

International Education Program
<http://www.cgc.edu/ss/intl>

PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Obtaining a Student F-1 Visa

The primary student will need to apply for an F-1 visa at the nearest United States Consulate Office or Embassy in the home country. Any dependents will need to apply for an F-2 visa. Procedures to apply for a visa change from time to time, so you are advised to check with your nearest consular office either by phone or website to find out what are the procedures and requirements in your country. Students will need to take the I-20 the school sends you, along with your financial guarantee documents, and any documentation supporting your permanent residency in your home country with you to apply for a visa. You will need to call well in advance to schedule an interview with an officer. The fee for processing the I-20 is \$100, in addition to the visa cost, which varies from country to country. The SEVIS fee must be paid before your visa appointment date. [To pay I-901SEVIS fee](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm) visit www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm

Airline Travel Arrangements

Arriving at Sky Harbor Airport - Purchase your airline ticket for final arrival to [Sky Harbor International Airport](#) in Phoenix, Arizona. During your flight into the United States, you will be given a custom's declaration card (form 6059-B). Please read it carefully and fill it out completely. Make sure that you have your I-94 card and passport. After passing through customs, you can then exit the terminal and locate the Super Shuttle, a taxi, or a bus that will take you to your destination.

Ground Transportation - The Super Shuttle is the most popular form of transportation from the Sky Harbor Airport to your destination. The [Super Shuttle](#) vans (between \$14 - \$24 depending on distance), are located right outside the exit doors of the airport or local taxis. [Super Shuttles](#) are recommended as taxi fare can be expensive.

Taxi service available just outside the terminal exits. Costs can range anywhere from \$25.00 - \$40.00 from the airport to the cities in the Greater Phoenix area.

If you are temporarily staying at a hotel, you might be able to receive complimentary (free) transportation. Please call your hotel in advance to make arrangements for hotel shuttle services if it's available at your hotel.

Making Financial Arrangements

Your tuition cost per semester will be approximately \$3500 for 12 credits (minimum credits required per semester). This does not include textbook or health insurance expenses. Cost for living (rent, utilities & personal expenses) will depend on where you want to live. Students can rent an apartment anywhere from \$500 - \$1000 a month depending on the quality and location of the home or apartment. Most students have the following type of expenses when they arrive: Tuition and Fees, Rent, Food (often called "board," as in "room and board"), Health insurance & Medical Costs, Books and Course supplies, Transportation, Communications (mainly cell telephone and e-mail hookups), Clothing, Personal expenses, Recreation, Furniture, Travel, Expenses for Dependents (that is, spouse and/or children who accompany you and are dependent on your financial support), including living costs, childcare costs, health insurance and tuition for dependents who are in school.

Your Health

Before you leave your home country you should have a complete physical and dental examination. You should tell your doctor that you are going to study in the United States, possibly for several years. Ask your doctor what medical care or monitoring you might need while you are away from home for that long. Find out how you can get medication that you might need. Your home doctor or clinic might be able to help by referring you to a source for prescription drugs in the USA. Get copies of your medical records translated into English if your doctor recommends it. Have your teeth checked thoroughly by your family dentist. Get all of your dental work completed before you come to Arizona. There are excellent dental care facilities in Arizona, but dental work can be very expensive and it is not covered by most health insurance plans. If you need dental care or orthodontic care while you are in Arizona, talk to the International Education office for help locating a suitable facility.

Medical Health Insurance

Health, dental and vision care is very expensive in the United States. Chandler-Gilbert Community College has a mandatory health insurance policy for international students. This means that you are required to purchase the CGCC-MCCD health insurance policy while you are enrolled here as a student.

Coverage begins on August 11th and extends through January 11th for the Fall semester. Coverage for the Spring and Summer semester begins on January 11th and extends through August 11th. It is suggested that you purchase temporary international health insurance in your home country if you will arrive before August 11th or January 11th. Students will be given more details about health care and medical insurance during the orientation session.

Dental and Vision Examinations & Insurance

CGCC had mandatory HEALTH insurance for all international students which cost about \$1000 annually. CGCC insurance does **NOT** cover dental and vision care, only health. You can save money if you receive health, dental and vision examinations and treatment before you leave your home country. Also, do not forget to bring with you any prescription medications. You might also want to consult with your doctor for recommendations and extra medications. There is dental and vision insurance policies students may purchase separately. For more information supplemental dental and vision insurance, visit the International Education Program office.

What to Bring

Immigration Documents:

Make copies of all your documents and make a list of all your valuable items just in case they get lost or stolen. Obtaining replacement documents and articles can be time consuming and costly if you do not have records.

Passport and Visa

I-94 card (arrival and departure record attaching inside your passport)

SEVIS I-20

Other important items not to forget to bring with you include:

Airline tickets

Credit cards

Emergency contact information

Medicines and prescriptions

Copy of original Birth Certificate

Transcripts and educational documents (extra copies)

Electrical Adapter (Voltage in U. S. is 110)

Clothing for Arizona weather

Packing Your Luggage

Arizona is hot during the summer months (June – September), so light cotton clothing is recommended. In the winter time months (December – February), Central Arizona weather is chilly; jeans, long sleeve tops and light jackets are recommended. If you plan to visit, snow ski or tour in the higher elevations in Northern, Eastern and parts of Southern Arizona, it snows and therefore you will need much warmer clothing such as wool socks, thick jackets, hats, gloves, etc. The rest of the year (Oct – Nov, March – May) in the metro-Phoenix area, the weather is absolutely beautiful. You should **take certain documents with you in your carry on luggage**, in case your checked luggage is lost. Don't forget to add labels with your name and contact information on your luggage. Remember that U.S. Dept of Homeland Security at the port of entry are authorized to search your and all your luggage when you seek admission to the U.S. Items to bring with you in your carry-on might include: Airline Ticket, Passport, I-20 form, Evidence of Financial Support form, Documentation of your permanent residence in your country, Extra passport size photos, Official Transcripts for all Secondary and Post secondary studies, Medical & Dental Records, Information about any Medical Conditions or Treatments, Eyeglasses and Lens Prescriptions, Traveler's Checks, cash, credit cards, Copy of Birth or Marriage Certificate, International Driver's License, Important Telephone Numbers, Emails and Address (family, friends, businesses, doctors, etc.) and a change of clothing if it takes you 2 days to get to the U.S.

Housing Arrangements

If you need temporary housing, there are nearby hotels or [weekly suites](#) you can rent until you find permanent housing. CGCC at the [Williams Campus has housing](#) available. For more information, such as availability, cost, size, and other rental information, please visit: www.poly.asu.edu/housing/. If you choose CGCC campus housing, you might also need transportation, such a car, especially if you decided you will take classes at the bigger campus - CGCC-Pecos Campus. There are also nearby leasing communities which a student can rent for a monthly fee ranging from \$600 - \$1200 a month depending on the quality of living preferred and location. For apartment leasing in Chandler or Gilbert, Arizona search on [Rent.com](#) (<https://www.rent.com/>) or [ForRent.com](#) (www.forrent.com) or [Apartment.com](#) (www.apartments.com). Make sure you use either of these search words within each website: 85225 (zip code where CGCC is located), East Valley, Chandler, Gilbert.

Arizona Weather

Arizona has some of the best weather in the nation between the months of September through May. The temperature will average 65-75 degrees Fahrenheit (18 - 24 Celsius degrees) during the day and 35-45 °F (2 - 7 °C) at night. Our summer months, June through August, can reach temperatures of over 100 °F (43 °C). Light cotton clothing is recommended for most of the year if you are living in the greater Phoenix area. Most people dress very casual in the summer months. Many students wear shorts and light cotton blouses or t-shirts to campus. Many stores sell very light cotton long sleeve blouses or t-shirts to avoid getting sunburns. They are made from a special "wicking" material that allows perspiration to evaporate quickly and leave you feeling cooler, yet protected.

Our winter temperatures can be chilly, reaching temperatures of 50 - 60 °F (11 - 15 °C). During winter months, you will need jeans, sweaters and a

light jacket. If you leave the greater Phoenix area to visit cities located in higher elevations, you will need heavier and warmer clothing during the winter months. It snows in many places such as Flagstaff, Prescott, Show Low and Payson. All these cities and towns are only about 1 - 2 hour car drive.

In addition to recommended clothing items, we strongly recommend you always wear sunglasses and a hat in the summer months, in addition to drinking plenty of water, even if you don't feel thirsty. Dehydration is a serious problem if you don't drink plenty of water during the summer.

Living in Arizona

The [state of Arizona](#) is known for its beautiful scenery. Arizona is the home to the [Grand Canyon](#), [Painted Desert](#), [Monument Valley](#), [Canyon de Chelly National Monument](#), [Katchner Caverns](#) as well as many other incredible natural wonders. Arizona is famous for its warm, sunny weather. With 330 days of sunshine a year, Arizona is ideal for outdoor adventures. Temperatures vary depending on elevation. Winter temperatures of 60°F (16°C) are common in Arizona. In the desert, summer temperatures often exceed 100°F (38°C). The cities of Chandler and Gilbert are just 35 minutes away from Phoenix, which is the fifth largest city in the United States. CGCC is located about 20 miles from the Superstition Mountains, which boasts four lakes, plenty of hiking trails and scenic camp grounds. Arizona State University, the largest university in Arizona, is only 30 minutes away.

The desert climate of Phoenix makes it a healthy place to live, but it is wise to remember a few important things. Because the air here is dry, it is very important to drink plenty of water every day. You may also find it necessary to use a moisturizing cream on your face and hands. If you are going to be in the sun participating in outdoor activities, use a sunscreen product on your face, arms, legs, etc.

Local Transportation

You can usually find bus routes close to where you live, though the times may not always be convenient. There are local and express bus routes to most parts of the greater Phoenix area. Local bus transportation in the metro-Phoenix area is not as good as in cities such as New York or Los Angeles, so we recommend you make transportation arrangements soon after you arrive. Although the cities of Gilbert and Chandler are the fastest growing the U.S. right now, reliable and consistent source of transportation is challenging but improving. There is a cities-wide bus system which includes several stops a day at CGCC. If you know your residing street address, you can determine if there is a bus route from your location to CGCC by visiting the [Valley Metro Bus](#) (www.valleymetro.org) on line.

Automobiles and Driving

Many students purchase inexpensive (\$3000 or less) vehicles to get to school. Students who purchase a car will need to get a [driver's license](#). Though cars are in many ways the easiest form of transportation in this large valley, you should think long and hard before you take steps to buy a car. First, figure out how much you can afford to spend on a car, title and license, insurance, maintenance, and fuel. Owning a car could double your expenses as a student at CGCC. Discuss the matter with your financial sponsor as well. If your sponsor doesn't know that you are planning to get a car, he or she may be very surprised when your expenses suddenly are doubled. Even if you buy a relatively inexpensive car, you could easily spend another \$3,000 per year on fuel, license plates, upkeep, tires, repairs, parking, and insurance.

Driver Licenses

Everyone who drives in Arizona must have a valid driver license or instruction permit from the [Motor Vehicle Department](#) (www.azdot.gov/mvd/). As an out-of-state foreign student you can drive with an International Driver License and your home country driver license. Or if you have a valid driver license issued in another state, you don't have to get an Arizona driver license. However, if you plan to stay in Arizona for a few years, it is advisable for you to obtain an Arizona license. In fact, you may not be able to get car insurance without an Arizona license.

Bicycles

Bicycles are a very popular mode of transportation for many students. Bicycling is a popular sport in the US so prices can range considerably. Inexpensive second-hand bikes can be purchased in several places from second-hand bike shops to swap meets, campus "for sale" bulletins, personal advertising in newspapers, and garage sales.

It is important to lock your bicycle securely whenever you leave it. We recommend you purchase a strong and secure U lock. You might want to ask a bicycle sales person to recommend an effective lock. You should always lock your bike to a rack and not a post or tree. Bicycle riders should always wear a helmet.