

LIFE IN THE U.S. AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT



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INTRODUCTIONS

- Amber Cordell, Associate Director, Programming and Support (she, her, hers)
- Stephanie Mathis, International Student and Scholar Advisor (she, her, hers)
- Student panel



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IN THE CHAT...

- Introduce yourself
- What are you hoping to get out of this session?



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ASSIMILATION VS. ADAPTATION

- In **assimilation**, the non-dominant culture is fully absorbed into the dominant culture and becomes unrecognizable (like adding salt to soup).
- **Acculturation** occurs when the non-dominant culture changes but is still able to retain unique cultural markers of language, food and customs (like adding a basil leaf to an omelet).
- Rather than giving up your identity and beautiful culture, we hope you will adapt and become more interculturally competent (effective AND appropriate when interacting with cultural differences)

Source: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/acculturation-vs-assimilation-definition-examples.html>



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GENERALIZATIONS VS. STEREOTYPES

- **Generalizations** are flexible, often based in research and recognize that while some members of a group may *tend* to have shared characteristics, it is not true for all.
- **Stereotypes** are rigid, are usually based on media portrayals and try to put *every* member of a group into a box of certain characteristics.
- As we talk about U.S. cultural norms, please know these are generalizations and not true of everyone. There are regional differences, socioeconomic differences, generational differences, etc.



U.S. CULTURAL NORMS AND VALUES

Communication

- U.S. Americans prefer direct communication.
- It's okay to say "no."
- It's okay to make mistakes and feel embarrassed.
- Professors expect you to share your opinion even if it is different than their own.
- If you want a U.S. American to understand your needs/desires, you may have to express them directly. U.S. Americans aren't good at picking up hints or reading between the lines.
- Sometimes U.S. Americans sandwich negative feedback between positive comments, which can be confusing.
- The U.S. is more direct than some cultures, but especially in southern U.S., less direct than others.



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U.S. CULTURAL NORMS AND VALUES

Time

- U.S. Americans prefer to be on time and expect the same of others.
- An event starts at the time listed on the invitation.
- If you want to meet with professors or advisors, you will need to schedule an appointment and show up on time or early.
- Even if you are just meeting your friends, be sure to send a text if you are running late.



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U.S. CULTURAL NORMS AND VALUES, CONT...

Individualism/Independence

- U.S. Americans place a high value on the individual rather than the group or the family.
- Americans appreciate being self-reliant and independent.

Informality

- U.S. Americans value and respect their teachers; however, they may call them by their given names and speak to them in a casual, informal manner.
- U.S. American dress in classrooms may be casual.
- It's again to start formal if you aren't sure and then let someone give you permission to use first names. Observe others to understand what is expected.



U.S. CULTURAL NORMS AND VALUES, CONT...

Privacy

- U.S. Americans are often busy doing something and especially value their time and space.
- It is good to call ahead or schedule time to visit U.S. Americans.
- It is considered rude to ask someone their salary, how much they paid for something, their weight or about their love life (unless you are friends).

Friendship

- U.S. Americans tend to be very friendly on a casual basis.
- Don't be afraid to invite domestic students to hang out with you. It may take more effort, but it will be worth it to take a friendship beyond the superficial.



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THINGS YOU MAY FIND STRANGE IN THE U.S.

1. “How are you?/What’s up?” as a greeting.
2. U.S. Americans tend to smile a lot and can seem superficially friendly.
3. Faculty and staff may ask you to use their first name.
4. Students may wear pajama pants and eat in class.
5. U.S. Americans usually hold the door open for the person behind them and say “excuse me” if they bump into someone. They may think you are rude if you don’t do the same.



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STUDENT PANEL

1. What have you found challenging about life in the U.S./Emory as an international undergraduate student? What advice or solutions can you offer?
2. What is different/difficult for you about U.S. classroom culture?
3. What is your biggest piece of advice for especially new international students?



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BREAK OUT ROOM DISCUSSION

Introductions

Have you noticed any cultural differences so far?

What has surprised you?

What challenges have you experienced as an international student in the U.S?

How have you navigated (or plan to navigate) cultural differences and/or culture shock/fatigue?

Do you have questions for your group moderator or each other?



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UPCOMING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP FOR STUDENTS

March 5, 3-4 pm



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ISSS VIRTUAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

International Coffee Hour: every Friday noon – 1 pm.

Lunar New Year. Feb. 12, 3-4 pm

Windows to the World: Africa, March 19, 3-4 pm



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FOLLOW ISSS ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Instagram: @emoryiss

Facebook: ISSSemory



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WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?

Check out the resource slides that follow!



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IMPORTANT RESOURCES ON-CAMPUS

CAPS (individual counseling and international student support group)

[ISSS Advisor/Amber in ISSS](#)

Academic advisor to

Tutoring

Student organizations

[Writing Center](#)

Career Center



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Cell phone](#)

[Banks](#)

[Off-campus apartments](#)

[Driver's license](#)

[SSN](#)

[Taxes](#)

[Working off-campus](#)



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THINGS TO DO IN ATLANTA

Georgia Aquarium

World of Coca-Cola

Martin Luther King, Jr. National
Historical Park

Atlanta Botanical Gardens

Centennial Olympic Park

High Museum of Art

Fernbank Museum

Fox Theater

Lullwater Reserve

Sports: Braves, Falcons, Hawks,
Atlanta United

Piedmont Park

Atlanta Beltline

Krog Street Market

Six Flags over Georgia

Zoo Atlanta

Stone Mountain

Ponce City Market



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INTERNATIONAL GROCERY STORES

Asian:

Hmart in Doraville, GW Supermarket and Jusgo in Duluth; Patel Brothers in Decatur

Eastern European

International Gourmet Foods

International:

Your Dekalb Farmer's Market

Buford Highway Farmer's Market in Doraville

Lots of Brazilian options



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RESTAURANTS

Indian restaurants: Cafe Bombay, Chat Patti, Botiwalla, Chai Pani, Madras Mantra, Bawarchi Biryani, Zykaa, Honest

Chinese: go Kabob, Dagu Rice Noodle, La Mei Zi, Good Harvest, J's Mini Hotpot.. There's a lot on Buford Hwy.

Korean: Jang Su Jang, Dish, Miss Gogi, Dg2 Korean BBQ...

Japanese: Shoya, Wagaya, Gyu-kaku...

Tapas: Iberian Pig, Gypsy Kitchen, Bar Mercado

Barcelona/ Hispanic: Casa Vieja, Superica, Buena Vida



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GENERAL GROCERY STORES

Publix in North Decatur Center (Route C Publix)

Kroger on Briarcliff Rd. (Route B)

Walmart on N. Decatur Rd.



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SAFETY

Call 911 for police, fire, ambulance

Download the LiveSafe App

Add Emory Police to your contacts: emergency (404-727-6111); non-emergency (404-727-6115)



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SAMPLE OF SLANG

- "I totally bombed." = I did terribly.
- "Bless your heart." = Famous Southern saying. Can be truly empathetic or passive aggressive. Example 1) Her mother died. Bless her heart. Example 2) Did you see her haircut? Bless her heart.
- "Spill the tea." = gossip



CONTACT ME!

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