

International Student Handbook

Elms College



Dear New International Student,

Welcome, and congratulations on your enrollment at Elms College! This is the beginning of a very exciting journey for you, and we are pleased you chose us for your higher education studies! We hope that this finds you eager to learn about Elms College, American Culture, and your field of study. You will bring an irreplaceable perspective to the Elms College community, and we are looking forward to the experience and culture that you will bring to us.

This handbook has been designed to help you prepare for your arrival and first semester at Elms College. Let this serve as a map for your road to success as a college student. While we have done our best to provide you with all the information you need prior to your arrival in Chicopee, please do feel free to contact us with any additional questions that you may have in the weeks leading up to, and following your arrival at Elms College. Our office is located on the second floor of the Mary Dooley College Center and we can be reached using the information provided below.

We look forward to working with you!

Joyce

Joyce Hampton
Director of ESL/ International Programs
413-265-2423
hamptonj@elms.edu

Jillian

Jillian Brown
Latino Academic Success Coordinator
413-265-2462
brownjillian@elms.edu

International Programs Office
Elms College
291 Springfield Street
Chicopee, MA 01013
USA

Pre Arrival Information:

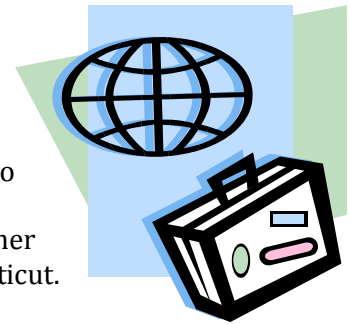
For Immigration (Note: If you are traveling from Puerto Rico the following does not apply):



- **Valid Passport** (Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months beyond your arrival date into the United States)
- As soon as you receive your **I-20 and supporting documents**, please pay the SEVIS I-901 fee at: (<https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtm>) and then schedule an appointment at the U.S. Consulate or Embassy to apply for your **F-1 student visa**. It is important that you do this quickly as procedures are more stringent than ever before and we need to have time in case they ask you for any additional information.

For Elms:

- If living on campus; **housing deposits must be paid by May 1st**
- **Complete all required Medical Forms** (available to download at <http://www.elms.edu/about/wellness.htm>)
- **Pay Fall fees and bills.** Questions regarding student accounts should be directed to Suzanne Balicki at 413-265-2412 or suzannebalicki@elms.edu. Questions regarding your Financial Aid can be answered by the Financial Aid Office at 413-265-2249 or finaid@elms.edu.
- **Once you have your F-1 student visa, plan your travel:**
 - Order flight ticket
 - Inform the International Programs Office of Arrival information
 - Make arrangements for temporary housing (if arriving prior to September 3rd)
 - Make transportation arrangements if flying into an airport other than Bradley International Airport (BDL) in Hartford, Connecticut.



Items that you cannot fit in luggage can be mailed to arrive one week ahead of time to the following address:

Your Name (New Student)

Elms College

291 Springfield Street

Chicopee, MA 01013

U.S.A

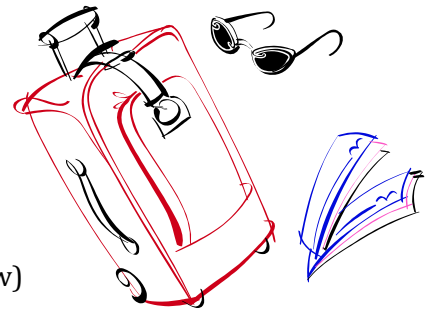


When you arrive the weather will probably be around 80° F or 27 °C. In general, the weather is fairly warm through September and will then begin to get cooler. Because of its location in the North East part of the country, winter temperatures often go below freezing, 32°F or 0°C, and Elms College will get a lot of snow between November and February. You will be able to purchase winter clothing here, or you may want to have it mailed from home. It is a good idea to pack clothes that can be layered, as you will be walking to classes on campus.

American student usually dress informally; wearing jeans, t-shirts, button down shirts, and sweatshirts. However, there will be occasions where you will want to dress up. This means a dress for young women and dress pants, dress shirt, and tie, for young men.

Suggested Clothing Includes:

- Sweaters, sweatshirts, and jackets
- Long and short sleeved shirts/blouses
- Underwear, socks, tights
- Skirts/dresses
- Pants, jeans, sweatpants, and shorts
- Pajamas, bathrobe
- Swim suits
- Sneakers, sandals, dress shoes, boots (for rain or snow)
- Mittens, hats, scarves
- Jewelry/accessories
- National or traditional dress



Essential Items:

- Pillow, blankets, sheets (these items will be provided from the college **for your first week** at Elms; however, they will need to be returned and it will be your responsibility to provide your own for the rest of your time here.)
- Towels
- Hangers, laundry basket/bag
- Hair dryer (110 volt)
- Hair brush/ comb
- Prescription and over the counter medicines
- Toiletries: shampoo, soap, body lotions, lip balm, etc.
- Personal items from family and friends to make you feel at home.

Non-Essential Items:

- A good dictionary/ thesaurus
- Storage boxes/trunks
- Bulletin or message board for your door
- Gym bag (for overnight trips)
- Key chain
- Computers (high speed internet is available in residence halls, however, there are also many computer labs available for student use)
- USB travel drive



****Many of these things can be purchased upon arrival in Chicopee at nearby stores. We will go shopping as part of our International Student Orientation.***

Arrival at Elms College:

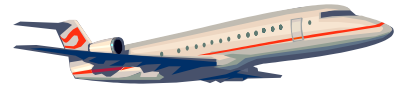
International Student Orientation will begin on **September 4, 2009**. We recommend that you arrive on September 3rd at which time, the Office of International Programs will provide you with transportation from Bradley International Airport, in Hartford, CT if we are notified of your travel itinerary prior to August 14th. We highly recommend that you utilize this airport, as it is about 30 minutes from the college.

Please note that residence halls are not open until September 3rd, and if arriving prior to this date, you should plan for temporary housing.

How to reach Elms College...

from Bradley International Airport: (<http://www.bradleyairport.com>)

As previously mentioned we strongly advise you use Bradley International Airport as your final destination when traveling to Chicopee. The identification code for the airport is BDL, and hosts flights through Delta, Continental, United, US Airways....



If you cannot participate in pickup from the International Programs Office Staff, or are traveling with a large group, the following are options available to transport you from the airport to the college:

Taxis are available from the "Ground Transportation" area of the airport. Fare is about \$75, plus gratuity.

Rental Car Services are also available on site, please refer to the Bradley International Airport website for details.

from Logan International Airport:

Boston is about a 2 hour drive from Chicopee. Peter Pan Bus lines run from Boston to Springfield and cost about \$40 per ticket. <http://www.peterpanbus.com>. You would then take a taxi from the Springfield us station to Elms College.

from John F. Kennedy Airport :

New York is about a 3 ½ hour drive from Chicopee. CT Limo offers services from JFK to Hartford, CT and cost is about \$95 per ticket. <http://www.ctlimo.com/>

Other Travel Information:

Please be advised when traveling to Elms College that you should plan to bring the following items in your carryon luggage:

- Passport, F-1 Visa, I-20, Acceptance Letter
- Small Amount of Cash
- Contact Information for IPO Staff in case of problems or emergency
- A change of clothes (in case of lost luggage)



Important Information about Academics at Elms College

(Please refer to the Student Handbook for more in-depth explanation of policies and procedures)

<http://www.elms.edu/Downloads/handbook.pdf>

Full Time and Academic Standing:

Full-time student enrollment at Elms is a course load of 12-18 credits. Twelve (12) is the minimum number of credits completed in order to maintain full time status for Financial Aid, Housing, and Immigration purposes. Fifteen (15) is the average course load for students planning to graduate in four years.

Please note that Good Academic Standing is defined by Elms College as the following:

Credit Hours Attempted	Minimum GPA Earned
1-15	1.6
16-30	1.7
31-45	1.8
46-59	1.9
60+	2.0

Attendance:

As with most American colleges and universities, Elms College students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Students are expected to have assignments and/or readings completed prior to the beginning of the class. Students will be held responsible for material and assignments from absences or late enrollment. At the discretion of the instructor, absences in excess of one-third of the total number of course meetings may result in the student's exclusion from the course.

Academic Honesty:

Elms College has a strict Academic Honesty Code of Conduct as stated on page 19 of the Student Handbook. Students who fail to abide by the guidelines stated in the Code of Conduct are at risk for failure of an assignment and/ or course and could face dismissal from the college.

Blazernet

Blazernet is the Elms College information system giving students access to academic schedules, course registration, account statements, grades, transcripts, history, and degree audits. Your Blazernet username and password will be mailed to you prior to your arrival on campus.

Manhattan Virtual Class Room

Manhattan is an online learning tool used by professors of Elms College, to contact students, turn in assignments, host class discussions, and serve as a portal for class communication. This username and password will also be provided for you by the college.

Living on Campus *

(*Students that wish to live in off campus housing should make such arrangements **prior** to their arrival to Chicopee!)

There are three residence halls at Elms College; O'Leary, Rose William, and Devine Halls. All resident first year students will live in O'Leary Hall or Rose William Hall with a randomly assigned roommate unless otherwise requested in the application process. Each Hall contains wireless internet, laundry facilities, floor lounges, and kitchenettes for student use. Students will be supplied with a bed, bureau, chair, and desk. Students are welcome to bring a television, stereo, computer/printer, clock radio, fan, hot plates, and refrigerator no larger than 1.7 cubic feet. Additional furniture or cooking devices are not allowed in student rooms.

Each floor is assigned a resident advisor (or "RA") who will be in charge of enforcing residence hall and college policies. Resident advisors can also be used to address any questions or concerns you have as you adjust to living in the residence halls.



Guest Polices

- Resident students are allowed to sign in male and female visitors on Sunday-Thursday from 9:00am-11:00pm and Friday-Saturday 9:00am-2:00am.
- Resident students who visit a hall in which they are not occupants are considered to be guests of that hall and must sign in (listing the person they are visiting). Visiting resident students only need to be escorted after the times listed above and must sign out by 4:00am.
- When signing in a guest, the following information must be logged at the sign in desk after showing a photo identification: resident's name, guest's name, room number, phone number (of resident), time of arrival/departure.
- Overnight guests must be of the same gender as the resident host and cannot exceed more than three consecutive nights or more than five times per month.



Quiet Hours

- Out of consideration to others, resident students (and their guests) are expected to keep noise levels to a reasonable level in the building all hours of the day.
- Official quiet hours are 11pm-9am Sundays-Thursday and 2:00am-9:00am on Fridays and Saturdays.
- Twenty-four hour quiet is expected during finals week.

Drug & Alcohol Policies

- With accordance to the federal and state laws, Elms College prohibits the illegal possession, use, or distribution of any controlled drug or substance.
- If you are under 21 years old, you may not have **any** alcoholic beverages in your room, even for guests.
- If you are 21 or older, you may not provide alcohol to underage residents.
- If you are 21 or older you may consume alcohol **in your room**. You may not store more than a 12-pack of beer, a liter of wine, or a half liter of other alcohol.

All resident students and guests are prohibited from smoking and/or having pets in any Residence Halls on campus.

Questions regarding policies are welcomed by the Residence Life Staff (listed below).

Director of Residence Life:

Patrick Carpenter carpenter@elms.edu (413)265-2461

Assistant Director of Residence Life

Elizabeth Fogarty fogartye@elms.edu (413)265-2260

Any Resident Advisor



Dining and Meals

All students enrolled at Elms College are automatically signed up for the Standard Meal Plan. This is a declining balance point system with items in the dining all being assigned a point price. Options in the Dining Hall include a produce market, grill, deli, pizza/pasta station, and the home zone. All information needed to utilize your points will be on the back of you student ID card.

Dining Hall Hours of Operation



Monday – Thursday 7:00am-10:00pm

Fridays 7:00am-6:00pm

Weekends and Holidays

Continental Breakfast 9:00am-11:00am

Brunch 11:00am-1:00pm

Dinner 4:30pm-6:00pm



If looking for food options outside of service hours, below is a list of places that are regularly utilized by Elms College students.

A-1 Pizza (413) 594-6767

486 Springfield Street

Munich House (413) 594-8788

13 Center Street

Dunkin' Donuts (413) 592-2385

95 West Street

Fruit Fair (small grocery store)

398 Front Street

Fairview Deli (413)598-8158

193 Fairview Avenue

Subway (413) 592-0500

105 Center Street

Dominos' Pizza (413) 827-8400

Delivery Services

Banking

Those students looking to open a bank account or utilize the services of banks in the area have a few options within walking distance from the campus.

Bank of America (0.4 miles from Campus) **(800) 841-4000**

Featuring "Campus Edge" checking accounts: no minimum balance requirement, only a \$25 initial opening deposit required, and free check card.



***Chicopee Savings Bank** (0.4 miles from Campus) **(413) 594-6692**

CSB Free Checking: \$20 minimum starting deposit, free checks, free debit/ATM card, no monthly service charges

*There is a Chicopee Savings Bank ATM located inside the College Center.

Sovereign Bank (0.4 miles from Campus) **(413) 592-2514**

Featuring Student Checking: no minimum balance, no monthly fee, free incoming domestic and international wire transfers, for students 17-25

Communication

Most students at Elms College use email and cellular phones as their primary methods of communication.

Email

All students of Elms are given an email address for personal and academic use. Your username and temporary password will be assigned to you and found in your campus mailbox upon arrival to the college. Faculty and Staff of the College will expect that you check your email regularly; most will use that as their primary contact with you.



There are also many options for free email addresses through domains such as Google, Yahoo, MSN, and Hotmail.



Postal Service

All students will be assigned a campus mailbox used for on-campus and off-campus mail. Incoming packages will be stored in the mail room until you are ready for pick up. Any mail that a student needs to send can be done through the Mailroom located on the bottom floor of the College Center.



Faxes

Students that need to send or receive messages can use the fax number of the International Programs Office; (413)594-3951. All incoming faxes should include "Attention: International Programs Office".

Cellular Phones

Cellular phones are available with, or without contracts, through many surrounding vendors. This includes:

No Contract Carriers:

Target (Holyoke Mall), **Best Buy** (Holyoke Mall) *Phones range from \$15-\$220; Airtime/Texting/Minutes prices range by desired outcome. **RadioShack** (Holyoke Mall, Memorial Drive Chicopee)* Phone prices range from \$10-\$180; Airtime/Texting/Minutes prices range by desired outcome **AT&T** (www.attnocontract.com) **Verizon Wireless** (Holyoke Mall) *Phone prices range from around \$50-\$185; Airtime/Texting/Minutes prices range by desired outcome

Contract Carriers:

Verizon
Sprint
AT&T

*Most Contract Carriers will require a Social Security Number.



Living in the United States: Fitting in with Your American Peers

Timeliness

If you hope to meet with someone (a faculty/ staff member, doctor, etc.) you will most likely need to make an appointment. Once your appointment has been made, the professional you are meeting with will set this time aside for you. It is extremely important that you arrive on time, and are prepared for your meeting. Should you need to change the meeting, be sure to notify him/her by email or telephone.



Personal Space

The space between two people conversing will vary depending on cultural background. In the United States you will find that most people will stand about a foot away from each other when talking, and most often will not physically contact each other during conversation. If you have a question about how a person should be addressed, it is best to be honest and ask.



Greetings

While living in the United States, you will notice that most greetings will be with a friendly “Hello” or “Hi”, and a handshake. The question “How are you?” is mainly used as a greeting, and can be answered, “Hi, I’m good”. As you get to know some of your peers, you may find that they will hug upon greeting each other.

Smoking and Drinking

Smoking is not allowed in public buildings in the state of Massachusetts and you must be 18 years old with proper identification to purchase any tobacco product. The legal drinking age is 21 years old. This means that you must have proper identification to purchase and consume alcohol in any public place in the United States. Some area restaurants and bars may only allow adults 21 years or older during posted hours of the night.

For more information on cultural adjustment in America, visit the websites below or ask at the International Programs Office

<http://www.edupass.org>

<http://educationusa.state.gov/>

http://www.internationalstudentguidetotheusa.com/articles/c_american_culture.php



"HELP! Where do I go with questions about...?"



Immigration Documents, Visas, ESL, etc.

International Programs Office

1st Floor College Center

413-265-2423 hamptonj@elms.edu

(Joyce Hampton)

413-265-2462 brownjillian@elms.edu

(Jillian Brown)

Campus Events, Trips, Games

Student Activities Office

2nd Floor of the College Center

tolsonj@elms.edu 413-265-2211

Financial Aid, Loans, Grants, Scholarships

Office of Financial Aid

Berchman's Hall

finaid@elms.edu 413-265-2249

Adding/Dropping Classes, Transcripts,

Registration

Registrar Office

Berchman's Hall

hartmann@elms.edu 413-265-2314

Academic Support/Tutoring

Academic Resource Center

Library (2nd Floor)

writeon@elms.edu 413-265-2426

My Student ID, Residence Life

Dean of Students Office

1st Floor College Center

413-265-2210

Tuition Payments, Account Balance, Holds

Student Accounts

Berchman's Hall

413-265-2412

Healthcare, Medicine,

Counseling

Health Center

2nd Floor Maguire Center

413-265-2288 gagnej@elms.edu

Internships, Jobs, Resumes, Cover letters

Career & Experiential Learning Center

1st Floor College Center

413-265-2272 careercs@elms.edu

Pool Schedule, Gym Schedule, Intramurals

Maguire Center

413-265-2313

Textbooks, School Supplies

Bookstore

413-265-2273

Volunteer Opportunities

Campus Ministry

1st Floor College Center

413-265-2289

Research, Photocopying, & General Library

Alumnae Library

413-265-2280

Intercultural Programs or Opportunities

Office of Intercultural Programs

alexanderk@elms.edu 413-265-2343

Sending/ Receiving Mail, Mailboxes

Lower Level, College Center


413-265-2301

gruskosj@elms.edu



Dictionary of Elms Terms

A	ARC	Academic Resource Center- free tutoring services located on the second floor of the library.
B	Berchman's/ BH	The College's largest academic building located across from the College Center
	Blazernet	Online information source that can be used to check grades, schedule, and account holds.
C	Computer Labs	2 Computer Labs on campus available for student use; one on the 1 st floor of the College Center and one on 2 nd floor of BH
	Convocation	Convocation is a ceremony marking the start of classes with all First Year Students and Faculty.
D	Degree Audit	Degree Audits can be found on BlazerNet and will serve as your academic road map to class scheduling
	DRA	The Dining Room Annex, located off of the Cafeteria, serves as a common meeting place for clubs, events, etc.
E	Email	Your ELMS Email will serve as a major communication from Faculty, Staff, and information regarding college events. Students are expected to check it daily.
	ESL	English as a Second Language
F	First Year Seminar	All first year students are required to take first year seminar, in order to best be acclimated to the college community.
	Fontbonne Room	The Fontbonne Room is CC103 used for class and club meetings.
G	Great Hall	The Great Hall, located on the first floor of O'Leary, is used for campus events.



Guard Shack

The Guard Shack is the center for Campus Safety on campus, located behind O'Leary near the athletic fields.

H Hold Codes

Hold Codes, appear on Blazernet and can affect your registration. Please see FAQ's to fix these!

I International Club

The International Club is open to all students on campus. It meets twice a month and hosts events to celebrate different cultures and discuss global issues

IPO

The International Programs Office, located in the College Center Room 208.

J Joyce & Jillian

Joyce Hampton Director of ESL/International Programs, and Jillian Brown Latino Academic Success Coordinator. They can be found in the IPO.

K KWU

Kochi Women's University, a Japanese university that collaborates with Elms for an annual exchange program

L Library

The Library is home to the ARC, Library Media Center, and wide array of books. Some classes are also held in the library.

M Maguire

Maguire Center houses the gym and wellness and fitness centers. It is available for use by all Elms students. Some classes may also be held on the second floor of the MC.

Manhattan

Manhattan is an online classroom used by faculty to facilitate out of class discussions, to give assignments, and to post grades throughout the semester.

P Pre-Req

A prerequisite is a course that needs to be completed prior to enrollment in many upper-level classes. For example, ACC 201 is a prerequisite for ACC 202.

Q

Quad

The Keating Quadrangle, or the “quad” is the grassy and concrete area located outside of O’Leary, Berchman’s, and the College Center.

R

RA’s

Resident Advisors are upper-class students living in the dorms, that serve as advisors and liaisons with the Residence Life Office.

S

Syllabi

A course syllabus will be issued to you by all faculty, and will outline class requirements and policies for the semester.

V

Veritas

Veritas Auditorium is on the second floor of Berchman’s Hall

Z

BlaZers

The logo/symbol of Elms College athletic teams.

