

STUDENT SURVIVAL GUIDE (updated 7/2008)

DO THIS NOW, IF NOT ALREADY DONE...

1. Find a place to live.

If you do not have a place lined up, then you need to get on this ASAP. Gainesville is a big college town and apartments rent out fast. Your apartment will likely be the biggest budget item you have, so make sure that you get a quiet place that you won't mind staying in during the day and sleeping in at night. Utilities are not too bad here, but it can get pricey, especially during the summer months. Some apartment complexes include utilities in the rent, but be sure to ask before signing a lease.

Rent in Gainesville usually starts around \$400.00 to split a four bedroom in University Club Apartments up to \$2300.00 for a 4 bedroom in College Park Apartments. On average, a one bedroom apartment will cost about \$675.00 a month. And don't forget about deposits and any pet fees! Depending on the apartment complex, local promotions for renters may include free DSL, free Cable, one free month of rent, and free rental of furniture. Most apartment complexes include parking in their rental agreements, but make sure this is the case when you are looking to rent.

Check out Apartment Hunters

(<http://www.apartmenthunters.com/Homepages/Gainesville.aspx>) or The Gainesville, FL Apartment Guide (<http://gainesville-rent.com/>), both of which will help you find an apartment free of charge. They'll give you a wide variety of apartments, condos or homes and price ranges to choose from.

Here are lists of many of the off-campus apartments available:

- http://www.housing.ufl.edu/housing/downloads/off_campus_list.pdf
- http://www.housing.ufl.edu/housing/Facilities_OChousinglist.htm

The following websites provide reviews of apartment complexes in Gainesville:

- <http://www.apartmentratings.com>
- <http://www.apartmentreviews.net>

If you want to share an apartment with another student, contact the area director in your area, they may be able to put you in touch with other incoming or current students who may want to share an apartment.

Another factor in your apartment search may be which bus line the apartment complex is on if you're considering taking the bus to campus every day. Parking can be a huge hassle on campus and you'll save money if you take the bus because you won't have to pay for a parking decal. The Regional Transit bus system is safe and reliable and covers most of Gainesville and all of campus. Students even ride free with their UF Gator 1 card!

2. Make sure that the Student Health Care Center has your immunization records.

In order to be cleared to register your first semester, the Student Health Care Center must have received a copy of your immunization records. If you do not have this readily available, contact your old school and see if they will send you or UF a copy of the immunization records that they have on file. This is much easier than tracking down your old doctors and asking them to access their records for you. The Student Health Care Center must receive your immunization form three weeks before registration. It can be mailed or faxed to the address below:

Student Health Care Center
Infirmary Building
PO Box 117500
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-7500
Fax: (352) 392-0938 or (352) 392-1161

3. Learn the semester's critical dates so you will be prepared.

The Registrar's homepage (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/>) posts an updated listing of critical dates for each semester. Checking the Registrar's site is the best way to keep on top of the academic dates for the term.

4. Get a sense of your financial situation given your assistantship or fellowship arrangement.

This is something everyone needs to know, but many are afraid to ask. Every student has a different funding situation. For example, some financial contracts require you to pay some amount of University of Florida fees but others do not. Student Financial Services can help you with questions about your individual situation.

As a graduate student, you're likely already familiar with the system of student loans. Please be aware that the Student Financial Services doesn't even begin to disburse loans until the Drop/Add period has ended for the semester. After that, you have to wait for your tuition waiver to be processed, if one is granted, and all previous debts, such as fees, book deferments, etc., to be satisfied before you check is processed, and then sent on to your current address. For this reason, it is imperative that UF has your most current mailing address at all times. Go to <http://www.bridges.ufl.edu/directory/> and click on the direct link to the UF directory to enter your correct contact information for the UF directory. Also, once everything is up and running in the system for you, <http://my.ufl.edu> will be a useful resource. (For example, payroll information will be there, and if you teach a class, the student rosters will be there).

Most students arrive one to two weeks before classes begin, as graduate students must attend the orientations that are held in the week preceding classes. This means that a student could

conceivably be living here for a month or two before any loan money is issued to them, so be sure to budget properly. You have the option of having the loan funds directly deposited into your bank account. To do so, choose the EFT selection on the Financial Information page in ISIS (<http://www.isis.ufl.edu>).

If you have a graduate assistantship, be certain that you properly fill out and return the necessary forms with all accompanying documentation. Letters of Appointment for new students (needed to get your tuition waiver) should be available the first week of classes. Failure to return the forms within the allotted time could mean a hold up in payment of your assistantship.

Your paycheck will be issued every other week by the Psychology Department. All employees of the university are expected to use the direct deposit program – putting your check directly into the bank from UF. The form can be found at <http://fa.ufl.edu/forms/pdf/fa-ps-dda.pdf> and most likely, the department will give you a direct deposit form with your first paycheck. (Do not confuse this with the EFT selection available through ISIS for the disbursement of your financial aid money).

SOON AFTER ARRIVING IN GAINESVILLE

1. Groceries. (the second biggest budget item)

Your options for large grocery markets in Gainesville are Publix, Winn Dixie, Albertson's, SweetBay and The Fresh Market. Publix is the biggest chain in the area and has multiple locations all over town, several close to campus. If you like veggies or organic foods, there are Ward's, Fresh Market and SweetBay, which specialize in organic food, as do smaller stores like Mother Earth and Sunflower Foods.

2. Furniture.

Most furniture stores in town are located in and around 13th Street: Furniture Kingdom, Leonard's Furniture, the Futon Corner and Ashley's Furniture. If you are on a tight budget, there are a variety of thrift stores near the University: Goodwill, Salvation Army, Hospice Attic, etc. Also, Gainesville boasts a very large Craig's list community (<http://gainesville.craigslist.org/>) check out the listings of slightly used furniture. Finally, you can also take a trip to the neighboring town of Waldo on Saturday and check out the biggest flea market around. It's pretty nice, great for people watching, and free.

3. Sign up for utilities

Utilities in Gainesville are run through Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) and cable through Cox Cable (you only receive a couple of TV stations without cable). Electricity is not too bad here, but it can get pricey, especially during the summer months. One student said she spends \$70-\$150 per month on electricity, \$40 for digital cable, or \$80 for phone and DSL. Depending on the age and quality of A/C system you have and the number of lights you leave on, your bill may vary.

4. Explore and decide on an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

If you are going to get high speed internet, both Cox Cable and Bellsouth (DSL) offer decent services. Make sure that the area in which you will be living has the service options you want. Some areas on the outskirts of town have limited options as far as Internet service goes. Some apartment complexes offer free high speed access, which is a nice perk. The Department of Psychology has wireless computer access – you simply bring in your laptop and sign on with your Gatorlink ID (see below). Depending on the lab you are in, you may also have access to a desktop machine in your assigned lab.

5. Get a University of Florida ID card (the “Gator 1 card”).

The Gator 1 Card is the official University of Florida picture ID card. It is required of all students, faculty, and staff. Many activities on campus are only available upon presentation of the Gator 1 card. Getting your card is simple. Go to the UF Bookstore & Welcome Center at the Museum Road entrance on the ground floor (up one flight of stairs). Fill out the white UFID Request form and present a photo ID, such as driver's license, military ID, or passport. If you do not have a photo ID, you can go to Station #2 at the Registrar's Office in Criser Hall for a notarized statement affirming your identity. If this is a replacement card, they may be able to look up your prior image to verify your identity. Pay \$10.00 by Cash, Check, Credit or Debit Cards. And that's it!

Students must have a Gator 1 card to do any of the following:

1. Use CIRCA Computer Labs.
2. Use all campus libraries and access periodical databases in LUIS.
3. Use all UF recreation facilities, including Student Recreation & Fitness Center and Southwest Recreation Center, and Lake Wauberg.
4. Ride on free RTS bus service.
5. Play intramural sports.
6. Buy football and other sports tickets.
7. Buy Gator Growl tickets.
8. Use a Gator Dining account.
9. Use prepaid vending accounts.
10. Use Student Health Care Center services at the Infirmary.
11. Vote in Student Government elections.
12. Obtain information on accounts and receive financial aid disbursements at University Financial Services.

More information on what you can do with your Gator 1 card is available at the ID Card Services website: www.gator1card.ufl.edu/

6. Complete any paperwork related to declaring Florida residency.

In-state tuition is a whole lot cheaper than out-of-state tuition, sometimes by more than 50%. Graduate students who receive an assistantship or Fellowship are required to apply for residency as soon as they are eligible, to save the University of Florida money when

paying tuition waivers. This is because the State of Florida subsidizes about two-thirds of the full cost per credit hour for students who qualify for in-state tuition rates.

You are considered a Florida resident if you live here, but to be a resident for tuition purposes has more stringent requirements. First, you must be admitted to the university, have completed one term of enrollment as a non-Florida resident and provide documentation of 12 months of legal residence in Florida. You should begin TODAY to get this documentation. Documentation may include a Florida driver's license, car registration, voter registration, and county declaration of domicile (showing residence 12 months before UF residency status is received). If you feel you have satisfied these basic qualifications, you can submit the Request for Residency Change and the Citizenship Confirmation form. More information, including the forms, can be found at <http://www.admissions.ufl.edu/residency/>. At a minimum, make sure you have a Florida driver's license, and a dated copy of your lease showing you moved here this summer. Have all of the required documentation this year and complete the forms as soon as possible in the summer before your second year. If students are eligible for residency and have not completed the proper paperwork they may have to provide the additional cost of non-resident (out-of-state) tuition from their own funds. **This is very important!!**

7. Get a Florida Driver's License, etc.

A list of Department of Motor Vehicle offices in the State of Florida are available online (<http://www.hsmv.state.fl.us/offices/index.html>). Voter registration can be done when obtaining a driver's license, or at the Alachua County Courthouse located in downtown Gainesville, or at any US post office. Declarations of domicile, needed for Florida residency, can be filed at Florida county courthouses as well.

8. Get familiar with UF computing and set up your UF email account.

Every University of Florida student is required to have a Gatorlink email account and to keep up with it regularly. All official communications from the University of Florida, deadline reminders, cancelling of classes, or policy announcements, will be sent straight to your Gatorlink account. To set up a Gatorlink account, go to <http://www.gatorlink.ufl.edu/>.

IMPORTANT: AOL is not always compatible with the Gatorlink system, so if you have AOL, consider dropping it altogether or keep it separate from your Gatorlink email.

9. Get on the Psychology network and listserv for students.

You will need to visit the Psychology department's website to fill out an online network account application. Look under Support/Computer Support and then read the New Account section where you will find a link to the network application. While filling out the application, it is important that you take the time to read and familiarize yourself with the University, College, and Department's computer policies. Once the application is processed, you will be granted access to resources in your area. You will use your

Gatorlink username and password for access. You will be added to the department's listserv. All Psychology graduate students are required to be on the student listserv – this will be the primary way that you receive important information from the department. You will also be added to the web directory for the department. Photos are optional for the directory. You can submit a photo or the IT staff (room 187) can take one for you.

10. Register for classes.

Students register for classes through the online ISIS system at <http://www.isis.ufl.edu>. To do this, go to my.ufl.edu and log in using your Gatorlink ID and password. Many graduate courses at UF are department-controlled, which means that you are not allowed to enroll in those courses through ISIS – ISIS can be used only for open-enrollment classes. If you have problems registering for classes, please contact the Graduate Secretary for assistance.

It is very important that you know the deadlines to register for each semester. If you have not registered by the deadline (before classes start), then you will be assessed a \$100 late registration fee. You do not have to have your schedule finalized by the end of registration, but you have to be registered for SOMETHING in order to avoid late penalties.

All graduate assistants holding appointments from .25 to .74 FTE will receive a tuition waiver for 9 credit hours each Fall and Spring semester. If you have a special Fellowship you may need to enroll for 12 credits, and receive a 12-credit tuition waiver. For most students, tuition waivers do not cover fees which can range up to \$500 per semester.

11. Get a parking decal.

With approximately 7,000 parking spaces for 47,000 students, faculty and staff, parking on campus can be tricky. To help ease the problem, UF has an agreement with Regional Transit System (RTS) to provide free bus service to anyone with a Gator 1 card. Most apartment complexes are serviced by RTS.

If you must park on campus, you will need to purchase a parking decal from the Department of Transportation and Parking (<http://www.parking.ufl.edu/>). Parking lots and garages on campus are color coded for specific decal holders and these fill up quickly. Parking in one of two commuter lots is highly recommended. Both offer reliable bus service to the center of campus.

All individuals who wish to park a motor vehicle on campus during restricted hours must display a valid parking decal or park in a metered space and pay the appropriate fee. Restricted hours are 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, unless otherwise indicated. Do not park without the correct decal or you risk getting a ticket, getting your car booted or having your car towed.

For more information about the decal system, parking on campus and buying a decal, visit the Department of Transportation and Parking website (<http://www.parking.ufl.edu/>).

12. Buy your textbooks.

Once you have registered for your classes through ISIS, click on “textbook requirements.” Once you know what textbooks you’ll need, get them as soon as possible. Early birds get the used textbooks, which cost much less than the new ones. Sometimes, you can find used textbooks at various websites including half.com or ecampus.com. Here is a list of local bookstores:

- Florida Book Store - 2010 SW 34th Street; 352-336-5011
- Gator Textbooks - 3501 SW 2nd Ave; 352-374-4500
- Goerings Bookstore - 1717 NW 1st Avenue; 352-377-3703
- University of Florida Bookstore – in the Reitz Union on Museum Road
- TIS Books - 1227 W. University Avenue; 352-377-1788

What is the textbook deferment plan about?

If you are going to be dependent on school loans to purchase your schoolbooks, look into the book deferment programs available at the UF bookstore, as well as other various private bookstores. This program will allow you to use up to \$500 of your expected funds that exceed your debts.

THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES

1. Find parking or know your bus route.

Buses are the best way. Look at <http://www.go-rts.com> to find your area schedule.

All vehicles parked on campus during hours of parking restriction enforcement must display a valid UF parking decal. A decal is not required to park in most restricted areas after 4:30 pm, but be sure to check signage and never park in a service drive, reserved space or disabled person parking space without the proper decal or permit.

If you have to drive, most likely, you will have a commuter parking pass. Check the map on the Department of Transportation and Parking to see what areas you’re allowed to park. If your classes are in the Psychology Building, the most convenient commuter lot is the one on Gail Lemerand Drive. You can also park in “all decal” parking if you don’t mind the walk:

If you are desperately hunting for parking and can’t find a spot in time for class, consider paying for all day parking at the garage in the Reitz Union, at the corner of Museum

Road and Reitz Union Drive. The garage is an unrestricted pay facility available to all members of the University community and the hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. Unless you arrive early, it may be full, but it is a last-ditch option to check.

2. Find the Psychology Building and other classroom buildings

The Psychology Building is on Center Drive, off Archer or Museum Road depending on which way you are driving. A campus map can be found at <http://campusmap.ufl.edu>.

3. Find your office space.

Most students have a place to hang their hat somewhere in psychology facilities. It could be in the Psychology Annex, the trailer behind the Psychology Building, or in your advisor's lab space in the Psychology Building or McCarty C Building. To find your office, contact your advisor and area director.

4. Introduce yourself to the Support Staff.

The Administrative Support Staff, mostly located in Room 114, keep the department running, pay the bills and know where to find everything and everyone. They know plenty of special tricks to overcome any obstacle you run into and can help you get the tools you need to be successful. It pays to be friendly and understanding with all of the Support Staff. Once they know who you are, and you appreciate their hard work, you will find yourself with a minimum of University frustration. David Fowler is the person in charge of processing paychecks.

What makes the Graduate Secretary my new best friend?

The Graduate Secretary and main point person for most administrative and academic issues like registering for classes, signing contracts and nearly anything related to graduating.

The Graduate Secretary and Dr. Wynne have spent a lot of time putting detailed information on the department website for you – check it out! As you progress through the program, it is in your best interest to turn in paperwork on time and keep in contact with the Graduate Secretary through email. The Graduate Secretary will do her best to keep you headed in the right direction and help you resolve any problems as soon as feasible. The Graduate Secretary can be found in room 114 and can be reached at psy-info@grove.ufl.edu.

5. Find out about Student Financial Services

The best way to get information about finances is to look at the Student Financial Services website at <http://fa.ufl.edu/ufs/student-links.asp>. Student Financial Services can help you with questions about your individual situation. If necessary, go in person to the Student Financial Services office on the ground floor of Criser Hall. If there is a question about fees or some glitch in receiving checks, the Graduate Secretary and David Fowler may be able to help you, depending on the nature of the problem.

6. Pay your fees.

Although eventually your correct fees will be noted on ISIS at <http://www.isis.ufl.edu>, it takes some time for the system to process your tuition waiver. If you get on ISIS right away, it will likely tell you that you owe full tuition and fees even if the department has offered you a tuition waiver. Once your Letter of Appointment is processed, the correct fees will be noted on ISIS, but payment may be due very quickly after that. The Registrar's website will note when fees are due. The best thing to do is for you to calculate your fees and pay them as soon as you can. Go to the website noted above and click on Fee Calculation and click on the link on the far right for this fall semester.

On that website, the middle column provides tuition and fee totals for graduate courses. Indicate your credit hours (put a 9 in the 5000-9999 box, although credits of 12 are required for some fellowship students; make sure the undergraduate and Law boxes say 0) and click on Florida resident or Non-Florida resident (most first-year students). Then hit recalculate. This will give you a total for tuition and fees, and then if your department letter indicated that you will be given a tuition waiver, just subtract the cost of tuition (first line in the middle column) times 9 credits (or times 12, for fellowship students) from the total. The remainder should indicate the fees that you need to pay. **This needs to be done right away, as fees are typically due within the first two weeks of the semester.**