

International Student Admission Guide



Office of Admissions
10501 FGCU Blvd. South
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565
www.fgcu.edu
admissions@fgcu.edu
toll free (888) 889-1095

Florida Gulf Coast University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award Associate, Baccalaureate, and Master's degrees.



Dear Prospective Student,

We are pleased to know of your interest in becoming an international student at Florida Gulf Coast University. FGCU opened for its first classes August 25, 1997. This school is authorized under Federal law to enroll nonimmigrant students. Currently we have students originating from 74 countries throughout the world. We look forward to you joining the exciting community of Florida Gulf Coast University!

Sincerely,

Marc Laviolette
Director of Admissions

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

The term international student refers to any student who is not a permanent resident or naturalized citizen of the United States.

The admissions process begins with the Office of Admissions. This office provides international students with university information and applications. We also determine admissibility and issue the I-20 form used to apply for the F-1 student visa.

International student admission to FGCU is based on:

1. Academic admissibility
2. Financial support
3. Visa and US Immigration requirements

If you currently have a visa other than an F-1 visa, you should consult the Office of Admissions to discuss your immigration status. Each visa category has restrictions on whether or not the visa holder can enroll at the university. Prospective students who have visas, passports or other immigration documents that are expired may need to seek services of an immigration attorney. Florida Gulf Coast University does not provide legal advice on immigration matters. Prospective students who are determined to be “out of status” with immigration cannot be admitted to the university.

After your admission is secured to FGCU, the Office of International Services and Student Life provides support services for international students. This includes: orientation to the university, orientation to living and studying in the U.S., assistance with cross-cultural adjustment and transition issues, information on and assistance with U.S. Immigration documents and regulations, on campus employment and other services.



Steps for International Student Enrollment

➤ **For admission to FGCU, you will need to:**

1. Apply for admission
2. Submit your \$30.00 application fee
3. Submit your academic transcripts (have your transcripts evaluated course by course)
** Information on approved transcript evaluation services is listed below
4. Submit admission test scores (either the ACT or SAT for undergraduate; GMAT, GRE or MAT for graduate)
5. Provide proof of English proficiency (TOEFL exam: 213 computer based, 550 paper based or 79 internet based minimum or IELTS exam: 6.5 minimum)
6. Submit a financial support statement (following specific guidelines) see <http://www.fgcu.edu/Admissions/Prospective/financialforms.html>
7. If you are transferring from a U.S. school or progressing from an undergraduate to a graduate program within the U.S. you must provide a visa clearance form authorized by your current school officials. See <http://www.fgcu.edu/Admissions/Prospective/visa.html>
8. Other immigration documents you currently have (copy of passport/visa/I-94 form, current I-20, etc.)

Important notes:

Once you have been academically admitted and fulfilled the immigration requirements, you will be mailed an I-20 from the Office of Admissions at FGCU. You will take this to a U.S. Embassy or Consulate when applying for the F-1 student visa. In your acceptance packet, you will receive information regarding the mandatory university orientation dates, health insurance and immunization requirements for international students.

➤ **Additional information:**

To Register for classes at FGCU, you will need to:

9. Provide appropriate immunization information to Health Services 239-590-7966
<http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/HealthServices/immunizations.html>
Provide appropriate insurance information that meets the State of Florida requirements.
11. Apply for housing. See <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/Housing/>
 - For academic testing information see <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/Testing/>
 - For scholarship information see <http://www.fgcu.edu/AS/FinancialAid/scholarships.html>

**** For international student transcript evaluation:**

We suggest you contact one of the following:

Josef Silny & Associates in Miami at 305-273-1616, or email info@jsilny.com

or World Education Services at 305-358-6688, email south@wes.org

or AACRAO website <http://www.aacrao.org/credential/individual.htm>

Request that the agency send the results directly by mail to our Admissions Office as an official document.

Should you require any additional information, please contact the Admissions Office at our toll free number (888) 889-1095 or e-mail address at admissions@fgcu.edu

Completed applications and ALL materials must be received by the following deadlines:

If you are outside the United States:

Deadline for Fall Semester	May 1
Deadline for Spring Semester	September 15
Summer (By special permission only)	

If you are currently in the United States attending school:

Deadline for Fall Semester	June 1
Deadline for Spring Semester	October 15
Summer (By special permission only)	

Education in the United States: Students who enter a university in the U.S. must complete 12 years (or equivalent) of preparatory education. International students applying to FGCU as a first-time-in-college freshman must have the equivalent of a U.S. High School Diploma.

Bachelor's Degree: The first university degree awarded is a Bachelor's, which normally requires four years of study (more for some programs). This degree includes required general education courses as well as specialization courses in the chosen field.

Master's Degree: A Bachelor's degree is required of all students who desire to enter a Master's degree program. This degree generally requires two years of study beyond the Bachelor's degree, depending on the number of courses a student completes each academic term.

Level of Placement and transfer of academic credits: Florida Gulf Coast University does not evaluate foreign credentials or transcripts on campus. Your transcripts and credentials must be evaluated by a private company such as: Joseph Silny & Associates, Inc. (305-273-1616), webpage: www.jsilny.com, email address: info@jsilny.com ; World Education Services (305-358-6688), webpage: www.wes.org, email address: south@wes.org ; or by The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) at website: <http://www.aacrao.org/credential/individual.htm> *All foreign transcripts should be evaluated for equivalency purposes.* University-level coursework taken abroad may be transferable if earned at a recognized institution depending on academic equivalency. International students who have completed some university level education and are interested in transferring academic credit to Florida Gulf Coast University should submit an original evaluation of courses taken and an English translation of course syllabi for which credit is desired. Undergraduate students are placed at the appropriate level for their educational background. However, academic departments have the option of denying credit for any coursework not applicable to that department.

Academic Calendar: Florida Gulf Coast University operates on a semester basis. Fall semester begins in late August and ends in mid December. Spring semester begins in early January and ends in late April or early May. There are three summer sessions; two that begin in May and one that begins in June. Summer sessions condense an intensive level of academic study into a short time period. To view the academic calendar and catalog on line see <http://gulfline.fgcu.edu/>

FGCU strongly advises that international students who are enrolling as first-time-in-college begin enrollment in the Fall or Spring semester. This offers a better opportunity to become familiar with the university, the pace of academic study, and to maintain the appropriate course sequence required for the degree. Some programs admit students to begin studies only in specified terms. Summer enrollment exceptions may be permitted on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Office of Admissions. Degree program requirements, immigration regulations and other factors may determine a specified term of enrollment.

Credits: Students may enroll for a particular number of semester hours or credits. Most courses earn three or four credits. A course that earns three credits means that a student will generally attend that class for three hours each week. All international students are required to be enrolled full time (12 hours or more for undergraduate students and 9 hours or more for graduate students) during the fall and spring semesters. Students must earn a minimum of 120 semester hours for a B.A. degree and some B.S. degrees. Graduate degrees (Master's) vary in the number of hours required according to the individual program.

Financial Responsibility-the Financial Statement Form:

For I-20 purposes, international students are required by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to show adequate proof of their ability to financially support themselves (and any dependents) for the duration of their studies in the United States. International students are generally not permitted to be employed (except for restricted on-campus work) while studying in the United States, and therefore need to ensure full financial support for their education. All applicants must submit proof of financial resources in \$US equivalent to the cost of attending Florida Gulf Coast University for one academic year (refer to the Estimated Expenses information). The Financial Statement Form must be completed and signed by an official of your financial institution (such as a bank) where your funds are deposited, or by a sponsor who will be legally responsible for your financial support. This original form must be submitted; no photocopies are accepted. **This document should be dated no more than six months prior to the intended date of enrollment.**

Scholarships and Financial Aid:

International students are **not** eligible for Florida State or U.S. Federal Financial Aid. However, International students may apply for other scholarships through the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office (239)-590-7920, or email: FASO@fgcu.edu, webpage <http://www.fgcu.edu/AS/FinancialAid/scholarships.html> International Students from certain countries may apply for partial tuition exemptions through the SUS Linkage program. Information on these tuition waivers is available from International Services (239)-590-7925, email: intsvcs@fgcu.edu or visit their website: <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/international/>. International students may also want to seek scholarships and other forms of financial support from home country governments, employers or family and foundations associated with the student's selected field of study.

Transfer Students:

You are considered to be a "transfer student" if :

1. You are currently enrolled in another US academic institution and are planning to enroll at (transfer to) FGCU **or**
2. You are moving from one academic level to another at FGCU, for example Bachelor's to Master's level **or**
3. You are seeking a second degree at FGCU **or**
4. You have completed courses at any accredited or recognized institution.

To transfer to FGCU, you should have been pursuing a full course of study (12 credits, undergraduate; 9 credits, graduate) in your former program or be on authorized practical training. Otherwise, you are "Out Of Status" and must apply to the US Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) for reinstatement to F-1 status which, if granted, will allow you to request enrollment at FGCU as F-1 status.

Visa Clearance Form:

You will need a visa clearance if you are a transfer student currently attending a US high school, college or university. This form must be signed by the DSO (Designated School Official) at your current institution, verifying your visa status, and should be sent in a sealed envelope directly to the Admissions Office at FGCU. You may download this form from our website at:

<http://enrollment.fgcu.edu/admissions/visa.htm>

Health Insurance:

International students are required to carry a personal health insurance program that meets the requirements of the State of Florida. **Proof of the health insurance is not needed for admission purposes but must be provided to the university prior to registration for classes.** Information on an approved health insurance program can be obtained from International Services and Student Life. Students who currently have a health insurance policy must demonstrate to Florida Gulf Coast University that the policy meets the requirements of the State of Florida.

Housing and Transportation:

International students are encouraged to consider living in the on-campus student residence halls. Living on campus promotes the student's involvement in the academic and social community of the university. For residence hall information and applications please contact Housing and Residence Life at (239) 590-1700, email address: housing@fgcu.edu. International students may also arrange their own accommodations in area apartments, with relatives or with a U.S. sponsor. A sponsor who hosts an international student should sign the Financial Statement form to verify that they are providing the room and board as a form of financial support to the student.

Students living off-campus will need to provide their own transportation to the campus. A local bus provides limited service between the campus and the area community. International students who plan to drive or own automobiles are responsible for meeting all driver's license, registration, and insurance requirements of the State of Florida.



**Estimated Expenses for International Students
for Academic Year 2008-2009
Florida Gulf Coast University**

A certificate of eligibility (I-20) will not be issued until proof of sufficient funds are verified by the student's financial institution and/or sponsor.

Each year, it is estimated that expenses will increase 10%.

Estimated Expenses, 2008-2009		Undergraduate living with parent or local sponsor	Undergraduate self- supporting	Graduate
Health Insurance		1,503	1,503	1,503
Books and Supplies		1,200	1,200	1,200
Tuition and Fees		13,790	13,790	22,754
Personal Expenses		1,400	1,400	1,400
Transportation		1,440	1,440	1,440
Housing and meals (Room and Board)	Student contribution	3,500	7,000	7,000
	SUBTOTAL	22,833		
	Sponsor*	3,500*		
TOTAL (US dollars)		\$26,333	\$26,333**	\$35,297**

SPECIAL NOTES:

Annual Tuition and other expenses may increase at approximately 10% each year.

*Submit Sponsor's Financial Support Statement indicating a maximum of US \$3,500 of support by providing housing and meals. Note: the person sponsoring you must be from our local area, not abroad.

**International students are required to maintain a full academic course load each semester (minimum of 12 credit hours for undergraduate; 9 credit hours for graduate.) Estimated expenses are based on the yearly required course loads.

Additional funds are required for any dependents who accompany you. For a nine (9) month period, the US requires \$6,000 for each dependent. For a twelve (12) month period, the US requires \$9,000 for each dependent.



Financial Support Verification Letter from Bank

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please refer to the Estimated Expenses for International Students form for exact costs based on graduate, undergraduate and sponsor factors. Be certain to enter the correct amount in the spaces provided. **ALL FIGURES MUST BE IN U.S. DOLLARS.** Foreign currency figures are not acceptable. This Financial Support Verification Letter can be submitted instead of the Financial statement. It must be an original document on the bank or financial firm letterhead. *This document should be dated no more than six months prior to the intended date of enrollment.*

A Financial Support Verification letter must include the following:

Date (day/ month/year)

Re: Sponsoring (name of student to attend Florida Gulf Coast University)

To : International Admissions
Office of Admissions
Florida Gulf Coast University
10501 FGCU Blvd. South
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

I / We certify that _____ (name of account holder) currently has a minimum of US\$ _____ (total amount of funds required for you to attend the university for one year) in an account with our firm, to be applied to educational expenses for _____ (name of student) to attend Florida Gulf Coast University beginning _____ (date or term you intend to enroll).

Sincerely,

(Signature of bank/financial officer)
(Print name of bank/financial officer)
(Address and telephone number)



Financial Support Statement from Sponsor

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please refer to the Estimated Expenses for International Students form for exact costs based on graduate, undergraduate, and sponsor factors. Be certain to enter the correct amount in the spaces provided. **ALL FIGURES MUST BE IN U.S. DOLLARS.** Foreign currency figures are not acceptable. *This document should be dated no more than six months prior to the intended date of enrollment, and should include a copy of a bank statement to verify funds.*

A Financial support statement must include the following:

Date (day/ month/year)

Re: Sponsoring (name of student to attend Florida Gulf Coast University)

To : International Admissions
Office of Admissions
Florida Gulf Coast University
10501 FGCU Blvd. South
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

I / We certify that: (please complete all that apply)

1. I / We will financially support _____ (name of student) for the minimum amount of \$U.S. _____ to attend Florida Gulf Coast University, beginning _____ (date you plan to begin classes).

(If you are providing room & board for international student, please add the following:)

2. I / We will provide room and board to _____ (name of student) for the equivalent minimum amount of \$U.S. _____ while attending Florida Gulf Coast University, beginning _____ (date you plan to enroll).

Sincerely,

(Signature of sponsor)
(Print name of sponsor)
(Sponsor's Address and telephone number)

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA CLEARANCE/ TRANSFER FORM

International Students Transferring From A U.S. high school, college or university to FGCU

As a part of the application process to Florida Gulf Coast University, you must show that you are currently in legal status according to Bureau of Citizenship & Immigration Services regulations. To verify your status, you must:

Step 1: Complete Section I of this form first

Step 2: Your **international advisor** at your current/previous school **must complete Section II**

Step 3: Your international advisor must **mail or fax the completed form** to FGCU's Office of Admissions

IMPORTANT: We cannot issue your I-20 for transfer until after your release date (the day you will complete your attendance at your current institution), and until we receive this completed Visa Clearance/Transfer Form verifying that you are in status.

Issuing your I-20 after the release date may take several weeks. Please allow ample time.

Section I – TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

I request and authorize my present international student advisor (or equivalent campus officer) to provide the information below as part of my application for admission to Florida Gulf Coast University.

Signature Date U.S. Social Security Number Expected FGCU Entry Date

Student's Name _____
(As it appears in passport) Last Name/Family Name/Surname Given Name Country of Citizenship

Present Address _____
Street and Apartment Number City and State Zip Code Phone Number

Section II - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR:

Student's I-94 Admission Number: _____ Expiration date _____ or D/S _____
Date of last entry into the United States: _____

Student's SEVIS ID Number: _____ SEVIS Release Date: _____

Term student last enrolled full time at your institution? _____ specify Campus/Branch _____
(if university has multiple campuses)

To the best of your knowledge, is/was this student in status as an F-1 Student and eligible for notification of transfer?
 Yes No **If not, please explain:** _____

Has the student ever been granted any kind of practical training? Yes No
If yes, state kind and duration: _____

Signature of School Official (or DSO) Date Name, Title

Name and Address of Institution City State Zip Code Telephone Number

Please mail to: Florida Gulf Coast University
Office of Admissions
10501 FGCU Blvd. South
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

OR Fax to: (239) 590-7894

For questions regarding this form please
call our office (239) 590-7878