Useful Information for students new to the United States

The Center for Multicultural Affairs

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American Culture

Introduction

Studying in another country is one of life's most enriching experiences. Throughout history, travelers have recognized the benefits of learning about different ways of thinking and living. Studying in a country and culture different from your own will enable you to look at the world from a new perspective. Nearly one million students come to the United States to study each year from countries around the world. Their presence in the United States gives them the opportunity to benefit from our system of education and allows them to contribute to U.S. understanding of the world community.

-NAFSA's International Student Handbook

Adjustment

After watching American films, TV, and talking with Americans in your country, you have probably formed some idea of life in the U.S. Some of what you have seen and heard is true, while some of it is probably distorted or just plain fiction. Your adjustment may not seem like a shock at all; you may just be uncomfortable at times, or
more tired than you would normally be. Regardless, most foreign students and faculty experience culture shock and most learn to accept the differences that they encounter. Remember though, that each person's experience is different, and part of the value of your experience abroad will be your own discovery of America and the American culture.

Common Symptoms of Culture Shock:

- Extreme homesickness
- Weariness of speaking English
- Desire to avoid social settings that seem threatening or unpleasant
- Lack of interest in studies
- Lack of motivation
- Physical complaints and sleep disturbances
- Loss of your sense of humor
- Constant yearning for familiar foods and spices
- Boredom or fatigue
- Hostility against the host culture
- Depression and feeling of helplessness
- Weight gain or loss
- Blaming others for your problems

Suggested Ways to Combat Culture Shock

- Get in touch with family and friends back home
- Get enough sleep and try to relax
- Involve yourself with college activities; interact with other students
- Connect with other international students
- Be physically active! Participate in sports or exercise
- Observe how others are acting in the same situation
- Describe the situation, what it means to you, and your response to it
- Ask local residents how they would have handled the situation and what it means in the host culture
- Plan how you might act in this or similar situations in the future
- Evaluate and test the new behavior, and see how well it works
- Decide how you can apply what you have learned the next time you find yourself in a similar situation

Throughout the period of cultural adaptation, find a way to make yourself feel better. Take good care of yourself, and take special notice of things you enjoy about living in the host culture. Being relaxed and keeping a good sense of humor will assist you in overcoming the culture shock.
American Customs and Courtesies

Time

To many Americans, precision is very important. Having an appointment with an American is like having a Swiss watch, which means "precision." Arriving late for class may result in lower grades or result in an absence. Be sure to arrive a few minutes early to your appointment. Call or e-mail if you will be coming late or will be unable to keep the appointment.

Friendships

In this mobile society, friendships may be transitory and are often established to meet personal needs in a particular situation. The casualness of friendship patterns in the U.S. allows people to move freely into new social groups. These groups usually form around work, shared interests, school, or places of residence. You may be greeted with considerable warmth initially, but find that this does not always continue. That is why the American form of friendship remains a question to many foreign students and faculty. As an outsider, it is up to you to introduce yourself. Most Americans usually welcome new people into their social groups as long as you show an interest in them.

Handshaking

The handshake is the most common form of non-verbal greeting used in the U.S. Americans shake hands when greeting friends, work associates, and before and after business meetings. The handshake is an acceptable gesture to either men or women, as it conveys greeting and professional recognition at business events. Unlike other cultures, there is no social restriction regarding men shaking hands with women, but it is always appropriate in formal social situations to wait until the woman offers her hand first.

Greetings

Americans often greet each other (or you) with phrases such as "How are you?", “How are you doing?”, “What’s up?”, or "Nice day, isn't it?" Usually, it's not a question at all, but rather a form of "Hello." A usual response to this question would be: "I'm fine, how are you?" You may not be "fine" at all, but this kind of greeting is a courtesy and is not intended to invite a lengthy
conversation. Do not be too concerned if they do not follow up the greeting with further conversation.

**Invitations**

If you accept an invitation to a person's home, it is important to keep the appointment. The host expects you to call or e-mail well ahead of time to cancel your appointment if you cannot make it. If you are not sure you can attend, it is probably better to decline. While you are not obliged to bring a gift if you are invited to dinner, a bottle of wine or flowers will always be appreciated. However, overnight guests usually bring an inexpensive gift. Before leaving, thank the host and hostess for accommodating you and compliment them for the meal or meals they have prepared for you. Complimenting is a fine gesture that Americans always appreciate.

**Tax**

Upon your purchase of goods and services (clothing, foods, books, etc.), you will notice that advertised price does not include a sales tax. The sales tax is added onto the price when you go to pay for your goods and services. Tax varies from city to city, but they are usually around 6-8 percent of the price listed on the sales tag. Some municipalities do not tax clothing purchases for single items costing less than $110.00 each.

**Tipping**

Customers reward workers' (such as waiters and waitresses, taxi drivers, airport and hotel porters) good service by tipping them. When service is particularly poor, some people consider it appropriate to limit the amount of a tip. Your waiter expects a tip of 15-20 percent of your bill while a taxi driver expects an additional 10-15 percent of the fare shown on the taxi's meter. A porter expects $1.00 for each bag he carries.

**Cleanliness and Body Odor**

Americans tend to choose products that will help them, their clothes, and homes smell like anything except their natural odors. Realize that your own culture's ideas about what smells good may be different from the American culture. For example, cooking odors can often be the most obvious and even offensive scents to most Americans. The smell of garlic on a person's breath could probably offend some Americans. Americans tend to bathe or shower daily and use deodorant and perfumes or cologne.

**Conclusion**

These are just a few tips for situations that you may encounter during your first few days here. International Student Orientation, offered during the early part of your stay, will provide you with additional information. Feel free to ask questions during the orientation sessions. College officials are here to help you make an easier transition into American collegiate life.
Immigration Policies and Procedures

Introduction

All students who are in the U.S. on non-immigrant visas are subject to an extensive and somewhat complex set of regulations mandated by the U.S. government. The following section of this Handbook discusses very briefly some of the major topics related to immigration regulations. Even though this is not a complete list of all immigration policies that apply to international students, the information contained in this section includes basic terminology and immigration policies, which all students must know while studying in the U.S.

Your Responsibilities as a Non-Immigrant International Student

Advisors are available to assist you and answer questions about your immigration status, but it is your responsibility to know and abide by the law in order to maintain valid legal status.

Important Terms

US Visa - A valid visa issued by the American Consulate in your country of origin stamped on a passport page.

I-94 Arrival/Departure Form: In order to check and see if you entered the U.S. in the correct visa category, or if you plan on working in the U.S., you will need this paperwork. The I-94 indicates how long you are authorized to stay in the U.S. You can obtain this form through the Registrar’s website. Please go to the Registrar’s website and click on the “International Students,” tab. Next, scroll down towards the bottom of the page under “Additional Forms,” and click on “I-94 Admission Number.” This will bring you to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection page where you will click on “get their I-94 number” that is highlighted in blue. This will then bring you to the I-94 section of the Customs and Border Protection website where you will click on “get most recent I-94” and hit “consent and continue.” Proceed to fill out the form, and when completed, print out the results.
**F-1 Students: SEVIS I-20 Form** - This form has to be presented by the student to the American Consulate in his/her country of origin in order to receive F-1 status. It consists of three pages. Page one has personal information, the school’s information, and financial information. Page two is a reporting page for employment, program changes, and travel. Page three is an information page. Every F-1 student should keep the SEVIS I-20 with his or her passport.

**J-1 Students: SEVIS DS-2019 Form** – This form has to be presented by the student to the American Consulate in his/her country of origin in order to receive J-1 status. This is a three-page document issued by your sponsoring organization that describes your purpose for entering the U.S., the expected duration of your program, and your sources of funding. Form DS-2019 permits you to apply for a J-1 visa stamp and request J-1 (Exchange Visitor) status upon entry to the U.S. Every J-1 student should keep the SEVIS DS-2019 with his or her passport. Please see the official website for a list of frequently asked questions about the J-1 Visas please see [http://j1visa.state.gov/basics/common-questions](http://j1visa.state.gov/basics/common-questions)

**F-1 Visa Policies**

*As a non-immigrant international student on an F-1 visa, you must:*

- Have a valid passport at all times.
- Either attend the school you were authorized to attend, or contact the Designated School Official (DSO) at the school on your I-20 and ask for a transfer to another school after entering the US.
- Be registered full-time for each academic semester as defined by the USCIS. For undergraduate students, this means registration for at least 12 credits per semester, and for graduate students, this means registration for at least 9 credits per semester. Only one online class per credit amount is allowed each semester.
- Maintain good academic standing and make progress towards completing your degree.
- Follow appropriate procedures if you transfer from one school to another or if you change from one educational level to another.
- File for a program extension in a timely manner (at least one month before the end date on your I-20) if you do not complete your program by the time estimated on your I-20.
- Limit on-campus employment or any authorized off-campus employment to a total of 20 hours per week during the academic semester (and up to 40 hours during breaks and vacation).
- Obtain proper authorization before engaging in any off-campus employment.
- Report promptly to the Registrar's office any change of address.

Students that are holding F-1 Visas are admitted to the U.S. for the duration of status ("D/S"), otherwise, defined as:

- The length of your stay while pursuing "full-time study" and making normal progress towards completing your degree. (In the event of a documented medical emergency, exceptions to full-time status may be made.)
- The time you may be working in "practical training" after you finished studies (if you are authorized and qualify); and
- A period of 60 days to leave the country upon completion of an academic program and if
you are planning to travel outside the U.S. (including going home), you must have your I-20 Form signed by the DSO in the Registrar's Office, Donnelly Hall. This affirms that you are eligible to continue as a student at Marist College when you return to the U.S.

**Please note:** If you have any questions regarding your F-1 status, please contact the DSO Registrar’s Office in Donnelly Hall.

**J-1 Visa Policies**

College and University students are eligible for the Exchange Visitor Program only if at any time during their college studies in the United States they meet one of the following four criteria:

1. They or their program are financed directly or indirectly by the U.S. Government, the student's home government or an international organization of which the United States is a member by treaty or statute;

2. The exchange program is carried out pursuant to an agreement between the U.S. Government and a foreign government (must attach a copy of the agreement to the application.)

3. The exchange program is carried out pursuant to a *written* agreement between: (must attach a copy of the agreement to the application or designate the Relevant Marist Exchange Program on your application.)
   a. An American and foreign educational institution
   b. An American educational institution and a foreign government
   c. A U.S. state or local government and a foreign government;

- or -

4. The exchange visitor student is supported substantially by funding other than personal or family funds.

[22 CFR § 62.23(c)]. Participants in this Program will enter the U.S. with a "J-1" visa, identified as "exchange student." A "non-degree" student is engaged full time in a prescribed course of study in a non-degree program of up to 24 months’ duration.

Please note that J-1 students must demonstrate minimum financial support according to their program specifications. Substantial funding from J programs must come from exchange agreements, the student's home university, scholarships, or other sources apart from personal or family funds.

The Department of State regulations require that all J-1 students and their dependents carry a comprehensive health plan for the duration of the program. J students at Marist are required to purchase insurance through the College to provide proper coverage under federal guidelines.

**Please note:** If you have any questions regarding your J-1 status, please contact the Responsible Officer (RO) located in the Marist International Programs office in the Hancock Center.
Employment Guide for International Students

F-1 Visa Students

Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible for campus employment. Please note that as an international student, you are only permitted to work on campus. Off-campus employment is prohibited. The only exception to this rule is if you are involved in an academic internship that is directly related to your field of study and is approved by the college. Students may work off-campus if they are involved in an Optional Practical Training (OPT) position or Curricular Practical Training (CPT) that is directly related to their field of study. It should be noted that competition for on-campus employment is keen and students may not always be able to procure work when they first arrive at Marist, nor even during their first semester. You must limit your work to no more than 20 hours per week while school is in session. You may work full-time on campus when school is not in session and during summer vacations.

J-1 Visa Students

The definition of “employment” is any type of work performed, or services provided in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, or for any other benefit. If you receive no pay or other compensation for the work performed, the activity is not defined as “employment”, but is considered to be volunteer work.

J-1 Students may apply for authorization for three kinds of employment:
   1) academic training related to the course of study,
   2) work related to academic funding or general campus employment, or
   3) off-campus employment authorization for unforeseen economic circumstances.
Each kind of employment has its own criteria and limits. Authorization must be obtained from the Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer for all types of employment. The exchange visitor is prohibited from engaging in unauthorized employment. Engaging in unauthorized employment is considered a violation of the regulations and subjects the exchange visitor to termination from the program.

Students can check the Student Financial Services website or visit the office in person. Students may call the Director of Student employment to make an appointment to discuss employment possibilities or to obtain a list of open positions on campus. Open positions are also posted online on FoxQuest, the Marist employment search engine.

**Director of Student Employment**  
Student Financial Services located in Donnelly Room 200  
(845)-575-3230

For more detailed information, please check the Student Financial Services website at [http://www.marist.edu/financialaid/studentemployment/international.html](http://www.marist.edu/financialaid/studentemployment/international.html)

When searching for a job of any kind, it is important to have a well-crafted resume. Guidance in preparing effective resumes is provided by professional staff members at the Center for Career Services. Career counselors there meet with students on an individual basis to provide instruction and advice on resume preparation and all aspects of career planning.

**Center for Career Services**  
Library 332  
(845)-575-3547

For information about Career Services, please check their website at [https://www.marist.edu/en_US/academic-resources/career-services](https://www.marist.edu/en_US/academic-resources/career-services)
Undergraduate Students

Marist College offers on-campus housing to international undergraduate students. Once accepted as an on-campus resident for your freshman year, you are guaranteed housing for that year. Housing fills up very quickly. We advise you to make reservations well in advance. For more information about on-campus housing, you may contact during regular office hours: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
You can read more about on-campus housing at: http://www.marist.edu/housing

Graduate Students

There is currently no graduate housing available on the Marist campus. All Graduate Students live off-campus, mostly in the vicinity of the Marist campus since Marist is only able to provide on-campus housing for undergraduates. Various local housing options are available to graduate students, including studio-type apartments, one-and two-bedroom apartments and many other shared housing options. The Marist College Office of Housing and Residential Life maintains an updated listing of apartments for rent in the area. The list can also be found at http://www.marist.edu/housing/offcampus.html and is updated regularly. The Poughkeepsie Journal, a local newspaper, is another good source for finding apartments, cars, etc.
http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/ You can buy the Poughkeepsie Journal at convenience stores and gas stations. Communication with current Marist graduate students via e-mail is another excellent way to check for availability of apartments. This information will also be made available upon request from the Office of Graduate Admissions or the Assistant Director for International Student Programs
Reminders for Apartment-Seekers

It is advisable when looking for a place to dwell that you make sure that the apartment is in good shape. Check it very carefully.

- Check the doors and windows to make sure that they can be locked for your safety and security. Open and close the doors and windows to ensure that they work properly.
- Make sure that appliances and lights are working properly. Check the stove, refrigerator, oven, microwave (if available), and dishwasher (if available) to see if they are clean and have no signs of problems. All apartments should have a stove and a refrigerator.
- Turn on the faucets to make sure they work easily to produce hot and cold water.
- Check the plumbing to see if there is any leakage.
- For those who have a car, parking is necessary. Ask the landlord if there is a place to park your vehicle in a driveway or garage. If you have to park on the street, be sure to pay attention to the signs regarding parking regulations.

Negotiating and Signing the Lease

Most apartment managers require a rental commitment, a written contract called a lease. Read the lease agreement carefully before signing. Make sure you like the apartment. The lease is usually for a one-year period, but sometimes this may be negotiable. The landlord expects you to pay rent on a monthly basis for the entire lease period, even if you move out on a date earlier than the end of the lease. Make sure that you have a written agreement with your landlord. If you make any verbal agreements with your landlord or are requesting repairs, write the request on the contracted lease. Make sure the landlord signs the written changes you have made. You must get a copy of the signed lease for your safety and security. If you see that the landlord is reluctant to put anything in writing, it is probably not a good idea to rent the apartment. Most landlords require one month’s rent and a security deposit at the time that the lease is signed.

Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation

If electricity and/or gas service are not included in your rent, you will need to contact the provider for this service. To request installation of gas or electric, you can fill out an application online found at: https://www.cenhud.com/workingwithus/newservicerequest Applications can be submitted online or mailed to:

Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation
284 South Ave.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Cable Television and Internet Service

Cable television and internet service is usually not included in your rent. Ask the landlord which company provides your cable service and contact the service provider for information on signing up for the service. Many of the same forms of identification that are needed for other utilities are also required for cable and internet service.

**Spectrum:** (844) 316-8554  
**Optimum:** (845) 296-3575  
**Verizon:** (800) 837-4966

Telephone Service

Cable TV, internet, and telephone services can all be bundled together with most companies. Separate landlines are available. Check with your landlord to see which service provider to contact if you wish to have a landline.

Hotel Accommodations

If you arrive prior to the orientation period or need a place to stay after orientation, you can check the Dutchess County Tourism website for accommodations at [http://www.dutchesstourism.com/all-accomodations.php](http://www.dutchesstourism.com/all-accomodations.php)

The hotels closest to Marist College are:

**Holiday Inn Express**  
2750 South Road (Route 9)  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
Tel: (845) 473-1151  
*Room Rate - Approximately $149 (plus tax) per night*  
(5-minute drive from Marist College)

**Courtyard by Marriott**  
2641 South Road (Route 9)  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
Tel: (845) 485-6336  
*Room Rate - Approximately $104 (plus tax) per night*  
(5-minute drive from Marist College)
Mail Service

The Marist College post office is located on the second level of the Student Center. The College mailroom (post office) services include sale of postage and stamps, weighing of packages and letters, and sale of certified mail with return receipts, and overnight mail delivery through Post Office Express. Mailboxes are available for full-time undergraduate students.

From Monday through Saturday, the U.S. Post Office delivers mail to the College and to private residences. If you use a campus mailbox, be sure to notify the College post office where to forward your mail before the school session ends, otherwise, the Marist College post office will automatically send it back to your original home address.

**College Post Office Service Counter Hours:**
- Monday to Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Sunday: Closed

**Mailbox Area Hours:**
- Monday to Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Sunday: 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The U.S. Postal Service picks up mail from the Marist College post office at 3:30 p.m. from Monday to Friday. The U.S. Postal Service does not pick up mail at Marist on
Saturday or Sunday.

There is no postage required for sending mail from one campus location to another. If you are sending mail to a student, you should write his/her name and MSC number on the envelope. If you are sending mail to a professor or a school official, you should write his/her name and department. On-campus mail is delivered during office hours Monday to Friday.

When filling out forms, or when having mail sent to them by friends and family, students often have questions about the proper format for addressing mail. If family members or friends in your home country have questions about how to address mail to you, below are examples of how mail should be addressed:

Sample Envelope for On-Campus Students:

Return Address Goes in this Area

Your Name

Marist College, MSC 12345 (College, Mailbox number)

3399 North Road (Campus number, Street name)

Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 (City, State, Zip Code)

U.S.A.

Sample Envelope for Off-Campus Students:

Return Address Goes in this Area

Your Name

123 Delafield Street, Apt. 3C (House number, Street Name, Apartment Number)

Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 (City, State, Zip)

U.S.A.

Telephones

Commuter students planning to acquire telephone service may contact AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, or other companies for landline telephone service connection. Many of the same companies also offer cell phone service. Cell phones may be purchased from a brick and mortar outlet or online. There are a number of prepaid services and cell phone plans with contracts for one year or more. Internet telephone services such as Vonage may offer an
economical alternative. Be aware that most telephone companies require identification including a social security number. When students first arrive, many get a calling card offered by one of several U.S. companies. Calling cards allow callers to save some money on the cost of phone calls. In addition, calling cards may be used to make phone calls at any phone, including pay phones, and charge the call to your phone card account. Most international students calling overseas use pre-paid calling cards because they offer cheaper calling rates especially when calling overseas and do not require a social security card. Pre-paid calling cards are sold in convenience stores, such as Walmart and Target, across the country and are also available in the Marist College Computer Store in the Rotunda.

http://attprepaidcard.amssupport.net/

**Long Distance and International Calling Card Dialing**

Dial 78 + 1 + toll free number - enter your PIN, and follow the instructions on the calling card. For students who live on-campus, each residence hall is equipped with telephones for free on-campus and local calling. If you find your residence hall is not equipped with a telephone, call the office of telecommunications at (845)575-3391. Marist College does not provide long distance telephone services.

**Electronic Mail**

In order to have access to the Marist computer system, you can go to their web page http://www.marist.edu/it/accountinfo.html to ask for an account number, or, if you are on campus, just go to the Help Desk in Donnelly Hall 258, or call (845) 575-4357 (HELP). You will need your Marist College ID number and your passport and be registered for classes to gain full access to the system. The network is available to all Marist College students, faculty, and staff. If you have a personal e-mail account already, you may have your Marist Mail forwarded to your personal account.

**Newspapers**

Newspapers from different countries can be accessed through the LexusNexus online database available to students by the James A. Cannavino Library at Marist.

**Television**

Cable reception is available to campus residents. If you live off campus and wish to have cable channels, you should contact the local cable provider. Your landlord will be able to furnish you with the name of the company that services your area. Cable stations provide a variety of programs in HD, including various news programs, which are an excellent source for international and headline news. If you are unable to get cable channels, national stations such as ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, CW, PBS and many others are still accessible. These television stations broadcast some international as well as national news (check your television program schedule).
Banking

Introduction

Most students use commercial or savings banks or credit unions to maintain checking, savings, and other accounts, and to transfer money to-and-from their accounts. When opening a bank account, make sure that you have at least two valid forms of identification, such as your passport and student ID card.

Banks offer different types of accounts with different service charges. There is two basic types of accounts: checking and savings accounts. With a checking account, you will be able to transfer money electronically for the amount of money you have on deposit at that bank or to write paper checks. Checking accounts are useful because personal paper checks are a convenient and safe way to use money when electronic transfers or cash are not possible or desirable. Once a month, most banks will provide you a statement of all your checking account activities. You are expected to balance the statement against your own records. If you write a paper check for an amount greater than the money that is held in your account, the check will be returned to the bank and you will be charged a fee by the bank (usually between $10 - $50).

Note: When you open your account, you will be given "starter" checks that do not have your name on them. Later, you will receive paper checks with your name and personal information on them. You will also be instructed on how to establish online access to your account.

Another way to access your money is with a debit card. These cards allow you to withdraw or deposit money to your bank account using an automatic teller machine (ATM) and allow you to make purchases at stores.
When opening an account consider the following:

- What is the minimum opening deposit?
- Is the bank an FDIC or FSLIC or NCUA member? If the bank is a member of one of these organizations your total accounts with the bank will be insured up to $250,000.
- Are there service charges, and how can they be avoided?
- Will there be a charge for every check you write? If so, how much?
- Is there a fee charged for every use of an ATM (Automated Teller Machine)? If so, how much?
- Can the bank accept wire transfers from a foreign bank, and vice versa?

With a savings account, you will not be able to write a check, but you will receive interest on the money you have deposited in the saving account. The interest you will get depends on the bank, the type of savings account you select, and the amount of money in that account. A typical setup for students will be to have about one-half of their money in a checking account, and the remaining half in savings, earning interest. When the checking account monies get low, users simply transfer money from savings. This way, most of the money is earning interest while waiting to be used.

**Financial Institutions Close to Marist**

**TEG (Federal Credit Union)**
(845) 452-7323  
(888) 834-8255 – Out of the area  
[www.tegfcu.com](http://www.tegfcu.com)

TEG is located across from Marist campus. TEG is a not-for-profit financial cooperative association that offers savings and checking accounts to its members. TEG also provides ATM cards. TEG offers competitive dividend rates on saving and investment accounts, competitive rates on loans, and is a NCUA member. For more information on how to become a member, call or visit their website listed above.

**Rhinebeck Bank**
(845) 471-4467  
[www.rhinebeckbank.com](http://www.rhinebeckbank.com)

Rhinebeck Bank is situated across from the Marist campus. It offers both savings and checking accounts. It is an FDIC member and also provides ATM cards. For further information about their banking products and services, call or visit their website listed above.
Financial Institutions in the Poughkeepsie Area (con’t)

A number of large international banks have branches in the Poughkeepsie area including Bank of America, Chase, and TD.

Automated Teller Machines (ATM)

ATM cards will enable you to withdraw money from ATMs that are located in most banks, shopping malls and grocery stores. However, if you withdraw money from a bank other than the one you belong to, there will often be a small transaction fee. Other services offered at ATMs include account balance inquiries and transfer of funds from one account to another. When using an ATM, be sure not to reveal your Personal Identification Number (PIN) to anyone. The bank will give you instructions on how to use the ATM card properly, including the security precautions to guard against theft.

There are ATM machines on the Marist Campus in Donnelly Hall, the Student Center Rotunda, McCann Athletic Center, and The Market Place. These machines are not affiliated with any bank. The fee per transaction is $1.00.

Most stores will allow debit card users to withdraw cash over the amount due for the items at the time of purchase so that shoppers can pay for their selections and receive cash back at the same time.

*Rite Aid Pharmacy allows cash back on purchases*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rite Aid Pharmacy</th>
<th>Hours of Operation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3350 North Rd</td>
<td>Sunday 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poughkeepsie NY, 12601</td>
<td>Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(845)-452-6153</td>
<td>Saturday 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Food

Several supermarkets and large shopping malls are located along Route 9 within a few miles of Marist College, both north and south. Food shopping is usually done in supermarkets such as Price Chopper or Stop & Shop, which are located on Route 9 (approximately 10 minutes driving time). These supermarkets often offer discount cards and coupons that will give you additional reductions on the regular price of some items.

Students who love to cook their own dishes may find imported spices and ingredients in ethnic stores throughout the area. Ask a fellow international student or check online for the addresses for ethnic markets.

Shopping Malls

The Poughkeepsie Galleria on Route 9, south of Marist College, features 150 stores, including major department stores and small stores that sell clothing, shoes, sporting goods, electronics, housewares, jewelry, etc. The mall also contains hair salons, a "fast-food" court in addition to separate restaurants, and a multiplex cinema.

The Shoppes at South Hills on Route 9, south of Marist College, and just south of the Galleria Mall, contains several specialty stores, furniture stores, and a cinema.

The Poughkeepsie Plaza, also on Route 9, has a number of medium and small specialty stores.
Across from the Campus

Across from the campus there are a home improvement warehouse store, a discount department store, a pharmacy, a fitness center, banks, a hair salon, a gasoline station, McDonalds, Starbucks, Applebee’s (featuring American food in a casual setting), a Chinese take-out restaurant, sandwich shops, a pizza shop, and several other restaurants and small businesses.

Campus Bookstore

You will find textbooks and reading materials, as well as a vast variety of school supplies at the campus bookstore located in the Rotunda. The campus bookstore hours are:

**Monday - Friday**  
**9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

There are extended hours during the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. The campus bookstore buys used textbooks, offering students 10% to 50% back on their books. The bookstore only buys used books if the text will still be used during the following semester and is in good condition.

The bookstore at Marist College is run by Barnes & Noble and sells mostly textbooks, but there is a larger Barnes & Noble Bookstore, along Route 9, south of Marist College, has a vast selection of fiction and non-fiction books as well as music CDs, magazines, and gifts.
Arriving by Air

There are three major airports in the New York City area: John F. Kennedy Airport (JFK) is located on Long Island about 12 miles (20km) from Manhattan. LaGuardia Airport is also located on Long Island, about 8 miles (15km) from New York City, and Newark Liberty International Airport is in New Jersey about 12 miles (20 km) across the Hudson River to the west of New York City. In addition, Stewart International Airport in Newburgh, Westchester County Airport in White Plains, and Albany Airport in Albany are all within a two-hour drive of Marist College.

New York Airport Shuttle Service  http://www.nycairporter.com/

This shuttle service brings people to and from both major airports in New York. The shuttle arrives and departs in front of Grand Central Train Station, where Metro-North trains depart to and arrive from Poughkeepsie. New York Airport Shuttles run to Grand Central Train Station from JFK and LaGuardia Airports between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. approximately every 15-30 minutes. Shuttles run seven days per week, 365 days per year. The bus stops are located directly outside the baggage claim area at both airports. Luggage will be loaded onto the bus by the driver. It is customary to give the driver a gratuity in addition to the fare if you have luggage. One to two dollars per bag is usually sufficient, depending on their size and weight. The fee is $18.00 from JFK and $16.00 from LaGuardia. The trip to Manhattan is approximately 50 - 70 minutes long. You may call (718)-777-5111 for additional information.
Coach USA Airport Express  www.olympiabus.com

Students arriving at Newark Liberty Airport (New Jersey) can also travel to Grand Central Railway Station via Coach USA Olympia Bus Service. It provides transportation every fifteen to thirty minutes between Newark Liberty Airport and Manhattan -365 days a year. Buses run from 4:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m. The fare is $17.00 from Newark Liberty Airport to Grand Central Station. Note: When checking the website, Newark Liberty Airport is listed as being in New York State. Call Newark Liberty Airport Express Bus toll free at 1(877) 8-NEWARK.

TAXI transportation:
The most convenient way to get to Marist is to use a taxi or car service to drive you from JFK to Marist College. Make arrangements so you know exactly where to meet your taxi driver at JFK. Your cell phone may not work in the United States, so you will need to know where to meet ahead of time.

If you coordinate your arrival with other students who are coming to Marist on the same day, you can divide the cost, which ranges from $200 to $300, making it more affordable. Check with your taxi provider about current rates. Ask if there are extra charges for toll or tips. A standard tip for a taxi ride is 15% of the total fare.

Driving Directions to Marist College  http://www.marist.edu/about/directions.html

From New York City Area:
Take Route 87 (NY State Thruway) North to exit 18. Go East on Route 299 to Route 9-W. Make a right on Route 9-W (south) to the Mid-Hudson Bridge. Cross the bridge and take the first exit to Route 9 North. Drive approximately two miles, Marist College is on the left. Use the first entrance to the College at the traffic light.

Another way of reaching Marist College:
Take Route 684 North to Interstate 84. Go East on 84 to exit 13. Take Route 9 North approximately 14 miles. Marist College is on the left.

Metro-North Train - http://www.mta.info/mnr

From Grand Central Train Station on 42nd Street in Manhattan, you can ride Metro North Railroad to Poughkeepsie. In the main lobby of Grand Central Terminal, you may purchase a ticket to Poughkeepsie on the Hudson River Rail Line. The Hudson River Rail Line runs on the east side of the Hudson River. The price for a one-way ticket is approximately $25.00. Once in Poughkeepsie, you may take a taxi (cost: approximately $5.00) for the short ride to Marist College, Donnelly Hall. Call (800) METRO-INFO for more information about the train.
Amtrak - www.amtrak.com

Amtrak trains depart from Pennsylvania Station located between 7th and 8th Avenues on 34th Street in Manhattan. The trip to Poughkeepsie takes approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. The fare is approximately $27.00 - $66.00 one-way. Call Amtrak's toll free number 1 (800) USA-RAIL for more information.

City of Poughkeepsie Transit System and Loop Bus

City of Poughkeepsie Transit

http://www.cityofpoughkeepsie.com/departments/dpw/busservice

The City of Poughkeepsie Transit System provides public transportation around the city of Poughkeepsie. The City of Poughkeepsie "Hospital" bus is the one that passes Marist College. You may obtain a list of the City of Poughkeepsie Transit System schedules and stops by asking the driver inside the bus. Otherwise, you may call the City of Poughkeepsie Transit System at (845) 451-4118 for more information. The fare is $1.75 with a $.30 charge for transfers. The City of Poughkeepsie offers very limited service and its last run of the day is at 5:30 pm.

Loop Bus

http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/countygov/departments/masstransit/plloopbus.http
The Loop Bus offers a more expanded route throughout Dutchess County. The LOOP information telephone line is (845) 473-8424. The bus will run daily Monday through Saturday with the earliest pick-up at 8:04 AM and the latest drop off at 10:47 PM. Inquiries can also be sent via e-mail to loopbus@co.dutchess.ny.us. If you present, your Marist I.D. you may ride for free. Please note that the last Loop Bus of the day runs until approximately 10:00 p.m.

**Automobiles**

Some of the students who live off-campus choose to purchase a car during their stay at Marist College. Many of these students buy pre-owned cars from dealerships or from a private person. Sometimes, graduating students sell their cars. Local car dealerships and internet sites are the best sources to search for pre-owned cars.

When buying a car, consider these additional *required* expenses:

a. insurance (this is usually calculated at the highest rate for drivers in their teens and early twenties)
b. state automobile registration
c. maintenance to keep the car safe and roadworthy
d. annual New York State automobile inspection
e. gasoline and oil

**Bicycles**

In good weather, bicycling can be another efficient way to get to and around Marist College. Many campus buildings have bicycle racks outside for parking your bike. It is wise to purchase a high-quality lock to keep it secure when it is left unattended. If you decide to ride a bike, be sure to wear a helmet for safety and obey all traffic laws.
Obtaining Identification Cards

The official mascot of Marist College is the red fox.

Marist College ID Card

A Marist College ID card serves as your official campus identification. Students are required to present it at the library to check out materials and at the McCann Recreation Center in order to use the facilities. It can also be used as a declining balance card at various locations both on and off campus. It permits entry to secured areas on campus as well. Marist students may obtain the ID card at the Marist Card Office in Donnelly Room 241 once they are registered for classes.

Social Security Number

Prior to applying for a social security card, students must have a job offer from a campus employer, a letter from that employer, and a letter from the Marist College DSO. Detailed information about the entire process can be found on the Student Financial Services website at http://www.marist.edu/financialaid/studentemployment/pdfs/employmentguideinternationalstudents.pdf

Once all necessary documentation is obtained, students may proceed to:

Social Security Office

332 Main St
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
(877) 405-674

Hours of Operation:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Wednesday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
*Office is closed on Saturday, Sunday, and national holidays*

https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/ic001.do#officeResults
When you go to the Social Security Office to apply for the card, you must bring:
  • Valid Passport
  • I-20 Form
  • Marist College ID Card
  • I-94 (white card attached to your passport)
  • Letters from campus employer and DSO

The card usually arrives within two weeks. You may then proceed to the Marist College Payroll Office in Donnelly Hall to fill out the requisite forms and begin work.

**Driver's License**

Individuals are sometimes asked to provide identification when conducting banking business, when filing official forms and applications, and when traveling. The most common form of identification requested in the United States is the driver’s license. This is one reason why some international students may wish to get a New York State license.

All drivers need to be licensed to operate motor vehicles in the United States. International driver’s permits and licenses from other countries are recognized by New York State. As a full-time student, you are not considered a legal resident of New York State and are not required to get a New York State driver’s license in order to drive here. A valid driver’s license from your home country, coupled with an international driver’s permit, are legally sufficient. However, if you wish, you may obtain a New York State driver’s license. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) issues New York State driver’s licenses. You will need to take a written test, a five-hour driving class, and a road test in order to procure a New York State driver’s license. For further information about rules for international drivers go to:

**The Department of Motor Vehicles**
(518) 486-9786
[http://www.dmv.ny.gov/license.htm](http://www.dmv.ny.gov/license.htm)

There are a number of acceptable proofs of ID required by the DMV before they will issue a driver's license. Some of these documents include:

• Passport
• Marist College ID Card
• Credit Cards (VISA, MasterCard, etc.)
• ATM Card
• I-20 Form
• Social Security Card (or a verification letter from the DSO)
• Utility bill showing local address
• Health insurance card
• Pay stub from local employer
Safety and Security

Marist College provides seven-day, twelve month, around-the-clock campus security for its students. The Town of Poughkeepsie is a quiet place, not nearly as chaotic as larger cities in the U.S. However, while it is generally a safe place to work and study, you still need to use caution.

Protecting Yourself from Crime

Marist College is committed to protecting its students in every possible way. The following suggestions will make your stay in the United States safer and more secure:

Safety Tips

• Look around and be aware of your surroundings.
• Keep away from dark streets. Use approved taxis when traveling in the area at night.
• Try not to walk alone, particularly at night. Ask a friend to accompany you.
• During the evening, you may use the Office of Security's escort service (S.N.A.P) to walk to and from buildings and parking lots on campus. S.N.A.P. may be contacted by calling (845) 575-7627.
• Always look behind you. If you think someone is following you, walk faster, and move toward a place where there are people.
• Be cautious with your purse and/or bag. Hold them tightly.
• If you need assistance on campus, you can call the Office of Safety and Security in Donnelly Room 201, at ext. 2282, or for emergencies at ext. 5555.
• Report any incident on campus immediately by calling the Security Office, (845) 575-2282, or ext.2282 from a campus phone, or (845) 471-1822 (evening phone),
• Blue phones are provided throughout campus. If you feel uncomfortable, use the blue light phone to contact Security.

For off-campus emergencies, call 911.

At Home

• Make sure you lock all doors and windows.
• Get to know your neighbors.
• Don't provide personal information over the phone.
• Don't take out garbage alone at night.

Driving

• Lock the car doors.
• Park and walk in areas that are well-lit.
• Never give rides to strangers.

Personal Belongings

• Don't leave your books or bags unattended.
• Leave valuable belongings locked in the trunk of your car, not on the seat or in plain view.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Police:
City of Poughkeepsie (845) 451-4000
Town of Poughkeepsie (845) 485-3666

For serious situations or life threatening injuries or other emergencies, dial 911

Marist College Office of Safety and Security: (845) 575-2282 – on-campus
(845) 471-1822 – off-campus
ext. 5555 - on campus emergencies

Fire Department: (845) 451-4081

Hospitals:
Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital (845) 483-5000
Vassar Brothers Medical Center (845) 454-8500
Parking on Campus

Driving a vehicle to the campus will make it necessary to find a place to park on a daily basis. Vehicle registration and a valid parking permit are required for all faculty, staff, and students - including resident, commuter, adult education, and graduate students.

To obtain a Marist College parking permit, go to https://www.marist.edu/security/parking and fill out the required form. You can check the status of your permit online. Once it has been processed, you may go to the Security Office in Donnelly Hall Room 201 to pick up the sticker.

To receive your permit, you must bring the following with you to the Security Office:

• Your Marist ID card
• A copy of your driver's license
• A copy of the vehicle registration
• License plate number

If you have questions about parking, you may contact the Security Office at (845) 471-1822 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Freshman resident students are not permitted to have a car on campus unless they are commuter students. All commuter students will be issued a commuter parking pass valid for the whole school year. This parking pass is valid for either one of the two commuter parking lots, Beck Place or McCann. Commuter student parking is not permitted in any other lot. Upper class resident students who have a parking permit are allowed to park only in the specified number lot. Parking is legal only in the lot to which the car is assigned.

Leisure Time and Recreation
You might have heard the saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." But what are the Romans doing? Or rather, what are the Americans doing? A good social life is important to a student's success. Recreation, diversion, and friends contribute to a balanced life. The Office of College Activities at Marist offers dozens of social, athletic, educational, and entertainment events each week. In addition to the many activities offered at Marist, the Hudson River Valley is rich with history and entertainment. Below is a list of local museums, historical sites, restaurants, and entertainment for your leisure time, your recreation and diversion.

**Museums and Historical Sites in the Dutchess County Area**

**Franklin D. Roosevelt Home, Library and Museum**
(800) FDR-VISIT
[http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu](http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu)

This is the lifelong home of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, including gravesite and Rose Garden Area. The Library and Museum contain extensive displays on the lives and careers of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt and exciting interactive exhibits. The grounds are open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. If you purchase an admission ticket to either the home or to the library and museum, you can go to the other one for free.
Located on Route 9 in Hyde Park, New York.

**Eleanor Roosevelt Historic Site at Val-kill**
(845) 229-9115
[https://www.nps.gov/elro/planyourvisit/basicinfo.htm](https://www.nps.gov/elro/planyourvisit/basicinfo.htm)

The modest home of Eleanor Roosevelt after the death of her husband in 1945 once served as a small workshop to create furniture and other small handicrafts. It was built to allow farmers who fell on hard economic times to earn another source of income. Open every day from sunrise to sunset and within walking distance of Franklin D. Roosevelt Home, Library and Museum.
Located on Route 9 in Hyde Park, New York.
The Vanderbilt Mansion
(845) 229-7770
https://www.nps.gov/vama/index.htm

The home of Frederick and Louise Vanderbilt, built between 1896 and 1898, representative of the "Gilded Age" is a great place to relax and enjoy a spectacular view of the Hudson River. Open every day from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Located on Route 9 in Hyde Park, New York.

Montgomery Place
http://www.hudsonvalley.org/historic-sites/montgomery-place

The 434-acre Livingston family estate with restored 23-room mansion and gardens, waterfall, walking trails, special events, views of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains is open every day except Tuesday in Apr.-Oct. and open weekends during Nov. and Dec. Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with tours conducted every 45-min. (closed Jan., February and March).
Located in River Road, Route 103, Annandale-On-Hudson, New York

Samuel F.B. Morse Historic Site-Locust Grove
(845) 454-4500
http://www.lgny.org/

The home of Samuel F.B. Morse, designed by A.J. Davis, this museum includes an extensive furniture collection, china, art, telegraph exhibits, gardens, and a nature walk, picnic facilities and woodland hiking trails. Open daily May through October 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Last tour starts at 3:15 p.m. Also open daily during November and December, and March and April or by appointment.
Located along South Road, Route 9, Poughkeepsie, New York

Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome Museum
9 Norton Road, Redhook, New York
(845) 752-3200
http://www.oldrhinebeck.org

Antique aircraft and automobiles are on display. Open May 15-Oct. 31, 7 days, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Weekend air shows, mid-June thru mid-Oct. 2:00 p.m. Open cockpit bi-plane rides begin at 10:00 a.m.

Restaurants

There are a number of American and ethnic restaurants in the general Poughkeepsie area, including the Culinary Institute of America, the nation's premiere cooking school.

Culinary Institute of America
433 Albany Post Road, Route 9, Hyde Park, New York
American, Italian, and French Restaurants, as well as casual Luncheon Restaurants.

**Entertainment**

There are numerous multiplex movie theaters in the area, as well as several venues for live stage performances. New York City, less than a two-hour train ride away, offers a wealth of entertainment opportunities.

**The Bardavon 1869 Opera House**
(845) 473-2072
http://www.upac.org

The Bardavon is the oldest Opera House in New York State. It hosts local, national, and international artists in opera, music, theater, dance, children's programs and films. Located on Market Street in Poughkeepsie, New York.

**The Mid-Hudson Civic Center**
(845) 454-5800
http://www.midhudsonciviccenter.com

Multi-purpose recreation/entertainment/convention center offering ice skating and programs ranging from pop and rock concerts to consumer and trade shows and cultural events. The ice skating facility is open from September to March and is home ice for the Marist hockey club. Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie, New York.

**Cuneen-Hackett Cultural Center**
(845) 486-4571
http://cunneen-hackett.org/

The former Vassar Institute where prominent American figures in the late 19th century spoke or performed are restored Victorian buildings at both locations. A theater and offices for theater related arts groups are housed at #12; art gallery and Victorian parlors at #9 promotes local artists and art groups. Administrative offices within, open Mon.-Fri., From 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Theater offerings, art exhibits, etc. are advertised locally through various "arts" calendars. 9 and 12 Vassar Street, Poughkeepsie, New York.

**The Barrett House-Dutchess County Art Association**
(845) 471-2550
http://www.barrettartcenter.org
Maintains art galleries that are changed every four to six weeks. Art classes are also offered. Opened Wed.-Fri. from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Located on Noxon Street, Poughkeepsie, New York

The Chance
6 Crannell Street, Poughkeepsie, New York
(845) 471-1966
http://www.thechancetheater.com

A variety of musical sounds: country, rock and roll, metal, R&B, blues, etc., local and national acts. Admission varies. Dancing Thursday nights.

Recreation

Walkway over the Hudson
http://www.walkway.org/

Just south of Marist College is a scenic pedestrian bridge (previously a railroad bridge) over the Hudson River connecting Poughkeepsie with Highland, New York on the opposite bank. It is a New York State Park open to the public for walking, jogging, biking and rollerblading. From the bridge, visitors can see for miles up and down the spectacular Hudson Valley.

Golf

McCann Memorial Golf Course: 18-hole championship course, driving range, putting
greens, pro shop, golf lessons.  
Located on Wilbur Boulevard, Poughkeepsie. Tel: (845) 471-3917

Other Golf courses:
• College Hill in Poughkeepsie (845) 486-9112
• Vassar in Poughkeepsie (845) 473-9838
• Beekman Country Club in Hopewell Junction (845) 226-7700
• Dinsmore in Staatsburg (845) 889-4082
• James Baird State Park in LaGrange (845) 452-1489

Bowling

For bowling lovers, you may play games at:
Spins Bowl Bowling Center
47 Taft Avenue in Poughkeepsie (845) 471-1820

Spins Bowl Wappingers
On Route 9 in Wappingers Falls (845) 297-8110

Fishing

Some favorite spots are the Wappingers Falls Lake for largemouth bass and the Fishkill Creek for trout. The Hudson River has numerous species among which may be found: American shad, largemouth and smallmouth bass, striped bass, brown bullhead, carp, and white catfish.
Fishing licenses are required in New York State. They may be acquired at any sporting goods or bait and tackle shop. In the state of New York, a fishing license is required to participate in this activity. **Note: Eating fish caught in the Hudson River is not recommended.**

Tennis, hiking, camping, boating and many other activities are plentiful in Dutchess County and the surrounding area. See Dutchess County Tourism at [http://www.dutchesstourism.com/](http://www.dutchesstourism.com/) for information about these activities as well as for information about seasonal festivals and events, and detailed information about a variety of things available to see and do in Dutchess County.
For information about Marist College please see http://www.marist.edu