issued up to 120 days in advance of your course of study start date. You will only be able to enter the US with an F-1 visa 30 days before your start date.
  - The following documents are required for your F-1 visa interview:
    - A valid passport
    - The Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-160
    - The application fee payment receipt
    - A passport photo
    - A Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status (Form I-20)
    - Proof of financial support
    - Acceptance letter to EGSC

Additional documents may be requested to prove your eligibility for the F-1 student visa, including academic transcripts, diplomas, degrees, or certificates. [Test scores](#) such as the TOEFL, SAT, or another English proficiency exam may also be requested, as well as proof of your intent to depart the U.S. after your program is complete and proof of your financial stability.

- Attend your F-1 Visa Interview
  - Your F-1 visa interview will determine whether you are qualified to receive an F-1 student visa for the USA. If you have prepared the appropriate documents and meet all of the F-1 visa requirements, your visa will be approved at the discretion of the consular officer.
  - You may be required to pay a visa issuance fee. Digital fingerprint scans will be taken for records. Your passport will be taken so that you can get your visa and you will be informed

when you can get it back, either by pick-up or in the mail.

- Check out a [list of questions](#) that you could be asked during your F-1 Visa interview
- Keep in mind that visa issuance is not guaranteed. Never make final travel plans until you have your visa approved. If your visa is denied, you will be given a reason based on the section of law which applies to your ineligibility. Filing a waiver of ineligibility is possible in some cases.

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### **STEP 3: SETTING UP YOUR MyEGSC ACCOUNT**

#### **Follow these steps:**

- Go to <https://myegsc.ega.edu/>
- Select "Click here to retrieve your myEGSC username"
- Input your information (your SSN is your EGSC student ID#) and select "Search."
- You will be given your EGSC ID and username.
- Click "Return to MyEGSC Login."
- You are redirected back to the first page. In the Sign in box, type in the username that you just looked up and your password.
- Select "Login."
- You will be asked to set up your security questions after you have logged in. DO NOT change your password until after the term has begun as it could unlink your associated accounts.

#### **Sign into Your Student Email (Office 365)**

During your course of study at the East Georgia State College, you will be expected to use your student email to send and receive information to the university staff and professors. Be sure to keep a regular check on this email as this is where we send important information to you about your immigration status, tuition fees, registration, and updates.

Download the App

Go to <https://www.ega.edu/help/how-do-i-download-the-myegsc-mobile-app.html>

#### **Using MyEGSC**

MyEGSC features a broad variety of online tools and information for students. Most of the information is categorized using Quicklinks in the "Launchpad" and your favorites.

When you first log in to MyEGSC, you will notice a series of "links" on the left of the screen. Each link contains a specific information, the most common of which are outlined below.

- CatMail (Office 365)
  - The main link is designed for quick and easy access to student email. You can download the app for east access but check frequently!
- BannerWeb
  - The BannerWeb link provides automatic access to a secure, online tool used to manage student information.
- GaView D2L/Brightspace
  - This link features information regarding the individual courses you are registered for that includes online content for F2F and distance education courses.
- GradesFirst
  - This link contains information about your advisor, making appointments with your advisor, etc.

Please click all links to become familiar with MyEGSC and its use.



## STEP 4: RESERVE HOUSING IN ADVANCE

*\*Before your arrival into the United States, be sure to secure housing. International students can live either on or off campus in most cases.*

There are several considerations you should consider before you choose your housing arrangements, including:

- price
- travel to the EGSC campus
- number of roommates you expect to have
- access to a kitchen and laundry units
- any other special needs or wants

**Please be aware:** *EGSC is not responsible for arranging your housing. This is an individual choice as there are many options. You are expected to arrange and secure your housing prior to arrival in the U.S. or as soon as you arrive in the U.S. Without a car, US bank account or US social security #, this can be very challenging. Therefore, we recommend living on-campus when you first arrive. It is easy, secure, convenient, and takes away all the hassle of unexpected issues. It is also the best way to meet friends and get involved. Housing is very important since it will be one of your biggest expenses and will affect your personal and academic adjustment.*

- 1. On-campus Housing (Swainsboro campus only).** Please see the Housing website at [Apply For Housing \(ega.edu\)](#) for virtual tours, amenities, pricing and policies. Housing can be contacted by phone at: 478-289-2172 or by email at [housing@ega.edu](mailto:housing@ega.edu)
- 2. Off-campus Housing.** For a reliable list off-campus housing options that are, please visit the Off Campus Housing Resources website at <https://www.ega.edu/student-experience/housing/off-campus-housing.html>



## STEP 5: PLAN YOUR TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES

You are required to arrive on campus in time for international check-in.

You may enter the U.S. up to 30 days before the program start date printed on your I-20 (section 5).

- You may have trouble entering the U.S. after the program start date.
- Late arrival to the U.S. may also result in delay or denial of entry to the U.S.
- Unexpected Delays? Notify the DSO as soon as possible to discuss your options. When purchasing your plane tickets, please arrive at least 1-2 days before International Check-in and no later than the start date on your I-20.

### Carry the following documents with you on the plane (not in your checked luggage):

- Passport with your F-1 visa
- SEVIS form I-20
- Copy of confirmation of SEVIS fee payment
- Evidence of financial resources
- Evidence of EGSC admission: acceptance letter, tuition receipts or transcripts
- Contact information for DSO – provided on the end of this guide.

Inform the immigration officer at the port of entry that you will be a full-time student at East Georgia State College to ensure that you are admitted in the correct student status.



***Be sure to check*** the arrival stamp in your passport (if provided) says “D/S” for duration of status and that the proper visa category is indicated: F1. If not, let the DSO know as soon as possible.

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## **STEP 6: INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION AND REGISTRATION**

The EGSC New Student Orientation is currently online. It can be accessed by visiting <https://www.ega.edu/admissions/orientation/index.html> . Built in the Orientation, there is a section for you to complete the pre-Registration Survey. This survey will be used to register you for courses.

For more information, please review the Accepted Students page on our website.

### **Provide to EGSC:**

- Your passport with valid F-1 Stamp
- Your I-20 with your signature

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## **STEP 7: SUBMIT IMMUNIZATION RECORDS**

EGSC requires certain immunizations of all students. If you have received any of the required immunizations from your home country, it is recommended that you print out the immunization form and have a doctor give you a copy of your records before you arrive in the United States. To see a current list of required immunizations along with the Immunization Policy, please click the link below.

<https://www.ega.edu/admissions/files/immunization-form-1.pdf>

All new students (freshman, transfers, and others) attending regularly scheduled classes or receiving resident credit will be required to submit a Certificate of Immunization prior to attending classes. The certificate will be kept on file and will be valid throughout the tenure of the student's enrollment. Your medical doctor needs to fill out the immunization for and you should return this form to the East Georgia State College. Once your doctor has filled out the form, send the completed form to [documents@ega.edu](mailto:documents@ega.edu). Include your name and Student ID number to ensure the documents are uploaded to the correct file.

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## STEP 8: PREPARE YOUR FINANCES! PAYING TUITION & FEES



The Business office is the only office on campus that can accept tuition payments. All inquiries about bills and payments should be made to their office.

The cost of attending The East Georgia State College can vary, depending on a student's classification, residency status, method of instruction, and/or degree program. Below are links to the fee charts that provide an estimate of what it will cost to take a course, or courses, at The East Georgia State College. These fee charts are only intended to be a guide and do not include special course fees, meal plans, or housing charges. The information contained in the fee charts is subject to change. All International students are charged out of state tuition.

- If you are taking an online class (D2L) or eCore, then you may have additional tuition charges associated with them, and the charges are listed on each fee sheet.
- Mandatory fees are assessed by using all hours attempted, including Online (Net) and eCore classes when taking any Face-to-Face classes.
- For specific information on mandatory fees please [CLICK HERE](#).

### Tuition & Fee Payment

- Tuition and fee payment deadlines are usually **one week after the start of the semester**. It is important to be aware of the final payment deadlines. EGSC will email reminders to your EGSC email address. The DSO will remind you also.
- Failure to pay all fees and tuition by the deadlines will result in classes being automatically dropped. In that case, you may not be able to get back in if the class seats are full.
- This could create a serious problem with your immigration status. EGSC has no control over these deadlines and processes. Avoid all these problems by settling your bill on time!

There are several methods to pay your tuition and fees:

### 1. International Transfers

East Georgia State College has partnered with TransferMate, a leading cross-border payments provider, to offer you an easy, economical and secure international tuition and fee payment options.



<https://www.ega.edu/help/how-and-where-do-i-pay-tuition-and-fees.html#international>

### 2. Pay Online

To pay using webcheck, BankMobile Vibe Account webcheck\*, or a credit card, simply log into your **myEGSC account**. For detailed instructions, click the following link.

<https://www.ega.edu/help/how-and-where-do-i-pay-tuition-and-fees.html>

### 3. Set up a EGSC Tuition Payment Plan\*

*\*This option is available for current tuition, on-campus housing and meal plans only.*

EGSC has partnered with Nelnet Business Solutions (NBS) to allow students to pay tuition and fees in installments, helping make college more affordable. The Nelnet payment plan is a flexible payment option that allows payments with either credit/debit card, or automatic withdrawal from a checking or savings account. The payment plan is not a loan, and has no credit checks, interest, or finance charges associated with this option. This plan can cover any tuition, student fees, meal plan, and on-campus housing charges up to \$5,500.00. **Click for more information about the payment plan.**

## **(Optional) Step 9: WAIVE HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN**

All international students are automatically enrolled in [EGSC's "SHIP"](#) student insurance plan in order to protect against the extremely high cost of US healthcare and catastrophic personal debt. The bill is automatically added to your student account.

Students may choose a different plan if they do not want to keep the United Health Care plan. This option requires the student to request a waiver each Fall and Spring by the waiver deadline.

- Waivers do not renew automatically, and a new waiver request is required each Fall and Spring. Summer semester is included in Spring coverage.

### **United Healthcare, INC.**

The University System of Georgia has contracted United Healthcare to provide affordable, high quality student health insurance coverage.

#### Plan Enrollment

Enrollment in United Health Care is automatic and charged to your student account each Fall and Spring. However, you must "activate" your coverage to use it.

#### Activate Your Coverage

Activate the plan here: <https://www.uhcsr.com/ega>

**ATTENTION:** Failure to pay for the health insurance or complete the waiver process by the fee payment deadline will result in all classes being dropped, which can affect your immigration status.

Contact United Healthcare

**Plan Information**

United Healthcare Student Resources 2301  
West Plano Parkway, Suite 300  
Plano, TX 75075

**Mail your claims to:**

United Healthcare Student Resources  
P.O. Box 809025 Dallas,  
TX 75380-9025

**Phone:**

Customer Service - 1-800-767-0700

**Request Insurance Waiver**

**Insurance Waiver Deadline for Spring 2023: January 22nd, 2023 at 5:00pm**

**Insurance Waiver Deadline for Fall 2023: TBD**

**Note: The Waiver Process can take several days, so be sure to pay your FULL EGSC balance, including Insurance by the payment deadline. When your waiver is approved, you will automatically receive a refund.**

1. Log on to <https://www.uhcsr.com/ega>.
2. Click the 'Waiver Form' on the bottom of the page. Fill out the form(s) set up for your institution.
3. United Health Care receives your waiver request and confirms request. If you do not receive this email, resubmit your waiver request.
4. Request is Reviewed by UHC (may take several days).
5. When verification is complete, you will receive an email stating approval or denial. If approved, EGSC will remove the fee from you student account in 3-4 business days.

Please note that the EGSC is not involved in the waiver or billing process.

\*\*If you are attempting to fill out the waiver and receive any error (record unable to be found, etc.) Please contact Ms. Chelsea Follis at [cfollis@ega.edu](mailto:cfollis@ega.edu). Be sure to include your 930 Student ID Number in that email as well.

**QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT US:**

Admissions  
131 College Circle  
Swainsboro, GA 30401

Phone: 478.289.2169 | Email: [admissions@ega.edu](mailto:admissions@ega.edu)  
Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm