

International Student & Scholar Services

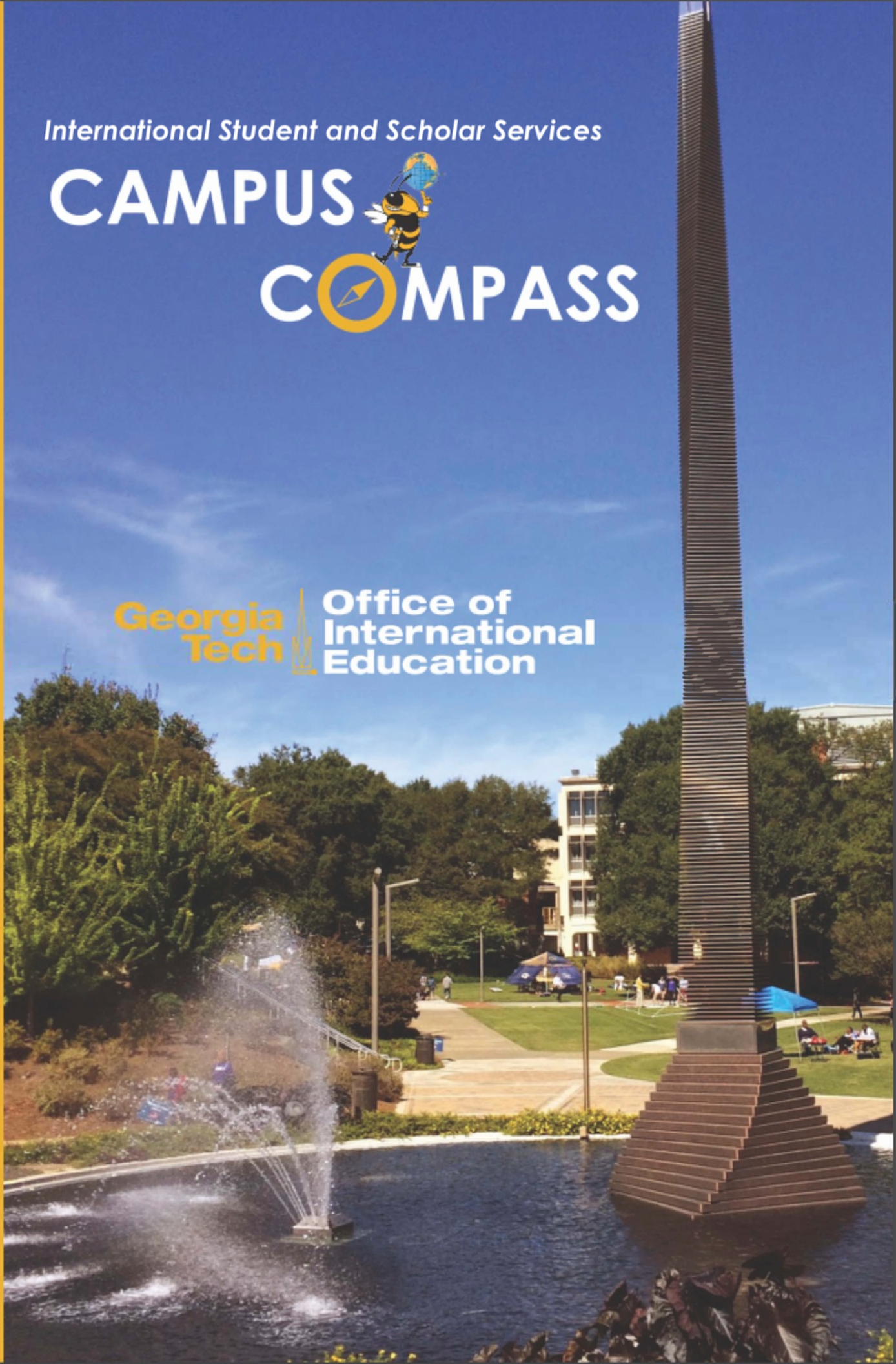
info@oie.gatech.edu

oie.gatech.edu/iss

International Student and Scholar Services

CAMPUS COMPASS

**Georgia
Tech**  **Office of
International
Education**





[Click Here!](#)
[International Student Orientation](#)

Important Contacts

Georgia Tech Police Department

police.gatech.edu

Registrar's Office

registrar.gatech.edu

Housing Department

housing.gatech.edu

Buzzcard Center

buzzcard.gatech.edu

Bursar's Office

bursar.gatech.edu

Stamps Health Services

health.gatech.edu

Office of International Education

oie.gatech.edu

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.

Ranked as the #7 best public university, Georgia Tech provides a focused, technologically-based education to more than 32,700 undergraduate and graduate students, 24% of them are international students.

Georgia Tech has many nationally recognized programs, all top-ranked 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

oie.gatech.edu/iss

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.

VIRTUAL ADVISING:

OIE offers virtual advising during International Student Drop-In Hours or by appointment. For more information on days/times and session links, visit oie.gatech.edu/iss_advising.

iSTART:

iStart is the software used by OIE to manage student records. Students use iStart to request changes and updates to their I-20 or DS-2019. 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/iss/istart-help.

iBUZZ:

iBuzz is an electronic newsletter sent to all enrolled F/J students. ISSS encourages international students to read this regularly as it contains important announcements, updates, and deadlines.

OIE HELPS YOU WITH:

Questions about
your visa status.

Changes or
updates to your
I-20 or DS-2019

Travel and visa
renewal guidance.

Understanding
benefits associated
with your visa
status

YOUR FIRST WEEK: SETTLING-IN

REMOVE HOLDS FOR REGISTRATION:

Check your Buzzport record to see if you have any holds preventing your registration for classes. The name of the hold and office to contact will be listed in Buzzport. Review the information on the website for the appropriate office and follow the instructions to remove the hold. Holds may include "Immigration file missing", "Immunization records missing", and "Final transcript and degree certificate missing" (for grad students). An OIE Check-In Hold will be added after Phase II Registration for any student who has not completed the OIE Check-In process in iStart.

REGISTER FOR CLASSES:

As an F or J visa holder you are required to enroll in at minimum 12 credit hours of study to meet the requirements of your student visa status during your first semester of enrollment (even if it is the summer term) and each semester during the academic year. New graduate students will register during Phase II registration. New undergraduate students will register during FASET orientation. You can make changes to your registration during the Phase II registration period and no later than the first Friday after classes begin.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION:

OIE holds an International Student Orientation which includes various sessions and social events to help new international students adjust to life at Georgia Tech and in the U.S.

For more information, visit:

oie.gatech.edu/iss/welcome-series.



BUZZCARD (GT IDENTIFICATION):

The BuzzCard is the Georgia Tech identification card that provides access to a variety of campus-wide services. 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.

COVID-19 RESOURCES:

For guidance on campus resources and plans regarding COVID-19, visit **[Tech Moving Forward](#)** and **[OIE's FAQs](#)**.



IMMIGRATION



Maintaining Your F-1/J-1 Status

It is important to understand and comply with the F or J regulations during your time in the U.S. Failure to abide by these laws can greatly impact your ability to meet your education and personal goals. Please remember that your immigration status and academic success are connected so you must be successful at both. All international students must do the following to maintain status:

- Be enrolled full-time (12+ hours) each semester unless a vacation semester has been earned or you have been approved for an authorized reduced course load.
- Keep a valid, unexpired I-20/DS-2019 and passport (passport must be valid at least 6 months into the future).
- Update OIE within 10 days of any change to your physical addresses in the US or your home country via iStart.
- Update OIE within 10 days of any changes to your program including change of major, pursuit of a new degree, Leave of Absence, etc.
- Work on-campus no more than 20 hours/week while enrolled full-time.
- Have a valid travel signature before leaving and re-entering the U.S.
- Complete an Income Tax Return as per IRS regulation by April 15th of each year.
- Notify ISSS of any change to or addition of your F-2/J-2 dependents.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment eligibility varies by visa type. Visit our [employment webpage](#) for more details regarding employment in your visa status.

ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT:

F-1 and J-1 students in good standing are eligible to work on-campus part-time (up to 20 hours/week) while school is in session and may be eligible to work more than part-time over school breaks and summer vacation. On-campus employment is subject to GT policies so please always work with the Human Resources Administrator in your hiring department to determine eligibility.

- F-1 students: There is no formal authorization required from OIE.
- J-1 students: On-campus employment requires approval in writing from OIE. To request on-campus employment, submit the "J on-campus Work Authorization Request" e-form in iStart.

Any job on campus that is paid by Georgia Tech or a firm providing service to GT students is considered to be on-campus employment. Examples are Barnes & Noble @Georgia Tech Bookstore, the Student Center, or an academic department. If you have questions about whether your employment will be considered on-campus, check with OIE.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT:

Off-campus employment is available ONLY with permission from OIE and sometimes USCIS. You are not eligible for these off-campus work options until you have completed one academic year of full-time enrollment in the U.S. Please see the OIE website for more detailed information.

SOCIAL SECURITYNUMBER (SSN):

A Social Security Number (SSN) is a permanent identification number administered by the Social Security Administration. All individuals working in the U.S. are required to have a Social Security Number. Students working on campus need to request a support letter from OIE for the SSN application. Students can request this letter and assistance with scheduling an appointment with the Social Security Administration via the iStart portal under the SSN and Taxes tab. For more information, please visit oie.gatech.edu/issn/social-security-numbers

FINANCES AT GEORGIA TECH

Costs Involved in Attending GT:

There are several fee payment options for Georgia Tech students: Flywire for international payments, Webchecks, check, wire transfer, and all major credit cards. Please see the bursar's website at bursar.gatech.edu for additional information on payment types and how to pay your bill. Please be sure to comply with all payment deadlines to prevent GT from dropping courses for failure to pay. If your courses are dropped you are not enrolled full time in study which is considered a violation of status.

**CLICK THE DOT ABOVE EACH BANK TO BE DIRECTED TO THEIR WEBSITE.
NEITHER GEORGIA TECH NOR ISSS IS ABLE TO RECOMMEND OR DIRECTLY PROMOTE ANY OF THESE OPTIONS.**

Open a U.S. Bank Account:

You are not required to have an SSN to open an account in a local bank. Some banks offer special accounts for students, so bring your BuzzCard with you when opening a bank account. You can find more information on OIE's website at oie.gatech.edu/content/opening-us-bank-account.

In order to maintain your immigration status, international students' account balances should be paid before the deadline set by the Bursar's Office.

Banks near Georgia Tech

			
Wells Fargo 645 State St NW Atlanta, GA 30313 404 853 1960 1 800 869 3557 www.wellsfargo.com <small>Closest to GT campus</small>	PNC Bank 75 5th St NW Atlanta, GA 30308 404 897 5688 1 888 762 2265 www.pnc.com	Bank of America 600 Peachtree St NE Atlanta, GA 30308 404 607 4850 1 800 432 1000 www.bankofamerica.com	SunTrust 523 Luckie St NW Atlanta, GA 30313 404 253 3509 1 800 786 8787 www.suntrust.com

CELL PHONES

Cellphones:

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.
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GROCERIES AND SUPPLIES

Groceries and Supplies



IKEA
441 16th St NW

Mon - Sun 10am - 9pm



Target (Atlantic Station)
375 18th St NW

Mon - Sun 8am - 11pm



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

The Weekend Grocery Shuttle: Stinger bus transports students to Atlantic Station's Publix store on weekends from 10am to 6am. For maps, arrival times, and tracking visit

<http://pts.gatech.edu/stinger-bus-routes>

ONLINE SHOPPING:

Many students prefer shopping online with Amazon.com, WayFair.com, and Walmart.com. Amazon@GeorgiaTech is a store for easy pickup and returns for Amazon, located at Tech Square (86 5th St NW, Atlanta, GA)

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 after-hours 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.
- 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 police.gatech.edu 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 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. Students are expected to thoroughly understand and respect these policies. For more information on important Georgia Tech policies, visit: <https://oie.gatech.edu/iss/important-gt-policies>



GEORGIA TECH RESOURCES

JOIN THE YELLOW JACKET COMMUNITY!

The GT campus is a dynamic and vibrant place, with an array of activities for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors. From athletics and concerts to lectures and social gatherings, great things are always happening at Tech. Music, dance, and comedy productions are offered at the renowned Ferst Center for the Arts and the student-run DramaTech Theatre. Tech offers exciting sporting events including football, basketball, baseball, swimming, diving, and golf. The Campus Compass is only a starting point for you to learn about the fun activities Tech has to offer. The best way to learn is to get out and explore your new campus!

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS:

There are hundreds of student organizations at Georgia Tech giving students many opportunities to get involved on campus. At the beginning of each semester, tables are set up near or in the Student Center by members of different student organizations looking to recruit new members. For a full listing of these groups and contact information, visit: gatech.campuslabs.com/engage



CAMPUS RESOURCES

VISIT [OIE.GATECH.EDU/CONTENT/ADDITIONAL-SUPPORT-SERVICES-AND-RESOURCES](https://oie.gatech.edu/content/additional-support-services-and-resources)

GT's campus has a number of useful resources that students 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, succeed in your classes, and create an unforgettable experience.

CENTER FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS:

success.gatech.edu

The Center for Academic Success provides exemplary academic support programs and services. They conduct 1-to-1 tutoring sessions, peer led study sessions, and various workshops to help students achieve their academic best.

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.

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. The Student Center is currently under renovation. Check the website for the latest updates

STAMPS HEALTH SERVICES:

health.gatech.edu

Stamps Health Services provides medical care and health education for students, along with pharmacy, laboratory, and radiology services. Specialty clinics include gynecology, psychiatry, dentistry, and nutrition.

CLOUGH COMMONS:

clough.gatech.edu

Located near the library, Clough Commons offers state-of-art meeting spaces which can be reserved through an online reservation system and is the hub for many student led organization meetings.

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.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

VISIT OIE.GATECH.EDU/CONTENT/ADDITIONAL-SUPPORT-SERVICES-AND-RESOURCES

LIBRARY:

library.gatech.edu

GT Library is re-defining the research library of the 21st Century, creating an environment where scholars can access the vast digital cloud of humanity's recorded knowledge.



POST OFFICE:

studentcenter.gatech.edu/georgia-tech-post-office

The post office is located on the 1st floor of the Student Center. Through the Post Office, students can send and receive packages and mail. Students living on campus are automatically assigned a P.O box, and students living off-campus must apply and pay an annual fee if they would like to have one.



10% of undergraduate and 45% of graduate students at Georgia Tech hold an F or J visa!

DID YOU KNOW?



There are over 5,000 F and J students enrolled at Georgia Tech hailing from hundreds of countries!

The Charles A. Smithgall Jr. Student Services Building is nicknamed the "Flag Building" because the country flags hanging represent all GT students' home countries. Stop by and find yours!

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

VISIT [OIT.GATECH.EDU](http://oit.gatech.edu) FOR MORE INFO

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

EMAIL:

mail.gatech.edu

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

CANVAS:

canvas.gatech.edu

Canvas is an online teaching, learning, and collaboration software. You can submit assignments, view grades, and access course material/resources through Canvas, using your GT username & password.

BUZZPORT:

buzzport.gatech.edu

On Buzzport you can register for classes, make payments, update personal information, view class schedules, student account information, and academic records. Your GT account username & password are needed to access BuzzPort.

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.



TRANSPORTATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [PTS.GATECH.EDU/BUS](https://pts.gatech.edu/bus)



The Stinger bus service offers three routes: Red, Blue, & Green. The Red & Blue Routes generally service the core of the GT campus. The Green Route extends north & south of campus, including areas such as GT Research Institute & Techwood Parkway.

TO TRACK GT BUSES, VISIT:
[BUS.GATECH.EDU](https://bus.gatech.edu)

Tech Trolley services the Campus Transit Hub and the Midtown MARTA Station, stopping at many locations throughout campus and Midtown along the way



The Stingerette provides after-hours transportation for GT students & employees. The shuttle services on-campus housing, academic buildings, & the MARTA Midtown Station. Available every day from 6PM-7AM excluding Institute holidays. Call 404-385-7433



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.

GT TRANSPORTATION:

Check out the complete GT bus schedule [HERE](#). For after-hours transportation, the Stingerette 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.

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.

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 the most convenient locations for knowledge & driving exams, 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: either paper or printed electronic copy
- 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 I-20 or 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. You can confirm that your SEVIS record is Active by reviewing the "SEVIS Status Information" section of your record in the iStart portal.
- 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. Students without SSNs are required to obtain Form SSA-L676 (Social Security Card Denial Notice) from the Social Security Administration before applying for a license.

HOUSING AND HEALTH INSURANCE

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING:

housing.gatech.edu

GT offers a variety of on-campus housing options for undergraduate and graduate students. Signing a residence hall contract with GT housing requires you to live in the residence hall system for the entire academic year.

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING:

<https://oie.gatech.edu/content/housing-campus-and-around-gt>

Students are responsible for securing their own housing off-campus. There are many residential apartments within the GT area with varied amenities.



HEALTH INSURANCE:

health.gatech.edu/finance/insurance

All F and J students are required to have health insurance for the duration of their time at GT. All international students will be automatically enrolled in the UnitedHealthcare student health insurance plan mandated by the University System of Georgia. If you wish to purchase an alternative plan and apply for an insurance waiver, you may do so.



HEALTH SERVICES:

health.gatech.edu

Stamps Health Services provides a wide range of health care and health education services to students, including primary care, pharmacy, women's health, psychiatry, immunization and allergy, health promotion, and nutrition. There are also on-site laboratory and radiology services. All students pay a health fee to support these services, which is a separate fee from the health insurance fee.

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).



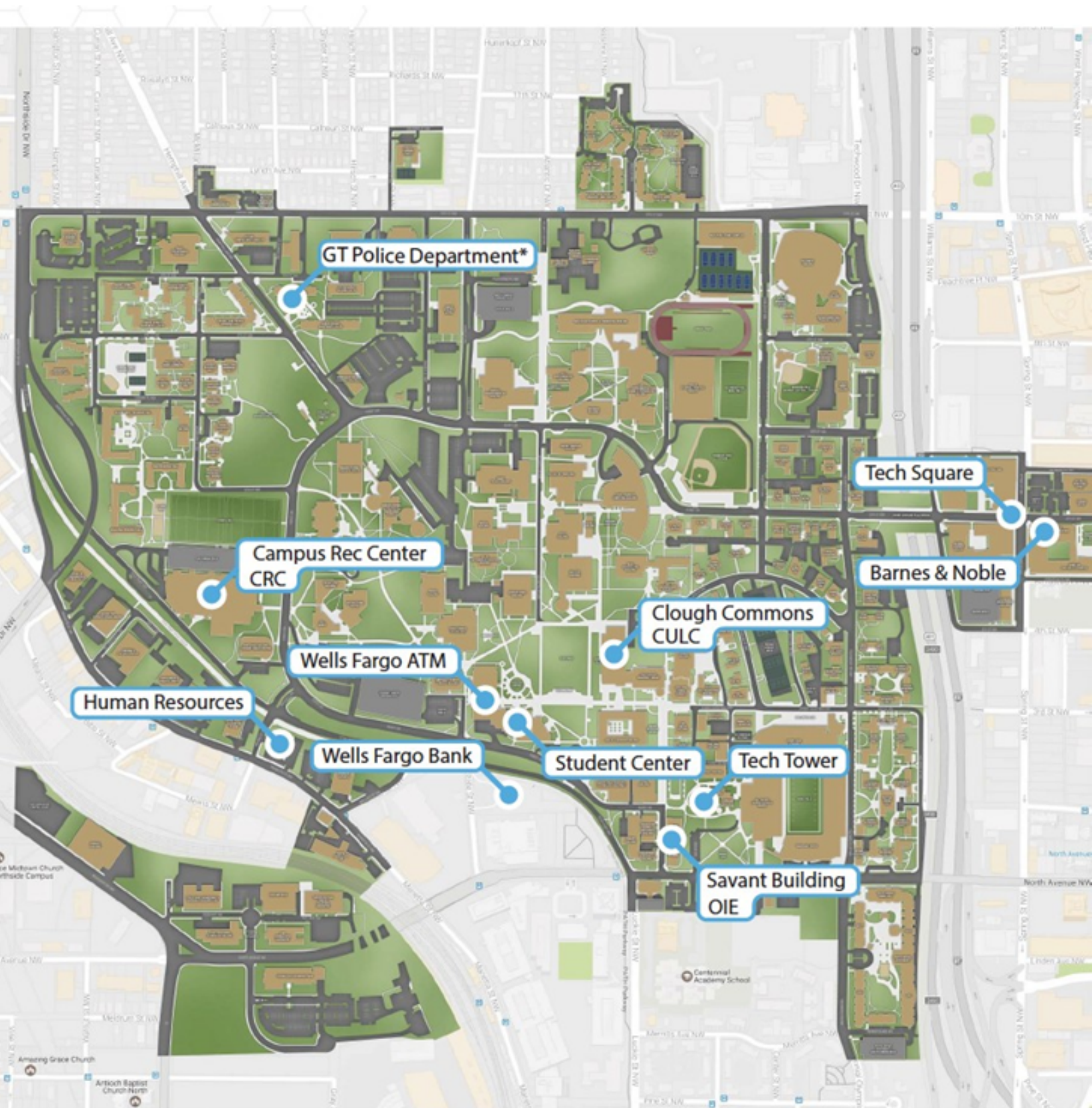
ATLANTA ATTRACTIONS

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](#)
- [Fernbank Museum and Science Center](#)
- [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](#)