International Students
Guidebook
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On behalf of the Office of International Student Services (ISS), we welcome you to Ashland University. We are excited that you have chosen to be a part of our community, and we look forward to assisting you in your transition to life here at Ashland University.

**The Office of International Student Services is here to help you!**

ISS aims to engage the university and community at large by coordinating a number of cultural exchange opportunities through our International Club and other programs. Every month we send out an electronic newsletter with important campus and ISS information. We provide advising for:

- Academic registration and concerns
- Immigration regulations
- Social and cultural adjustments
- Personal and financial concerns
- Admissions and transition into new degree programs

**Ashland International Office Staff:**

**Scott Parillo**  
Director of International Student Services  
sparillo@ashland.edu  
419-289-5631

**Jacob Moss**  
International Student Services Coordinator  
iss@ashland.edu  
419-289-5725

**Office Hours and Drop-In Appointments:**

**Semester Hours:**  
Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Drop-in: Tuesday - Thursday: 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

**Summer Hours:**  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Drop-in: Wednesday & Thursday: 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

**Note:** If the Director is not in the office or unavailable, you may also send an email with your questions or to schedule an appointment.
Dear Readers,

The objective of this Guidebook is to provide international students at Ashland University with useful information that will better acquaint them to university policies and life in Ashland, OH. The information found in this Guidebook has been collected through official and public Ashland University sources as well as from the international student information guides from various universities.

Good luck with your studies!

Sincerely,
ISS Office
When new students arrive in Ashland it can be difficult to remember all of the tasks that need to be addressed. This checklist is meant to serve as suggestions for students while adjusting to everyday life.

1. **Settling In:**
   - Secure permanent on or off-campus housing.
   - Open a bank account.
   - Get a cell phone.
   - Get an Eagle Card from the Eagle Office (located in Lower Convo or student dining).
   - Apply for a parking permit if you will own a car and need to park on campus.
   - If you have children, enroll your children in a local school or daycare if needed.

2. **Reporting to the University:**
   - Attend the ISS International Student Orientation (Mandatory).
   - Take the English Placement Exam. (Only for ACCESS students).
   - Undergraduate students- Attend Orientation Weekend.
   - Graduate/Professional students- Contact your department for orientation and advising sessions.
   - Follow instructions from the Health and Counseling Center for reporting vaccinations.

3. **Preparing for Life at AU:**
   - Undergraduates should review their schedule, and graduate students should register for classes as needed.
   - Purchase your textbooks at the campus bookstore in the Student Center or through an online vendor.
   - Pay the AU health insurance fee and arrange coverage for any dependents with you in the United States.
   - Meet with ISS if you have a job offer for on campus employment. (Employment Meetings weekly for the first few weeks of classes.)
   - Consider joining AU clubs or organizations to meet other students. For more information check at the Student Affairs website. www.ashland.edu/student-affairs/getting-involved

Please let the Office of International Affairs staff know if you have questions or concerns about completing any of these required tasks.
1. If your cell phone number or address changes, you must give ISS the new number and/or address so that we can contact you by phone as well as email.

2. AU email is considered to be the standard communication between faculty, staff, and students. You must check your email daily. The proper etiquette is to answer an email within 24 hours.

3. If you have computer trouble go to the Information Technology/Tech Support Center located in 100 Patterson Hall or call: 419-289-5405

4. To access internet on campus your Username will be your email (first letter of first name and then the first several letters of your last name, sometimes with numbers) and your password is AU-your student ID number. Ex. John Smith, Username: jsmith36 and Password: au-1112345

5. The Computer Lab in Patterson and the computers located in the Student Center are available for 24/7 use.

6. In order to maintain your F-1 status, all undergraduates must not fall below 12 credits per semester. Graduate level students must not fall below 6 credits per semester (unless it is your last semester).

7. If you travel outside of the country at any point during your semester, you must have your I-20 signed by a designated official from the ISS office. Otherwise, you WILL NOT BE ALLOWED to re-enter the United States.

8. If you wish to change your room, you must follow all Residence Life procedures, and then when you move, you MUST let ISS know where you will be/ are living.

9. Pay special attention to the end of semester schedule so that you have plenty of time to book your return flight. You will want to book your flight after all of your classes; final exam dates and make any necessary adjustments. On-Campus Housing for winter and summer break is available but students must apply with Residence Life so look for the Application deadlines.
Requirements:
All international students enrolled at Ashland University are required to enroll in the Ashland University Student Insurance Plan. Ashland University will no longer accept another country’s insurance as a substitute; therefore, the Ashland University health insurance cannot be waived. Complete insurance coverage information is available at www.studentplanscenter.com

Students in the ACCESS (ESL) program are billed on a per-term basis; billing is handled in the ACCESS office. Undergraduate and Graduate students are automatically enrolled in the University’s insurance program, and the cost will be billed during September (or January if you start in the Spring Semester). Please contact the Business Office for details of coverage and cost.

All students are to collect their insurance card in the Business Office. In addition to the health insurance requirement, all international students are required to complete the Ashland University Student Health History and Physical Form and provide proof of immunity to measles, mumps and rubella. Screening for tuberculosis will be performed once students arrive on campus.

How Insurance Works in the United States:
As important as health insurance is, it is also important to understand that most insurances do not automatically cover all of your medical expenses. The student insurance plan has a deductible and co-pay requirement. These are costs that you are required to pay before your insurance begins to pay benefits. You will be provided with instructions for reporting and documenting medical expenses (filing a claim). Generally, after you have paid the deductible portion, the insurance company pays a percentage of the total medical expenses, often 80 percent. The remaining amount (co-payment) is your responsibility.

*The Student Health Center is available to answer insurance questions, concerns and to assist with completion of health insurance claims.*
**SAMARITAN REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM**

Address: 1025 Center Street, Ashland, OH 44805  
Office Tel.: 419-289-0491  
Toll Free: 800-257-9917 ext. 2650  
Customer Service Response Line: 419-207-2650

**Note:** 24/7 Emergency Services. Used for serious injuries and illnesses treatment. Accepts most major insurance plans. The consultation fee is much more expensive than the Q-care. More information available online at: [www.samaritanhospital.org/patient-visitor/pricing-guide](http://www.samaritanhospital.org/patient-visitor/pricing-guide)

**Q-CARE**

Address: Hillcrest Medical Building, 350 Hillcrest Drive (Off of Samaritan Hospital’s Parking Lot)  
Office Tel.: 419-207-2502  
Hours of Operation:  
Appointments are not necessary; just bring your paperwork anytime  
Monday - Friday from 11 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

**Note:** Q-Care provides aid for sprains, minor broken bones, stings, rashes, minor infections, sore throats, minor burns and other non-life threatening diseases or injuries in people over 12 months of age. Walk-ins welcome! Payment is required at the time of treatment, with most major insurance plans accepted. The consultation fee is a lot cheaper than the Samaritan Regional Hospital.

**WALK IN URGENT CARE**

Address: 1016 Sugarbush Dr, Ashland, OH 44805  
Office Tel.: 419-903-0404  
Hours of Operation:  
Mon-Fri: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Sat/Sun: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Note:** Walk-in for a quick quality medical care. It is used for general health issue. Open weekends and holidays when other doctors’ offices are closed. It provides a lower cost alternative to the emergency room, without sacrificing quality of care for your non-life-threatening conditions. The consultation fee is similar to the Q-care.

**STUDENT HEALTH CENTER**

Address: Hawkins Conard Student Center, 401 College Avenue, Ashland, Ohio 44805  
Office Tel.: 419-289-5200  
Hours of Operation:  
Monday-Friday 9:30 a.m.-noon & 1-5 p.m. Closed for lunch.  
Closed Saturday-Sunday & during the summer, Closed on breaks.

**Note:** The Ashland University Health Center offers confidential medical care for common illness and injuries and students are encouraged to utilize these services when possible. It is used for general health issues and referral to specialists as indicated. Undergraduate students are automatically charged at the beginning of the school year. Graduate students who wish to use the Health Center can pay a one-time fee to the center for the whole semester.
The City of Ashland is a friendly and welcoming community with a variety of apartments and houses available to rent. Most of these can be found within a mile of Ashland University. It is recommended that students visit the apartments they are considering before making up their mind. Information about available houses and apartments can be found on the realtor office’s websites or by visiting their office. The houses and apartments in Ashland usually are **unfurnished**, which means that they do not have any furniture, although most will have appliances such as a **stove** and **refrigerator**. Furniture can be purchased at several stores including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wal-Mart</th>
<th>Home Hardware</th>
<th>Goodwill</th>
<th>Home Depot</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996 E Main Street</td>
<td>1040 Center Street</td>
<td>1611 Claremont Avenue</td>
<td>1060 Sugarbush Drive</td>
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**Housing Options**

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<tr>
<th>Eagle View</th>
<th>Ashland Seminary</th>
<th>Barbara Lane</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1436 Eagle Way</td>
<td>910 Center St</td>
<td>6 Cardinal Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>419-281-3680</td>
<td>419-289-584</td>
<td>419-281-0804</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ashlandeagleview.com">www.ashlandeagleview.com</a></td>
<td><em><a href="mailto:Hmarth@ashland.edu">Hmarth@ashland.edu</a></em></td>
<td><em><a href="mailto:Rentals@aspenmgt.ne">Rentals@aspenmgt.ne</a></em></td>
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<tr>
<th>Bauer Management</th>
<th>Ashland Village</th>
<th>Hillcrest Manor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 E Second Street</td>
<td>1517 Cottage Street</td>
<td>307 Hillcrest Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>419-281-3446</td>
<td>419-289-8784</td>
<td>419-281-801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bauerrealty.com">www.bauerrealty.com</a></td>
<td><em><a href="mailto:Manger@Bauermanagement.com">Manger@Bauermanagement.com</a></em></td>
<td><em><a href="mailto:Office@powerrealty.com">Office@powerrealty.com</a></em></td>
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<tr>
<th>King Road</th>
<th>Martin House</th>
<th>Stadium Villas</th>
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<tr>
<td>1125 King Road</td>
<td>625 Center Street</td>
<td>Mifflin Ave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>419-908-5077</td>
<td>419-281-6721</td>
<td>866-288-0701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://Studer44@zoominternet.net">Studer44@zoominternet.net</a></td>
<td><a href="http://Manger@Martinhouse.com">Manger@Martinhouse.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Stoney Creek</th>
<th>Tom Gilman</th>
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<tr>
<td>265 Ronald Avenue</td>
<td>245 Sandusky Street</td>
<td>866-288-0701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>419-281-0281</td>
<td>419-289-8080</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Regina.stoneycreek@gmail.com">Regina.stoneycreek@gmail.com</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:TGilman@kickandgilman.com">TGilman@kickandgilman.com</a></td>
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**Additional Housing Information:**

Please contact the ISS office if you are looking for a roommate(s). Be sure check our housing list for available openings. Securing off campus housing can take anywhere from a few days, to possibly a few weeks. Many students will stay at the Surry Inn or in temporary housing at the Seminary until they secure an off campus residence.
Below are some questions to consider asking when looking for an apartment and preparing to sign a lease once you find an apartment.

1. Is there a vacancy? Is there a single (or double) bedroom apartment available?

2. Is the apartment furnished or unfurnished?

3. What is the monthly rent? Generally in Ashland, monthly rents are around $450 for a one bedroom apartment and $525 for a two-bedroom apartment.

4. Are utilities (gas, electricity, water, garbage) included in the rent? If not, what is the normal monthly charge for utilities?

5. Is there a deposit? If so, how much? Is it refundable? Normally, landlords charge a deposit. Usually the deposit is the equivalent of one month’s rent and is refundable when you leave the apartment if there is no damage and/or there is no cleaning necessary. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU LEAVE THE APARTMENT CLEAN WHEN YOU MOVE.

6. What is the lease arrangement? A lease is your contract with the landlord. It may be a binding lease, which means you need to stay in the apartment for six months or one year. If you leave earlier, you may have to pay some or all of the rent for the rest of the lease, or you may lose your deposit. Or, the lease may be non-binding; that is, you may leave at any time with no extra charge. Many restrictions and exclusions may be included in a lease. Common restrictions concern children and pet animals. Many landlords do not permit pets. Generally, it is not a good idea to sign a binding lease for your first apartment for longer than six months. This is because your first apartment may not be the best choice, and you may want to move to a different place.

7. You will need to provide your own shower curtain and should NOT use the shower without one. American-style bathrooms are not designed to allow water on the floors, as they will be ruined and water could go to the apartment below. All water should stay within the shower/bathtub.
Payment of Rent:
You must pay the rent within a certain agreed-upon period or you can be forced to move (evicted). Only a police officer can serve an eviction notice; the landlord cannot simply demand a tenant to move out without proper authorization.

Damage/Security Deposits:
Usually tenants must pay a damage or security deposit when first renting an apartment or house. When the tenant moves out, the landlord can keep part or all of the deposit to cover damages caused by the tenant, unpaid utility bills, unpaid rent, and necessary cleaning. The landlord should return the deposit to you within 30 days after you leave the apartment if you have paid your rent, left the apartment clean and undamaged, and have not been evicted.

Check-In Sheets:
Before signing a lease and moving into an apartment or house, you should complete a check-in sheet. This sheet is a written document describing the condition of each room, including furniture, carpeting and appliances. Be sure to mark down anything that needs repair or is damaged so that you will not be charged for previous damages. Keep a copy of the check-in sheet signed both by you and your landlord.

Garbage Disposal:
If your apartment has a garbage disposal in the sink, be sure to ask your landlord what kinds of waste can be put into it. A garbage disposal is a machine that grinds food waste and allows it to be washed down the sink drain. Never put metal, glass, bones, paper, string, banana peels, celery, corn husks or meat fat down the disposal. Be careful not to drop your silverware in the disposal as it could ruin both the disposal and your silverware. NEVER put your finger or hand in the disposal while it is running. It is very dangerous and you could be seriously injured.

Heating System:
Usually you can control the heat in your apartment with a thermostat or heat control valve. When you are away, turn the thermostat down to save gas or electricity. A recommended setting for conservation of energy is 68 degrees during winter days and 60 degrees at night. If you leave for winter break, do not turn the temperature all the way down, or the pipes may freeze.

Repairs:
Usually you are required to pay for any damages in the apartment that you cause. The landlord is responsible for maintaining the quality of the building and ensuring that appliances and heating are in good working order.

Garbage Removal:
You are responsible for removing trash from your apartment to the outside trash container. Do not leave trash in hallways or walkways outside your apartment. Trash is collected once weekly by employees of the Department of Public Works. Ask your landlord or neighbor which day of the week is trash collection day.
Your I-20 Living expenses are estimated on a 9-month basis. While enrollment during the summer may be optional, food, rent and other expenses are necessities. Planning your living costs for the year is important.

**Your first month in the United States demands more financial outlay than any other single period.**

- For ON CAMPUS Students an **additional $500** should be available to meet these expenses
- For OFF CAMPUS STUDENTS an **additional $1,000** should be available to meet these expenses.

**Arrival:**
For All Students: Arrival from Cleveland Hopkins International Airport to Ashland Ohio Costs:

- **Free** - Make arrangements to arrive on your own
- **$50** - AU Airport Pickup, MUST COMPLETE ARRIVAL FORM (https://www.ashland.edu/iss/content/arrival-form)
- **$120** - Airport Cab
- **$150** - Lyft/Uber

*Estimated Costs*

Once you arrive in Ashland the ISS Office will coordinate trips to Wal-Mart to get basic supplies such as linens, food, clothing, etc. Students should have money to purchase these items, as well as money allocated to set up a cell phone plan and open a bank account. Additional costs will accrue when students purchase their class materials (i.e. - Books, a Laptop, school supplies).

**Health Insurance:**
Ashland University requires that all International Students enroll in University Health Insurance - this will be billed to your student account. Payment on your account must be approved and cleared prior to the start of classes. Furthermore, the business office will not let you schedule for future semesters if you have an outstanding balance on your account.

**Housing (Off Campus Students):**
Many students stay in temporary housing for their first few days in Ashland while looking to secure permanent housing arrangements. There are limited options within a walking distance of campus.

Costs for Temporary Housing: (Estimates)

- **Seminary Housing:** $35/night
- **Surry Inn:** $60/night
- **Bed & Breakfast:** $100-$160/night (within walking distance of campus)

Rent in Ashland: (Averages)
1 Bedroom: $400-$500
2 Bedroom: $600-$700
*Median Rent Asked In Ashland Ohio in 2016: $672

Miscellaneous $500 – utility deposits, credit check fees, renter’s insurance, and starter supplies

When finalizing your housing arrangements, often times a security deposit equal to one month of rent is required. (Deposits occasionally require first AND last month rent equivalents).

**Please note:** These expenses are not exact and should only be used as a general guideline to first month expenses. Contact the ISS office at *iss@ashland.edu* if you have questions, comments and or concerns.
Most cell phone providers require social security numbers, but there are some options if you do not have one. In Ashland you can go to the following places to buy a prepaid or a contract cellphone. Pick from monthly, daily, minute and data prepaid plans. Some companies, like Verizon require a deposit which is returned to the person after a year of service.

**Wal-Mart**  
1996 E Main St  
419-281-9537  

**Verizon Wireless**  
1041 Commerce Pky  
419-281-1714  

**Online Cell Phone Shopping**  
International students usually do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) when first arriving in the United States. Sometimes students bring unlocked cell phone from their home country; they can buy only sim cards and attach that with the unlocked cell phone. There are several sources available for international students where they do not need a SSN to get cell phone service. Some available sources are:

- **H20**  
  www.h2owirellessnow.com
- **Cricket Mobile**  
  www.mycricket.com
- **Simple Mobile**  
  www.nysimplemobile.com

**International Calling Card**  
Most international students want or need to make a call back home. There are many options for them to make international calls. They can either make an international call from their local phone service or they can buy an international calling card from another company. To buy an international calling card you need to provide a debit card number and current address. Some international calling card websites are:

- **Boss Revolution**  
  www.bossrevolution.com
- **Rebtel**  
  www.rebtel.com
- **AmanTel**  
  www.amantel.com
- **NobelCam**  
  www.nobelcom.com
**Driver’s License:**
Anyone living in the state of Ohio and driving a car here must have an Ohio driver’s license. Check out the Ohio DMV for other non-driver ID options.

[www.bmv.ohio.gov/state_id_card.stm](http://www.bmv.ohio.gov/state_id_card.stm)

To get an Ohio license, you must go to the Ohio Division of Motor Vehicles and take a written test followed by a driving test.

**Documents Required:**
- I-94
- I-20
- Passport with address
- Proof of Ohio Address

Proof of Ohio Address the documents accepted as proof of residency are listed on the website: [www.bmv.ohio.gov/acceptable_id_documents.stm](http://www.bmv.ohio.gov/acceptable_id_documents.stm)

* If you do not have any of these documents, they also accept a certified transcript from the university, after your first semester here.

You will be required to take a written examination concerning driving laws and practices. In addition to the written test, you will be required to take a “road test”. This consists of driving your car while accompanied by a driver license examiner (you must provide your own car for the test). Before the examination, you should study the booklet that is published by Ohio Division of Motor Vehicles which contains all the information needed to pass the written part of the test and is available free of charge. You can pick this booklet up at any local DMV.

**NOTE:** A Social Security Number (SSN) is NOT a required document for a Ohio license if one has not been previously issued.

**Ohio Division of Motor Vehicles**
Agency #0302
1070 Commerce Pkwy
419-281-2125
8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Monday
8 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues-Fri
8 a.m.-noon Saturday
Please be aware of the following companies that can provide transportation in Ashland and to airports. ISS cannot provide information on private individuals who may provide transportation services for a fee. Please use caution and negotiate all fees in advance.

**Renting a Car**
- Hertz rent-a-car
  - 1304 Claremont Avenue
  - 419-903-0750
- Enterprise
  - 2014 S Baney Road
  - 419-289-1818

**Airports:**
- Cleveland (60 minutes)
- Columbus (90 minutes)
- Akron (45 minutes)

**Other transportations:**
- Amtrak (Train), check out [www.amtrak.com/home](http://www.amtrak.com/home)
- Greyhound (Bus), check out [www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com)

**ASHLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT**
- Tel.: 419-207-8240
- Within Ashland city call 24HR ahead for better prices
- Call 48HR ahead if outside the city limit would be $2 a mile.
- Wednesday Walmart Bus—from the Bixler Lot.
  - Leaves AU: 4 p.m. & 5:30 p.m.
  - Leaves Walmart: 4:45 p.m. & 7 p.m.
  - Cost: $3 round trip (Please have exact change)

**ASHLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT**
- Tel.: 419-281-4869
- $75 to Cleveland and Akron airport , $100 to Columbus airport.
  *AU students get 10% off.
- Car rental--$75 per hour to any cities.
To open any kind of bank account, go to the bank of your choice and tell the receptionist that you would like to open an account. The receptionist will direct you to a person who can explain the kinds of accounts that are available and can open one for you. There are periodic changes in the kinds of accounts and the other services that banks offer. Banks have “customer service” personnel whose job it is to answer customer questions and assist with problems that have to do with banking services. It is important to understand that banks have specialized charges. When opening an account the bank or financial institution must give you a list of all current charges. Read this list very carefully so you do not incur unnecessary charges or fees. ATMs are usually available at all times and day; however, be sure to practice safety when you are getting money out of an ATM.

**Note:** A bank representative will be available on-campus during orientation to assist with opening an account.

### Scams To Be Aware Of

#### The Taxman
Scammers know that taxes strike fear in the hearts of men and women. Exploiting the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) name and function is one way that scammers have been able to get people to open their wallets.

- Automated calls from the IRS claiming that you owe back taxes, and requesting you pay via gift card. There are several red flags and tips to know whether you’re dealing with the real IRS vs. a scammer:
  - The IRS never initiates contact with you via phone call, email, or through social media.
  - The IRS cannot threaten to have you arrested or deported for not paying.
  - You will never be asked to pay using a gift card, prepaid debit card, or wire transfer; the IRS also never takes credit/debit card information over the phone.
  - If you owe the IRS back taxes, you will always have the opportunity to question or appeal the amount.

#### Money Order Overpayment Scam
For those of you trying to get rid of your old sofa on ebay, a word of caution – beware of money orders. Prospective buyers will offer to pay with one that is worth more than the price you are asking for and after the alleged money order “clears” they will ask you to transfer the difference back to them. Unfortunately for you though, the money order was a fake and guess who’s responsible?
Ebay Sellers Not Shipping
Just because you paid for something on ebay doesn’t mean you’re going to receive something through ebay. There are a number of unscrupulous sellers on the site that will just take your money and run. Read the reviews first and if they don’t have any, contact them directly.

Phishing
This broad term applies to any attempt by a scammer to obtain usernames, passwords, or credit card numbers by masquerading as a legitimate source. Just remember, if you get an email from your bank asking you to verify your account details…ignore it! Legitimate companies will never ask you for this information via email.

The computer problem
What it looks like: You receive a call from your internet service provider. They’ve detected a virus on your computer and it’s sending error messages. The good news is that they can fix it, so long as you give them remote access.
What's really happening: You’ve handed control of your computer to a scammer. They’ll probably try to steal your personal data or hold your computer to ransom until you pay.

*If it’s “too good to be true” then it’s most likely to be a scam*
Traditional Holidays

**Easter:** falls on a varying spring Sunday and celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
**Christmas Day:** December 25, another Christian holiday, marks the birth of the Christ Child.
**New Year’s Day:** January 1, celebrates a happy and prosperous coming year.

Other Celebrations:

While not holidays, other days of the year inspire colorful celebrations in the United States.

**Valentine’s Day:** On February 14, Americans give presents, candy or flowers, to loved ones.
**Halloween:** On October 31, (the evening before All Saints or All Hallows Day), American children dress up in funny or scary costumes and go “trick or treating” knocking on doors in their neighborhood.
**St. Patrick’s Day:** On March 17, Irish Americans celebrate this high-spirited day by wearing green clothing in honor of the “Emerald Isle.”
**Mardi Gras:** The day before the Christian season of Lent begins in late winter is a big occasion in New Orleans, Louisiana, where huge parades and wild revels take place. The daily newspaper is a good source of general information for facilities that may close on holidays. For more information check out the local newspaper.

American Holidays

**Thanksgiving:** The fourth Thursday in November and celebrates the harvest and prosperity.
**Fourth of July:** Independence Day, honors the nation’s birthday -- the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.
**Martin Luther King Jr. Day:** Honors MLK who was a great African American clergyman who worked for civil rights with non-violence.
**President’s Day:** Celebrates all Presidents on the third Monday of February.
**Memorial Day:** On the fourth Monday of May, this holiday honors all soldiers of war who have died.
**Labor Day:** The first Monday in September, honors the nation’s working people.
SEVIS

SEVIS is the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System that requires all colleges and universities in the US to report electronically to the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) information about F-1 students and J-1 students and visiting scholars.

For a quick overview of your responsibilities as an F or J visa holder, please note that you must inform the International Student Services office BEFORE you:

● Move to a different apartment, house or dorm room. Please email the New address to iss@ashland.edu
● Change your major or program of studies.
● Drop below full-time status.
● Participate in an internship or off-campus work experience.
● Transfer to another school.

F1 Visa Information

The ISS office must now report to SEVIS of a student’s:

● Failure to enroll (termination of studies);
● Dropping below full-time without ISS authorization;
● Any other failure to maintain status, such as unauthorized employment or failure to complete program;
● Change in legal name and address;
● Disciplinary action taken by Ashland University as the result of the student being convicted of a crime;
● Students graduation prior to expected end date as listed on the I-20 and,
● Start date of student's next session.

Full-Time Enrollment Requirement

Regulations require all undergraduate students to enroll for 12 credit hours per semester, and graduate students must enroll for 6 credit hours per semester.
COURSELOAD REDUCTION
ISS must report to SEVIS each semester whether students are full-time or part-time. Those who do not maintain a full course of study will be considered out of legal status by USCIS and must depart the US immediately. There are, however, six INS approved reasons for students taking less than full-time. They are:
1. Initial difficulty with the English language or reading requirements, unfamiliarity with American teaching methods, or improper course level placement (allowed only during the first semester, and undergraduates must enroll for at least 6 credit hours).
2. Last semester of study.
3. Concurrent enrollment (total combined enrollment at each institution must meet the full-time definitions as stated above).
4. Temporary illness or medical condition for a period of time not to exceed an aggregate of 12 months while the student is pursuing a course of study at a particular program level. Documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist is required and must be provided for each new quarter that a student is ill.

US ADDRESS REPORTING REQUIREMENT
Students must notify ISS within 10 days of an address change. These address changes should also be reported to the Registrar’s Office and, if you are working, to the Business Office as well.

F-2 DEPENDENT STUDY
Individuals in F-2 status are unable to study for a degree on either a part-time or full-time basis.

EXTENSION OF I-20
Students must obtain an extension of their I-20 PRIOR to the program end-date noted on their current I-20 by coming to ISS. Students who do not obtain a new I-20 prior to the program end-date violate their status.

CHANGE OF MAJOR
Students who change their majors can also complete the address change form to let the ISS office know; we must notify USCIS within 21 days of this event.

GRACE PERIODS
F-1 students have a 60-day grace period following completion of study or completion of optional practical training to 1) depart the US, 2) transfer to another institution, or 3) change status.
However, students who terminate their studies before completion of their academic program do NOT receive a 60-day grace period. These students MUST notify ISS BEFORE terminating studies in order to receive a 21-day grace period to depart the US.

**Note:** F-1 students who do not notify ISS before termination of studies receive no grace period and must leave the US immediately.

**SAFEKEEPING DOCUMENTS**

Never throw away any I-20 after receiving an updated form. USCIS may request to see these forms in the future.

**TRANSFERS**

Students must notify ISS prior to leaving Ashland University for another institution. Students will not be able to receive an I-20 from the new school unless the following steps are completed: Notify Ashland University of your intent to transfer and provide the name of the new school to which you intend to transfer; Ashland University will update your record in SEVIS as a transfer out and indicate the name of the school to which you intend to transfer, along with a release date. The release date is usually the last day of the semester or the date of expected transfer; You may request that Ashland University cancel the transfer out at any time prior to the release date; As of the release date, the new school will have full access to your SEVIS record and assumes responsibility for you, at which time the new school will issue you a SEVIS Form I-20; Student must contact the international office at the new school within 15 days of the start date listed on the SEVIS I-20 to avoid violating their status; The new school will verify enrollment with SEVIS, thereby acknowledging that the student has completed the transfer process; and In the remarks section of the students SEVIS Form I-20, the new school must note that the transfer has been completed, indicating the date, and returning the I-20 to the student.

**REINSTATMENT TO LEGAL STATUS**

F-1 students may make a request for reinstatement through the ISS office. F-1 students must not have been out of status for more than five months at the time of filing the request for reinstatement and not have a record of repeated or willful violations. Students and their dependents who fail to timely report a change of address (see above) are not eligible for reinstatement.
F-1 students may work on-campus **up to 20 hours per week** while school is in session, and more than 20 hours per week during breaks. Other employment in the US requires recommendation or authorization by USCIS and/or ISS.

Each semester the ISS Office hosts seminars to go over on-campus employment, CPT and OPT

**On-Campus Employment**
- An F-1 student is eligible to apply for PART-TIME university employment, but only do so if you have the required qualifications.
- An F-1 student visa does not permit you to work in a full-time position unless it is related to your area of study and you have been approved for OPT (or the department is willing to sponsor you for a change of status to another visa).
- Available positions are posted outside of the Personnel office in the basement of Founder's Hall or by calling the Job Line at 419-289-7788.

**Tips**
- Make personal visits to on-campus departments, even if they do not have a job posted, and talk to others who already have a job in the department in which you are interested. This is called "networking," and will help others to know that you are looking for work.
- Take looking for a job on campus seriously. Dress neatly and consider making up a mini resume to take along.
- Get involved. This method of networking can lead to many opportunities. Volunteer, join clubs, ask your department or college for advice and leads.

**Immigration Guidelines**
- No more than 20 hours per week during fall and spring semesters
- You can have a job in more than one department, as long as your hours do not total more than 20 per week
- Can work more hours during all break periods (summer semester, Christmas, etc.)
- Email ISS to set up an appointment, and bring your passport and I-94
- Some sponsoring agencies do not allow their students to work while studying, please check with your agency first if this applies to you.
Basic CPT

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is the immigration program that will help you obtain permission to work off campus in a job related to your field of study, or to participate in a paid internship.

Guidelines:
- You cannot participate in CPT until you have been in enrolled full time in legal F-1 status (at any U.S. school) for at least one academic year (9 months). ESL students are not eligible.
- CPT requires an academic advisor, registration for a course, and will carry a grade. The work experience must be related to your major field of study.
- CPT can be approved for one year for part-time work (renewable), and for up to one year of full-time work.

Please note that you must have approval for Curricular Practical Training BEFORE you can begin work. Not doing so puts you out of status, which then makes it impossible for us to approve you for CPT.

Basic OPT

Optional Practical Training for F-1 students is the USCIS program that provides permission for a student to work off campus in a job related to their area of study. Some basic information:
- An F-1 student is eligible for a MAXIMUM OF 12 MONTHS of OPT.
- Students in English language training are not eligible for OPT.
- While on optional practical training, the former student must still report address changes and employment information to Ashland University.
- OPT is available to students who have been enrolled on a full-time basis in F-1 status for at least nine months.
- Students may apply for OPT up to 90 days prior to completion of studies or up to 60 days after (We recommend that you apply at the beginning of your last semester.) Authorization to engage in OPT is automatically terminated when the student transfers to another school or begins study at another educational level.

Please schedule a meeting with the ISS office if you are interested in CPT or OPT - updates must be made to your I20 and other immigration documents; these changes are handled by appointment in the ISS office.
Understand the Student’s Goal: Academic success in the American system requires consistent, disciplined studying for all assignments, examinations, and courses.

Evaluate Your Expectations: Keep in mind that a period of adjustment to a new educational system is necessary before you will be able to perform to the best of your ability. Do not be discouraged if your grades during the first few weeks are low.

Select Your Courses Wisely: Consult your academic advisor and avoid overloading yourself with difficult courses.

Work Hard from the Beginning: It is not possible, in the American system of higher education, to wait until the latter part of the semester to begin studying. If you do not begin studying on the first day of classes, you are likely to get behind and to experience academic difficulty.

Know How to Study: The study habits that were appropriate for the educational system of your country may not be appropriate here. You may have to learn to approach your studies in a different way while you are studying at a U.S. institution.

Talk With Your Professors: Professors here expect students to ask questions in class or immediately following class. They expect students to see them during Office Hours when students are having problems in class. If you are not doing well in a class and you do not see your professor to discuss the situation, the professor is likely to assume that you are not interested in his or her class. In other words, most professors will have a negative or at best indifferent evaluation of a student who never raises questions or challenges in the class, or who does not visit the teacher outside of the class to discuss any academic difficulties he or she may be experiencing.

Ask Questions: Any time you feel unsure of what is expected of you in a class, or of some aspect of the material being presented, ask the teacher and some of your fellow students about it. If you do not ask, it will be assumed that you understand everything or that you are not interested.

Attend the International Club Programs! If you attend programs and participate in the events put on by the club there are always new opportunities to suggest future events and talk to the club officers about your passions and interests. The club exists to satisfy the social needs of the students - so let the International Club know what you’re interested in doing.
The most common method of instruction here is the classroom lecture. The lectures are supplemented by classroom discussion. Smaller classes are referred to as seminars and are almost entirely devoted to discussion. It is important for the student to contribute to the discussion in the classroom. In some societies it is “disrespectful” for students to question or challenge the teacher. In this country, by contrast, questioning or challenging the teacher is viewed as a healthy sign of interest, attention, and independent thinking. In many classes your grade will be determined in part by your contribution to class discussion. If you sit in “respectful” silence, it is likely to be assumed that you are not interested in what is being said in the class, or that you do not understand it. Normally professors announce their office hours on the first day of class. At Ashland, you are encouraged to make an appointment with your professor or to stop by during office hours to ask questions to further discuss topics from class.

**Laboratories:**
Many courses require work in a laboratory, where the theory learned in the classroom is applied to practical problems. Classes that require labs will also include a lab fee, or a charge to cover the cost of materials used during the labs.

**Term Papers:**
In many courses you will be required to write a “term paper” (often called simply a “paper”). A term paper is based on study or research you have done in the library or laboratory. Your teacher will usually assign a term paper in the early part of the course. You are expected to work on it during the semester, and submit it near the end. The grade you receive on the term paper may constitute a significant portion of your grade for the course. It is wise to complete term papers in advance of their due date so there is time to ask another person to review your paper and suggest revisions. If you have questions, please do not be embarrassed to ask for help from the professor, the Writing Studio, or from the trained library staff.

**Writing Studio:**
[www.ashland.edu/writing-studio](http://www.ashland.edu/writing-studio)

**Library:**
[www.ashland.edu/library/](http://www.ashland.edu/library/)

**Examinations:**
You will have many examinations. Nearly every class has a “final examination” at the end of the term. Most have a “midterm examination” near the middle of the term. There may be additional “tests” or “quizzes” given with greater frequency, perhaps even weekly. All of 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. Some professors may require that you buy a “blue book” or examination book. They are sold for $0.25 each at the university bookstore.
Do not look at other students’ papers during an examination. To “cheat” on an examination by getting answers from other students or from materials illicitly brought to the test can result in a “zero” grade for the examination, an “F” grade in the course, and disciplinary action.

(See academic dishonesty: www.ashland.edu/integrity-policy).

Specialization:
The American educational system also produces specialists, people who have studied a limited range of topics in depth. Further specialization occurs during graduate school, especially as students undertake research for a thesis or dissertation.

Evaluation:
It is considered important here to evaluate the work that students do in each class. Therefore, there is a “grading system,” which is used to rank and compare students’ academic work. A student’s grades receive considerable attention in competition for scholarships and fellowships, for admission to universities and graduate schools, and for jobs.

Organization of the Academic System:

Credits:
The quantity of academic work a student does at the University is measured in “credits.” The number of credits a course is worth usually depends on the number of hours per week that it meets. A “three-credit course,” for example, will meet three hours weekly for one semester. It might meet for three fifty-minute sessions, as undergraduate classes normally do, or for one three-hour session. A student must earn a specified number of credits in order to graduate.

The Grading System:
The quality of a student’s academic work is measured by means of “grades.” There are four “passing” grades, A, B, C, and D. There is one “failing” grade, F. At the graduate level, only A and B are considered passing grades. A student’s grade point average (or GPA) is calculated by dividing the number of credits earned into the number of grade points earned. The “cumulative GPA” is the GPA a student has earned for all studies undertaken. For more details, please refer to the Registrar’s website at www.ashland.edu/Registrar.

Dropping/Adding Classes:
Students who find that they are in too many classes or that one or more of their classes are exceedingly difficult can “drop” those classes, and perhaps add others to replace them, if they act before the “drop-add deadlines.” International students need to remember that U.S. immigration regulations require them to be registered “full time,” which means being registered for at least 12 credit hours as an undergraduate or 6 as a graduate student. Students should contact their academic advisor if they wish to drop or add a course.

Withdrawal:
International students intending to withdraw from all classes must receive prior approval; from the International Student Services. An undergraduate student intending to withdraw from the university must go through the official withdrawal process which includes completing a Withdrawal Request Form.
Academic Dishonesty

What is considered “Cheating”? Cheating is an act of deception in that a student represents mastery of information that he/she has not mastered. Cheating may be suspected if an assignment that calls for independent work results in two or more solutions, sequences, or language so similar as to merit the charge. Cheating may be suspected if there is a statistical inconsistency in the student’s performance and the student cannot explain or reproduce both the intricacies of the solution and the techniques used to generate the solution; or in the case of an essay examination, that the student cannot explain or reproduce the thought-processes used to generate the writing.

Examples include:
- Copying from another student’s test paper.
- Allowing another student to copy from a test paper.
- Using notes, textbooks or other information in homework, examinations, tests or quizzes, except as expressly permitted.
- Securing, giving or exchanging information during examinations without authority to do so.
- Other offenses of this form which incorporate dishonesty for academic gain.

Policies for Plagiarism & Integrity

Honoring our shared values:
Personal integrity is important in everything you do now and throughout your life. For this reason, Ashland adopted its Statement on Ethical Leadership, which undergirds our Academic Integrity Policy. The statement reads: “The Ashland community strives to model leadership which is based upon Judeo-Christian beliefs and virtues and which will encourage, develop and sustain men and women of character to serve their professions, their communities and the world.” As a student at Ashland University, you are expected to hold yourself to the highest standards of academic, personal and social integrity including adherence to the academic standards of integrity outlined in this policy.

For the full text please see:
www.ashland.edu/integrity-policy
The Writing Studio is a resource for students to collaborate with student consultants. Writing Assistants (WA) meet with undergraduate students who are writing papers for courses the WAs have taken. During the first appointment students discuss the assignment and generate ideas and writing goals; during follow up meetings, the WA guides the process of writing a highly skilled paper. Writing Assistants can collaborate with all writers because they, themselves, are skilled writers representing a variety of Ashland University majors/minors.

**Writing Studio Hours**  
Monday – Thursday: 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. | Friday: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Sunday by Appointment

**Writing Studio Location**  
104 Bixler Hall

**ACCESS Tutoring with the Schar Scholars**  
Free Peer Tutoring is available to any undergraduate student. Individual tutors are available for most academic areas and group tutors are available for Math and the Sciences. Students arrange their own times with tutors for individual tutoring sessions. Please visit the Academic Success Center on the 7th Floor of the Library and at [www.ashland.edu/academicsupport](http://www.ashland.edu/academicsupport)

ACCESS students are encouraged to meet with the Schar Scholars who are undergraduate students who are preparing for a career in education. These tutors meet with international students to help improve English language skills. All student tutoring services are provided at no cost to the student.

**Note:** Tutors help to generate ideas and will help explain grammar concepts in order to assist student in improving their academic works. TUTORS WILL NOT COMPLETE THE WORK FOR THE STUDENT. Students are always expected to do their own work and formulate their own ideas. Please see AU Academic Integrity Policy for more information.

**Graduate Students:** Talk with the MBA faculty and staff if you need additional assistance in your classes.
Blackboard:
Blackboard offers a course website for every course offered at Ashland University. These course shells are equipped with tools for material distribution, assignment management, assessment, feedback, and grading.
https://ashland.blackboard.com

Web Advisor:
Web Advisor is the student and faculty avenue into the Datatel system. Students can register for classes, view financial award letters, check final grades, and review transcripts. Faculty can review class rosters, input grades, approve of advisee schedules, and access departmental budgets.
https://webadvisor.ashland.edu

AU Portal:
AU Portal is the new one-stop-shop for all internal Ashland University communication. By using this site AU students can access their email, calendar, and campus information all at one central location.
https://myau.ashland.edu

Housing Guide:
Find out more about residence life and check out Housing Guide:
www.ashland.edu/residence-life

Meal Plans
All students living on campus are required to have a meal plan. The meal plan consists of a number of swipes to be used in the school dining hall that serves breakfast, lunch, dinner, and Late Night Dining. Meal swipes can also be used in the Eagle’s Nest, Tuffy’s Smoothie Bar, Schar Cafe, Catering and Talons Concessions. One meal swipe is equivalent to $6.50 per transaction. Check out Student Dining for more information:
www.ashland.edu/student-dining

Culture shock:
It is a feeling of disorientation experienced by someone who is suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life, or set of attitudes. Ashland university provides FREE personal, social, academic and career counseling and related services to address a variety of student's needs which include the culture shock, to learn more visit:
www.ashland.edu/student-affairs/health-safety/psychological-counseling-services