

# International Graduate Student Admission Guide 2011-2012



Office of Graduate Studies  
10501 FGCU Blvd. South  
Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565  
[www.fgcu.edu](http://www.fgcu.edu)  
[ahill@fgcu.edu](mailto:ahill@fgcu.edu)

(239) 590-7408  
Toll-free (800) 590-3428 (option 6, ext. 7988)

*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, Master's and Doctoral degrees.*



Dear Prospective International Graduate Student,

We are pleased to know of your interest in becoming an international student at Florida Gulf Coast University. FGCU first opened its doors for classes on August 25, 1997 with approximately 2,500 students. Our student body has grown to exceed 12,000 students today. FGCU is authorized under Federal law to enroll nonimmigrant students. We currently have students representing 76 countries from around the world. We look forward to helping you become part of the exciting community of Florida Gulf Coast University.

Sincerely,

Dr. Greg Tolley  
Director of Graduate Studies

### **GRADUATE ADMISSION INFORMATION**

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

The graduate admission process begins with the Office of Graduate Studies. This office provides international students with university information and applications. Admission to a graduate program is decided by the program chair of the department offering the degree. We then work with the department of Global Initiatives and International Services to issue the I-20 form used to apply for the F-1 student visa.

#### **International graduate 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 Graduate Studies 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 the services of an immigration attorney. Florida Gulf Coast University does not provide legal advice on immigration matters. Prospective students who are determined by the United States Department of Immigration and Naturalization Services to be “out of status” cannot be admitted to the university.

After your admission is secured at FGCU, the International Services office 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 GRADUATE STUDENT ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT**

### **Admission Requirements:**

1. Apply for admission. You may submit either the online Graduate International or the Printable Graduate Application: <http://www.fgcu.edu/Graduate/gradapps.html>
2. Submit a \$30.00 application fee. Please send a money order to FGCU Graduate Studies.
3. If your Bachelor's Degree was earned outside of the United States, you must submit an official Course-by-Course International Transcript Evaluation of your foreign credentials (information on approved transcript evaluation services is listed below).
4. If applicable, submit official transcripts from any and all regionally accredited colleges and universities attended in the United States.
5. Submit official Entrance Exam Scores (GMAT, GRE or MAT depending on graduate program).
6. If Bachelor degree earned outside of the United States, submit official TOEFL scores (minimum scores are 213 computer based, 550 paper based, and 79 internet based). Some graduate programs may require higher scores. With the approval of the Director of Graduate Admission and the program chair, you may submit satisfactory evidence of English competency in lieu of the TOEFL.
7. Submit a Financial Support Statement. Specific guidelines are included in this Guide. See <http://www.fgcu.edu/Admissions/Prospective/financialforms.html>.
8. If you are transferring from a U.S. school or progressing from an undergraduate to a graduate program within the U.S., you must submit a Visa Clearance Form completed and authorized by your Designated School Official. This Form is the last page of this Guide. You may also visit <http://www.fgcu.edu/Admissions/Prospective/visa.html>.
9. Submit copies of any and all immigration documents you currently have (copy of passport, Visa, I-94 form, etc.).

### **Important Note:**

**Once you have been academically admitted to FGCU and fulfilled the immigration requirements, you will be mailed an I-20 from the Office of Graduate Studies 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.**

## **Enrollment Requirements:**

1. Provide Student Health Services (239-590-1254) with the required immunization documentation. See <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/HealthServices/immunizations.html> for more information.
2. Provide appropriate insurance information that meets State of Florida requirements.
3. For housing on campus, see <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/Housing/> to apply.

## **Important Contact Information**

World Education Services (*recommended*)

*International Transcript Evaluations*

(305) 358-6688

[info@wes.org](mailto:info@wes.org)

<http://www.wes.org/>

Josef Silny & Associates

*International Transcript Evaluations*

(305) 273-1616 (Miami)

[info@jsilny.com](mailto:info@jsilny.com)

<http://www.jsilny.com/>

FGCU Testing Services

(239) 590-7955

<http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/Testing/>

Financial Aid and Scholarships

(239) 590-7920

[FASO@fgcu.edu](mailto:FASO@fgcu.edu)

<http://www.fgcu.edu/AS/FinancialAid/>

<http://www.fgcu.edu/AS/FinancialAid/scholarships.html>

University Foundation

*Scholarship Information*

(239) 590-1067

<http://www.fgcu.edu/Foundation/scholarships.asp>

**Please make sure to request that your selected evaluation agency mail your official Course-by-Course international evaluation directly to the Office of Graduate Studies. If you would like to submit your evaluation yourself in person, make sure that it remains sealed in its original envelope.**

If you would like any additional information or assistance, please contact the Office of Graduate Studies at (239) 590-7408 or toll free at (800) 590-3428 (option 6, ext. 7908). You may also email Ana Hill (Graduate Admissions Officer) at [ahill@fgcu.edu](mailto:ahill@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 (contact Office of Graduate Admissions for permission)**

**If you are currently in the United States attending school:**

**Deadline for Fall Semester**                      **June 1**  
**Deadline for Spring Semester**                **October 15**  
**Summer (contact Office of Graduate Admissions for permission)**

**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 World Education Services (recommended) or Josef Silny & Associates (refer to page 4 for contact information). Evaluation companies that are members of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) are all acceptable. For a complete listing of NACES members, please visit: <http://www.naces.org/members.htm>.

*All foreign transcripts must 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, please visit <http://www.fgcu.edu/Registrar/academiccalendar.asp> and <http://www.fgcu.edu/Catalog/index.asp>.

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 during specified terms only. Summer enrollment exceptions may be permitted on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Office of Graduate Studies. 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 most Bachelor's degrees. Graduate degrees (Master's and Doctoral) 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. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) 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 Dollars equivalent to the cost of attending Florida Gulf Coast University for one academic year (refer to the Estimated Expenses information on page 8). 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. **The Financial Statement form must be submitted in its original form. Photocopies are not acceptable. This document should be dated no earlier 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 (see page 4). International Students from certain countries may apply for partial tuition exemptions through Florida's State University System's Linkage program. Information on these tuition waivers is available from the International Student Services office. You may contact International Student Services by phone at (239) 590-7925, by email at [InternationalServices@fgcu.edu](mailto:InternationalServices@fgcu.edu), and on the web at <http://www.fgcu.edu/international/>.

International students may also want to seek scholarships and other forms of financial support from home country governments, employers, 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 higher education academic institution
2. You are moving from undergraduate to graduate level at FGCU
3. You are seeking a second degree at FGCU

To transfer to FGCU, you should have been pursuing a full course of study (12 undergraduate semester hours or 9 graduate semester hours) 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 Form** to verify your Visa status if you are a transfer student currently attending a US high school, college or university. This form **must** be signed by the Designated School Official (DSO) at your current institution and should be sent in a sealed envelope directly to the Graduate Studies Office at FGCU. You may use the form at the end of this Guide or you may download the form at:

<http://www.fgcu.edu/Admissions/Prospective/visa.html>.

### **Health Insurance:**

International students are required to carry a personal health insurance program that meets the requirements of the State of Florida. **Proof of medical 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 the International Services office. 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 on campus. Living on campus promotes the student's involvement in both the academic and social communities of the university. For residence hall information and applications, please contact Housing and Residence Life by phone at (239) 590-1700, by email at [housing@fgcu.edu](mailto:housing@fgcu.edu), or on the web at <http://www.fgcu.edu/housing/>. 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 FGCU campus. Public transportation is available. International students who plan to drive their own automobiles are responsible for meeting all driver's license, registration, and insurance requirements of the State of Florida.



## Estimated Expenses for International Students 2011-2012

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

Note: It is estimated that expenses will increase 10% each academic year.

Estimated Expenses for 2010-2011		Undergraduate living with parent or local sponsor	Undergraduate self- supporting	Graduate
Medical Insurance		1,304	1,304	1,304
Books and Supplies		1,200	1,200	1,200
Tuition and Fees		18,533	18,533	21,671
Personal Expenses		1,700	1,700	1,700
Transportation		1,700	1,700	1,700
Housing and meals (Room and Board)	Student contribution	3,500	7,000	7,000
	SUBTOTAL	27,937		
	Sponsor*	3,500*		
<b>TOTAL (US Dollars)</b>		<b>\$31,437</b>	<b>\$31,437**</b>	<b>\$34,575**</b>

\*Submit Sponsor's Financial Support Statement indicating a minimum 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 undergraduate semester hours or 9 graduate semester hours). Estimated expenses are based on 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. **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 Support Statement**. **It must be an original document on the bank or financial firm's letterhead.** *This document should be dated no more than six months prior to the intended date of enrollment.*

The Financial Support Verification letter **must** include the following (please use this as a guide):

**Date (day/month/year)**

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

**To : Office of Graduate Studies  
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.*

The Financial support statement must include the following (please use this as a guide):

Date (day/ month/year)

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

To : Office of Graduate Studies  
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 \$US (*total amount of funds required for you to attend the university for one year*) 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 \$US (*total amount of funds required for room and board for one year*) while attending Florida Gulf Coast University, beginning (*date you plan to enroll*).

Sincerely,

(Signature of sponsor)

(Print name of sponsor)

(Sponsor's Complete Address and Telephone Number)

**FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY**  
**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA CLEARANCE/ TRANSFER FORM**

**To be completed by 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 The Department of Homeland Security 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 Graduate Studies.

**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 without receipt of 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 (leave blank if you do not have one)	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: \_\_\_\_\_

Last term student was 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 so, please identify kind and duration  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of School Official (or DSO)	Date	Printed Name/Title

Name of Institution	Address/ City/State/Zip Code	Telephone Number

UNDERGRADUATE: Florida Gulf Coast University  
 Office of Undergraduate Admissions  
 FAX: 239-590-7894 10501 FGCU Blvd. South  
 Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565  
 Office: 239-590-7878

GRADUATE: Florida Gulf Coast University  
 Office of Graduate Studies  
 FAX: 239-590-7843 10501 FGCU Blvd. South  
 Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565  
 Office: 239-590-7408

For questions regarding this form, please call: