

# International Student Handbook



**International Programs Office  
Elms College**

*Updated: 3/11/13*

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, Room 208 and our **office hours** are Monday through Friday 8:30 am-4:30 pm.

The International Programs Office will assist you in many of your needs from the time of your arrival at Elms College until your graduation or program end date. General services that are provided by the office include:

- A full international orientation programs to help acclimate you to Elms College and life in the USA
- Academic Advising and Academic Support Services
- Immigration Advising
- Transportation to Bradley International Airport
- Assistance in pre-arrival matters such as housing, medical forms, packing, and
- course schedules

We look forward to working with you!

Tami

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Mailing address:  
**International Programs Office**  
Elms College  
291 Springfield Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013, USA

## PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

**For Immigration** (Please note- This does **not** apply to students who are from Puerto Rico.)

- **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 1<sup>st</sup>**
- **Complete all required Medical Forms** (available to download at <http://www.elms.edu/about/wellness.htm>) by **August 1<sup>st</sup>**.
- **Pay Fall fees and bills.** Any questions regarding student accounts should be directed to Suzanne Balicki at 413-265-2412 or [suzannebalicki@elms.edu](mailto:suzannebalicki@elms.edu). All Fall bills should be paid by August 2<sup>nd</sup>. This includes insurance waivers if you have your own health insurance that will cover you while you study in the United States. This can be done at [www.Collegehealthplans.com](http://www.Collegehealthplans.com). If you do not waive the insurance you will automatically be charged for these services.
- Questions regarding your Financial Aid can be answered by the Financial Aid Office at 413-265-2249 or [finaid@elms.edu](mailto:finaid@elms.edu).

### Once you have your F-1 student visa, plan your travel

- Order flight ticket with a final destination to Bradley International Airport (BDL) in Hartford, Connecticut. This is the closest airport to campus and IPO can provide transportation to campus if notified 7 days in advance.
- Send the International Programs Office your flight itinerary or arrival information to campus
- Make arrangements for temporary housing (if arriving prior to September 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Make transportation arrangements to Elms College if flying into an airport other than BDL.

*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**



If you arrive in late August, 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 northeastern 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 students 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.

### 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

- Command Strips (If living on-campus, you'll need to buy these once in the US to hang things in your dorm room.)
- 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 **August 29, 2014**. We recommend that you arrive on **August 28<sup>th</sup>** 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 16<sup>th</sup>. 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 **August 28<sup>th</sup>**, and if arriving prior to this date, you will need to plan for temporary housing.

### How to arrive at Elms College

- **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 (IPO) 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.

- **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 bus station to Elms College.

- **John F. Kennedy Airport**

New York is about a 3 1/2 hour drive from Chicopee. CT Limo offers services from JFK to Hartford, CT and cost is about \$95 per ticket. <http://www.ctlimo.com/>

- **Important 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 in U.S. Dollars
- Contact Information for IPO Staff in case of problems or emergency
- A change of clothes (in case of lost luggage)

## UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN EDUCATION

### Educational Structure

Americans attend twelve years of primary school, commonly known as *elementary school* and secondary school, has two levels and they are commonly known as *middle school or junior high school, and high school*. Elementary school begins around the age of five and students attend five to six years of elementary school. Next students attend a middle school or a junior high school for two or three years depending on the school model used. Next students attend high school for four years.

Americans call the first year of schooling Kindergarten, then the following years are called First through Twelfth. With a high school diploma, a student can enter a community college, 4-year college/university, vocational school, or other professional schools. In the US, there is very little difference academically between a **college** and a **university**. Universities are larger than colleges, in terms of student attendance and the number of degree programs offered.

Students who study at a college or university earn a Bachelor's Degree, commonly known as *undergraduate* education. Students typically earn an undergraduate degree in four years. The first year of college is called your **freshman** year and your second year of college is called your **sophomore** year. Freshmen and sophomores are known as *underclassmen*. Sequentially, the last two years are called **junior** and **senior** years. Students in these years are known as *upperclassmen*. It's very common for students to ask each other "What year are you?" You can reply, "I'm a freshman."

At the next level of study, students earn a Master's Degree is known as *graduate* school or education in two-three years depending on the course of study. Study beyond the Master's Degree is known as a Doctorate. It's the highest degree in any given field and is known as a *terminal degree*.

### 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>

Elms is a Catholic, liberal arts college. This means students are required to study a wide variety of subjects such as English, science, mathematics, history, etc. in addition coursework in their major. Typically students complete their required liberal arts curriculum coursework by the end of their junior year. This allows upperclassmen to concentrate of taking classes within their major.

The Undergraduate academic calendar has two 15-week semesters. The Fall semester is September through December and the Spring semester is January through May. Students have about a month off between semesters. The Graduate Programs have different academic calendars so it's best to check with your Program Director for the correct information.

**Classroom Culture** Elms is a small and fairly informal college, professors work with the students on a personal basis. Many international students, who are accustomed to a more formal educational system, find that the personal nature of the college requires a major adjustment. Professors encourage students to ask questions both in and outside of the classroom. Do not be afraid to ask questions or get clarification about things that you do not understand.

The most common method of instruction is a **lecture**. The lectures are supplemented by classroom discussions. It is important for the student to contribute to the discussion in the classroom. In the US, rising questions or not agreeing with the professor is viewed as a healthy sign of interest, attention, and independent thinking. If you don't contribute to class discussions, it may be assumed that you aren't interested in what is being said in the class, or that you don't understand.

Another common method of instruction used at Elms is **Group Presentations**. Group Presentations are done in class by you and your fellow classmates. The professor will typically assign students to a small **group** and give each group a topic or theme to present on. Group Presentations involve writing a group paper and giving an oral presentation in class. The group members must work together to complete the desired outcome as assigned by the professor. Each member is expected to contribute knowledge to the assignment, since the success of the group relies on the over-all outcome.

**A Syllabus** On the first day of the class, your professor will distribute and review a course syllabus. It's an outline of the entire class and will state the course requirements, expectations and daily assignments needed for a class grade. This may include information about class participation, examinations, and research papers. Students are responsible for the material covered by the assignments, even if the professor does not review the materials in class. You will be expected to complete all your assignments on time, due dates for assignments are rarely flexible.

The syllabus will also list required books for the course and it may also include a suggested reading list. The books are available for purchase at Elms bookstore. Purchasing books for your courses can be expensive. You may want to purchase used books if available or purchase your books online through [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

Most importantly, the syllabus will have the professor's office location on campus, contact information, and office hours. Professors hold regular office hours, it's a time when you can meet with him/her if you have any questions or concerns about your class or assignments. If you cannot make it to their office hours, contact your professor to make an appointment at another time. If you are unable to attend class or complete your assignments, you need to contact your professor directly and as soon as possible.

**Grades** Professors give each student a grade for each course. Elms uses a letter grading system and each semester students receive a grade report that will list of all the courses you completed, the credits earned, and the grade you received. The grading system used by Elms and most colleges/universities throughout the U.S. for evaluating the overall scholastic performance of students are:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Quality Value</u>
A	Excellent	4.0
A-		3.667
B+		3.333
B	Good	3.0
B-		2.667
C+		2.333
C	Average	2.0
C-		1.667
D+		1.333
D	Poor	1.0
D-		0.667
F	Failure	0

**Other grades may include:**

AU	Audit
S	Pass for Pass/Fail
W	Withdrawn
W/S	Withdrawn/Satisfactory
W/U	Withdrawn/Unsatisfactory
NC	Non-credit
NS	Not submitted
IP	In process, multi-term courses only
I	Incomplete
IF	Incomplete converted to failure

**Grade Point Average (GPA)** is calculated by the dividing the total **Quality Values** by the total **Credit Hours** attempted.

**Example:**

<u>Course</u>	<u>Grades</u> <small>(Quality Value)</small>	<u>Credit Hours</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>
ESL	B (3.0)	3.0	9
Biology	C (2.0)	4.0	8
History	B+ (3.333)	3.0	9.999
Yoga	A (4.0)	2.0	8
Rhetoric	B- (2.667)	3.0	8.001
		15.0	43.0

43 Total Grade Points / 15 Credit Hours = 2.867 **GPA**

**Class Grades** are based on many factors and these factors will vary slightly from course to course so it's best to read all your syllabi carefully. The factors that impact your class grades are:

- **Class Attendance** Students are expected to be **on time** and **attend all** scheduled classes. Students are held responsible for material and assignments from absences or lateness. If a student does miss a class, it's your responsible to follow up with the professor to explain why you missed class. Students are expected to have all assignments and/or readings completed prior to the beginning of the class. 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 and the student may receive a failure grade for the class.**
- **Classroom Discussion** Students are expected to participate in class discussions and are usually a very important factor in determining a student's grade. Students are welcomed and encouraged to ask questions or share their own thoughts on the current topic. This is requires students to keep up with their assigned readings and/or homework assignments.
- **Research/Term Paper** A research paper is a written commentary or analysis of a particular aspect of a topic. Research papers involve independent research and study using outside references such as books, databases, and articles. Since research papers may be on a topic about which you know little, much of your paper will be a result of facts or opinions stated in the books or articles you used as sources. Therefore, it is extremely important to

acknowledge these sources in footnotes and/or a bibliography. Rules and regulations concerning the proper use of references can be found in the Elms Student handbook, under "Writing Papers," which is given to all students. Your professor will evaluate your paper not only on the amount of research and quality of writing, but also on the amount of independent thinking you have demonstrated.

- Your professor will be willing to answer any questions you might have about the amount of research required. The library has excellent resources available online- <http://www.elms.edu/library>, which explain the format and requirements of research and other types of papers.
- **Laboratories Labs** involve hands on learning of theories discussed during class lectures. They are usually 2-3 hours in length and meet once a week, and are in addition to the regularly scheduled class times. A paper called a **lab report** may be assigned which will require you to write about the lab procedures and the results of your experiment. If a course includes a lab, it is necessary to attend all scheduled labs as well as the weekly class times in order to earn credit for the entire course. Labs are usually associated with the science and psychology courses.
- **Examinations (exams)** You will take many examinations during your Elms experience. Most exams will be written rather than oral, but oral presentations are also a key component of most courses at Elms. Exams are typically scheduled throughout each course, and most classes will also have a final exam which is given at the end of the semester. All these tests are designed to assure that students are doing the work that is assigned to them, and to measure how much they are learning. There are two common types of examinations, **Objective** and **Subjective**.
  - **Objective Examinations-** tests the students' knowledge of particular facts. There are five different kinds of questions commonly found on objective examinations.
    - Multiple Choice** - The student must choose from among a series of answers, selecting the one (or more) that is most appropriate.
    - True and False** - The student must read a statement and indicate whether it is true or false.
    - Matching-** The student must match words, phrases or statements from two columns.
    - Identification-** The student must identify and briefly explain the significance of a name, term, or phrase.
    - Fill-in-the-Blank-** The student must fill in the blanks left in a phrase or statement in order to make it complete and correct.
  - **Subjective Examinations-** Often called **Essay Questions**, require the student to write an essay in response to a question or statement. This kind of examination tests a student's ability to organize and relate his/her knowledge of a particular subject.

Common styles of examinations you may take at Elms are:

**Pop Quiz:** Unannounced, short test given on a specific topic.

**Tests/Quizzes:** These are small tests that also aim to keep students on track with their required readings and assignments outside of class.

**Take Home Exam:** This type of exam is similar to homework. Students are given questions to answer within a specified number of days. To justify the length of time allowed,

a high quality of work is expected. Take home exams tend to be harder than in-class exams. They are usually, but not always, open book. Professors may specify how long you are allowed to work on them. All non-original sources and materials used or referred to should be acknowledged in footnotes and a bibliography.

**Open-Book Exam:** Students are allowed to bring and consult textbooks during the exam. These exams usually consist of essay questions that are more complicated than those of a simple essay exam.

**Midterm Exam:** Held at the middle of the semester and will cover all the material learned up to that point. It can be Objective or Subjective examinations or a combination of both.

**Final Exam:** Held at the end of the semester. The Registrar's Office will issue a schedule for Final Exams. It can be Objective or Subjective examinations or a combination of both.

- **Taking Notes** Although this is *not* usually a factor that will affect your class grade, it's very important for you to take notes on your professor's lecture material, especially since most of this material discussed in class will be covered on exams. It is not necessary or even possible to write down every word your professor says. However, you should be sure to cover the main points of the lecture material in your notes.
- Please be aware, you shouldn't look at other students' papers during an examination or copy & submit the same work as another student to a professor because it is considered cheating. To *cheat* on an examination by getting answers from other students or by using any other form of materials brought to an examination, whether written or taken from electronic devices can result in a *failure* grade for the examination, and may result in a *failure* grade in the course, as well as disciplinary action.

**Credits** Each course is considered to be worth a number of *credits* or *credit hours*. This number is about the same as the total number of hours a student spends in class each week. A course at Elms is typically worth 1- 4 credits. **Full-time undergraduate** students typically enroll in 12 or 15 credits, which is 4 or 5 courses per semester. Full-time undergraduate student enrollment status at Elms is a course load of 12-18 credits.

**For F-1 Student Visa holders**, in order to stay in status with SEVIS, **undergraduate F-1 students** must take a minimum of 12 credits per semester. **Graduate F-1 students** must take a minimum of 9 credits per semester.

**For Students eligible to receive US Federal Financial Aid**, twelve credits is the **minimum** number of credits needed in order to maintain full time undergraduate status for Financial Aid and Housing. Nine is the **minimum** number of credits needed in order to maintain full time graduate status for Financial Aid.

**All Undergraduate students should keep in mind** in order to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in four years, students typically take 15 credits per semester.

**Graduation** In order to graduate from your degree program, you must fulfill all of your "graduation requirements". These include certain classes you must take, how many credits you need to graduate with, the minimum GPA that you need to achieve, and more. In addition, it is necessary to formally "apply for graduation" when you near the time that you will be completing your graduation requirements. Since graduation requirements vary among the different

academic programs at Elms, you can be ask your academic advisor or the chair of the department in your major if you have any questions regarding this.

**Change of Major** If students want to change their major, they need to meet with their academic advisor and complete a ADD/CHANGE OF MAJOR form which you can get at the Registrar's Office. It does require your academic advisor's signature. For **F-1 students**, your I-20 lists your field of study, you will also need to meet with the Coordinator of International Programs to make note of this change in SEVIS. A change of major requires issuing a new I-20. If a F-1 student fails to notify the Coordinator of International Programs regarding a change of major, you may jeopardize your legal status.

**Academic Recognition** At the end of each semester, the college recognizes and rewards students' academic achievements by publishing the Dean's List. It's composed of full-time students who have earned a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or better without incompletes. The GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of credits attempt.

### **Maintaining Good Academic Standing**

For a student to be in good academic standing, the student must give evidence of satisfactory academic progress. Students who don't make the qualitative or quantitative standards are placed on academic probation. This probation period is for one fall or spring semester. Students who are on probation are expected to meet with their academic advisor(s) regularly to monitor the student's academic progress. Students are subject to academic dismissal if they fail to show improvement academically during their semester of academic probation.

- Being placed on Academic Probation, may have a negative affect your financial aid, especially if you receive a merit grant or scholarship.
- For further information read the Elms College Undergraduate Catalog.

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

<b>CREDIT HOURS ATTEMPTED</b>	<b>MINIMUM GPA EARNED</b>
1-15	1.6
16-30	1.7
31-45	1.8
46-59	1.9
60+	2.0

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

The International Programs Office encourages all students to take advantage of the academic resources available to them, if you are struggling academically or if you'd like some extra support with your studies. At Elms the faculty and staff really want you to succeed academically and they welcome the opportunity to assist you throughout your academic program. If you don't understand material covered in class or how to complete an assignment, please let your professor(s) know so they can help clarify it for you. In addition to your professors, there are many academic support resources available to help students such as:

- **Academic Advising** Each student at Elms is assigned an **academic advisor** who is a faculty member within the student's major. It is the responsibility of the advisor to assist you in planning your course of study so that you maintain continual progress towards meeting the academic requirements of your major. Your academic advisor is also the person who signs your registration forms during registration periods and who approves any changes to your registration, such as adding or dropping a class. **All F-1 students** need to meet with the Coordinator of International Programs before dropping any classes. Although your academic advisor assists you throughout your time at Elms, it's ultimately your responsibility to make sure you are meeting all academic and graduation requirements.

All international students and Non-Native Speakers of English who are enrolled in ESL courses will also have a secondary academic advisor. This person provides additional support to students in areas such as academics, personal, immigration, and as a link to other resources available on campus. The International Programs Office, highly recommends that you meet with your advisors regularly, throughout your academic career.

- The **Academic Resource Center (ARC)** offers Peer Tutoring in Accounting, Biology, Chemistry, Education, French/Spanish, Legal Studies, Math, Nursing, Psychology, Social Work, and Writing Skills in areas of term papers, essays, & case studies. It also offers tutoring such as Study Skills, Research Skills, Computer Skills, Math Skills, Teacher Test Preparation, and Assistive Technology Software. The ARC is located on the second floor of the Library and appointment hours are Monday-Friday, 9am- 4:30pm. Evening and weekend hours may be available as well depending on tutor availability.
- **Brianfuse** is a virtual learning technology and it connects students with qualified eTutors live anytime, anywhere via the internet.
- **Exams/Tests/Quizzes** All international students, scholars, and non-native English Speakers are able to take exams, tests, or quizzes in the International Programs Office. If you are interested in this service, please email the Coordinator of International Programs as soon as possible to set up a meeting time.

Our office offers students a peaceful place to take their exams and the International Programs staff are able to help students comprehend the English their exam questions. Our staff members will **not** provide students with answers to their exam or tell students whether their answers to exam questions are correct. Students are **not** able to use electric devices, notes, or textbooks during their exam.

Students are responsible to give their professor(s) and the International Programs Office staff, **at least one week notice that they want to take an exam in our office**. Please be aware that we need time to coordinate with professors to get your exam and to make sure that we have the space for you to take your exam.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

Elms College has a strict Academic Honesty Code of Conduct as stated on page 38 Elms College Undergraduate Catalog 2010-2012. 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.

### Academic Honesty Policy

Communication of knowledge and a free exchange of ideas, two essential aspects of a college community, require a fundamental standard of honesty. Students and faculty must be able to expect that thought and work presented for the class are the properties of the person claiming credit for them. To safeguard these principles, it is important to clarify the rules and procedures regarding academic honesty:

1. Students must refrain from all forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating on quizzes and examinations, abetting others in cheating, appropriating other students' work, and plagiarizing written assignments. "**Plagiarism:** the use of outside source(s) without proper acknowledgement. **Quotations:** Any quotation, however small, must be placed in quotation marks or clearly indented and must be accompanied by a precise indication of the source. **Paraphrasing:** Any material which is paraphrased must be specifically acknowledged in a footnote or in the text. A thorough rewording or rearrangement of an author's text does not relieve one of this responsibility." Source: *Napolitano v. Princeton Univ.*, 453 A.2d 279 (N.J. Super. Ch. Div. 1982).
2. Faculty who find students in clear violation of the policy on academic dishonesty shall determine the appropriate response, which may include failure on the assignment or failure in the course.
3. Faculty shall report incidents of academic dishonesty, including copies of any documentation, and the action taken in response to them, in writing, to the vice president of academic affairs. Faculty shall inform the student that the notification has been sent to the vice president of academic affairs.
4. The vice president of academic affairs can elect to pursue further action up to and including dismissal from the college. The vice president will inform the student in writing that notification has been received, that it is confidential, and that the student has the right to question the charge.
5. Students who believe they are unjustly accused or punished for academic dishonesty (Elms College Student Handbook)

### Plagiarism Prevention

All Elms College students are responsible for understanding plagiarism. Do not copy any text without citing sources because there are academic consequences and potentially immigration status consequences for knowingly or unknowingly committing plagiarism. The expectations regarding citations and collaborative work differs greatly across the globe, however in the U.S. plagiarism is taken very seriously and you are required to cite all information used from original authors. If a student is found guilty of plagiarism, there is a variety of disciplinary actions such as failing a course, being put on academic probation, or even expulsion from Elms College.

### **Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism**

- **Don't procrastinate-** Don't wait until the last minute to write a paper or due an assignment. The pressure of working with last minute, may it very tempting to plagiarize.
- **Know what IS plagiarism and what is NOT plagiarism-** Ask advice from academic advisors, faculty, and the library staff.
- **Remember to always give credit to the original author(s) when working on any paper or project.**

### **International Students Responsibilities**

- Understand and be aware of Elms' Academic Honesty Policy
- Learn and be aware of how to maintain their legal immigration status as students

### **Potential Disciplinary Action for International Students**

- An international student on academic probation for a term needs to carefully monitor his or her academic progress to ensure that he or she will be able to meet the terms of probation. If the student is unable to reach the expected grade point average, he or she may be terminated from his or her academic program. Since the student would no longer be eligible to register for full time coursework at that College, he or she would be unable to maintain legal immigration status and would need to transfer to another institution or change to another immigration status immediately. If these options are not available, the student would need to leave the United States.

- A F-1 international student in F-1 who is expelled from Elms is no longer eligible to register for full time coursework. The student would be unable to maintain legal immigration status and would need to transfer to another institution or change to another immigration status immediately. If these options are not available, the student would have to leave the United States.

**Plagiarism Resources** are available from the Elms library online at <http://www.elms.edu/x1130.xml>

**Citation Resources** are available online at <http://www.elms.edu/x1132.xml>

## 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.

- **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](http://www.attnocontract.com))

**Verizon Wireless** (Holyoke Mall) \*Phone prices range from around \$50-\$185;  
Airtime/Texting/Minutes prices range by desired outcome.

- **Contract Carriers\***

\*Most Contract Carriers will require a Social Security Number.

**AT&T**

**Sprint**

**Verizon**

- **Postal Service/Campus Mailroom** 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 lower level of the College Center.

- **Faxes** Students who need to send or receive messages can use the fax number of the International Programs Office; (413) 265-2466. All incoming faxes should include:

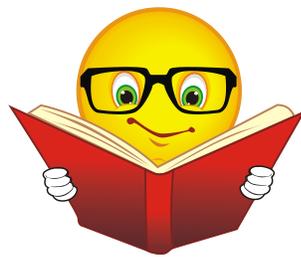
**Attention: Your First Name and Your Last Name.**



## EMAIL AND INTERNET SERVICES

Email and Internet services are a vital part of U.S. colleges and universities. Elms College offers introductory computer courses to familiarize students with the Internet, basic software and computer skills.

- **Elms e-mail account** Each student who attends Elms is given a student email account. It's the main means of communication throughout your Elms experience. Your username and password will be mailed to you prior to your arrival on campus.
- **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.
- **Moodle** 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 who wish to live in private housing located off campus should make such arrangements **prior** to their arrival in 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. Devine Hall is quieter living space and students in this dorm are required to participate in the Residential Wellness Program. Each residence 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 or buy 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 (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 the resident cannot host guests 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 under 21 years old, you may **not be in the presence** of any alcoholic beverages.
- 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 6-pack of beer **or** one liter of wine. There is to be no hard alcohol on College grounds.

### **Staying Over Breaks**

- All Residence Halls are closed during Thanksgiving Vacation, Semester/Winter Break, Spring Break, and Easter Vacation.
- Should you need to stay on campus during Thanksgiving, Spring, or Easter vacation you must contact Residence Life staff **no later than one week** prior to the close of the buildings. **\*\*\*Please note- THIS SERVICE CAN'T BE PROVIDED TO THOSE WISHING TO STAY DURING WINTER BREAK (END OF FALL SEMESTER TO THE START OF SPRING SEMESTER IN JANUARY).**
- Students staying in the Residence Halls during breaks are not permitted to have any guests in the building.
- Dining services will not be provided during College breaks.

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:

**Jon Todd**, Director of Residence Life  
College Center 209  
toddj@elms.edu  
(413) 265-2461

**Mariette Bien-Aime**, Assistant Director of Residence Life  
College Center 209  
bienaimem@elms.edu  
(413) 265-2260

## DINING AT ELMS COLLEGE

### Café Saint Joseph

The café located on the left when you enter the main entrance of the Mary Dooley campus center, has a wide variety of food and beverage options to serve you. Whether you're in need of a quick snack or a boost from an espresso based coffee beverage, you'll find what you're craving right there.

### Dining Hall

The dining hall is located in the Mary Dudley College Center.

- **DINING HALL HOURS**

- **MONDAY – FRIDAY**

- Breakfast 7am-11am

- Lunch 11am-4pm

- Dinner 4pm-7:30pm

- Late Night 7:30pm-10pm

- **SATURDAY**

- Breakfast 8am-11am

- Brunch 11am-1:30pm

- Dinner 4:30pm-6pm

- **SUNDAY**

- Continental Breakfast 9am-11am

- Brunch 11am-1:30pm

- Dinner 4:30pm-6:30pm

### Food Station Options

- ***Chef's Creation***: an interactive station creating made to order meals
- ***Home Zone***: comfort foods that remind you of home
- ***Vegetarian Bistro***: animal-free fare with gourmet flair
- ***Produce Market***: a bounty of fruits and vegetables as well as freshly baked breads
- ***Deli***: made to order deli sandwiches and a variety of homemade side salads
- ***Grill***: innovative fare and international cuisines
- ***Mediterranean Café***: traditional pizza and pasta with a gourmet twist
- ***Soup's On***: homemade soups created fresh daily, always with at least one vegetarian or vegan option
- ***Bake Shoppe***: freshly baked cakes, pies, cookies and more to treat your sweet tooth at any time of the day

### Meal Plan Options

**All You Care to Enjoy Dining (AYCE) in the Dining Hall** The dining room in the Mary Dooley Campus Center is an-all-you-care-to-enjoy facility. This means, you swipe your Elms College Student Id card one time per meal and you get food from each food station as many times as you want. This ensures your satisfaction at every meal.

**Dining Dollars** supplement your meal allowance and can be used at both the dining hall and the café. They are valued dollar to dollar and save you the hassle of carrying cash or credit cards. Your account works like a debit card, simply swipe your card and the dollars are deducted from your account.

**Residents have the following options available to them**

- **AYCE 200 \***  
This option includes 200 all you care to enjoy meals per semester plus \$100 in Dining Dollars. \*This plan is automatically part of Room and Board fees.
- **AYCE Ultimate Value \***  
This meal plan has unlimited all you care to enjoy meals per semester plus \$100 in Dining Dollars. It costs an additional \$154 per semester.

**Commuters have the following options available to them**

- **AYCE 100 (\$805)**  
This option has 100 all-you-care-to-enjoy meals plus \$100 Dining Dollars.
- **AYCE 50 (\$409)**  
This option has 50 all-you-care-to-enjoy meals plus \$50 Dining Dollars.
- **AYCE 20 (\$199)**  
This option has 20 all-you-care-to-enjoy meals plus \$50 Dining Dollars.

**Off Campus Dining Options**

- **A-1 Pizza** (413) 594-6767  
486 Springfield Street
- **Fairview Deli** (413)598-8158  
193 Fairview Ave
- **Munich House** (413) 594-8788  
13 Center Street
- **Subway** (413) 592-0500  
105 Center Street
- **Dunkin' Donuts** (413) 592-2385  
95 West Street
- **Dominos' Pizza** (413) 827-8400  
Delivery Services
- **Fruit Fair** (small grocery store)  
398 Front Street

## U.S. CURRENCY

American coins come in three colors and seven sizes. Unfortunately, smaller sized coins are not always lower in value than larger coins.

- The penny or cent, worth 1 cent, is the only copper colored coin
- The nickel, worth 5 cents, is silver colored and is larger than a penny
- The dime, worth 10 cents, is silver colored and is the smallest coin
- The quarter, worth 25 cents, is silver colored and is larger than the nickel
- The half-dollar, or 50-cent piece, is silver in color and larger than a quarter, but isn't commonly used.
- The one dollar or golden dollar is the only coin that is gold in color, but isn't commonly used.
- All U.S. paper money is the same size and the same color other than the new \$20 and \$10 bill, which has added colors. Denominations include \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100 and larger amounts. Paper money for amounts over \$100 is generally not seen in public circulation.

## BANKING

The banks provide a number of services and have a variety of accounts students can choose to open. You need to bring identification of such as your passport, Elms student I.D. card, etc. to open an account bank. The International Programs Office will assist you in opening an account at a local bank upon your arrival.

- **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/electronic transfers, for students 17-25

**Money sent from home** Once you have opened a bank account you can have money sent directly to your bank account from abroad. The length of time it takes for money to reach Northampton varies widely, from as little as three days to as long as several weeks. The time varies depending on the country and city from which the money is sent.

**Money Orders** It is not advisable to send cash through the mail. If you choose not to open a bank account you may purchase a money order draft in a bank or at your local post office. If your money order is lost or stolen, present your customer receipt and it can be replaced.

**Credit Cards** These are issued by banks, gasoline companies, and stores to delay payments for purchases. Examples of these are MasterCard, American Express, Visa, ExxonMobil, etc. If you have an international credit card, bring it with you for it is an excellent form of identification.

**ATM Bank Machines** Most banks operate Automated Teller Machines (ATMs). These make it possible for customers to deposit, withdraw, or transfer funds conveniently, even when the bank is closed. These are located in town at several locations. Be sure, though, that you understand your bank's ATM system and policies, and are familiar with the fees your bank may charge for using this service. There is an ATM machine on the lower level of the Campus Center.

➤ **Special Tips** When a transfer order is given to a correspondent bank it may not get processed that same day, delaying the time of arrival. For example, if the order is given on a Friday, the transfer may not be processed until Monday, which means that the bank would not receive the funds until Wednesday at the earliest. Please take into consideration that holidays in the U.S. may not coincide with those in other countries. Banks are closed on all public holidays, delaying transfers.

#### **Some Words of Caution**

- Do not carry large amounts of cash with you.
- Do not send cash through mail. Use money orders or certified checks instead.
- Protect your credit card and ATM card and do not share your "PIN" number with anyone.
- Transfer funds from home before you are out of money.
- Understand the requirements of your government or home bank regarding transfer of funds.
- Carefully read all financial documents and contracts before you sign your name.
- Keep accurate records of all financial transactions.

**International Checks** If you go to your local bank in your country to obtain a bank check in international currency, when you bring this check to the U.S., you will often find that it takes between 6 and 8 weeks (or longer) to receive your money in the U.S. This is not the best or the fastest way to bring money to the U.S.

**Shopping** in the U.S. is an independent process. Contrary to what you may be used to, sales assistants are not always available to help you with your selections. This is especially true in larger stores such as supermarkets, drugstores and department stores. Merchandise is openly displayed on shelves and you are free to select items and then proceed to the cashier for payment. In clothing stores you are permitted to try the on garments before purchase. You will notice special tags fastened to items; these tags set off an alarm if not removed by the sales clerk before leaving the store.

If you enter a store with a large handbag or other shopping bags you will often be asked to allow the store to look inside them or to leave them at a desk at the entrance. You will be given a receipt with which you can redeem your bags upon leaving the store. This is to insure that previously bought items are not confused with those that you intend to purchase. While shopping it is expected that items are not concealed either on your person or in any bag you are

carrying. If you leave the store without paying for all the merchandise, either intentionally or accidentally, you will be accused of “shoplifting” by store officials. Shoplifting in the U.S. is a serious crime and stores will prosecute violators in court.

**Department Stores** These stores carry a complete selection of clothing, furniture, appliances, housewares, and household linens. In fact, almost everything except food may be found in a department store and some of the stores do carry candy, teas, and cookies. Examples of local department stores are J.C. Penny, Macy’s, & Target located in the Holyoke Mall at Ingleside.

**Discount Stores** These stores are similar in some ways to department stores but they sell their merchandise at a lower cost. Some of the less expensive stores in the area are Marshalls, TJ. Maxx, Burlington Coat Factory, and Walmart.

**Drugstores or Pharmacies** These stores sell many things besides prescription drugs, such as: magazines, sanitary goods, medicines, first aid supplies, toiletries, cosmetics, and other items of a similar nature. The most conveniently located drug stores/pharmacies are CVS Pharmacy on 235 Center Street in Chicopee & it’s within walking distance of Elms and Walgreen’s Pharmacy on James Street. They also process film and sell telephone calling cards

**Supermarkets or Grocery Stores** These are primarily food stores carrying fresh, frozen, and canned meats, vegetables and fruits, cheese, milk, butter, eggs, spices, and baked goods. They also carry a supply of household items such as pots, soaps, laundry needs, napkins, facial tissues and toiletries. Some of the food stores in Chicopee are Stop & Shop, and Big Y.

**Secondhand Stores or Thrift Shop** These are small outlets for the sale of goods that have been used by previous owners. A wide variety of goods can be purchased at these stores. Depending on the store, merchandise can be in reasonably good, or even excellent, condition.

**Sales Tax** The Massachusetts sales tax is 6.25% and applies to all items with the exception of clothing, shoes, and purchased food from a grocery store (restaurant food, however, is taxed). The tax is not included in the quoted price but is added to your bill. Sales tax varies from one state to another.

**Restaurants** In addition to the restaurants listed below, an extensive list is also available in the free weekly newspaper, “The Valley Advocate” which can be picked up on the first floor of the Campus Center, and at the newspaper stands throughout the local area.

**Hints on Tipping** Tipping is a way of showing gratitude, and it is difficult to set up comprehensive guidelines, but the following suggestions maybe helpful to you:

**Do Not Tip:**

Police Officers  
Fire Fighters  
Mail Carriers  
Receptionist  
Ushers in theaters  
Bus and airline clerks  
Desk Personnel in hotels & motels  
Government officials  
Store clerks

**Do Tip:**

Restaurant Waiters/waitresses - 15% to 20% of total bill  
Taxi driver- 10% to 15% of total fare  
Coat room attendants in restaurants and theaters \$1.00 - \$2.00  
Bellhops and porters: \$1 for each piece of luggage carried

Tipping is dependent upon the type of establishment (some do not allow tipping) and the quality of services rendered. NEVER offer money to any public officials. If you are not sure who to tip and what is considered a proper tip, you should ask.

## LIFE IN THE U.S.A

It's important to remember like your native country, America has people who are friendly and people who are not, people who are quiet and people who are not, and so on. American culture is unique because of the diverse ethnic and religious groups that have come and settled here, which is why America is called a *melting pot* or a *tossed salad* of many different cultures.

**Relationships with Americans** Assumptions and values about relationships, whether they are friendships or romantic relationships, differ markedly from culture to culture, therefore misunderstandings can easily occur. Misunderstandings arise because people from different cultures often have different answers to such questions as these: Under what circumstance can one appropriately initiate interaction with someone else? What interactions are socially acceptable, considering such variables as age, sex, marital status, differences in social status, and the setting where the encounter takes place? How much is appropriate to let the other person know about you?

A particular area in which the assumptions and values differ between cultures is that of friendship. Friendships amongst Americans tend to be shorter and less intense than those among people from many other cultures, because Americans are taught to be self-reliant because they live in a very mobile society. It's very common for Americans to have strong friendships with the opposite sex and not have a romantic relationship with that person. Furthermore, Americans compartmentalize their friendships, having their work friends, school friends and so on.

### General Characteristics of Americans

**Appointments and Time** Americans place a high value in punctuality. This is especially true in academic settings and in the workplace. If you would like to meet with someone (an Elms faculty/ staff member, doctor, etc.) you will most likely need to make an appointment. Once your appointment has been made, the person you are meeting with will set this time aside for you at that exact time. **It is extremely important that you arrive on time, and are prepared for your meeting.**

If you need to change the meeting, be sure to notify him/her by email or telephone. If you fail to keep an appointment or are late for it, it is extremely important for you to call and give an appropriate explanation. In addition, if you know you are going to be late, it is a good idea to call and inform the person you are meeting that you are going to be delayed.

If you are late and have not called ahead, you may find the person you are meeting to be abrupt and even unpleasant. Be aware, some faculty, office workers, and doctors may cancel your appointment if you are late.

Americans also tend to organize their days into planned activities. As a result, people may seem hurried, running from one class or appointment to the next, and not able to relax or enjoy themselves.

**Individualism** Americans often see themselves more as individuals. Emphasis is placed on “doing your own thing” and having the freedom to make individual decisions. Most Americans see themselves first as separate individuals, and only secondly as representatives of a family, community or other group.

However many Americans, even while making life plans that suit their personal needs, agree that family and friends are important, and will seek advice from them and make decisions together within the family. Personal freedom is respected and highly tolerated.

**Equality** Americans are taught that “all men are created equal,” but they often violate that idea in some respect or the other based on their own personal background.

**Informality** Most Americans are informal in their behavior; even elderly people are often addressed by their first names. This is not a mark of disrespect but of a sense of equality. You will encounter people walking in the street who will often smile and say “Hi, how are you?” as you pass them. This is an acknowledgement of your presence, not necessarily an invitation to begin a conversation.

- **When addressing faculty members**, students should address them as **professor**, followed by **his/her last name** or if the faculty member has earned a terminal degree such as a Ed.D. or Ph.D., students can address him/her as **Doctor**, followed by **his/her last name**. For example, professor Joyce Hampton can be addressed as **Professor Hampton** or **Dr. Hampton**.

**Role of Women** There is a strong feminist movement, or women’s liberation movement, in the U.S. which aims to ensure that women have equal responsibilities and opportunities to those of men. Although there are still many aspects of society in which women have not achieved this equality, women play a much more public and visible role in the country and have much more responsibility and authority than in many other countries. You may also find that the dress and behavior of women in social situations here are quite different from those in your own country. Some international students have difficulty adjusting to situations in which a woman is in a position of authority because their experiences have not prepared them for that. They need to be sensitive to this difference in the role of women.

**Invitations** Americans believe that invitations should be answered as soon as possible. Whenever an invitation is extended to you, formally with a note or informally by telephone, you will be expected to respond quickly and candidly. When accepting an invitation, make sure you have the correct time and place. While appointment times for social events are more flexible than business appointments, you should try to arrive as close to the scheduled time as possible, particularly if you are invited to dinner. Nothing annoys a host or hostess more than having dinner ready to serve and finding that some of the guests have not yet arrived.

It is normal to thank the person or family for their hospitality by a telephone call or by mailing them a card after the visit. If you are invited to stay in an American home for a few days, giving a small gift is greatly appreciated.

Under normal circumstances, a person who extends an invitation to a restaurant or to a movie theatre will pay the bill and the tip. You may wish to offer to pay but don’t expect your offer to be accepted. However, since students are often short of money, an invitation by another student or a group of students may merely mean, “we’d enjoy it if you joined us”, in which case you are

expected to pay your share of the bill among everybody in the group. Again, if you are not sure, just ask.

**Returning Phone calls and messages** If you receive a phone call or a message with a name and/or a telephone number, you are expected to return the phone call as soon as possible. When you have called a person who is not there, you are expected to leave your name and/or message so that person will be able to return your phone call.

**Hygiene** As you can tell from television commercials, Americans have been taught that the natural smells of their body and breath are unpleasant. Most Americans bathe daily, use an underarm deodorant to counteract the odor of perspiration, and brush their teeth with toothpaste at least once daily and usually more than that. In addition, they may rinse their mouths with mouthwash and chew mints in order to be sure that their breath is free of food odors. It is very common for women to shave their legs and underarms and to use perfume every day; many men use cologne or aftershave to impart what they believe is a pleasant smell.

Some international students and scholars come from places where the human body's natural odors are considered quite acceptable, and where efforts to overcome those odors are considered unnatural. Still other students and scholars come from places where personal cleanliness is considered more important than Americans consider it to be, and they may view Americans as dirty.

**Giving Gifts** Americans usually only give gifts on special occasions such as: Christmas, birthdays, or anniversaries. It is also nice to give a gift to your host. If invited to someone's house for dinner; flowers or a card is sufficient. People generally assume that students have a tight budget and very little time to shop. Gift giving should not be thought of as seeking special favors from someone or as requiring a gift in return.

### **The Communicative Style of Americans**

When we talk with someone it involves a lot of nonverbal communication such as personal space, facial expressions, gestures, and body positioning. These nonverbal aspects of communication differ widely across cultures.

- **Eye Contact** When they are talking to someone, Americans generally alternate between looking briefly into the listener's eyes and looking slightly away. When they are listening to another person, they look almost constantly at the speaker's eyes. Americans tend to distrust people who do not look into their eyes when talking to them.
- **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, to mean the same thing as "Hello" or "Hi" and can be answered with a quick "Hi, I'm good." Generally, speaking Americans really want or expect to hear a long response that requires a lot of listening and speaking. This is very different from other countries with many ritualistic conversations that require a lot of listening and speaking.
- **Personal Space** The space between two people conversing will vary depending 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.
- **Touching** People in some countries touch their conversation partners far more frequently than Americans do; American men rarely touch each other except when shaking hands. Women touch each other during conversations more often, and sometimes walk hand in

hand or arm in arm like women in many other countries. As you get to know some of your peers, you may find that they will hug upon greeting each other. When in doubt, follow the lead of your peers and your own comfort level.

- **Verbal Interaction** In the typical conversation between Americans, participants in conversation “take turns” frequently, usually after the speaker has spoken only a few sentences. Long extended periods of silences in conversations tend to provoke uneasiness in casual conversation, Americans prefer make “small talk” about the weather, sports, jobs, classes, people they both know, or past experiences, especially ones they have in common. Most Americans don't openly discuss their personal lives or views with casual friends or acquaintances. Americans do not generally expect very much personal involvement from conversational partners.. It is only with close friends that Americans generally expect to discuss personal topics. This could be much different than your culture.
- **Other helpful knowledge** In a thoughtful and concise introduction to American society and culture, Cornelius Grove of American Field Service International/Intercultural Programs offers these points:
  - Americans have no taboo of any kind associated with the left or right hand.
  - Americans have no negative association with the soles of their feet or with the bottom of their shoes.
  - People in the U.S. often point with their index finger and wave it around in the air as they make especially important points in conversation.
  - Americans show respect and deference for another person by looking him/her in the eyes, not by looking down.
  - Americans are generally uncomfortable with silence

## LAWS

**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.

**Alcoholic Beverages** Drinking alcoholic beverages is a commonly accepted social custom among many Americans. In a social situation, or at someone's home, you may be offered an alcoholic beverage. This is to be taken as a gesture of hospitality, although you are not obliged to accept. Drinking alcohol is not a required social formality and you may certainly request a non-alcoholic beverage and still participate.

The legal drinking age is **21 years old** in the U.S. 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.

As an international student at Elms College, you are subject to Massachusetts State laws as well as to U.S. Federal laws, including immigration regulations. These very same laws also protect you. Should you come into contact with State or federal authorities, the first person to contact is Joyce Hampton, Associate Dean of Academic Success. She will advise you and inform you how to proceed.

If arrested or questioned by police, an international student, just like an American citizen, is not required to confess or give evidence against herself; you may remain silent and refuse to answer any questions regarding any accusation against you. It is recommended that you do not volunteer information without the presence of an Elms College representative or legal counsel. The only information that you are required to give is personal data such as your name, date of birth, and current address.

International students often worry that they will be deported should they come into conflict with the law. In general, you will not be deported for minor offense such as petty theft, shoplifting, disturbing peace, intoxication, or traffic violations. If a student is convicted of a serious crime and is sentenced to one or more years of confinement, then deportation is a real possibility. Charges related to drug offenses such as possession and sale of illegal drugs fall into this category.

- **Note** Immigration laws and regulations are constantly changing, especially the ones governing student visas. The International Programs Office will keep you informed of any changes that will affect you. Please remember that immigration regulations do not apply equally to all nationalities. This is particularly true if you are trying to obtain a visa to travel to a third country. Please check with the International Programs Office if you have any questions. Do not depend on information or advice from friends who are often not familiar with immigration laws or are from countries other than yours.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

People coming to Massachusetts from outside the US bring with them many impressions of life in America. American movies and television, and news reports from the U.S. that appear abroad, may convey the message that serious crime and violence occur all over the country, but this isn't true.

The rates of crime and violence are higher in some parts of the U.S. than others. Chicopee has a very low crime rate. This is not to say that Chicopee is a perfectly safe place. Vandalism and petty theft can occur no matter where you are in the world. It is therefore wise to take certain precautions to protect yourself and your property.

### **Personal Safety**

- Keep your dorm room or apartment doors locked.
- If living off-campus, when someone knocks at your door or rings your doorbell, do not open the door until you have asked who is there. You are not required to open the door for salesmen or strangers.
- Use caution if you choose to disregard the traffic signals when walking across streets.
- Avoid walking alone at night, especially when off campus. Walk with a companion or find a ride. If you are a commuter, need to walk to your car at night you may call Public Safety at 265-2278 and they will walk you to your car.

### **Protecting Valuables**

- Always lock the doors to room, apartment, and car.
- Do not leave valuables unattended at the library or gym, even briefly. Take your backpack, coat, or other valuable possessions with you, or remove valuable possessions from your backpack, if you are going to be away from the area.

## MEDICAL CARE AND INFORMATION

**General Nature of the U.S. Medical Care Delivery System** The medical care delivery system in the U.S. has two characteristics that distinguish it from many others in the world. First, it devotes considerable resources to prolonging the lives of people with serious illness or unusual injuries. The cost of medical care reflects the enormous investment in research, medication, and technology that is required to make this type of care available. Second, there is no government supported system for paying individuals' medical costs. That is, there is no national medical care program or national insurance program.

The result of these and other factors is that medical costs in the U.S. are extremely high and they must be paid by the individuals incurring them. Individuals can buy health and accident insurance which will pay some of their medical expenses. No health insurance plan is readily available to students that completely covers all medical expenses.

**Elms College Health Insurance Requirements** The College requires all international students to purchase health insurance. The fee for the international insurance plan is automatically billed to your student account. Insurance brochures will be included in orientation packets for new students and in campus mailboxes for returning students.

**Health and Accident Insurance** To avoid having to pay high medical bills that result from illnesses or injury, it is necessary to buy health insurance. Insurance protects against the need to meet the entire financial burden of high medical expenses by spreading the cost among a group of people, not all of whom will suffer illness or injury that will result in medical bills.

**Common Misconceptions about Health Insurance** Students and scholars from other countries often have difficulty in understanding how the health insurance system works. Here are some misconceptions people from other countries often have about health insurance in the U.S.

- If I have medical insurance, all my medical expenses will be covered. No, they will not.
- Any visit to the hospital emergency room will be paid for if I have health insurance. No, an emergency room visit is covered only in case of a genuine emergency.
- If I look carefully, I can find a reasonably priced, very comprehensive health insurance policy. No, the more comprehensive the policy, the more costly it will be.
- The insurance company's job is to help me meet my medical expenses. Yes and no, the insurance company's job is to fulfill the terms of the contract it has with you. But insurance is a business; insurance companies operate in order to make a profit (by investing the money people pay for insurance). Insurance companies can be good or bad, and insurance policies can be good or bad, but in no case are insurance companies operated like charity organizations. The doctor or hospital considers it your responsibility to pay your bills and not the insurance company's.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### Daylight Savings Time

The clock times change twice a year in the U.S.'s Eastern Time zone. During the winter months, clocks are set on *standard time* but during the summer months, when days are longer, clocks are moved ahead one hour. The time changes are *official* at 2:00 a.m. but most make the change

before going to bed on Saturday. A common phrase used to remember the time change is **spring ahead, fall back**.

- **Fall** On the last Sunday in October move clocks **back** one hour
- **Spring** On the first Sunday in April, move clocks **ahead** one hour

### **CULTURE SHOCK: WHAT IS IT?**

**Culture shock** is the name given to a feeling of disorientation or confusion that often occurs when a person leaves a familiar place and moves to an unfamiliar one. Coming to Elms College from another country, you will encounter a multitude of new things. The buildings look different, and so do the trees and the birds. The food is not the same as it is at home, and the people look, speak, and act differently from the people at home. Even the smells are different.

Your English might not serve you as well as you expected it would. You might not be able to convey your full personality in English, with the result that you think other people are seeing you as a child. And your family and friends are far away. As a result of all this you may feel confused, unsure of yourself, and you may have some real doubts about coming to study in the U.S. **Culture Shock** has to do with values and belief systems. Remember, you have been brought up believing in certain things and sometimes when you go to another country, their beliefs are different than yours. You may begin to question- who is right and who is wrong.

**Symptoms** Culture shock can develop from many different symptoms. Some people are more affected by culture shock than others. People who experience culture shock usually become nervous and very tired. They want to sleep a lot and many lots of time contacting friends & family back home. They may feel frustrated and hostile toward their host country. They may get excessively angry about minor irritations. It is not unusual for them to become very dependent on fellow nationals who are also in the new country. All these feelings may make it difficult to deal with residents of the host country and to use their language.

**Coping with Culture Shock** Different people react differently to culture shock. Some become depressed, or even physically ill. Others are stimulated by the new experiences that are open to them. Here are some ideas that might be helpful:

- **Maintain your perspective.** Try to remember that millions of people have come to the United States from other countries and have survived.
- **Evaluate your expectations.** Your reactions to the U.S., Chicopee, and Elms are products both of the way things are here and of the way you expected them to be. If you find yourself feeling confused or disappointed about something, ask yourself, "What did I expect?" "Why?" "Was my expectation reasonable?" If you determine that your expectations were unreasonable, you can do much to reduce the amount of dissatisfaction you feel.
- **Keep an open mind.** People on campus or in the local community might do or say things that people at home would not do or say. But people at Elms and off campus are acting according to their own set of values, not yours. Try to find out how they perceive what they are saying and doing, and try to avoid evaluating their behavior using the standards you would use in your own country.
- **Learn from experience.** Moving into a new culture can be the most fascinating and educational experience of your life. It gives you the opportunity to explore an entirely new way of living and compare it to your own. There is no better way to become aware of your own values and attitudes and to broaden your point of view.

## **Adjusting to a New Culture**

When you are in a new setting, you have to make certain adjustments or adaptations in your usual behavior and attitudes. It is important to observe your own reactions to being in a new culture, and to compare your reactions with those of other people who are from different countries. These observations can result in increased understanding of yourself and of the various factors that have made you the kind of person you are.

Furthermore, if you are able to keep the perspective of a person who is observing himself or herself while undergoing an unusual experience, you will be able to help prevent yourself from becoming anxious or depressed. You will learn more from the intercultural experience you are having. Many factors influence the way different people adjust to a new culture. One of these factors is, of course, the individual's personality- degree of self-confidence, sense of humor, ability to interact with other people, ability to tolerate ambiguous or frustrating situations, and so on. Other factors influencing people's adjustment to a new culture are the nature and quality of differences between their own culture and the new one; the comparative status of their own country and the new one; the nature of the person's past experience in foreign cultures, and the nature of the particular setting in which the newcomer to a culture is situated.

Social scientists who have studied the phenomenon of adjusting to a new culture have identified stages of culture shock that newcomers to a culture commonly pass. As summarized by NAFSA, Association of International Educators, those stages are:

- **Honeymoon:** Upon arrival in the new country, students are excited & eager to learn about their new home. Typically this stage is relatively short.
- **Culture Shock:** As students settle into their daily life, the novelty and excitement wear off, and students may start feeling sad or unsatisfied.
- **Recovery:** Students new life becomes more familiar and they are more comfortable with living in the U.S., students will be happier.
- **Adjustment:** At his final stage, students learn to live in their new country and how to integrate their beliefs and lifestyle choices.

This is only one way of looking at the process of **Culture Shock**. Not everyone goes through all these phases, and different people spend different amounts of time in those phases through which they do pass. It can be interesting for you to see whether you pass through phases like this yourself.

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

[http://www.internationalstudentguidetotheusa.com/articles/c\\_american\\_culture.php](http://www.internationalstudentguidetotheusa.com/articles/c_american_culture.php)

## HOW TO GET A MASSACHUSETTS DRIVER'S LICENSE

**Driver's License** A valid driver's license is required in order to drive any vehicle in the U.S. You will need to obtain a Massachusetts driver's license.

Once you have a Massachusetts license, you can drive anywhere in the U.S. because the driving laws are quite similar throughout the country. However, if you are planning to stay in another state for an extended period of time, you should check about transferring your license to that state and becoming more familiar with their driving laws. Some states recognize the license granted by another state only for a limited period of time, such as 30 days.

**International Driver's License** are honored in Massachusetts for about 30 days or longer, depending on the country you are from, and your visa category. In general, most people will need to apply for a regular Massachusetts Driver's license, but call the Registry of Motor Vehicles to find out the details of your specific situation. Be prepared to answer questions about your immigration status and student status at Elms College.

**Driving While Intoxicated** In the United States there are strict laws governing alcohol consumption for anyone less than 21 years of age. In addition, driving a vehicle after you have consumed alcohol is against the law. There are strict penalties if you are involved in a vehicle accident while intoxicated. Please remember if you have consumed alcohol at a private party or anywhere else, **DO NOT OPERATE A VEHICLE. CALL A TAXI OR ASK A FRIEND TO DRIVE YOU HOME.**

**The first step is to get a Massachusetts driver's license** is to obtain a Learner's Permit. You will need to visit a local Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV), take a computer-based test, a vision and color test, and pay a fee. The computer test will consist of questions based on information about Massachusetts traffic laws, road signs, and safe driving techniques found which is available free online [MA Driver's Manual](#) or at any Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). Only after passing these tests can you apply for the actual Massachusetts driver's license and request a driving test on the road.

There are two Registry of Motor Vehicles in the local area:

Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles  
116 Pleasant Street, **Easthampton, MA**  
<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/rmv/>

**Office Hours:** Monday- Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
It's about 25 minutes from Elms by car.  
Tel: 617-351-4500

Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles  
165 Liberty Street, **Springfield, MA**  
<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/rmv/>

**Office Hours:** Monday- Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
It's about 10 minutes from Elms by car.  
Tel: 1-800-858-3926

**\*Important: A Learner's Permit does not give you legal permission to drive a vehicle alone.** With a Learner's permit you must always be accompanied by a licensed operator who occupies the passenger seat next to you. This person must be at least 21 years old and have a valid license with at least 1 year's driving experience.

You must bring proof of the following (see details below): identity, valid immigration status, signature, date of birth, and Massachusetts residency.

**\*Important: You may only use a document for one purpose.** For example: you may not use the same document (such as a Social Security card) to prove both your Social Security number *and* your signature.

### **Required Documentation:**

#### **1. Proof of identity**

- Elms ID card
- Valid Passport

#### **2. Social Security number (SSN) or proof that you are not eligible for a Social Security number**

Social Security card OR Paycheck stub showing your Social Security number OR If you do not have a Social Security number, you must show a **letter from the Social Security Administration** indicating that you are ineligible for one. To do this, you apply for a Social Security number at the Social Security Administration office and they will issue the letter of ineligibility.

#### **3. A document that proves your signature**

- Passport (if you are not using it for proof of date of birth); or
- Employment Authorization Card; or
- Social Security card (if not used as proof of Social Security number); or
- A canceled personal check; or
- Official current or expired ID (expired not more than 12 months ago) issued by a U.S., Canadian, or Mexican government agency with photograph and signature

#### **4. A document that proves your date of birth:**

- Passport (if you are not using it for proof of signature); or
- Employment Authorization Card; or
- Original or certified copy of a non-U.S. birth certificate (if not in English must be accompanied by acceptable translation)

#### **5. Proof of Massachusetts residency:**

- Utility bill (gas, electric, wired telephone, wired cable, or heating oil) no more than 60 days old; or
- Original school transcript with your name and address, dated within the past 12 months (only if you completed your degree in Massachusetts); or
- Checkbook with your pre-printed name and address; or
- Bank statement or other bank document (not more than 60 days old) on a form from the bank, displaying the bank's name and address, and your name and mailing address. (Be sure to black out your account number.)

#### **6. Proof of valid immigration status, including all of these:**

- Your most current immigration document(I-20 or DS-2019). You may wish to carry previous/expired documents separately, in case you are asked for them; AND
- A valid passport with visa stamp from a U.S. Consulate; AND
- I-94 admission record printed from [I-94 Retrieval](#) OR paper I-94 card (small white card in passport) from most recent entry into the U.S.

**\*Remember, you cannot use the same document (except the passport) for more than one purpose.**

### **HOW TO GET A MASSACHUSETTS ID FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Carrying a passport as a form of identification may often be inconvenient and risky, with the possibility of loss. Students who do not have a Massachusetts valid driver's license, may wish to apply for a Massachusetts ID, issued by the Registry of Motor Vehicles. This form of identification will not allow you to drive a vehicle, but is an official form of picture identity that is accepted throughout Massachusetts.

Applying for a Massachusetts ID may be done through any full service RMV. This page contains a summary of the requirements to complete the application process. However, students should visit the RMV website at <http://www.mass.gov/rmv/>  
SOME of the requirements are:

- May NOT hold a valid Massachusetts driver's license
- Must have a valid passport OR a valid Social Security card OR a letter of denial from the SSN Office
- • Complete an application form (available on the RMV website)
- Letter of residency from the International Programs Office

### **HOW TO APPLY FOR A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER**

#### **Social Security Number**

A Social Security Number (SSN) is a unique, 9-digit identification number issued by the US Social Security Administration (SSA). A Social Security number is a requirement to work in the United States, even on campus. The SSN is used to report your wages to the government. The Social Security Administration will only assign SSN to international students with documentation certifying that they have an on-campus job, Valid CPT or OPT. It does not represent **NOT** represent permission to work off-campus without valid CPT or OPT and it is **NOT** proof of U.S. citizenship or permanent residence.

#### **Required Documentation:**

- Valid Passport
- Current I-20
- Latest I-94
- Certification Letter from the International Programs Office

Bring **ONE** of the following documentation:

- Job offer letter on Elms Letterhead
- **For F-1 students:** Job offer letter on company letterhead and Curricular Practical Training authorization on your I-20
- **For F-1 students:** Valid Employment Authorization Card for Optional Practical Training

#### **WHAT to do at the Social Security Office:**

Bring all required documentation and complete **Form SS-5**, which is available at the Social Security Office or you may download it at [www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ss-5.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ss-5.html) before visiting the office.

**WHERE to apply:**

There are 2 offices near Chicopee and both are within a 15 minute drive from Elms College.

1. **Social Security Administration**, 70 Bond St., **Springfield, MA** 01104

**Telephone:** 1-866- 964-5061

2. **Social Security Administration** , 200 High St #2, **Holyoke, MA** 01040

**Telephone:** 1-877-480-4989

- **Always call or search on the web before you visit an office for hours of operation.** To check for the closest location nearest you go to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)
- **IMPORTANT Notes:**  
After you receive your Social Security Card, the International Programs Offices needs to get a copy of it to keep on file. Also, provide this information to your Payroll Representative so you can get paid.

Once you have the necessary documents, you will submit your application on Form SS-5 with the Social Security Administration closest to where you live.

## IMMIGRATION AND SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR F-1 STUDENTS

### Employment

**F-1 Students may not accept or engage in paid employment without meeting with the Coordinator of International Program.** Permission to work **off-campus** is granted by USCIS, under the Curricular Practical Training(CPT) or Optical Practical Training(OPT) program. It must be approved and documented in SEVIS. There are strict employment guidelines that F-1 students must follow for on-campus employment, CP T, and Occupational Curricular Training.

- **On-campus Employment-** Students are able to work up to 20 hours per week on campus during the academic semesters and 40 hours per week on campus while to college is on holiday breaks, such as winter break, spring break, or summer break. Students must be in good academic standing. Once you have been offered a job, please make an appointment with the Coordinator of International Programs to go over the required documents and steps of applying for a Social Security number.

**Passports** Before entering the United States, your government must issue you a passport. You are responsible to ensure that the passport is valid for at least six months beyond the date of your authorized stay in this country. Your embassy or consulate in the U.S. can extend, renew, or issue a new passport if necessary. Please consult with them to find out what forms you will need. Keep your passport in a safe place at all times during your stay. You might want to write down the number and issue-date of your passport and keep this information in a separate place in case your passport is lost. The International Programs Office will also keep a photocopy of your passport in your file.

**F-1 Visa** Upon your acceptance to Elms College, our office issued you a SEVIS 1-20 Form (Certificate of Eligibility), which enabled you to apply for a student visa at a U.S. Embassy in your country. The F-I student entry-visa is inside your passport. With this visa, you may leave and re-enter the United States as many times as you wish during your stay, provided you have

- a valid passport
- a valid multiple-entry student visa in your passport
- a current I-20 Form from Elms College dated and signed by the Associate Dean for Academic Success
- I-94 Form, which you will surrender at the border or airport to an immigration official upon leaving the U.S.

**I-94 Form** When you entered the United States, you filled out an I-94 Form (Arrival and Departure Record), which then was inspected by an official, stamped and attached inside your passport. This form is valid until your graduation and must be kept in your passport at all times. When you leave the U.S. at any time during your stay, you must surrender this form at the airport to an airline official who will then send it to USCIS. Upon your return, you will be issued a new 1-94 provided you have the documents mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

**Expiration Date of Visa** All students should be aware that passports, visas, and I-94 forms have expiration dates. Once you are in the United States, your **entry-visa** may expire, without any consequences to you, since you have already entered the U.S. However, if you leave the

United States with an expired visa, you must obtain a new one before you can return. Check with the Office for International Students if you have questions about this.

**Responsibility** You are responsible for maintaining all official documents such as passport, visa, I-94, etc. The International Programs Office will advise and assist you as well as provide you with forms and documents you may need. You are encouraged to periodically check your passport and other immigration documents to make sure that they are still valid and are not expiring soon. If you lose your passport or any other important documents, notify the International Programs Office immediately.

You are also responsible for maintaining full-time student status while studying at Elms. You must notify the International Programs Office if you are transferring, taking a leave of absence or withdrawing.

**Practical Training** is a program for students to gain valuable experience by working outside the college, provided it is connected to their major. The visa status remains F-1 with a special authorization for employment. There are two types of Practical Training available at this time at Elms.

**A.** Optional Practical Training Prior to Completion of Studies---working during the annual school vacation, most likely in the summer months, although students may also apply during the January Interterm. **Permission is granted by USCIS.** The time used for this OPT will be deducted from the total 12 month eligibility for after graduation.

**B.** Optional Practical Training -Post Completion of Studies--- following completion of a degree program, i.e., A.B., M.A. or Ph.D. **Permission is granted by USCIS.** You will be authorized to work up to 12 months (minus any time used for Pre-completion), STEM majors may apply for an additional 17 months of OPT training.

To obtain permission, a student must have been in F-1 status for at least nine months. The process of obtaining permission for Practical Training is complicated, and permission is determined on an individual basis. The Office for International Students has forms and information pertaining to this program. You will need the following documents to apply:  
-Passport, , I-94 card (usually stapled inside your passport) current I-20, all other I-20's issued to you either by Elms or other schools, Letter of Employment (for Pre-completion summer OPT), a check or money order made out to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" for \$380 Dollars, any previously issued EAD cards. For Post Completion OPT, a letter of employment is not required.

**Curricular Practical Training (CPT)** is an employment option for off-campus jobs and for students usually in their second year of studies or those who have been in F-1 student status for 9 months or longer. You must have a declared major, you must have a job offer in a field related to your major (not minor) and must be able to register for a "Special Studies" course in your major department for which you will receive at least 1-credit and must be sponsored by a Elms faculty member. This course may be an independent study with a practical component. Or a course in your department which already has a variable credit given for independent research or study. **CPT permission is granted by the Office for International Students & Scholars** and there is no application fee. Forms are available from this office.

The time you spend working on the CPT is not deducted from your 12 month Post-completion Optional Practical Training program. You may apply for CPT in your second and third year summers. The employment authorization page of your I-20 will specify the permission granted for CPT as well as the authorized dates and the name and address of the company, institution or agency where you will be working.

## POPULAR AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

### **Martin Luther King Day** - Third Monday of January

Martin Luther King Day is a federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday in January. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was an African-American clergyman who is recognized for his tireless efforts to win civil rights for all people through nonviolent means

### **Valentine's Day** - February 14<sup>th</sup>

Valentine's Day is celebrated on February 14. The day was named after an early Christian martyr, and on Valentine's Day, Americans give presents like candy or flowers to the ones they love. The first mass-produced Valentine cards were sold in the 1840s.

### **Washington's Birthday**- Third Monday of February

Washington's Birthday is a federal holiday observed the third Monday of February to honor George Washington, the first President of the United States. This date is commonly called Presidents' Day and many groups honor the legacy of past presidents on this date.

### **Easter**- First Sunday after the first spring full moon.

Easter falls on a spring Sunday that varies from year to year. Easter is a Christian holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For Christians, Easter is a day of religious services and the gathering of family. Many Americans follow old traditions of coloring hard-boiled eggs and giving children baskets of candy.

### **Memorial Day**- Last Monday of May

Memorial Day is a federal holiday observed the last Monday of May. It originally honored the people killed in the American Civil War, but has become a day on which the American dead of all wars, and the dead generally, are remembered in special programs held in cemeteries, churches, and other public meeting places. The flying of the American flag is widespread.

### **Independence Day**- July 4<sup>th</sup>

Celebrated on July 4, this federal holiday honors the nation's birthday - the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. It is a day of picnics and patriotic parades, a night of concerts and fireworks. The flying of the American flag is widespread.

### **Labor Day**- First Monday in September

Labor Day is the first Monday of September. This federal holiday honors the nation's working people, typically with parades. For most Americans it marks the end of the summer vacation season and the start of the school year.

### **Columbus Day**- Second Monday of October

Columbus Day is a federal holiday celebrated on the second Monday in October. The day commemorates October 12, 1492, when Italian navigator Christopher Columbus landed in the New World. The holiday was first proclaimed in 1937 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

**Halloween-** October 31<sup>st</sup>

Halloween is celebrated on October 31. On Halloween, American children dress up in funny or scary costumes and go "trick or treating" by knocking on doors in their neighborhood. The neighbors are expected to respond by giving them small gifts of candy or money.

**Veterans Day** - November 11<sup>th</sup>

Celebrated on November 11, Veterans Day was originally called Armistice Day. This federal holiday was established to honor Americans who had served in World War I, but it now honors veterans of all wars in which the U.S. has fought. Veterans' organizations hold parades, and the president places a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

**Thanksgiving-** Fourth Thursday of November

The Thanksgiving holiday began in 1621, when Puritans, who had just enjoyed a bountiful harvest, showed their gratitude to the Native Americans for their help by hosting a feast to give thanks. The Thanksgiving feast became a national tradition and almost always includes some of the foods served at the first feast: roast turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes, and pumpkin pie.

**Christmas-** December 25<sup>th</sup>

Celebrated on December 25, Christmas is a Christian holiday marking the birth of the Christ Child. Decorating houses and yards with lights, putting up Christmas trees, giving gifts, and sending greeting cards have become traditions even for many non-Christian Americans.

<http://www.usa.gov/citizens/holidays.shtml>

## CLOTHING SIZE CONVERSION TABLES

### Women's Clothing Dresses, Suits and Coats

British	28	30	32	34	36	38	40
Continental	34	36	38	40	42	44	46
American	06	08	10	12	14	16	18

### Blouses and Sweaters

British	34	36	38	40	42	44
Continental	40	42	44	46	48	50
American	32	34	36	38	40	42

### Dresses and Coats (Children's and Junior Misses)

British & Continental	1	2	5	7	9	10	12
American	2	4	6	8	10	13	15

### Socks

British & American	8	8.5	9	9.5	10	10.5	11
Continental	35	36	37	38	39	40	41

### Shoes

British	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5
Continental	36	37	37.5	38	38.5	39	39.5
American	6	6.5	7	7.5	8	8.5	9

### Men's Clothing

#### Suits, Sweaters, and Overcoats

Continental	44	46	48	50	52	54	56
American & British	34	36	38	40	42	44	46

### Shirts

British & American	14	14.5	15	15.5	16	16.5	17
Continental	36	37	38	39	40	41	42

### Socks

British & American	9.5	10	10.5	11	11.5	12	12.5
Continental	39	40	41	42	43	44	45

### Shoes

British	6.5	7	7.5	8	8.5	9	9.5
Continental	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
American	7.5	8	8.5	9	9.5	10	10.5

## WEIGHTS & MEASURES

### Linear Measures

1 inch	2.54 centimeters
1 foot (12 inches)	30.48 centimeters
1 yard (3 feet)	0.91 meters
1 mile	1.61 kilometers
1 centimeter	0.20 inches
1 meter	39.37 inches or 1.1 yards
1 kilometer	0.62 or 5/8 mile

### Volume

1 quart (2 pints) dry	1.10 liters
1 quart liquid	0.95 liters
1 gallon (4 quarts) dry	4.40 liters
1 gallon liquid	3.80 liters
1 liter	0.91 quarts dry
1.06 quarts liquid	

### Weights

1 ounce	28.35 grams
1 pound	0.45 kilograms
1 gram	0.035 ounces
1 kilogram	2.2 pounds

### Temperature & Conversion Formulas

Conversion Formulas

Fahrenheit to Centigrade

Degrees C = (degrees F - 32) x 5/9

Centigrade to Fahrenheit

Degrees F = (degrees C + 32) x 9/5

### Fahrenheit Centigrade Conversion

(F)	(Celsius)
100	37.8
90	32.2
80	26.7
70	21.1
60	15.6
50	10.0
40	4.4
32	0.0
0	-17.2

### Body Temperature

Normal body temperature (by oral thermometer) is 98.6 F or 37.0 C.

Normal body temperature may vary between 97.6 and 99.6 F.

## **Kitchen Measures & Temperatures**

### **Dry Measure Equivalencies**

1 dry cup	approximately 250 grams
1 teaspoon (tsp or t)	approximately 5 grams
1 tablespoon (tbsp or T)	approximately 15 grams

### **Oven Temperature**

Degrees F	Degrees C
300	150
325	160
350	180
375	190
400	200
425	220
450	230
475	240

## WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

### **Academic Support/Tutoring**

Academic Resource Center  
Library (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
[writeon@elms.edu](mailto:writeon@elms.edu) 413-265-2426

### **Adding/Dropping Classes, Transcripts, Registration**

Registrar Office  
Berchman's Hall 102  
[hartmann@elms.edu](mailto:hartmann@elms.edu) 413-265-2314

### **Campus Events, Trips, Athletic Events**

**Megan Kielty**  
Student Activities Office  
College Center 109  
[kielty@elms.edu](mailto:kielty@elms.edu) 413-265-2211

### **Financial Aid, Loans, Grants, Scholarships**

Office of Financial Aid  
Berchman's Hall 132  
[finaid@elms.edu](mailto:finaid@elms.edu) 413-265-2249

### **Healthcare, Medicine, Counseling**

Health Center  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Maguire Center  
[gagnej@elms.edu](mailto:gagnej@elms.edu) 413-265-2288

### **Immigration Docs, Visas, ESL, etc.**

**Tami A. Brunelle**  
International Programs Office  
College Center 208  
[brunellet@elms.edu](mailto:brunellet@elms.edu) 413-265-2462

### **Intercultural Programs or Opportunities**

**Kent Alexander**  
Office of Intercultural Programs  
College Center 103  
[alexanderk@elms.edu](mailto:alexanderk@elms.edu) 413-265-2343

### **Internships, Jobs, Resumes, Cover letters**

**Nancy Davis**  
Career & Experiential Learning Center  
College Center 103  
[careercs@elms.edu](mailto:careercs@elms.edu) 413-265-2272

### **Parking Passes, Room Lockouts, Tickets**

**Mike Sullivan/ Public Safety**  
College Center 106  
[sullivanm@elms.edu](mailto:sullivanm@elms.edu)  
413-265-2494/ 413-265-2278

### **Pool Schedule, Gym Schedule, Intramurals**

Maguire Center  
413-265-2313

### **Research, Photocopying, & General Library**

Alumnae Library  
413-265-2280

### **Room Changes, Lost Room Keys, Storage**

**Jon Todd**  
Office of Residence Life  
College Center 209  
[toddj@elms.edu](mailto:toddj@elms.edu) 413-265-2461

### **Sending/ Receiving Postal Mail, Mailboxes**

**Jessica Smith**  
College Center 009  
[smithj@elms.edu](mailto:smithj@elms.edu) 413-265-2301

### **Student ID, Student Life**

**Trudy Laramee**  
Dean of Students Office  
College Center 110  
[laramet@elms.edu](mailto:laramet@elms.edu) 413-265-2210

### **Textbooks, School Supplies**

**Bookstore**  
College Center 007  
413-265-2273

### **Tuition Payments, Account Balance, Holds**

**Suzanne Balicki**  
Student Accounts  
Berchman's Hall 131  
[balickisuzanne@elms.edu](mailto:balickisuzanne@elms.edu) 413-265-2412

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

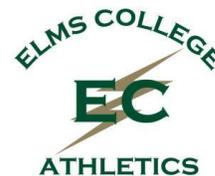
Campus Ministry  
College Center 108  
[campusministry@elms.edu](mailto:campusministry@elms.edu) 413-265-2289

## ELMS COLLEGE A TO Z

**ARC-** The Academic Resource Center offers free tutoring services located on the second floor of the library.

**BH/Berchman's-** Berchman's Hall is the College's largest academic building located across from the College Center.

**Blazers-** It's the mascot name for the college. Every student is a *Blazer* 😊



**Blazernet-** Online information source that can be used to check grades, schedule, and account holds.

**CC Mary Dooley College Center-** Houses the dining hall, offices, and classrooms.

**Computer Labs-** Computer Labs on campus available for student use; one on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the CC and one on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of BH.

**Convocation-** Convocation is a ceremony marking the start of classes with all Elms College students and faculty.

**Degree Audit-** Degree Audits can be found on BlazerNet and will serve as your academic road map to class scheduling.

**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.

**ELL-** English Language Learner.

**ESL-** English as a Second Language.

**First Year Seminar-** All first year students are required to take First Year Seminar, in order in best be acclimated to the college community.

**Fontbonne Room-** The Fontbonne Room is CC105 used for class and club meetings.

**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.

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

**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.

**Joyce-** Joyce Hampton, Associate Academic Dean for Student Success can be found in the College Center, Room 208.

**UoK University of Kochi-** a Japanese College that collaborates with Elms for an annual exchange program.

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

**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.

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

**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.

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

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

**Syllabi-** A course syllabus will be issued to you by all faculty, and will outline class requirements and policies for the semester. It also gives important information such as the best way to contact a professor or his/her office hours.

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

**BlaZers** - The logo/symbol of Elms College athletic teams.