



CAMPUS COMPASS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 - 2 OIE Services + Contact Info
3 - 6 Applying For Your Visa
7 Housing
8 Health Insurance
9 Check-In
10 Buzz Card
11 Social Security Number
12 Drivers License
13 Transportation
14 Finances/Banks
15 Cell Phones
16-17 Groceries/Supplies
18 Campus Safety
19 Campus Resources
20 Computers/Technology
21 - 22 Explore Atlanta
23 Campus Map



Important Contacts

Office of International Education

Website: https://isss.oie.gatech.edu/

Email: jscholars@oie.gatech.edu

Buzzcard Center

buzzcard.gatech.edu

Georgia Tech Human Resources

hr.gatech.edu

Department of State

j1visa.state.gov

J-1 Visa Emergency Hotline:

1-866-283-9090

Georgia Tech Police Department

police.gatech.edu 404.894.2500

U.S. Emergency Services
Call 911



ABOUT GEORGIA TECH

Located in Atlanta, Georgia, the Georgia Institute of Technology is a leading research university committed to improving the human condition through advanced science and technology.

Georgia Tech is one of the nation's top public research universities with more than 50,000 students who study in person at the main campus in Atlanta, at off-campus instructional sites such as Georgia Tech-Europe in France, and through distance and online learning. International students make up approximately 25% of the student body at Georgia Tech, with over 60% of graduate students being international.

Georgia Tech has many nationally recognized programs, all topranked by peers and publications alike, and is ranked in the nation's top 10 public universities by U.S. News and World Report. The strong academic work ethic at Tech is balanced by a collegiate atmosphere incorporating both intercollegiate and intramural sports, campus traditions, and some 400 student organizations.

There is no doubt that Georgia Tech stands out as a distinctively different kind of university, one that is eagerly encouraging and developing the revolutionary technologies of the 21st century. Equipped with the extremely rich resources of an outstanding student body and faculty, strong partnerships with business, industry, and government, and support from alumni and friends, Georgia Tech is designing a future of global preeminence, leadership, and service.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

https://isss.oie.gatech.edu/

WHO WE ARE:

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is a workgroup within the Office of International Education (OIE). Our mission is to serve as a resource and advocate for the large and diverse population of international students and scholars at GT.

WHAT WE DO:

ISSS is a resource to which you can turn to receive support to solve problems, obtain information to maintain your immigration status, and connect you to Georgia Tech and external resources.



Questions about your visa status.

Changes or updates to your DS-2019

OIE HELPS YOU WITH:

Travel and visa renewal guidance.

Understanding
benefits associated
with your visa
status



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

https://isss.oie.gatech.edu/

VIRTUAL ADVISING:

OIE offers virtual advising during Drop-In Hours or by appointment.

Click here for Drop In Advising
Hours & Session Links

Click here to book an appointment with a J-1 Advisor

iSTART:

iStart is the software used by OIE and Global HR to manage international student & scholar records. You will use iStart to submit various requests related to your immigration status and GT appointment. You can log into iStart at istart.gatech.edu using your GT username and password. For more information about iStart and e-form processing times, visit oie.gatech.edu/isss/istart-help.

J-BUZZ NEWSLETTER

The Office of International Education (OIE) publishes J-Buzz, a monthly newsletter tailored for J-1 Exchange Visitors and their families in Georgia Tech's BridgeUSA program. J-Buzz provides essential updates on immigration regulations and policies, important reminders, information on upcoming events, and highlights stories about fellow Exchange Visitors. To subscribe, please visit our <u>J-Buzz page</u>.

The <u>U.S. Department of State's website</u> provides detailed information explaining the requirements for applying for a J-1 visa. You are eligible to apply for a visa up to 120 days before the Program Start Date listed on your DS-2019. Please note, wait times for visa appointments differ, so please plan accordingly based on the embassy or consulate where you will apply. You can find average visa wait times <u>here</u>.

Note: You should not make your appointment with the U.S. embassy or consulate until after you have received your DS-2019 from Georgia Tech. You will need the SEVIS ID found on your DS-2019 to schedule your visa appointment.

Note: Citizens of Canada and Bermuda are not required to obtain J visas, but are required to pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee. You will use the Georgia Tech issued DS-2019 to enter the U.S., but citizens of Bermuda and Canada are not required to obtain a visa. You may be asked to show proof of having paid the SEVIS Fee at the U.S. port of entry.

Preparing for Your Appointment

You will be required to complete the following steps before your visa appointment:

- 1. Pay the I-901 "SEVIS Fee." The easiest way to do this is through SEVP's I-901 SEVIS Fee page. See the I-901 FAQ for more information. To pay the I-901 fee, you will need your SEVIS Identification number (N00_____) found at the top, right corner of your DS-2019. Bring your payment receipt to your visa application appointment.
- 2. Complete the online Visa application (DS-160).
 - a. U.S. Point of Contact: The DS-160 form asks for you to provide a U.S. point of contact, which can be any individual in the U.S. who know you and can verify, if necessary, your identity. If you do not personally know anyone in the U.S., you may provide the GT Office of International Education contact information below:
 - i. List of the name of the ARO listed on your DS-2019 Form
 - ii. 631 Cherry St., Savant Suite 211 Atlanta, GA 30332-0284
 - iii. 404-894-7475
 - iv.jscholar@oie.gatech.edu
- 3. Pay the Visa Application Processing Fee. Students and scholars from certain countries will also have to pay a Visa Reciprocity Fee.

During Your Appointment

You will be required to bring the following items to the Embassy or Consulate for your appointment:

- 1. DS-2019 from Georgia Tech
- 2. Passport (valid at least 6 months beyond your Program Start Date)
- 3. I-901 Fee payment receipt
- 4. Visa Application Fee
- 5. DS-160 confirmation receipt
- 6. Offer or invitation letter from Georgia Tech
- 7. Verification of financial resources (this should be the same documentation that you sent to Georgia Tech. If paid by Georgia Tech, your offer letter will suffice)
- 8. Proof of English proficiency
- OIE suggests that J-1 scholars & student interns come to the visa appointment with the following documents: both yours and your GT faculty host's Curriculum Vitae (CV) with a complete list of publications, summary of research activities current and past, and official academic records.
- During the appointment, you should be prepared to discuss your purpose of being in the U.S. Simply handing a Consular Officer your documents will not suffice; you should be able to explain your goals and objectives of your time in the U.S.

Administrative Processing

Administrative processing may be required of an applicant for a variety of reasons: a "hit" during a name check; being a national of certain countries; studying/researching a field on the Technology Alert List (TAL); or based on the "intuition" of the interviewing consular.

Georgia Tech and the Office of International Education are not able to assist with any requests for consular posts to expedite the administrative processing of a visa application. Administrative processing can take anywhere from 2 weeks to several months.

You can read more about administrative processing and the visa process at our website here

Please note: you must arrive at Georgia Tech and complete J Scholar or Student Intern Check In within 30 days of the start date on your DS-2019. If you are unable to arrive at Georgia Tech and complete check in within that timeline, please work with your department administrator to request an update to your DS-2019 program dates

HOUSING

Georgia Tech is located in Midtown, an area north of Downtown Atlanta. Many apartments or other housing options are available within walking distance of campus and/or via the Marta or GT shuttle routes. As with all cities, housing options vary from neighborhood to neighborhood as does the expense, safety and convenience of the neighborhood. Neighborhoods adjacent to Georgia Tech campus are: Downtown, Midtown & West Midtown, Berkeley Park, Westside/Howell Mill, Home Park, Atlantic Station, Virginia Highlands, etc.

Helpful Hints to Assist in Your Housing Search:

- If you are arriving early and need a place to stay during your search for housing, you can stay at a hotel or a rental (through Airbnb or Vrbo) in the area.
- Many International Student Organizations at Georgia Tech assist students in finding long-term housing in Atlanta. To find out if there is a student organization that represents your home country or region, consult <u>Georgia Tech Student</u> <u>Organizations</u> with the Office of Student Involvement.
- Contact an Apartment Locator Service (apartments are usually rented in person, but apartment locator services may assist you before you arrive). e.g. <u>Apartment</u> <u>Guide</u>
- Refer to the <u>GT Parking & Transportation website</u> for maps/schedules of campus shuttles and for information on alternative transportation, including <u>MARTA</u>.
- Remember to use caution and do your research regarding your rights and responsibilities as tenants. While most people offer legitimate deals, there are some out there who might see an opportunity to take advantage of someone who is not aware of their rights.

Housing Resources and Locators:

- https://offcampus.housing.gatech.edu/listing
- https://conference.gatech.edu/internlodging/
- https://conference.gatech.edu/guest-housing/
- https://www.apartmentsearch.com/
- https://www.apartmentguide.com/
- https://www.trulia.com/
- https://www.zillow.com/
- https://www.cort.com/



HEALTH INSURANCE



All J-1 and J-2 visa holders must have valid health insurance for the entirety of their program. Not only is it a requirement of your visa status, it is important to ensure your health and well being while in the US.

Please visit our health insurance webpage <u>here</u> to learn more about US health insurance and requirements.

Your health insurance coverage must meet or exceed these requirements established by the U.S. Department of State:

- Minimum medical benefit (minimum insurance coverage): \$100,000
- Deductible: Not more than \$500 per event
- *Medical evacuation insurance: At least \$50,000
- *Repatriation of remains insurance: At least \$25,000

*Some insurance plans combine these 2 types of insurance, which is fine as long as the combined total is \$75,000 or above

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Some health insurance policies include medical evacuation and repatriation coverages, others (such as GT employee insurance plans) do not. If your health insurance plan does not include medical evacuation and repatriation insurance, you are required to purchase this coverage separately. Those on the GT Employee Health Insurance Plans can purchase the separate coverage through <u>Global Travel Plus</u>.
- If you are eligible and choose to enroll in one of the GT employee health insurance plans, please note that you cannot choose the Anthem
 Consumer Choice HSA as this plan does not meet the J-1 requirements.

POST-ARRIVAL: CHECKING IN



STEP 1: VISIT YOUR GT HOST DEPARTMENT

Begin any onboarding procedures required by your department.

STEP 2: COMPLETE J SCHOLAR OR STUDENT INTERN CHECK IN

You are required to submit the J Scholar or Student Intern Check In e-form within 30 days of the start date listed on your DS-2019. If you do not complete check in or request a program date change within 30 days, your SEVIS record will automatically go inactive.

To submit J Scholar or Student Intern Check In, go to <u>istart.gatech.edu</u>, and login with your GT username and password. If you have not created your GT username and password yet, you can login with Limited Services using the instructions <u>here</u>. Be prepared to upload the following information to your check in e-form:

- US residential address
- US phone number
- · Proof of health insurance
- I-94
- Visa
- Signed DS-2019
- Signed DS-7002 (for student interns)

STEP 3: ATTEND J-1 ORIENTATION

After you have completed J Scholar or Student Intern Check In, you will be invited to the next available orientation session. You can find a schedule of our orientation sessions **here**.

VISIT OUR CHECK IN WEBPAGE HERE

BUZZ CARD



BUZZCARD (GT IDENTIFICATION):

The BuzzCard is the Georgia Tech identification card that provides access to a variety of campus-wide services and buildings. The first card is issued free of charge. You will need your passport and GT ID number handy to get your BuzzCard. Visit buzzcard.gatech.edu for more information.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER



A Social Security Number (SSN) is a permanent nine-digit identification number administered by the Social Security Administration, an agency of the U.S. federal government. SSNs are required for anyone employed in the U.S. because it tracks income for employers and the IRS, but is not required for anything else.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- 1. You must complete J Scholar or Student Intern Check In and get confirmation that it has been approved by our office before you can apply for an SSN. Your SEVIS record must be active when applying and is not active until we process your check in e-form.
- 2. If you have been in the US before and were issued an SSN, that is still your SSN. It is a permanent lifetime use number.
- 3. If you are employed or paid by Georgia Tech, you are required to get an SSN. If you are not employed or paid by Georgia Tech, you are not required to apply for one but you are still eligible to do so.

VISIT OUR SSN WEBPAGE HERE FOR MORE
INFORMATION ABOUT SSNs AND HOW TO APPLY

GEORGIA DRIVER'S LICENSE

OBTAINING A GA DRIVER'S LICENSE:

You may apply for a license or a Georgia State identification card at any Department of Driver Services (DDS) office if you are older than 18. DDS offices in Atlanta are more familiar with F/J students. Applicants must pass Vision, Knowledge, and Road Skills exams. For DDS locations and information about how to apply, visit: www.dds.ga.gov.



REQUIREMENTS FOR A DRIVER'S LICENSE:

You must apply in person to the DDS for Georgia "Class C" Driver's license for regular non- commercial motor vehicles. When applying, bring the following to the DDS center:

- Passport valid for at least six months
- I-94
- 2 documents showing Georgia residence: This can include a signed lease agreement, utility bill with applicant's name and local address, bank statement, etc.
- Current DS-2019
- SSN or Form SSA-L676 (Social Security Card Denial Notice)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Wait until your SEVIS record is active before you apply. You will receive an email when OIE activates your SEVIS record.
- Before purchasing a car, you must obtain GA Driver's license to register the car. The state requires that all cars be registered within 30 days of the date of purchase.
- You are not required to have a Social Security Number (SSN) to obtain a GA Driver's License. Those without SSNs are required to obtain Form SSA-L676 (Social Security Card Denial Notice) from the Social Security Administration before applying for a license.

TRANSPORTATION

GT TRANSPORTATION:

Check out the complete GT bus schedule **HERE**.

For after-hours transportation, the **Stringerette** provides shuttle services to on-campus housing, academic buildings and the MARTA Midtown Station. Available every day from 8PM-3AM excluding Institute holidays. Call 404-385-7275.

ATLANTA TRANSPORTATION:

Georgia Tech's campus is accessible by Atlanta's public transportation system, MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority). MARTA offers rail and bus service throughout metropolitan Atlanta. Trains stop throughout the city, with two stops convenient to the Georgia Tech campus: North Avenue Station and Midtown Station. MARTA also offers frequent train service to Hartsfield- Jackson International Airport. Visit https://www.itsmarta.com for more information.

UBER AND LYFT:

Uber and Lyft provide affordable transportation. Always, make sure you ride on the correct vehicle by checking plate numbers, drivers photo, and always have your driver to confirm your name.



FINANCES

There are many banks in the local area that offer several types of savings and checking accounts. Be sure to research different options to find the choice that best fits your needs. Make sure to consider the following before choosing a bank.

- What are the fees for wiring money from overseas?
- What is the minimum balance required? Is there a penalty if my balance goes below the minimum?
- Will my checking account earn any interest?
- What will I pay in monthly service charges?
- Are there branches or ATM machines near Georgia Tech and where I live?

In order to open a bank account, you should bring the following documents:

- Georgia Tech ID (Buzzcard)
- DS-2019
- Passport
- I-94
- You may be asked for a Social Security Number, but it is not required to open an account.

CLICK ON THE IMAGES BELOW TO BE ROUTED TO EACH BANK'S WEBSITE.

NEITHER GEORGIA TECH NOR OIE IS ABLE TO RECOMMEND OR DIRECTLY

PROMOTE ANY OF THESE OPTIONS.

BANKS NEAR GEORGIA TECH:











CELL PHONES

Some of the major cell phone service providers in Atlanta include AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile. Some cellphone companies may require a Social Security Number (for credit check purposes) in order to establish a contract. Other companies, like campusSIMs, offer alternative plans for students without an SSN or for those who would like to use their current unlocked phone for a U.S. plan.

CLICK EACH LOGO TO BE DIRECTED TO THEIR WEBSITE.

NEITHER GEORGIA TECH NOR OIE IS ABLE TO RECOMMEND OR

DIRECTLY PROMOTE ANY OF THESE OPTIONS.









GROCERIES AND SUPPLIES

Groce	ries and Supplies		
	IKEA 441 16th St NW	Mon - Sun	10am - 9pm
# P *	Target (Atlantic Station) 375 18th St NW	Mon - Sun	8am - 11pm
#P *	Walmart (Howell Mill) 1801 Howell Mill Rd NW	Mon - Sun	6am - 12am
	Publix (Midtown) 950 Sprint St NW	Mon - Sun	6:45am - 11pm
	Publix (Atlantic Station) 1380 Atlantic Dr. NW	Mon - Sun	7am - 10pm
	Kroger (Howell Mill) 1715 Howell Mill Rd NW	Mon - Sun	6am - 1am
	Furniture Electronics	Clothing	Groceries

ONLINE SHOPPING:

Many students and scholars prefer shopping online with <u>Amazon</u>.

Amazon@GeorgiaTech is a store for easy pickup and returns for Amazon,
located at Tech Square (86 5th St NW, Atlanta, GA)

Grocery delivery is always a useful option for those without a car. Some stores have their own grocery delivery services or you can use a service like <u>Instacart</u>.

GROCERIES AND SUPPLIES

POPULAR INTERNATIONAL GROCERY STORES NEAR ATLANTA:

- Your Dekalb Farmers Market
 - 3000 E Ponce de Leon Ave, Decatur, GA 30030
- Buford Highway Farmers Market
 - 5600 Buford Hwy NE, Doraville, GA 30340
- H Mart
 - 6035 Peachtree Rd Bldg B, Doraville, GA 30360
 - 2550 Pleasant Hill Rd bldg 300, Duluth, GA 30096
 - 6335 GA-85 T, Riverdale, GA 30274
- Cherians International Groceries
 - 751 Dekalb Industrial Way Building #4, Decatur, GA 30033
- Nam Dae Mun
 - 2350 Spring Road SE, Smyrna, GA 30080
 - 5158 Memorial Drive, Stone Mountain, GA 30083
 - 6131 South Norcross Tucker Road, Norcross, GA 30093

SAFETY AT GEORGIA TECH

CAMPUS SAFETY TIPS:

The Georgia Tech Police Department (GTPD) has provided the following safety tips:

- Be aware of your surroundings and use the Stingerette (stingerette.com) for afterhours transportation.
- Never leave valuables unattended and do not walk while talking on the phone or while wearing headphones as you will not be able to hear people approaching.
- Never prop doors open, even for a short time.
- Sign up for GTENS emergency notification system at passport.gatech.edu.
- Don't fall victim to scams! Do not give out personal information over the phone. A
 U.S. government agency will never ask you for personal info in a phone call. Contact
 GTPD to report a scam or if you believe you have been scammed. Visit our
 Scams101 webpage for more resources.
- Do not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs! International students who receive a DUI will have their visa revoked.

For on-campus emergencies, dial the GTPD emergency number (404-894-2500). Make sure to save this number in your phone. For off-campus emergencies, dial 911. Please visit <u>police.gatech.edu</u> to learn more about safety tips and information from GTPD.

IMPORTANT GEORGIA TECH POLICIES:

There are important policies that the Georgia Tech community is expected to follow to ensure fairness, orderly conduct, and harmony. These policies allow the large student, staff, and faculty body to live and work together harmoniously with minimum friction and misunderstanding. These policies cover a wide range of important topics and rules and you should become familiar with them upon arrival. For more information on important Georgia Tech policies, visit: https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/employment

CAMPUS RESOURCES

GT's campus has a number of useful resources that students and scholars use on a daily basis. Here you will find a vast network of supportive and caring people to help you smoothly transition to Georgia Tech and create an unforgettable experience.

CAMPUS RECREATION CENTER:

crc.gatech.edu

The CRC fitness center has been recognized as one of the best campus recreation facilities in the country. This full- service fitness center offers cardio and weight training equipment, pools, basketball/volleyball courts, wall-climbing, an indoor track, and more. You will need to purchase a membership to visit.

GEORGIA TECH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE:

esl.gatech.edu

The Georgia Tech Language Institute (GTLI) offers a wide variety of English language courses and ways to connect. Visit their website for more information about their offerings.

FERST CENTER FOR THE ARTS:

ferstcenter.gatech.edu

The Ferst Center for the Arts hosts a number of concerts, recitals, lectures, dance, film, and theater performances throughout the semester. See Ferst Center Box Office for calendar and tickets. Tickets are generally available online (arts.gatech.edu/ferstcenter) and by phone at 404-894-9600.

STUDENT CENTER:

studentcenter.gatech.edu

The Student Center offers a wide variety of services like the campus box office, food, bowling, billiards, a movie theater, post office, music listening room, ballroom, computer lab, ATMs, and several lounge and study areas.



COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

The Office of Information and Technology takes care of all internet, network, cyber-security, and other IT-related support for students, faculty, staff, and visitors on campus.

EMAIL:

mail.gatech.edu

Email is the primary method of communication between scholars and the University. Scholars are responsible for checking their emails regularly. All scholars have a default email address of username@gatech.edu which can be customized through the Passport website.



TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION:

twofactor.oit.gatech.edu

Georgia Tech considers the security and privacy of employee and student information to be of utmost importance. To keep our information safe, the Institute requires that all students, faculty, and staff to use two-factor authentication when accessing campus services and systems.

WIFI:

http://lawn.gatech.edu

Eduroam is the default LAWN Wi-Fi service. It is a secure world-wide roaming authentication service which allows users to connect to WiFi networks when visiting GT campus.

VISIT **OIT.GATECH.EDU** FOR MORE INFORMATION

EXPLORE ATLANTA!

Atlanta is the capital of the state of Georgia, site of the 1996 Olympic Games, and one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. It is home to approximately 5.9 million people and has the busiest airport in the world. Atlanta, the undisputed business and cultural center of the southeast US, is consistently ranked as one of the top 10 places for high-tech and international career opportunities. There are more than 1,600 international businesses in Atlanta and Fortune 500 companies such as BlueLink Holdings, CNN, Coca Cola Enterprises, Delta Air Lines, Home Depot, and UPS are headquartered in the area.

The city combines classic small-town southern hospitality with all the amenities of a cosmopolitan city. The moderate cost of living, which is below the national average, and the pleasant climate, which permits year-round outdoor activities, makes Atlanta appealing to many.





The city has four distinct seasons, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy a range of comfortable climates. During the fall and spring, Atlanta is quite comfortable with temperatures of 70-80° F (21-26° C). Summers can be quite hot and humid, and winters are normally mild with a few colder spells. The annual rainfall is about 48 in (122 cm).





ATLANTA ATTRACTIONS

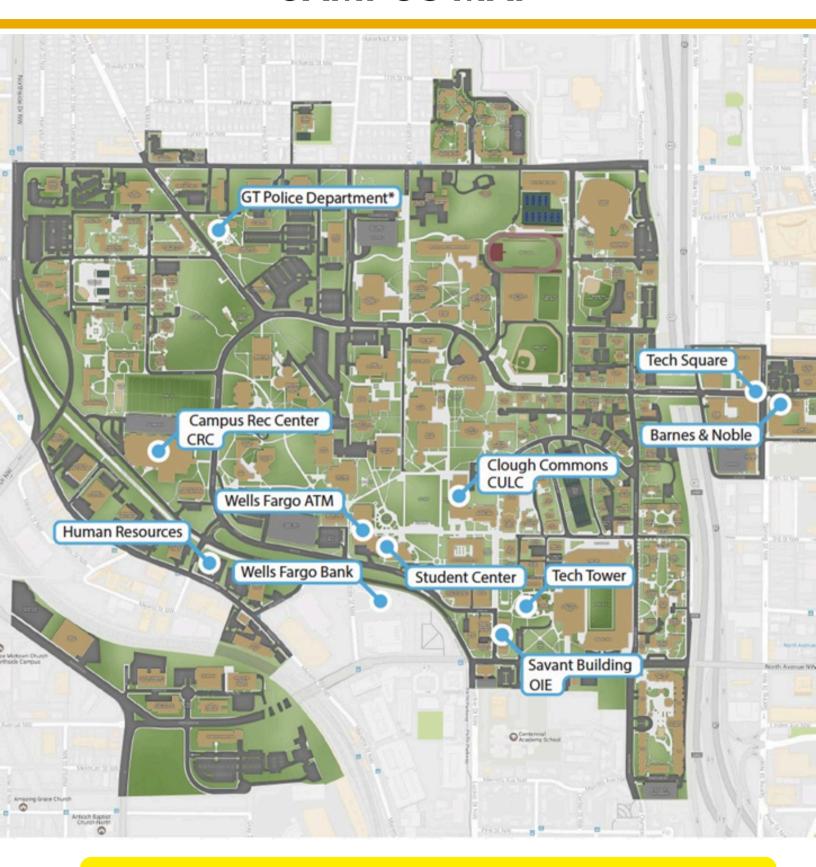
The city of Atlanta features a wide variety of popular attractions, restaurants, and events that will make your stay filled with fun and new experiences!

- Atlanta Botanical Gardens
- High Museum of Art
- Fox Theatre
- Atlanta History Center
- Chattahoochee Nature Center
- CNN Center
- Georgia Aquarium
- Martin Luther King, Jr National Historical Site
- Centennial Olympic Park
- <u>Fernbank Museum and Science</u>
 <u>Center</u>

- Six Flags Over Georgia
- Piedmont Park
- Ponce City Market
- Atlanta BeltLine Eastside Trail
- SkyView Atlanta
- Stone Mountain Park
- World of Coca-Cola
- National Center for Civil and Human Rights
- Starlight Drive-In Theatre and Flea Market
- Krog Street Market



CAMPUS MAP



CLICK HERE FOR AN INTERACTIVE MAP OF CAMPUS