# Exchange Fact Sheet
## Academic Year 2024-2025

George Mason University
Global Education Office
Johnson Center 235
4400 University Drive, MS 2B8
Fairfax, VA 22031 USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contacts and Dates</th>
<th>Application Information</th>
<th>Visa Information</th>
<th>Academics</th>
<th>Housing &amp; Meal Plans</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>+1-703-993-2154</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>+1-703-993-2153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gmu.edu">www.gmu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.studyabroad.gmu.edu">www.studyabroad.gmu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exchange Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.studyabroad.gmu.edu/exchange">www.studyabroad.gmu.edu/exchange</a></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Contacts

**INCOMING EXCHANGE**
inbound@gmu.edu
+1-703-993-2154

Chris Hicks
chicks21@gmu.edu

**OUTGOING EXCHANGE**
intlex@gmu.edu
+1-703-993-2154

Martha Sadler
msadler6@gmu.edu

Chris Hicks
chicks21@gmu.edu

**Krista Uhrig**
Director of Enrollment Partnerships and Exchanges
kuhrig@gmu.edu

## Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION CYCLE</th>
<th>FALL 2024 (and Academic Year 2024-2025)</th>
<th>Spring 2025 (and Calendar Year 2024-2025)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications &amp; Nominations Open</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>September 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOMINATION DEADLINE</td>
<td>MARCH 15</td>
<td>OCTOBER 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Offering Finalized</td>
<td>Mid March</td>
<td>Mid October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPLICATION DEADLINE</td>
<td>APRIL 1</td>
<td>OCTOBER 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate Timeline for Acceptances</td>
<td>Early May</td>
<td>Early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Housing Application Begins</td>
<td>Upon Acceptance</td>
<td>Upon Acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Registration Begins</td>
<td>Mid-May</td>
<td>Mid-November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Arrival Date</td>
<td>August 21</td>
<td>*January 10 (TENTATIVE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANDATORY ORIENTATION (In-Person)</td>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>*January 11 (TENTATIVE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Day of Classes</td>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>January 21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day to Add/Change classes</td>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>January 28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day to Drop classes</td>
<td>September 9</td>
<td>February 4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day of Classes</td>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>May 5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam Period</td>
<td>December 11-18</td>
<td>May 7-14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departure (if living in on-campus housing)</td>
<td>*5pm on last day of exam period</td>
<td>*5pm on last day of exams</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Dates are estimated. The Office of the University Registrar maintains academic calendar at registrar.gmu.edu/calendars.
ELIGIBILITY

Students must attend a current partner university and be nominated by their home institution for the exchange program.

**Academic Requirements**

- **Undergraduate:** 2.5 GPA minimum (on a 4.0 scale).
  Students should have completed at least ONE (1) YEAR of study at the bachelor level by the time of arrival.

- **Graduate:** 3.0 GPA minimum (on a 4.0 scale).
  Students should have completed at least ONE (1) SEMESTER of study at the master/postgraduate level by the time of arrival.

**English Language Proficiency Requirements**
*See table below

**Financial Requirements**

During the application process, students must also show sufficient funding of their program in order to apply for a J-1 Student Exchange Visa (non-U.S. Citizens only).

For more information, including minimum USD amounts required and acceptable documentation, please see the Incoming Exchange Website (StudyAbroad.gmu.edu/exchange)

NOMINATION

Students must be nominated by their home institution by nomination deadline using student’s full legal name on passport

- **Online Exchange Nomination Form** (Password to access form sent separately via e-mail)
- Official Transcripts can also be sent along with nominations (transcripts forwarded by student are considered unofficial)
- GEO will contact nominated students with a link to the Incoming Exchange Application portal (MasonAbroad)

APPLICATION

- **ONLINE APPLICATION**
- **OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT** (in English)
  - MUST be sent by the home institution directly to Mason/GEO (May be sent via e-mail by mobility coordinator)
- **COLOR COPY OF VALID PASSPORT**
  - Passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond program END date
- **FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION** (non-U.S. citizens only)
  - Certificate of Financial Responsibility
  - Proof of Funding documentation
  - See “VISA” section below and Incoming Exchange Website for full financial requirements
- **OFFICIAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAM SCORES** (non-U.S. citizens only) – ALL SCORES <2 YEARS OLD
  - **TOEFL:** Official test scores must be sent electronically using Mason’s school code (5827)
  - **IELTS:** Official test scores must be sent directly to Mason by testing center
  - **DUOLINGO:** Official test scores must be sent electronically to Mason from Duolingo portal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Language Proficiency Minimum Score Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOEFL</strong> Internet-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IELTS</strong> Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DUOLINGO</strong> Academic</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Non-U.S. citizens are required to obtain a J-1 visa (students with U.S. citizenship must travel on their U.S. passport). In order to apply for a J-1 Visa, students must first receive a DS-2019 Form from Mason (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status). This form is issued AFTER students have been accepted into the exchange program.

Students entering the U.S. on J-1 visas are Exchange Visitor Students in the BridgeUSA program.

REQUIRED AT APPLICATION (See Application Section Above)

1. **Passport:** Must be valid for six (6) months beyond the end date of the exchange program
2. **Certificate of Financial Responsibility** (available on MasonAbroad application portal)
3. **Proof of Funding Documents**
   - See the Office of International Programs and Services website for acceptable Proof of Funding DOCUMENTATION
   - See Incoming Exchange Website for MINIMUM AMOUNTS required

UPON ACCEPTANCE

1. **Welcome Packet**
   - Mason will provide an electronic Welcome Packet on student’s MasonAbroad application portal
   - The Welcome Packet includes the DS-2019 form and exchange program acceptance letter
2. **Pre-Arrival Guide**
   - Mason’s J-1 Visa Compliance Officer, Christine Bodziak (cbodziak@gmu.edu) with the Office of International Programs and Services will contact accepted students and provide a pre-arrival visa guide that explains the visa process and other important information regarding J-1 regulations
3. **Student Visa Application and Appointment**
   - Once students have their physical Welcome Packet, students will need to apply for their J-1 Exchange Visa

DURING EXCHANGE PROGRAM

1. **Full-time Enrollment & Attendance:** Students are **required** to enroll full-time and **attend and participate** in classes
   - **Full Time Enrollment:** 12 credits minimum for undergraduate students; 9 credits for graduate students
2. **In-Person Requirement:** Current government guidance in effect through **June 2024** does not allow for exchange students to have the majority of their credits be fully online. Hybrid courses that meet for at least 60% in-person may be counted as an in-person course.
   - **Online Classes:** J-1 students to have only one 3 credit fully online or hybrid course as part of their full-time enrollment requirement. Once a student meets the minimum enrollment requirement (12 credits for undergraduates and 9 credits for graduate students) they may enroll in additional hybrid or online courses.
   - **NOTE:** There is always the possibility that updated guidance will be issued that reverts to the pre-pandemic requirement of not allowing exchange students to have any fully online classes count towards their full-time enrollment requirement.

***VISA INFORMATION***

We welcome exchange coordinators to review the current Pre-Arrival Guide

https://oips.gmu.edu/j-1-students/

(Scroll down to “GEO Exchange Program Information”)
ACADEMICS & COURSES

COLLEGES & SCHOOLS AT MASON

George Mason University is divided into ten schools or colleges (See Colleges & Schools)

- Antonin Scalia Law School (*Unavailable for exchange)
- Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution
- College of Education and Human Development
- College of Engineering & Computing
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- College of Public Health
- College of Science
- College of Visual and Performing Arts
- Schar School of Policy and Government
- Costello College of Business

COURSE OFFERING

There are two ways students can search for potential classes: the University Catalog and the Schedule of Classes

University Catalog

Students can search the online catalog to view all courses offered at Mason regardless of term.

Schedule of Classes

Students can search the Schedule of Classes to see courses offered in a specific term (i.e. Fall 2024)

*FALL SEMESTER class schedule is finalized and published online in MARCH
*SPRING SEMESTER class schedule is finalized and published online in OCTOBER
*Classes are generally offered in the same semester (i.e. a class offered last year fall semester is likely to be offered again in the fall)

REstrictions & Limitations

Restrictions: The following subjects/areas are unavailable to exchange students:

- Undergraduate Nursing courses
- J.D. courses offered at the Antonin Scalia Law School
- Honor (HNRS) coursework
- Thesis/capstone courses (reserved for Mason degree-seeking students)
- BMGT courses in the Master of Science in Management Program

Limitations: The following subjects are open to exchange students but may have limited availability due to demand:

- Courses in the College of Engineering & Computing (Specifically undergraduate IT & Computer Science)
- Courses in the School of Business

*Academic Prerequisites*: Individual courses may also have required prerequisites (courses that must be completed prior to taking a more advanced course). Students must show they meet through a Course Override Request process on the MasonAbroad application. NOTE: The University Catalog shows each course’s prerequisites catalog.gmu.edu/

Important Registration Note

**Registration is not guaranteed. All students should be prepared to find alternative courses/subjects**

- Courses may not be offered the term being attended, may get cancelled, or spots may fill up, or prerequisites may not be met.
- As well, the course override approval process can take some time and in the waiting period courses may fill up.
- Therefore, students should ensure they have plenty of alternative courses.
- We are unable to reserve spaces for exchange students or require departments to add spaces for exchange students.

Registration Process

- Registration will open in mid-May (Fall semester) and mid-November (Spring semester) AFTER acceptance
- Students register themselves online after they have set up their PatriotPass/Mason student email.
- Students can ADD or DROP classes generally through the first week of each semester.
- Required Course Load per Semester: 12 – 15 credit hours (undergraduate) / 9 credit hours (graduate)*

*Note Regarding Changes during Covid-19 Pandemic:

- Prior to Covid-19, exchange students were required to take a minimum of 12 credits (Undergraduate) or 9 credits (graduate) of coursework fully in-person or hybrid.
- For the current 2023-2024 academic year, undergraduate students must have at least 9 of 12 credits in person with 3 credits able to be online. U.S. government guidance may change prior to 2024-2025 academic year.
Housing Application

Students apply for housing AFTER they have been accepted into the Exchange program. Students will use their Mason NetID to log into the housing application portal. Further instructions will be on students’ MasonAbroad application portal. After submitting the housing application, students will receive a housing selection date and time.

It is very important that students select their housing on their assigned date and time. Students who do not select housing during their assigned time will go to the end of the list and may no longer be guaranteed housing.

Please see Housing Important Dates for accommodation start/end dates. Typically, students must move out of their residences the day after final exams.

Yearlong students staying on-campus over Winter Break must apply for additional housing AND pay additional housing fees.

Undergraduate Students

While not guaranteed, Mason is able to accommodate most undergraduate exchange students on-campus as long as housing applications are submitted in a timely manner upon acceptance into the exchange program.

Students are generally placed in double occupancy bedrooms in on-campus student residences. Please note single occupancy rooms are limited and subject to availability with preference given to those requiring disability accommodations. Mason offers two types of accommodations for undergraduate exchange students – suites and apartment style:

- **Suites**: Consist of either a single, double, or triple room with a shared bathroom (a maximum of six residents will share a bathroom). A handful of suites have kitchenettes (sink, microwave, small refrigerator). Each student will receive a bed, chair, desk, dresser, and closet (free Wi-Fi and cable). Those living in suites must buy a meal plan.

  - Suite-buildings include:
    - Eastern Shore*
    - Mason Global Center
    - Piedmont / Tidewater / Blue Ridge / Sandbridge
    - Hampton Roads*
    - Whitetop*

- **Apartments**: Consist of fully furnished unit with full kitchen, dining area, living room, and a combination of single or double rooms with at least one bathroom (maximum of six students per apartment). Each student will receive a bed, chair, desk, dresser, and closet (free Wi-Fi and cable). Those living in apartments can choose to buy a voluntary meal plan, but it's not required.

  - Apartment-style buildings include:
    - Liberty Square*
    - Potomac Heights*
    - Student Apartments*
    - Northern Neck*
    - Rogers*
    - Townhouses*

  *Single occupancy dormitories are rarely available and are primarily reserved for students with disabilities.

  *Students studying abroad for the academic year who wish to spend any part of winter break at Mason should live in one of these dorms.

- **Off-campus Housing**: Students should utilize the services offered by Mason’s Off-Campus Housing Service.

Graduate Students

Graduate student accommodations on campus are extremely limited and preference is given to those requiring disability accommodations. Most graduate students live off-campus.

- **Graduate Housing**: Please note the Main Campus (Fairfax, VA) has only Townhouses or the Angel Cabrera Global Center (ACGC). Beacon Hall is located on Mason’s SciTech Campus located in Prince William, VA. Connected by a campus shuttle that takes approximately 45 minutes to over 1 hour depending on traffic.

- **Off-Campus Housing**: Students should utilize the services offered by Mason’s Off-Campus Housing Service.
## ESTIMATED EXPENSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition/Course fees</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>Exchange students do NOT pay tuition/course fees to Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Housing (Paid to Mason)</td>
<td>$3,640 - $4,900</td>
<td>Per semester (triple occupancy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$3,640 - $5,510</td>
<td>Per semester (double occupancy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$5,785 - $6,890</td>
<td>Per semester (single occupancy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory Health Insurance (Paid to Mason)</td>
<td>$1,261 (Fall)</td>
<td>Health insurance is mandatory for visitors on a J-1 visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$2,063 (Spring/summer)</td>
<td><em>NOTE THE HIGHER INSURANCE COST FOR SPRING STUDENTS</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meal Plan (Paid to Mason)</td>
<td>Starts at $2,715</td>
<td>Per semester meal plan in housing without full kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Bonus Funds*</td>
<td>• (Independence or Liberty Meal Plans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Starts at $265</td>
<td>Per semester meal plan in housing with full kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Bonus funds *</td>
<td>• (Independence, Liberty, Freedom, or Patriot Meal Plans)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,600 - $2,800*</td>
<td>Per semester for living off campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Transportation Costs</td>
<td>$1,134</td>
<td>Students living on-campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$2,368</td>
<td>Students living off-campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transportation</td>
<td>Free with Mason ID</td>
<td>Campus shuttle and local CUE bus (around Fairfax)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$4 - $6 / one-way</td>
<td>Metro train to Washington, DC (Requires SmartTrip Card)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEVIS Fee (Form I-901)</td>
<td>$220</td>
<td>Paid to the U.S. Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonimmigrant Visa Application Fee (Form DS-160) •</td>
<td>Minimum of $160 (varies by country)</td>
<td>Paid to U.S. Consulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Expenses</td>
<td>$2,302</td>
<td>Per semester for students living on-campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$5,194</td>
<td>Per semester for students living off-campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and Supplies</td>
<td>$1,314</td>
<td>Per semester (books can be bought used or rented for less)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Costs are estimated based on Academic Year 2023-2024 rates.

- Health insurance is mandatory for visitors on a J-1 visa.
- More details are available on the [Student Health Services website](https://masonhealth.sodexomyway.com).
- Fee(s) subject to change. For non-U.S. citizens on a J-1 visa only.

## POST-PROGRAM TRANSCRIPTS

At the completion of the semester, each student will receive ONE (1) transcript free of charge and sent to the home institution. Transcripts will be sent digitally unless physical copies are requested by the home institution.

- Students can order additional transcripts for a fee through the Office of the Registrar [online](https://www.gsu.edu/registrar/transcripts/).
- Post-Program Transcripts will be sent in late-January (Fall students) and late-June (Spring students)
- **NOTE**: If a “hold” is placed on a student’s account, official transcripts will be withheld until hold is resolved.