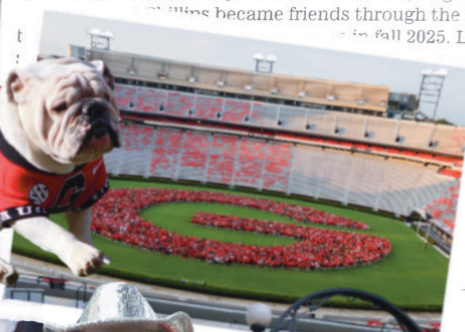


THE ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

UGA 101



IT'S EASY AS 1-2-3

Class registration basics on page 13

CHECK AND CHECK

Cross off the Class of 2030 bucket list on page 90

HOP ON!

Riding the bus like a pro on page 55

HOME IS WHERE THE ARCH IS

How a first-generation student navigates college on page 21

A transfer student's journey to UGA on page 44

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UGA 101

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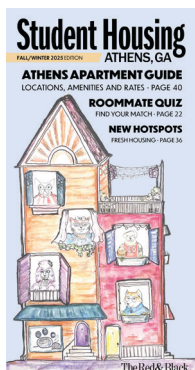


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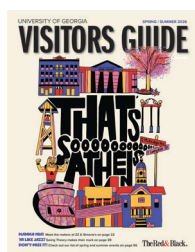
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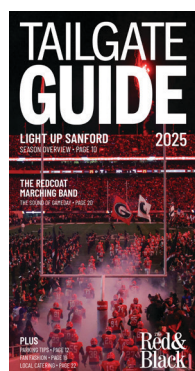
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

CAROLINE NEWBERN

Admittedly, I did not want to attend the University of Georgia. My senior year of high school, like many angsty teenagers, following in my mom's footsteps by attending her alma mater was not what I had in mind.

During my free time, I attended City Springs Theatre Conservatory, studying opera, dance and acting. I auditioned for approximately 15 schools and the result was overwhelming rejection. It stung, making me question my worth and purpose. Although I was consistently reassured of what an accomplishment it was to get into UGA, ultimately, I felt like a failure.

It was in this headspace that I packed my bags and headed to Athens.

My freshman year was hard. I longed for a sense of home, the family and friendships I left behind. I didn't feel much like branching out beyond my classes and spent most of my time running outside or in my dorm room.

My sophomore year, once I decided to put myself out there and give it the old college try (pun intended), everything changed. I found my student newsroom turned family at The Red & Black, pursuing untapped passions in written and visual journalism.

From my first story to the present day, in the last several weeks of my undergraduate experience, I've only learned more about myself and progressed in my passions.

Four years ago, I dreaded what my college experience at UGA would look like. Now, I can't imagine what my life would be like had I not committed to being a Georgia Bulldog.

So, here is my advice to incoming students.


Know that everything will be okay. Your family and friends back home will still be in your corner when you need them and you'll find an equally supportive community in the Classic City.

Try new things, turn strangers into friends, pursue experiences and opportunities that challenge existing interests. Putting yourself out there is crucial to discovering who and where you are meant to be.

Become acquainted not only with the UGA community but the one in Athens-Clarke County. The area we live in, though populated by students, is also inhabited by some of the most creative, passionate and kind people I've had the privilege to meet.

Treasure this time. Not because it's destined to be the best four years of your life or some of the most crucial for establishing a future career path, but because the present is what you make of it. Make it count.

There truly is no institution more worthy of loyalty than UGA.

Go Dawgs! 

Caroline Newbern, senior editor



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REGISTRATION HACKS

7 tips to help you sign up for classes

CHOOSE YOUR CLASSES

First: Meet with your advisor. Most students take 12 to 15 credit hours per semester.

You must take at least 12 to be considered a full-time student, but the HOPE Scholarship only covers up to 15 credit hours per semester. DegreeWorks is a must. It's individualized, showing requirements you may have filled with AP or IB classes and which classes you still need for your degree.

The University of Georgia Bulletin contains descriptions for classes, any prerequisites and old syllabi. It will help ensure you're taking what you need now in order to get into higher level courses down the road.

CREATE YOUR SCHEDULE

Before you start registration, it helps to plan out a couple of different schedule options.

Coursicle, an online class schedule-building site, is extremely helpful. You can also look up courses DegreeWorks recommends or do a general search for an area you need.

Each class will pop up with the current capacity, time, place and professor. Build a few different schedules to see which course load works best for you and which classes are good backups.

MAP IT OUT

Once you have a list of courses, check how far apart the buildings are. Keep in mind, there are only 20-minute breaks between consecutive classes.

For perspective: it takes 24 minutes to walk from Peabody Hall to the Science Learning Center. That same journey could take 15 minutes on a bus, or eight minutes on a bike. Some professors will be lenient about travel logistics, so if you can't get there on time, talk to them.

RESEARCH PROFESSORS

An instructor can make or break a class.

Check out student reviews on Rate My Professors but always take them with a grain of salt. Students who write reviews are usually the ones who had the most extreme experiences — good or bad. Your advisor and other students can give more balanced feedback.

SIGN UP FOR CLASSES

Log in to Athena before your time ticket starts so that you can register for classes before they fill up. Have some backups — you won't always get your first pick.

Entering the course reference numbers for the classes you need is the quickest way to reserve your spot.

Go to: Student Services > Registration >

Register for Classes, then select the semester you're registering for and enter the CRNs.

ASK YOUR ADVISER

If you're unsure of what classes to add, how many credits to take, or if you're looking to explore a minor or summer classes, ask your adviser. If you're worried about scholarships, grants or financial concerns, go to the Office of Student Financial Aid.

MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Unfortunately, some classes might be full before you even get to orientation. Sometimes a professor can add you to a course, so it never hurts to email and ask. Make sure you find several alternatives that fulfill your requirements and are of interest to you, and prioritize registering for any classes you missed out on the next time they're offered.

IF YOU DROP A CLASS

It's not the end of the world. Sometimes, even after searching Rate My Professor and studying the syllabus, the experience of a class might be different from what you imagined. Dropping or withdrawing may be a necessary choice to salvage your GPA, mental health or navigate an unexpected circumstance.

If you are considering withdrawing but are uneasy about how it might impact your track to graduation, schedule a meeting to talk with your advisor. There's no shame in taking the steps that are right for you, but try to decide before the class withdrawal deadline (two weeks after the semester midpoint). It's more common than you might think to stay at UGA for more than four years.



READING YOUR SYLLABUS

How to use it beyond syllabus day

Whether you're attending a class in person or online, the first day will consist of reading your syllabus (and hopefully not much else).

Syllabi provide an outline of what a professor feels is most important about the course. In addition to exam dates, they list assignment deadlines, class policies, textbooks and other required reading.

After reading through each syllabus, it's helpful to write project and exam dates in an academic planner to keep track of them. The University of Georgia Bookstore has a wide range of physical notebooks and agendas, but Google Calendar works too.



You might also want to include family responsibilities and social events to better visualize how much time you'll realistically have to work on assignments before they're due.

Because professors provide these due dates months in advance, they'll be more likely to accommodate absences and shift deadlines if you communicate about conflicts at the beginning of the semester.

Check in every month or so to make sure your professor hasn't changed the syllabus from the first week of class. Sometimes, but not often, teachers will alter the original copy without letting the class know, so stay vigilant!



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LEARNING RESOURCES

Where to find academic help outside of the classroom

PEER TUTORING

dae.uga.edu

Peer tutoring is completely free through the Division of Academic Enhancement. Students can meet with a peer tutor who has successfully completed the course they're looking for help in. Tutors can discuss class content, offer study tips and resources and answer questions. There are one-on-one sessions as well as study groups. Skoolers Tutoring, Science Guyz and Varsity Tutors are popular non-UGA options.

ACADEMIC COACHING

dae.uga.edu

Academic coaches help students assess their school-related and professional goals, connect them with other resources and plan a path toward success. Where peer tutoring is centered around specific classes, academic coaching is more focused on long-term objectives. Coaching is a free service available for all undergraduate students pursuing any major.

WRITING CENTER

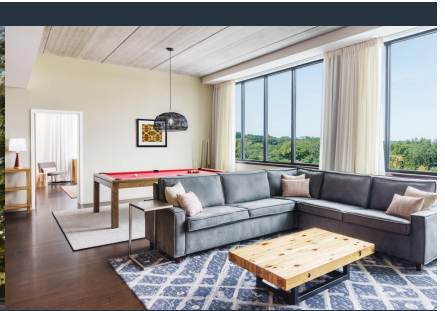
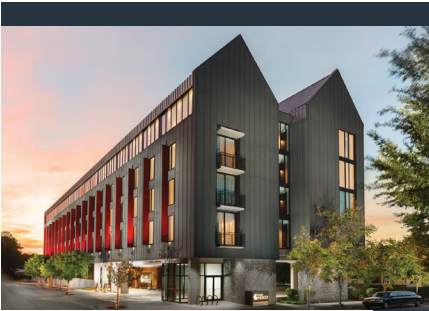
english.uga.edu/writing-center

Whether you need assistance with an essay, a research paper or even a cover letter, the writing consultants are there to help. Appointments are free and can take place either online or in-person at several locations across campus. Services include evaluating thesis statements and writing structure, teaching students how to proofread their own work and providing feedback on first drafts.

CAREER CENTER

career.uga.edu

Many students aren't sure what they want to do after college, but the Career Center helps you navigate your options. Explore the many majors UGA offers and their respective career paths, utilize resume and cover letter reviews and practice for job interviews. You can even sign up for the mentoring program and find someone in your dream field to connect with.



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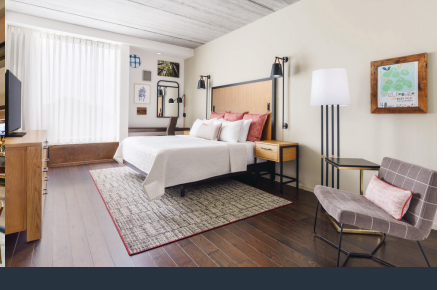
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DORM LIFE

7 tips for Living on Campus

Living with hundreds of strangers will be fantastic. Really. Here are a few guidelines for making the most out of your residence hall experience.

BE FRIENDLY

Don't be afraid to talk to your neighbors. Plenty of people in your dorm are feeling the same awkwardness you are. The universal signal for trying to make friends in your hall is leaving your door propped open on move-in day.

GO TO DORM EVENTS

Resident assistants and other staff work hard to create a social atmosphere to promote community. Go to the events and connect with the people in your hall and in dorm!

BE PATIENT

Don't worry if you don't find a friend group immediately, you'll find your people in time!

TALK TO YOUR ROOMMATE

You don't need to be the best friends, but communicate enough to feel comfortable asking them to turn off the light.

USE THE WASHERS AND DRYERS

Do your laundry at the dorm instead of hauling it back home. Remember, you pay for all these services in your housing fees.

ENJOY LIVING ON CAMPUS

Take advantage of the fact that you live right on campus, you'll miss some of the conveniences when you move off campus! You don't need a car to get to your classes, the dining hall or even downtown. The buses stop near the dorms, and you have more time to go back to your room between classes or work.

STAY SAFE

Keep your doors locked, take well-lit paths to the dorm and wear flip-flops in community showers. Take basic steps to ensure the well-being of yourself and your belongings; you'll be living with a lot of different people.

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD IF YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR ROOMMATE

Movies and TV shows make it seem like you should become instant besties with

your freshman year roommate. Although befriending your roommate is definitely possible, it's just as common that you and this random person won't become best friends.

Living with someone else can be difficult, and it's normal to have arguments, tension and maybe a few silent treatments. If you and your roommate really don't vibe, you can reach out to an RA to moderate arguments or switch rooms if it becomes necessary. It's most important to feel safe and comfortable in your living space.

DO PACK THIS

Shower shoes

You can survive for a couple of days without that extra set of sheets. You will not survive without shower shoes.

Soft lighting

There will be times you need to study at night and your roommate insists on sleeping. Lamps and string lights create atmosphere in a room with two settings: pitch dark or glaring fluorescent.

A first aid kit

Create a box with essentials — from Band-Aids and Neosporin to DayQuil, Emergen-C and essential medications.

A long phone charger

This is a game-changer if you have a lofted bed. A 10-foot cord allows you to use your phone in bed at night and minimizes the journey to turn off a blaring alarm.

DON'T PACK THAT

All your clothes

It's tempting to bring under-bed storage packed with all your cute winter outfits, but if you're starting in August you won't need them for months. Swap things out when you visit home instead.

A printer

You can find printers in residence hall lobbies and around campus that cost just cents per page.

Too many plants

Small succulents are low maintenance and will be fine. Forget about plants that need lots of natural light.

Candles

The dorms unfortunately have a strict no-candle policy, so avoid bringing these fire hazards and opt for air fresheners instead. Wallflowers can usually do more to freshen up a room than candles anyway.

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NAVIGATING COLLEGE AS A FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT

NATHAN VALLES

The first time I walked into a college classroom, I did not feel prepared. I felt out of place.

As a first-generation college student from a Mexican family, higher education was never a clear path for me. My parents talked about it at times, but the focus was always on working hard and being practical.

The expectation was simple: get a job, contribute to the household and make sure we could move forward. College was not discouraged, but it was not something my family had experience with.

My path to college was not traditional. I transferred to the University of Georgia from Kennesaw State University, and adjusting to a new school brought another layer of challenges. I was not only trying to figure out college for the first time, but also adapting to a completely new environment. The change made it harder to feel settled and added to the sense that I was always trying to catch up.

Growing up, I watched friends prepare for college with a level of confidence I did not have. They understood applications, majors and what campus life might look like. I did not. That gap in knowledge followed me when I arrived on campus.

The hardest part was not just the academic workload. It was the distance from home and the feeling of being on my own. As a Latino student pursuing journalism, I often found myself in spaces where I was one of the only people who looked like me. In classrooms and meetings, I sometimes stayed quiet, unsure if I belonged or if my voice mattered.

Once I was on campus, I had to push myself to take the first step. I remember staying after class to talk to a professor, unsure of what to say and worried about sounding unprepared. That short conversation turned into advice about classes, opportunities and how to get involved. It showed me that support was there, even if I had to reach out first.

That mindset led me to find a community that felt like home. Joining La Unidad



Latina, Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc. gave me a sense of belonging I had been searching for. My fraternity became more than just an organization. It became a family. Being surrounded by people with similar backgrounds and experiences helped me feel understood and supported in ways I had not felt before on campus.

At the same time, I learned the importance of staying connected to where I came from. Calling my family and keeping in touch with friends from home kept me grounded. It reminded me of the support system that helped me get here. Finding a strong group on campus mattered, but so did not forgetting the people who made this journey possible.

If I could give advice to other first-generation students, it would be to take things one step at a time and not let yourself get overwhelmed. Find your people, set your own standard and do not be afraid to put yourself out there. Growth comes from effort, not perfection.

Being the first in my family to attend college has not been easy, but it has been meaningful. It has pushed me to grow, take risks and create my own path. More importantly, it has shown me that even when you feel out of place, you are capable of building a community, setting a standard and opening doors for those who come after you.

GET INVOLVED

Explore UGA's extra-curricular activities

The University of Georgia offers hundreds of clubs and organizations that help students find their niche. When looking for ways to get involved, consider what's important to you.

I WANT TO TRY SOMETHING NEW

College is a time to experiment. There's probably no other phase of your life where you'll be offered so many different activities and experiences to try. UGA's hundreds of clubs allow you to learn skills ranging from the intricate to the obscure. A few examples include the Ballroom Dance Club, Aviation Club, Juggling Club and Knit and Crochet at UGA.

I LOVE BEING OUTDOORS

Head outside with ag clubs like Block and Bridle, a livestock club affiliated with the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. There are hiking and rock climbing groups too, like the Outdoor Adventure Club.

I'M COMPETITIVE, BUT NOT A JOCK

Exercise your competitive nature with groups like eSports at UGA or the Board Game Club. The Tate Student Center also has a game room with multiple screens, a

rotating selection of video games and old-school arcade units.

I'M A JOCK, BUT NOT A DI ATHLETE

Join one of the 40+ UGA club and intramural sports teams. This will allow you to hone skills, meet new people and travel to compete. Hockey, lacrosse and rugby are just a few of the teams you can join.

I'M FOCUSED ON MY FUTURE CAREER

Just about every field has a student group at UGA. They offer education about what it takes to transition into your intended career. Clubs often organize networking events, speakers and workshops. A few examples are UGA's student chapter of the American Society of Microbiology and the UGA Economics Society.

I WANT TO REPRESENT UGA

You can get involved in the Student Government Association and represent your class and your interests at the university level. The Residence Hall Association represents more than 9,000 students. You can take part as a committee member, floor representative or on the executive committee. You can also join a group that focuses on your area of study, like Ag Hill Council, which advocates for South Campus. If you've got a free summer, look into becoming an orientation leader or a Dawg Camp counselor.



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I'M SEEKING A SPIRITUAL HOME

There are a number of religious organizations on UGA's campus serving many faith communities. The Wesley Foundation, which meets at the Wesley Main Chapel on Wednesday evenings, is one of the largest Christian organizations on campus. Others include Baptist Collegiate Ministries and The Catholic Center. The Muslim Student Association serves as both a network for Muslim students and a voice for their community on campus. Many Jewish students will gather at Hillel to enjoy free Shabbat dinners and services. The Pagan Student Association is a student-led group focusing on spirituality, esotericism and community building.

I LIKE TO DEBATE

Some of the oldest organizations on campus are the Demosthenian and the Phi Kappa Literary Society, which fuse debate and discussion with social activities. For a more competitive focus, consider the Mock Trial team.

I WANT TO SERVE

Several groups let you help students or Athens residents. Designated Dawgs provide safe rides home for students. Extra Special People supports people with developmental disabilities. The UGArden Club works with the student-run organic farm to raise sustainably-grown produce, which is then distributed to the community. The Backpack Project of Athens distributes meals, necessities and care packages to local people experiencing homelessness. You can also volunteer (and pick up groceries) at the UGA Student Food Pantry in the Tate

Center. If you have a car, head over to the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia to lend a hand there.

I WANT TO FIND COMMUNITY

There's no shortage of cultural organizations or communities to join at UGA. The Pride Alliance and Pride Center offer support and advocacy for the university's LGBTQ+ community and its allies. ASL Dawgs provides resources for UGA's Deaf community and anyone interested in learning about American Sign Language and Deaf culture. Cultural organizations include the Asian American Student Association, the Hispanic Student Association, the African Student Union, the Filipino Student Association, the Indian Cultural Exchange and the Russian Club. The International Student Life office at UGA offers resources and hosts events like the annual International Street Festival.

I WANT TO GIVE BACK

Take part in events like UGA Miracle's 24-hour Dance Marathon, which on Saturday, March 28, 2026, raised more than \$1.4 million for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, or the SDT Greek Grind dance contest, which raised over \$120,000 for Prevent Child Abuse America in 2025. Fundraising doesn't always have to be a dance-related event, of course. Local restaurants and breweries host percentage nights or benefit concerts in which a portion of sales benefits a club or cause. Almost every weekend brings a 5K or fun run. Not all runners are human — in the Pre-Veterinary Medicine Club's annual Dawg Jog 5K, dogs and owners compete to raise funds for animal-related causes.



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 UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
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FINDING YOUR PASSION

Don't be afraid to add a major or minor

CAROLINE NEWBERN

"What am I going to do with my life?"

As a freshman in college, you're bombarded with questions about your life goals, despite not truly having lived yet. When I got to the University of Georgia, I knew I liked writing and decided a good start would be to pursue an English major.

In theory, it was perfect. To stick with the familiar, to hide in the comfort of what I was good at. I could spend my time stepping into worlds that weren't the ones I was living in. I could run from the looming pressure to decide my future.

But I wasn't living. That isn't to say that I wasn't academically challenged or learning new things. In my time as a student in the English department, I've tackled the arduous. From the works of John Milton to T.S. Eliot and Mina Loy, I've explored both the traditional literary canon and non-traditional, experimental. I had grown as a writer. But I was comfortable. I hadn't pushed myself. I ignored the unknown.

For me, that was journalism. In a usual semester check-in, my advisor asked

"What else?"

"You're going to graduate next semester with just English."

What else? Graduate? I'd barely gotten used to living away from home, let alone thought of stepping into the real world.

"Well, what are your other interests?" I had no real idea. I took a shot in the dark,

"Um. Journalism?"

"Great."

I signed up for an introductory course to test the waters. It was in a large lecture hall, and I didn't know anybody, much different from the intimacy of the 15 to 30-person English classes. If it was discomfort I was looking for, this was it.

Only after this did I start to grow in a different way; I wasn't just growing as a writer but as a person. Each class, I started to find my footing again all the while wanting to know more. I began to chase the unknown.



I decided to join The Red & Black as a contributor. I'd never interviewed anyone or knew what AP style was. I had little experience, but whether it be in my English classes or simply talking to family and friends, I have a knack and passion for storytelling.

My first stories were far from perfect. During interviews, I stumbled over my words. I constantly wondered if I was in over my head. And yet, there was an undeniable sense of purpose. I had to keep going.

I applied to the Grady School of Journalism and Mass Communications and was accepted to the journalism major in spring 2024. I consistently picked up stories from The Red & Black. Journalism lit a fire in me.

Two years later, I've conducted countless interviews and snapped thousands of photos. I've held the roles of co-recruitment manager, co-culture editor and managing editor and now, I'm finishing my last semester as an undergraduate student as the senior editor of our Guides & Magazines department. I've loved my experience so much that I'm staying one more to finish my master's degree in journalism and mass communication as a Double Dawg.

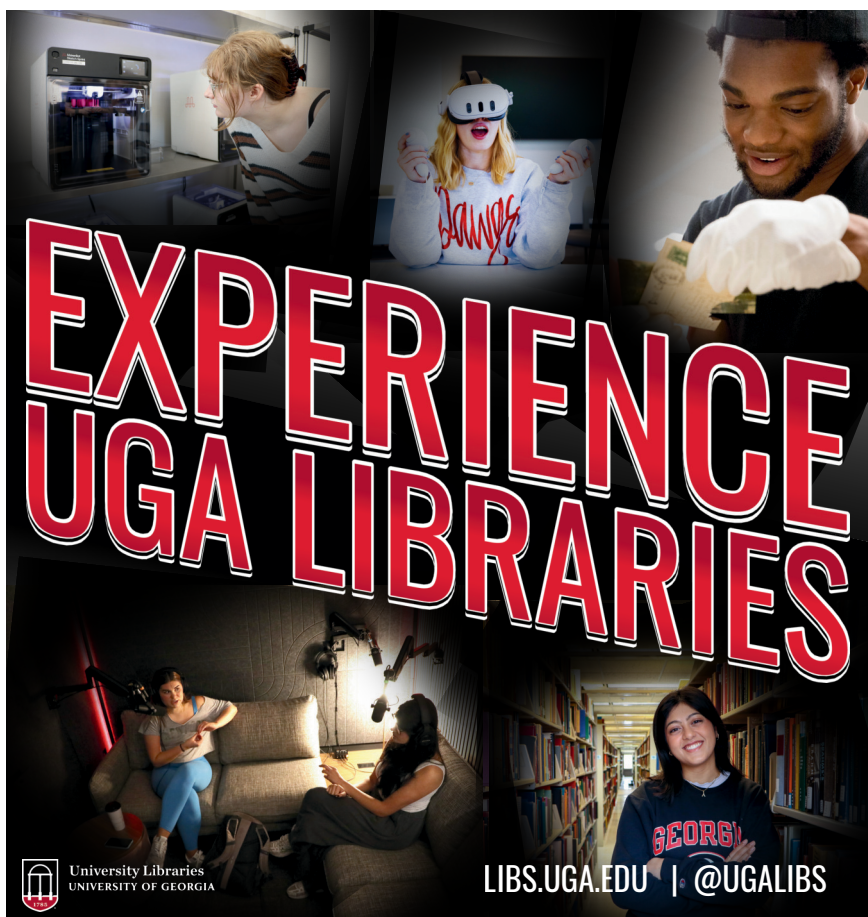
If I had the chance to speak to my freshman self, scared and clinging to what I knew, I would say, "The unknown is terrifying, but go after it anyway. It's how you grow." After all, you don't know what you don't know.

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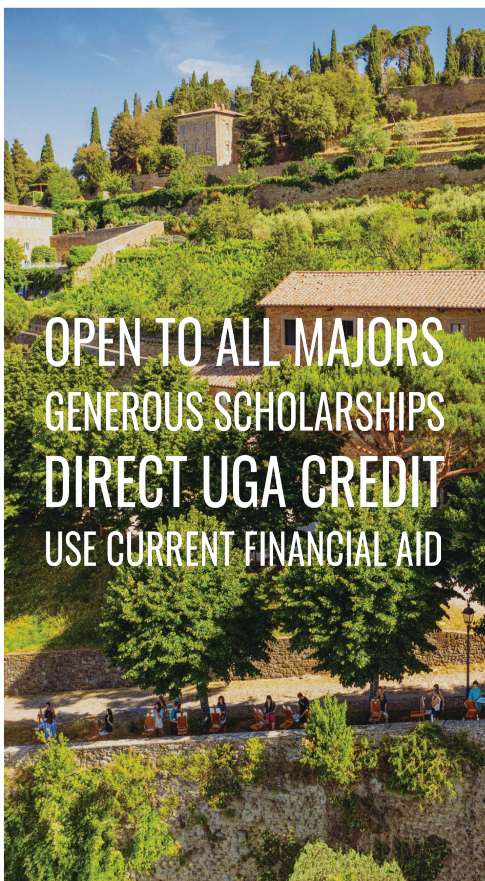


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cortona.uga.edu

GAMEDAY GUIDE

Georgia's full 2026 football schedule

Sept. 5 | Tennessee State at Sanford Stadium

Sept. 12 | Western Kentucky at Sanford Stadium

Sept. 19 | Arkansas at Razorback Stadium

Sept. 26 | Oklahoma at Sanford Stadium

Oct. 3 | Vanderbilt at Sanford Stadium

Oct. 10 | Alabama at Bryant-Denny Stadium

Oct. 17 | Auburn at Sanford Stadium

Oct. 31 | Florida at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in ATL

Nov. 7 | Ole Miss at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium

Nov. 14 | Missouri at Sanford Stadium

Nov. 21 | South Carolina at Williams-Brice Stadium

Nov. 28 | Georgia Tech at Sanford Stadium

How to navigate your first Georgia football season

There's really nothing like a Saturday in Athens in the fall. Georgia fans arrive by the tens of thousands to Sanford Stadium to watch the Bulldogs play between the hedges, while the surrounding Athens population seems to triple in the process.

Here are some tips on how to navigate these games and have the best student section experience possible.

HYDRATE

The only drink that you should be heavily consuming on gameday is some good old H₂O! While the only thing they'll let you bring into Sanford is one unopened water bottle, there are plenty of drink kiosks and concession stands throughout the stadium that will allow you to remain hydrated.

CHECK THE WEATHER

The September heat can be pretty grueling early in the season, especially in the student section that rarely gets any shade. Wear a hat that provides shade, bring sunscreen and reapply as needed. As the season progresses and the weather cools down, wear layers. Rain is a possibility all semester long, and umbrellas aren't allowed in Sanford Stadium. A poncho or rain jacket could

be the difference between a great gameday and a cold, uncomfortable one.

GET THERE EARLY

The process of getting through the student gate and into the stadium before a big game isn't always fast. Don't arrive at the gates 20 minutes before kickoff expecting a short wait. Get there around an hour early (or more, suit yourself), find some good seats in the student section and soak in the pre-game atmosphere. Georgia is also frequently featured in ESPN's College GameDay.

DRIP OR DROWN

A good gameday outfit is essential. One of the best parts of any Saturday in Athens is seeing the thousands of Bulldog fans decked out in red and black. If you don't have a jersey or Bulldog-themed attire, opt for head-to-toe red and black.

STAY FOR THE LONG HAUL

Scanning your student ticket and immediately leaving the stadium to avoid getting a strike is a move that should only be made in the most dire of circumstances. Heading home at halftime is more common, but staying for the whole game isn't the impossible feat that some students act like it is. If you've got the energy, it's worth it to celebrate a win in-person and hear the Redcoat Marching Band play both the halftime show and the post-game concert.

KNOW THE LORE

A storied program like Georgia understandably has a laundry list of rituals, chants and cheers that date back to the days of leather helmets. Unless you want Larry Munson rolling in his grave, you need to know the two simple words which express the sentiments of the entire Bulldog nation – Go Dawgs. Get ready to call the dawgs, spell “Georgia,” point towards the upper South Deck as the Battle Hymn is played and light up Sanford before the fourth quarter.

GET LOUD AND HAVE FUN

If you forget any of the above tips, all can be forgiven if you go to Sanford Stadium and root for the Bulldogs like your life depends on it. Be respectful to your fellow fans as well as those of the other team, but when it's time to cheer, be a part of the reason Sanford is one of the hardest stadiums to play in all of college football. Have fun with it and enjoy your time between the hedges!



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“JOIN ME” INITIATIVE INVITES FRIENDS TO THE TABLES AT UGA DINING HALLS

ADALEIGH WEBER

It is noon at the University of Georgia, and hungry students with meal plans are making their way out of class, heading to a dining hall. Depending on how soon they arrive, each table at the dining hall may be filled with students eating, and finding a seat without a friend present may be a struggle for some.

“Can I sit with you?” you replay in your head, as you walk past dozens of empty chairs

that are close to a seated individual enjoying their meal.

One day, you enter a dining hall, and you notice something new. Located in Joe Frank Harris Commons near the entrance, you see plastic green placards saying “Join me,” and out of curiosity, you pick one up and place it on your table, letting others know you are open to sharing your table with them and potentially forming an unexpected friendship.

The “Join Me” initiative was created in response to dining hall anxiety by sophomore agricultural communications and social entrepreneurship major Amiyah Elam. Elam came up with the idea for this initiative from her dining hall experiences during her freshman year. She noted how crowded the dining halls could be, and how it was sometimes difficult to find a place to sit.

“I was like, gosh, are we going to be able to find a table if we need to ask somebody to sit with?” Elam said. “All of these anxiety-ridden questions filled my head, and I was like, ‘I wish there was an easier way to do this.’”

Elam works with the diversity, equity and inclusion committee for UGA’s Student Government Association, and wants to ensure each initiative she takes has options for a diverse range of students in mind.

“And so knowing that, yeah, there’s students that are loud mouths like me, that aren’t afraid to be like, ‘Hey, can I sit with you?’ But also making sure that we’re catering to our students that might be a little bit more demure,” Elam said.

When Elam joined SGA and was brainstorming the type of legislation she wanted to pursue, she looked at an initiative that Louisiana State University did in their retail dining locations.

She ran her idea with the director of dining services and her legislation passed. Afterwards, she proposed her idea to her friends and peers, asking for feedback and things to consider before working towards implementing it in dining halls.

Elam had been workshopping this proposal since August 2025. After having meetings with dining services and collecting feedback from her classmates, she proposed the legislation for it in September, and it passed in October. The initiative went live in January 2026.

Sophomore international affairs and journalism major Erin Simmons has used these placards on the table while eating at the dining halls to invite others to sit with her. She said this has helped her strengthen existing friendships and alleviate anxiety that comes with finding a seat.

“I see people, sometimes even from my class, [and they ask me], ‘Oh, is it okay if I sit?’ I’m like, ‘Yeah!’ We talk about class, and I get closer with people like that... If I’m at Joe Frank and people are coming from the gym, they’ll sit down and we’ll talk about our workouts,”



Simmons said. “And it’s been really good with meeting different types of people that I get to see around campus to say hi to.”

The placards are currently located in Joe Frank Harris Dining Commons, but Elam is currently working on expanding this initiative to the new dining hall currently being built, as well as freshman orientation, to get new students accustomed to implementing this process when they attend UGA.

“You never know, like, just by looking at somebody at the lunch table... Like, you guys could be in the same major, you guys could be a part of the same club. [You might] have the same interests, and you never would have known unless you would have sat in that seat,” Elam said.

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POWER IN STUDY ABROAD

EMMA PETERSON

Studying abroad changed my life.

It's a cliché you hear all of the time, but the sentiment holds weight.

During summer 2024, I had the opportunity to study at the University of Oxford in England through the University of Georgia at Oxford program.

I vividly remember calling my mom outside the college of journalism after finding out I was accepted into the program. It was a feeling like no other. As we loudly shared our excitement with one another, I knew in my heart this would be an experience like no other.

So, at the end of June I packed my suitcase with as many English weather clothes as I could fit, and flew “across the pond.” This was my first time traveling outside of the United States, which meant I had no idea what to expect for my six weeks in Oxford.

UGA's summer term students live at Trinity College, which is just one of more than 30 different colleges making up the university. Students also have the chance to live at the UGA at Oxford Centre, a renovated Victorian house just outside of the college grounds.

This is where I stayed, rooming with two of my close friends Jayden and Jojo, and our honorary roommate Ivy. Getting to live in Oxford together was truly amazing. We did everything as a group. From experiencing the Fourth of July in an English pub to traveling to other countries, I could not have asked for a better group of women to be around.

Let's also not forget the time we made the mistake of watching a football match in a crowded pub and got to truly understand just how much the sport means to England.

Coursework is an emphasized component of the study abroad, as you get to learn from both UGA and Oxford professors. Immersing myself in two Oxford taught tutorials was both a challenging and rewarding



experience. There were many days I spent working on essays and presentations in the Bodleian Library.

The amount of time spent focusing on classes is not meant to scare potential applicants, but instead meant to excite you about the new information you can gather while on campus. All classes are required to take students on excursions where we travel within the country to experience first hand what we're being taught in the classrooms.

In both my courses I took trips to London, where I visited a museum, Gordon Ramsey's restaurant and even got to see a West End play. Also, on the weekends you don't have excursions planned, you can travel with the friends you make on the trip.

My group went to London, Edinburgh, Scotland and Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands. Each time we traveled, we crammed as much as we possibly could into the few days we had in each location. By the end of each trip we would have blisters on our feet and a bag full of trinkets to remember the adventure.

Without going to Oxford almost two years ago now, I wouldn't be the person I am today. It not only brought me an entirely different outlook on life, but it sparked a lifelong career goal I now have for myself.

Getting to know Oxford in those short six weeks made me want to know each and every person who stepped foot into the city's story. Living abroad as an international journalist is now something I hope to accomplish down the line.

It really does only take one choice to change your life, and mine was choosing to study abroad at Oxford.



COMMUNITY FEATURES



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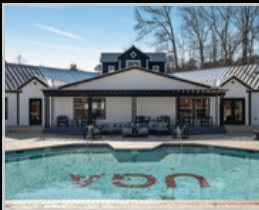
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EXPLORE DOWNTOWN ATHENS

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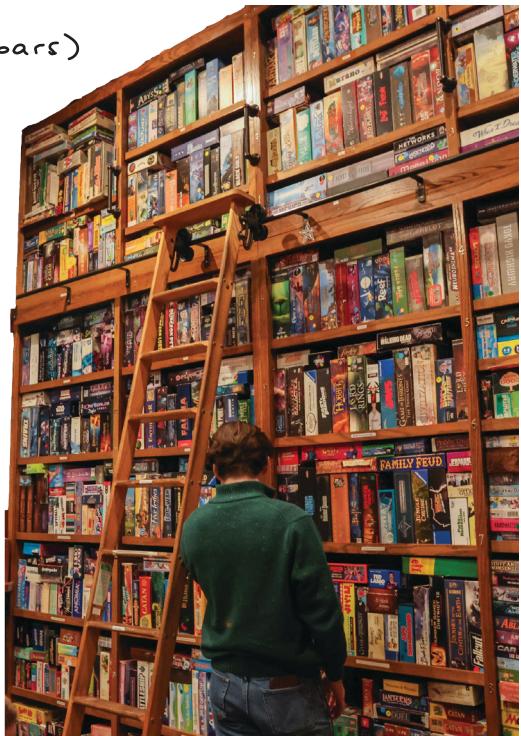
There are more than a dozen concert venues within a half-mile of downtown Athens, each with its own rich history and character. On the corner of Washington and Pulaski Streets sits the fifth location of the historic 40 Watt Club. A likely stop for any big-name artist coming through Athens, the Georgia Theatre offers a ground floor and several balconies to watch bigger shows from, as well as a rooftop bar with its own stage. Athens also puts on many festivals — like AthFest Music and Arts Festival and The Athens Orthopedic Clinic Twilight Criterium — that include free performances in the streets.

SEE A MOVIE

Local independent movie theater Ciné is the best place in town to catch harder-to-find films and documentaries, but they also frequently show the newest A24 releases and select blockbusters. The entertainment doesn't stop at movies, however; Ciné also hosts art exhibits and concerts in The Lab.

BROWSE BOUTIQUES

Although Athens has national chain stores like Urban Outfitters and Target, the streets downtown are also lined with Athens originals. Community offers locally sourced products and sustainable fashion. Get vintage pieces at stores like Dynamite Clothing and Agora Vintage. You'll find gameday outfits at shops like Cheeky Peach and Pitaya. Wuxtry Records and Low Yo Yo have hundreds of records, books, comics and collectibles, while Cillies Clothing stocks second hand clothes and pop culture gifts.



GRAB SOME COFFEE OR TEA

There are plenty of places to get a drink to cool off or warm yourself up. Cafes and coffee bars like Walker's Coffee Shop & Pub, Sunroof Coffee and Jittery Joe's offer a place to study, hang out or just get your caffeine fix. Bubble Cafe and Taichi Bubble Tea offer a variety of teas served with boba, popping pearls and other toppings.

HIT THE ICE

A popular activity at the end of fall semester is ice skating at the Classic Center. If you don't know how to skate, no fear: you can always be pushed around on a plastic seat.

PLAY SOME GAMES

Grab some friends and head to board game cafe The Rook & Pawn on Washington Street. Their impressive selection of over 600 games ranges from classics like Scrabble and Clue to strategy challenges like Catan and Ticket to Ride. Cranium and The Chameleon are favorites for larger parties. They also have snacks, drinks and a lunch and dinner menu.



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TRANSFER STUDENT GUIDE



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TRANSFER TIPS

Finding your place at UGA

Coming to the University of Georgia as a transfer student can be daunting. Whether transferring was always part of your plan or a more recent decision, it can be both exciting and scary to start at a new school. At a university as big as UGA, you will be surrounded by students who have been here longer. Here are some tips for finding your way after transferring.

NAVIGATING UGA AND ATHENS

UGA is an impressive 767 acres sprawled across a large part of Athens, Georgia. Names like North Campus, South Campus and Health Sciences can sound overwhelming, but there are ways to navigate it. Using the bus tracker on the UGA app makes figuring out routes and getting a ride much easier. If you prefer walking, head to [PAGE 50] for tips.

FINDING A COMMUNITY

Finding friends and a community can be intimidating no matter who you are. If you're skipping the normal first-year experience of living in a dorm, you might feel isolated. Luckily, UGA offers a huge variety of clubs, organizations and athletic opportunities to help you find a niche. Getting involved is a great way to find like-minded people that could become fast friends.

Athens has a lot of fun stuff going on off-campus too. Look out for classes, events or trivia around town. It's easier to talk to people at these kinds of things when you have a common interest or goal.

Silent Book Club is especially great for solo outings. Just reserve a seat online beforehand, grab a book and head to that week's cozy location. The first hour is for socializing, after which everyone quiets down. Ask someone next to you about what they're reading, you might hit it off!

ADJUSTING ACADEMICALLY

UGA's academic rigor can feel like a big change, but there are many resources available for students having trouble with a particular course. The Office for Student Success and Achievement offers free tutoring that connects students with other peers who have taken their classes. For more learning resources, head to [PAGE 14].

While UGA can seem intimidating at times, don't be afraid to ask for help. Make sure to take advantage of all the resources and opportunities available to you, because you never know which one will bring you closer to finding your community and achieving academic success.

FINDING MY WAY

Stepping out of my comfort zone

MCKENNA EDWARDS

When I moved to Athens in the fall of 2023, I cried the entire night after my parents and grandmother left to help me move into my apartment. Although I was ecstatic to move to a new city, live by myself (kind of) and study journalism, I was terrified.

I wasn't home anymore, I was living with three girls I had never met in an apartment I hadn't visited before signing my lease, and I was studying something which would define the rest of my life. I was completely and utterly alone in the Classic City.

I had friends who attended the University of Georgia, were coming in as a transfer or a freshman and people who just lived in the area. I knew this. I knew I had people

to hang out with between classes and on weekends, but I wasn't driving around, watching a movie in theaters or shopping with Darby and Jamirial, my two best friends, every day.

I would be shallow to tell you this was easy. Absolutely nothing was. My world was flipped upside down after 19 years, stagnant in the same place, seeing the same people and hearing the same things.

My first semester here, I felt like I didn't belong. I went to events, talked to people in my classes, but I hadn't found my space yet.

I was hopeless, leaving for winter break, thinking these next three years were going to be the loneliest and slowest of my life. When I came back for the spring semester,

my fears had washed away. I found my people. In my journalism classes, I clicked with classmates instantly and began to feel like I was meant to be here, taking up space.

This was the start of my forever, finding these long-lasting friendships.

Since the spring of 2024, I have felt more comfortable settling in at this university, finding a spot meant for me with people whom I care for deeply and knowing they care for me just the same.

I have since served as a beat mentor for Reporting I students, helping hone their skills for writing and reporting, while keeping my skills sharp in the process. I began writing for the culture desk at *The Red & Black*, where I now serve as the assistant guides and magazines editor. Dove back into creative writing with *Strike Magazine*, where I began my role as blog director this January.

Through the course of my senior year, I started my role as an ambassador for the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, something I have enjoyed every step of the way; getting to share my love for this school, these professors and the passion they poured into me over my three years here. Seeing clearly, they want me to succeed.

This school has given me opportunities I would have never thought were possible.



I have traveled to New York City and met with professionals in my field, taken photos for the Georgia National Fair and will be studying abroad in Prague this summer, learning about travel journalism.

I found myself doubting any of these things would be possible for me. I was a transfer student. I came to UGA late. Why take me over everyone else?

It took time. But that time was spent finding these professors and friends who believed in me, never once questioning my skills and intelligence and, of course, never asking if I was a transfer student, to understand I'm right where I belong. I think being a transfer student is something to be proud of. There are so many opportunities out there for you, so many things to take advantage of. So many people who share the same experiences, fears and hopes as you.

Who cares if you didn't live in the dorms your freshman year?

CAMP COUNSELOR TURNED CAES CAREER

Finding a home at UGA

KATIE GUENTHNER

Lydia Belflower decided from a young age that she would attend the University of Georgia. That, paired with her determination to become a camp counselor after attending a Georgia 4-H summer camp, motivated her academic career.

The senior agricultural and environmental science communication major didn't start at UGA, though. She transferred from the Cochran, Georgia, campus of Middle Georgia State University in fall 2023, her sophomore year.

Transferring didn't come without challenges, though. At first, Belflower felt like she missed out by not being able to experience

UGA her freshman year. And, compared to her home town, UGA's campus was overwhelming and difficult to navigate.

"I feel like a lot of people find their people freshman year, and so I kind of felt like I was behind, but, honestly, I took that challenge as an opportunity," Belflower said.

Belflower started participating in one such opportunity, 4-H, in fifth grade. 4-H gets young people involved in a variety of fields ranging from agriculture to leadership and civics through school programs, summer camps and extracurricular activities. It is connected to the UGA College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, so transferring allowed Belflower to grow her involvement by working on the organizational aspects of the extension program at the college level.



From camp counseling to fundraising and development, Belflower has touched on many aspects of agricultural communications through 4-H. Learning about the organizational “behind the scenes” while at UGA helped her understand the importance of agricultural education, she said.

Agriculture is the state’s leading industry, contributing more than \$74 billion to Georgia’s economy annually. Belflower hopes to be able to protect the agriculture industry through education, which includes translating high-level research into layman’s terms.

“I think it’s important that students know where their food comes from, first and foremost, and that they learn to appreciate agriculture,” Belflower said. “For students from a young age to be educated on agriculture... helps them protect the farmland and helps them to advocate in the future.”

The “tight-knit” community at CAES helped Belflower find both research opportunities and friends. She paid it forward by serving as a CAES ambassador. In that role she shares her story to prospective students in hopes that her example keeps those who don’t get into UGA the first time from getting discouraged.

“[Being a transfer student] doesn’t define you, and don’t let it stop you from jumping into all of the opportunities,” Belflower said. “At the end of the day, everybody’s degree is going to say UGA.”

CAES Director of Student Recruitment Jaky Cervantes Childers — who was once a transfer student herself — appreciated Belflower’s attitude and ability to represent

students from nontraditional backgrounds as one of three CAES ambassadors who transferred out of 33 total ambassadors.

“Having students that got to the university through our transfer process on our ambassador team gives our college the opportunity to reach and network with a broad audience,” Cervantes Childers said. “It makes getting to the University of Georgia attainable for some of our students.”

She added that transferring can be a benefit to students, as they often come in with some of their core credits complete and are able to dive into upper level courses upon arrival at UGA. This happened to Belflower, whose work in youth development through 4-H caught the attention of CAES professor Abigail Borron, who researches community development.

“It was an easy and flawless shift over for Lydia to work with [Borron] as a researcher,” Cervantes Childers said.

At first she didn’t know exactly what she wanted to do post-graduation, but she decided to pursue a master’s in agricultural leadership, education and communication at UGA in the fall due to Borron’s encouragement.

“I always knew I wanted to come to UGA,” Belflower said. “And I did, even though it wasn’t the way I initially had planned, but, honestly, looking back now, this is the way to do it.”

Belflower’s route from summer camp to a master’s degree hasn’t been direct. But the experiences she’s had along the way set her up for success.

THE FOUR C'S

How to be and find a good roommate

MCKENNA EDWARDS

As someone who went from spending a year living in an apartment with three girls I had never met to being in my second year of living with friends, here are some tips I learned on how to be a good roommate, whether you know them or not.

COMMUNICATION

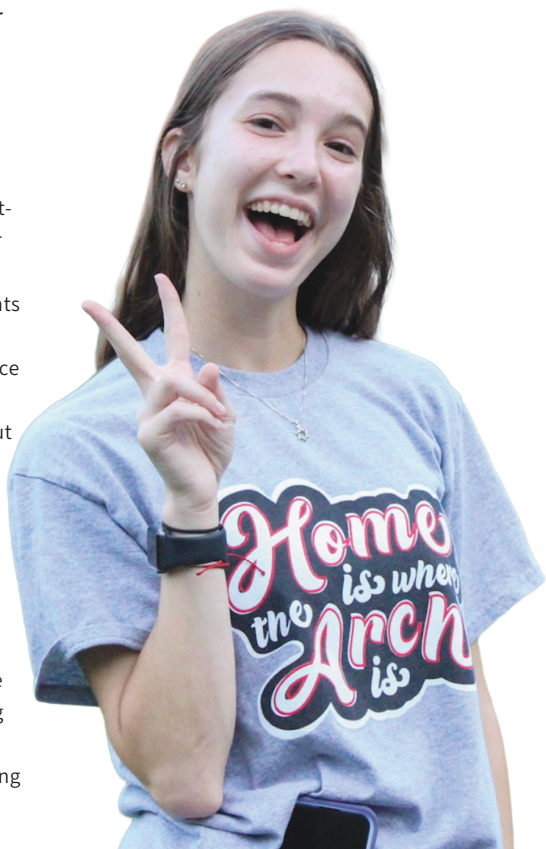
Make a group chat. Keep each other updated on things happening; if your partner or family is coming to visit, if you're going to be home late or even to ask if anyone wants to watch a show together on the couch. There's nothing worse than living in a space where no one speaks to one another and you stay in your room or are constantly out of the house, dreading being in the space you pay for.

CLEANLINESS

It's common courtesy to keep your shared spaces clean. Washing your dishes after you're done eating, taking your laundry out of the dryer if you know someone else is washing clothes and, of course, keeping your floors and surfaces clean. If you find your roommates are having trouble rotating chores, offer to make a chore chart where you all rotate different things weekly.

CONSIDERATION

Remember that a considerate roommate is someone who realizes their actions affect another person's reality. You may be living with upwards of three other roommates, depending on your lease. If you're on a chore rotation and you notice your trash is full and no one has taken it out yet, don't let it overflow; take it out and talk to your roommates about it later.



COMPATIBILITY

If you can help it, try to seek out roommates with similar lifestyles and schedules to yours. Most apartment complexes offer a questionnaire when assigning roommates, if you don't already have people in mind, regarding pets, noise levels and cleanliness. It's also a good idea to include any dos and don'ts to social media posts or groups for finding roommates.

If you sign with random roommates, try to schedule a time to meet up with them before your move-in date, get to know them, talk about how you're going to decorate and share things in common spaces and talk about expectations.

If you're moving in with friends, I still recommend getting a meal or coffee with everyone, especially if you don't all know each other and chat about the same things, making sure living together won't jeopardize your relationships with one another.

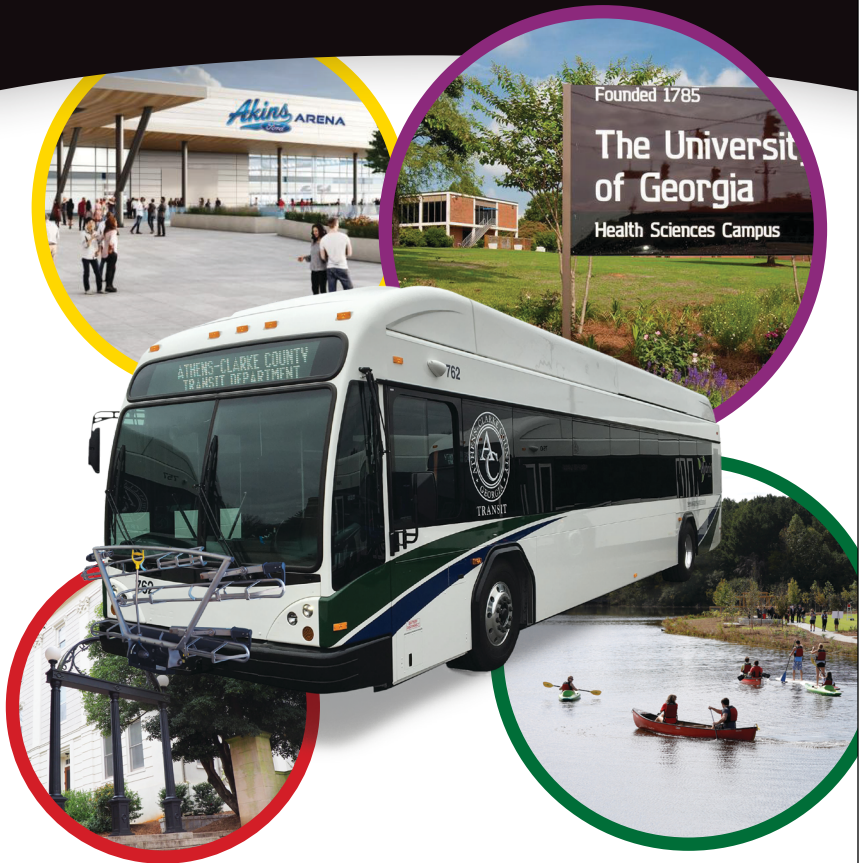




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MAP + KEY

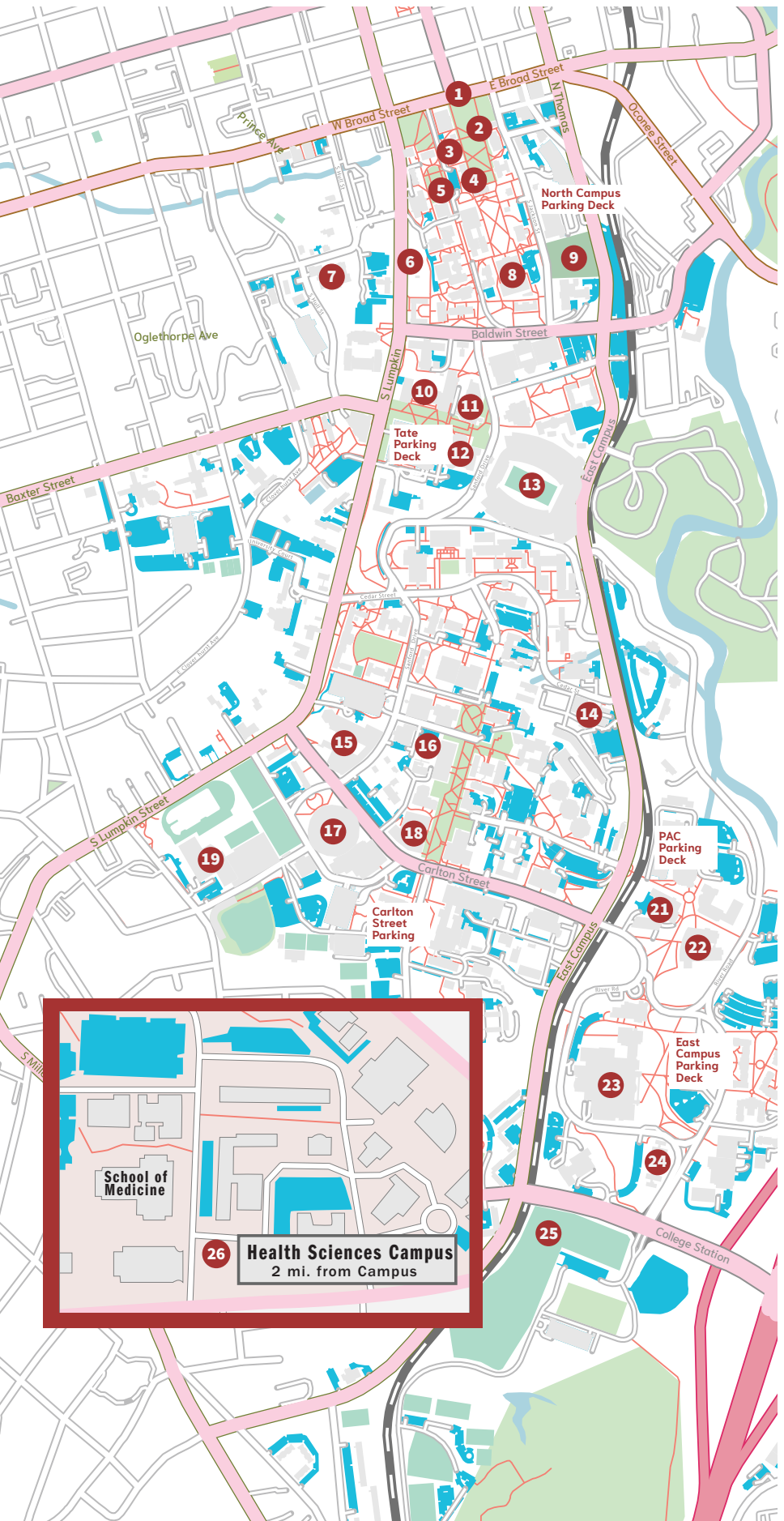
1. THE ARCH
2. NORTH CAMPUS QUAD
3. THE CHAPEL
4. OLD COLLEGE
5. HERTY FIELD
6. FOUNDERS MEMORIAL GARDEN
7. SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARIES
8. MAIN LIBRARY
9. JACKSON STREET CEMETERY
10. ZELL B. MILLER LEARNING CENTER
11. CAMPUS BOOKSTORE
12. TATE STUDENT CENTER
13. SANFORD STADIUM
14. GEORGIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
15. THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION AND HOTEL
16. UGA TRIAL GARDENS
17. STEGEMAN COLISEUM
18. SCIENCE LEARNING CENTER
19. BUTTS-MEHRE HERITAGE HALL
20. PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
21. GEORGIA MUSEUM OF ART
22. LAMAR DODD SCHOOL OF ART
23. RAMSEY STUDENT CENTER
24. UGA VISITORS CENTER
25. INTRAMURAL FIELDS AREA
26. SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Abc VISITOR PARKING DECK

 UGA BUILDING

 SURFACE PARKING

 FOOTPATH





WALKING THE WALK

The art of navigating UGA on foot

ELIJAH KING

During one's freshman year living at the University of Georgia, a particular savvy is gained. However, in the hubbub of adjusting to college life and making new friends, this skill is often overlooked: the art of walking at UGA.

At a glance, walking sounds like a superfluous aspect of college life; an obligation, not something to notice, antithetical to the fast-paced environment freshmen are thrown into.

However, throughout my freshman year, I found it crucial to take notice of the routes I took, when to use transportation services and how to dress for the volatile Georgia weather. Moreover, walking the UGA campus and appreciating the fauna therein, helped me maintain a healthy mental balance during stressful times.

The day before fall classes began, still adjusting to independence, I decided to map out my trek to and from classes. My Monday schedule began with a brisk walk to the Boyd Research and Education Center five minutes from my dorm. Afterward, I undertook what seemed like an expedition to the Miller Learning Center, then uphill to Sanford Hall near the Main Library. At the time, I found the walk arduous—UGA's hilly terrain, sweltering heat and my inexperience navigating a campus this spread out made me dread the next ten months.

While the terrain and weather haven't changed, my perspective has. Despite my initial assumptions, navigating campus

became somewhat of an art form. Memorizing routes and no longer relying on maps, I began trusting my internal compass, feeling more at home with each passing day. By timing my walks and checking the weather beforehand, I grew more comfortable with both my attire and pace. I was able to pick up many tips throughout the year: utilizing building pass-throughs, knowing when to use campus transportation, knowing the terrain (watching out for that one pothole or loose brick) and walking with confidence and rhythm.

Beyond navigation, walking became salient to my mental health. Before exams or on stressful days, I took walks with no destination in sight. I took in UGA's abundant flora and fauna, listening to the melodic sounds of nature juxtaposed with the clanging construction. Whether it was in the Founders Memorial Garden or downtown Athens, walking gave me a sense of calmness.

Although this frame of reference is more poetic, I found my world of assignment deadlines and coffee-filled all-nighters soothed by walking. A canopy of trees was no longer scenery but a sanctuary. The scent of honeysuckles or falling leaves stopped me in my tracks, allowing me to not just move but experience.

To walk the sprawling UGA campus is to traverse the lines of both a map and a moment; not just to get somewhere but to remember where you are. Soak it all in, because these four years of walking will fly by.

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LAWS IN ATHENS

When transitioning to off-campus housing, it's important to note the Athens-Clarke County laws and ordinances you might not have known about while living on University of Georgia property.

WHERE TO PARK

Athens-Clarke County has an ordinance prohibiting people from parking in unapproved areas, even if it's your front yard. Parking anywhere that isn't specified as an approved area or doesn't meet the paving or graveling requirements is prohibited. This can result in citations or even towing, so take note of the parking practices in your neighborhood.

WHEN TO PLAY MUSIC

Noise that travels 300 feet is prohibited from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 7 a.m. to midnight on Friday and Saturday. This applies to party noise between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. during the week and between midnight and 7 a.m. on weekends, so be extra courteous to your neighbors if you're hosting!

At night, noise can't travel more than 100 feet without being considered a disturbance. This ordinance includes sounds made from mechanical devices,

human-produced sounds and commercial advertising, so keep your music and TVs at a reasonable volume.

WHERE TO PUT YOUR TRASH

All recycling and trash cans must be put out in front of your property by 7 a.m. the day of pickup, and removed from the street by the end of the day that the trash is collected. On non-pickup days, the cans must be stored behind or adjacent to your home, or screened from public view. Glass can be included in your regular recycling. Plastic bags can be recycled at grocery stores like Kroger and Publix or at the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials on College Avenue.

To find out what day your trash is collected, enter your address into the Solid Waste Department areas and collections schedules interactive map.

WHERE TO PUT FIRE PITS

Open burning is prohibited in Athens-Clarke County, with a few exceptions. Devices like backyard fireplaces, open metal drums, burn barrels or burn pits are prohibited unless the fire is for cooking food or recreational purposes. However, fires in provided grills, fireplaces and fire pits are allowed.



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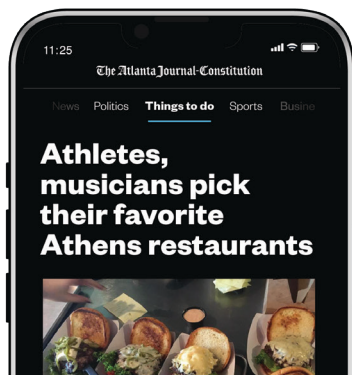
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NAVIGATING THE BUS SYSTEMS

CAROLINE NEWBERN

One of the first weeks of my freshman year, I took a bus leaving Ramsey Student Center without thinking much of it.

"Surely the university bus system will take me back to my dorm," I remember thinking to myself.

Ignorant thinking, as I would soon find out after being dropped off far from Brumby Hall at the Park & Ride lot. As a senior about to graduate from the University of Georgia, it's easy for me to brush off the incident with a laugh at my blind trust, but looking back, there is a lot I wish I had known.

Here is a list of tips for navigating both the UGA and Athens-Clarke County bus systems from someone who learned it the hard way.

DOWNLOAD THE RIGHT APPS

The UGA mobile app is your best friend for tracking buses along campus routes. For ACC Transit, the myStop App can help with planning trips across the area, providing real-time updates and service changes. And, when in doubt, Google Maps or Apple Maps can be of service.

PRACTICING RIDER ETIQUETTE

Try your best to arrive a couple of minutes early to a stop rather than sprinting to catch the bus at the last minute. Though easier said than done, this gives you time to breathe, and for the bus driver to notice you.

When you're on the bus, keep volume to a minimum by wearing headphones, pay attention to those needing to get on and off, and stay attentive toward your own destination.

RUSH HOUR

Between class periods, buses can become incredibly crowded. If you see a bus that looks like a sardine can, don't be afraid to wait five minutes for the next one. Or, if you need to board, make sure to move as far to the back as possible to keep the front clear for others.

LATE NIGHT SAFETY

If you find yourself on campus or downtown past dark, use the UGA bus system to navigate home safely. UGA provides night versions of routes, including Night Milledge and Night Campus Housing, both running until 1 a.m. Monday through Wednesday and until 3 a.m. Thursday through Saturday, and Night North-South, running until 9 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Pro-tip: Wait at well-lit areas like the Arch, where there are other students and buses pass through

WEEKDAYS VERSUS WEEKENDS

One of the most common mistakes is assuming that the bus schedule is the same every day. During the week, the UGA bus system offers consistent routes. However, come Friday night and the weekend, most routes are replaced by specific "weekend" routes that cover broader areas of campus and run less frequently. The same decrease goes for the ACC system; buses stop earlier in the evening and can have over an hour-long gaps in between pickups.

MASTERING THE SYSTEMS

Navigating Athens can sometimes require using both the UGA and ACC bus systems. Knowing points of overlap will help you get to where you need to be. Such stops include the Arch and Tate Student Center stops.

THE MULTIMODAL CENTER

While Tate is the heart of campus transit, the Multimodal Transportation Center (MMTC) downtown is the gateway to the rest of Athens. It can be intimidating at first, but it's the best place to catch buses to grocery stores and shopping centers around the city.

END OF THE LINE

While on a UGA bus, you can expect the driver to stop at just about every pickup and drop-off station. When getting on or off ACC buses, it can be helpful to visibly signal outside or pull the yellow cord on the bus to notify the driver. It's a small step, but one that can make a big difference.

A LIFE-CHANGING CLUB

ADDISON SIMMONS

I grew up on stage: from singing in church and school choir to dancing in my local company, I was preparing for a show from age 4 to 18. When it was time to graduate high school and leave behind my artistic passions, I experienced panic. What would I do with all my free time if I wasn't learning a new dance or practicing new music? Who would I be without these parts of my identity? I knew I needed to find something I could do in college that would allow me to continue to exercise my passions. After a discussion with my parents at a family dinner one night in May, I decided I should give a capella a try.

My father searched for what a capella groups the University of Georgia has to offer (as he always says, it was "worth a Google") and found "The Ecotones: a co-ed, ecologically-minded a capella group." It sounded so niche, so bizarre, and yet a perfect intersection of some of my passions. I have always loved sustainability, but never quite found my footing in science classes.

The Ecotones are based out of the Odum School of Ecology and do environmental volunteer work with the Upper Oconee Watershed Network. They just happen to meet twice a week to learn music and prepare for concerts as well. Again, bizarre, but exactly what I needed.

September 2022 rolled around and it was time for auditions. I was terrified. Starting college unmoored me quite a bit. Losing pieces of my identity and community was

hard, and my confidence was low. Sitting in my car in the Odum parking lot, I almost turned around five minutes before my audition time, but something in me knew I needed to give it a shot. I tried out, got a callback, and by the end of the week, I was in an a capella group.

I had never sung a capella before. I can't even actually read music, so there was a bit of a learning curve. I felt insecure and uncomfortable, and did not talk much at all those first few months of rehearsal. But these people were funny and kind, and I realized singing was cathartic for me. I always left rehearsal feeling better than I had before, and slowly but surely, I warmed up to everyone.

Before I knew it, I felt that I found a community in The Ecotones. I had moments where I realized, I would have never met these people if I hadn't taken that scary leap, and my life would not be the same without them.

I have now been in The Ecotones for four years and have been administrative director for the past two. I have opened up to The Ecotones, laughed and cried about school and life. The people in this group have stood by me for four years—they've been there when I've felt low and celebrated how I've grown.

I look back on my college experience with extreme gratitude that I joined that niche, bizarre, co-ed ecologically minded a capella group.





A QUIET PLACE

where to take a break on campus

ANNA KAPUSTAY

Everyone gets overwhelmed at college, whether it's because of piled up schoolwork or a busy work schedule. Freshman year can be a big adjustment, and sometimes there's just no time to go back to your dorm to decompress. Luckily, the University of Georgia has plenty of quiet places on campus to take a breather.

FINE ARTS BUILDING

One of the quieter buildings on North Campus, the Fine Arts Building has beautiful architecture and peaceful spots to decompress. The staircases on either side of the main entrance lead to smaller lobbies with seating, sunlight and access to restrooms.

FOUNDERS MEMORIAL GARDEN

UGA's campus is dotted with historic lawns and sunny quads, but if you're looking to relax somewhere that feels more private, head to the Founders Memorial Garden. Located on North Campus off of South Jackson Street, it's one of the most picturesque spots on campus. Filled with a wide variety of beautiful botany, there's a fountain, a small maze and plenty of benches and lawns to sit on. It's the perfect place to get a breath of fresh air and reconnect with nature.

THE GEORGIA CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

You may be familiar with the Georgia Center as a hotel and event venue, but it's also a convenient spot to work or unwind. Located off South Lumpkin Street, near Snelling Dining Commons and Myers Quad, stop by

to enjoy ample seating, a relaxed courtyard (with fire pits) and the Bulldog Bistro, where you can order a meal or grab a snack to go.

HERTY FIELD

The location of the first Georgia football game, Herty Field is a secluded spot on North Campus where you can enjoy the rushing of the iconic fountain and the sun shimmering on the water. There's a solar-powered charging station and plenty of benches to sit back and enjoy the view.

TRIAL GARDENS

Behind the Science Learning Center and in between College of Pharmacy and Snelling Dining Commons are the UGA Horticulture Trial Gardens. A hidden gem on South Campus, this garden puts both annual and perennial plants on trial to see how they thrive in the southern heat. It's the perfect place for a stroll to clear your head while taking in the colorful flowers.

WELL-BEING HUBS

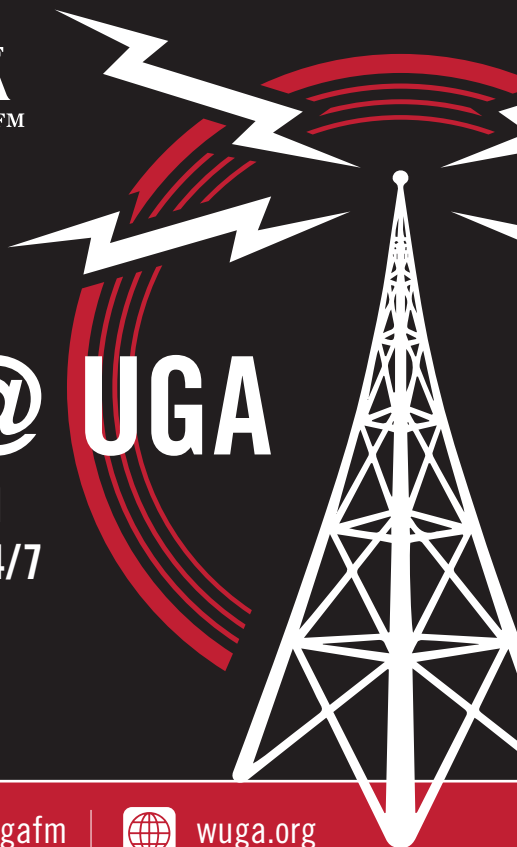
UGA's Well-Being Hubs are private and semi-private rooms where students can study, meditate, pray or just take a break between classes. Located all around campus, you can find them at the University Health Center, the Tate Student Center, Milledge Hall, the College of Environment and Design, Clark Howell Hall, Sanford Stadium and the College of Pharmacy. Features include comfortable seating, nap pods, massage chairs and art supplies. Some are first come, first served and others can be reserved online.



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CHEAP EATS

Take a break from the meal plan!

Dining hall food at UGA can actually be pretty great, but you'll get familiar with the rotating menu eventually. Here are some cheap and cheap-ish spots close to campus recommended by our editors.

ORDER A PIZZA

Yes, there are the national chains that line Baxter Street, but for something unique to Athens, order a pizza from **DEPALMA'S ITALIAN CAFE**. For a late night snack, head to **LITTLE ITALY**, where pizza is served by the slice until 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. Thursday through Saturday. If you happen to be near Five Points, stop by **FULLY LOADED PIZZA CO.** This pizza place serves slices and full pies. Grab a seat at the outdoor patio when the weather is nice — and don't miss out on Wing Wednesday for 90¢ wings.

GRAB A BURGER

In the heart of downtown Athens, **THE GRILL** offers a charming retro vibe, burgers, onion rings, shakes and their beloved feta fries. For a sustainable and locally-sourced option, head to **FARM BURGER** on Prince Avenue.

SOUTHERN COOKING

DAWG GONE GOOD BBQ is a counter-service barbecue spot specializing in pulled pork, ribs and mac and cheese. Grab a meal to sit at one of their outdoor tables or take a plate to go. Located off of Barnett Shoals Road, **PREACHER GREENS** boasts classic Southern cooking.

BIG CITY BREAD CAFE serves comfort food with creative twists made from locally-sourced ingredients.

TEA TIME

Stop at **HAPPY LEMON**, a Taiwanese establishment, for one of its many boba options. Want lunch or dinner too?

BUBBLE CAFE offers a full dining menu alongside snacks like dumplings and edamame to pair with its huge selection of boba teas in dozens of flavors.

TACO NIGHT

Check out **BARBERITOS**, an Athens-based restaurant chain offering burritos, tacos, quesadillas and more at multiple Athens locations. **TLALOC EL MEXICANO** is a beloved family-owned restaurant on North Chase Street that serves Mexican and Salvadoran food. **CALI-N-TITO'S** is an Athens favorite that serves affordable Cuban and Latin food at locations in Five Points and on the East Side.

GO INTERNATIONAL

Stop by **WOK'S UP** for an expansive and affordable menu offering Chinese cuisine, with menu and "WOK My Own" bowl options. Pick up a poke bowl from **AHI HIBACHI AND POKE**, or try their hibachi and sushi offerings. **MEDITERRANEAN GRILL** on Lumpkin Street has a menu featuring authentic entrees including spanakopita, gyros and kabobs — all for \$20 or less.

DORM LIFE

Pros and Cons of living on campus

ALLISON MAWN

As someone who has lived on campus at the University of Georgia for five years, I feel qualified to speak on the realities of dorm life in freshman year and beyond. Here are a few key lessons I've learned.

PARKING SPOTS

You have a better chance of getting a parking spot in a good location if you live on campus. Plus, you never have to worry about being late to class or missing a test because you couldn't find a spot in the Tate deck!

However, most lots get taken over by the Athletic Association for home football games. Unless you park by the freshman high rises, odds are you'll be forced to move your car for every gameday, which can get annoying.

PROXIMITY TO EVERYTHING

One of the nicest things about still living on campus is how calm my mornings are. As mentioned above, I don't have to worry about leaving early enough to find a parking spot. If you like to sleep a little later, you'll probably value the fact that you can roll out of bed 15 minutes before class and still make it on time. Between my feet and the buses, I can get anywhere on campus or downtown that I need to go.

Living on campus also makes scheduling less stressful; if I have a long break between classes, I easily can (and do) just go home and eat lunch or do homework. If I have a meeting a few hours after my day is done, I don't have to linger at the Miller Learning Center, I can go take a nap.

LIMITED SPACE

Newsflash: dorm rooms are small, and they get even smaller once you remember you have to share with a roommate. This makes you get creative with storage and learn to be organized, something absolutely vital to success in college.

Plus, alone time becomes almost entirely



dependent on your roommate's schedule. If you're more of a homebody, take that into consideration when you're matching with a roommate, or deciding if you're even going to stay on campus after freshman year.

SHARED BATHROOMS

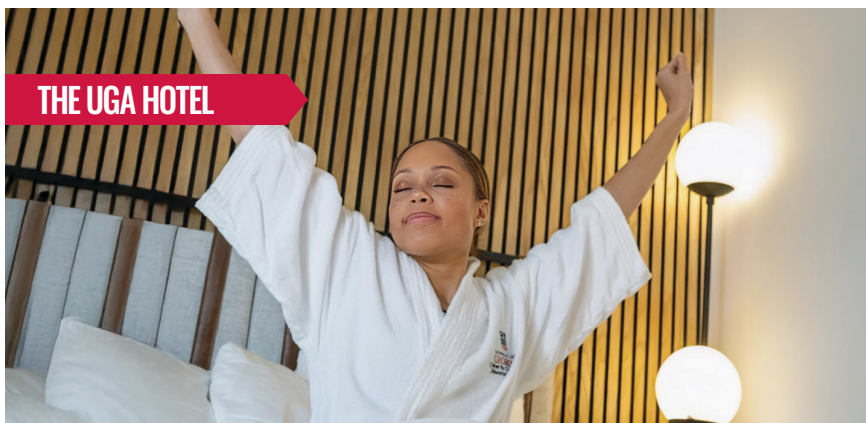
As disgusting as they are, communal bathrooms build character. It's a rite of passage that forces a reckoning with germs, shyness and the realization that you are not the center of the universe.

In many halls, you share only with your roommate or suitemates, which is much easier to manage (especially for folks who, unlike me, grew up with siblings). However, if you're a freshman aiming for the high rises, just go ahead and buy some shower shoes, because a public bathroom is in your future.

NO MONTHLY BILLS

This is one of the best and least talked about benefits of dorm living: all my bills are wrapped into my semester fees. I pay everything at once, with the help of my loans and scholarships, and then I'm done. My friends living off campus have to worry about making sure they pay their water, electricity and internet bills every month. Meanwhile, I take long, hot showers knowing I won't pay any more than I already have.

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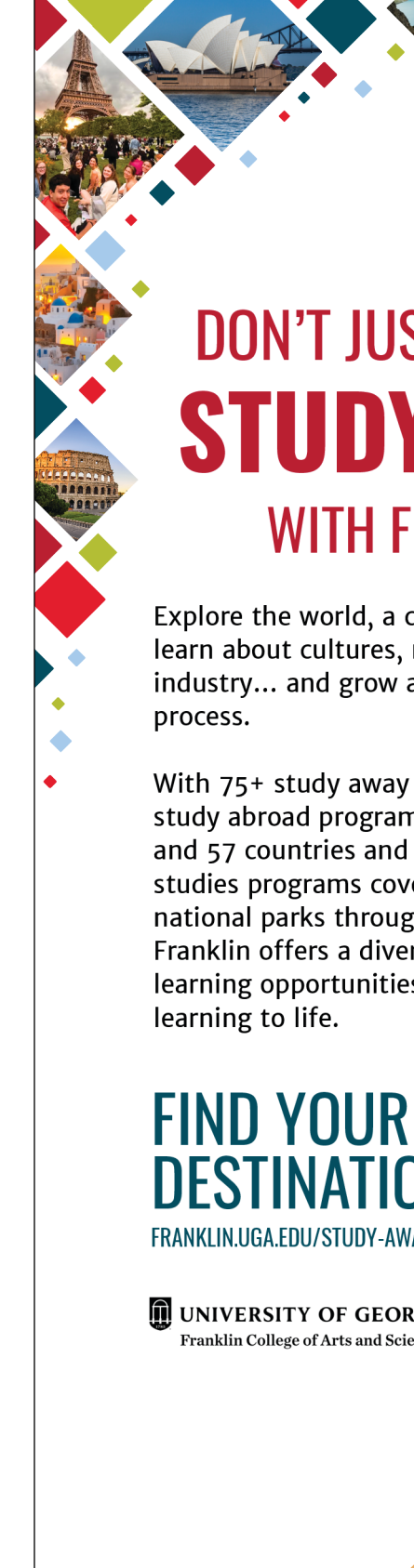


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JOB HUNTING

Use these UGA resources to find a job

After freshman year, finding a job or internship can be a great way to begin stepping into a career of interest. However, it is hard to know where to begin. To help ease the stress of the search, here are some resources to use as a starting point.



HANDSHAKE

Create a profile and let the University of Georgia's job search platform connect you to thousands of part-time roles, internships, employers and events. It's also the best place to find jobs on campus, but be sure to send a follow-up email after you apply.

LINKEDIN LEARNING

LinkedIn is a great tool to connect with people and find jobs, but UGA also provides

free LinkedIn Learning with your student ID. This service provides over 16,000 video courses taught by industry experts. Once completed, certifications are automatically posted to your profile.

SGA PROFESSIONAL CLOTHING CLOSET

The Student Government Association provides students with one free professional outfit per academic year. Select the desired items on the SGA website and you'll receive an email to schedule a pickup at one of the designated pop-up shops.

UGA MENTOR PROGRAM

This program connects students and alumni to form meaningful relationships. When selecting a mentor, students create a profile and are linked to mentors who relate to them based on their industry, major, location and more. Once connected, mentees and mentors can meet anytime, anywhere.

FREE AND DISCOUNTED TOOLS

Students have free access to the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and Microsoft Office Suite. Discounted items include Adobe Creative Cloud and Spotify.



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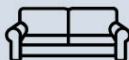
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CONGRATULATIONS NEW UGA PARENTS AND FAMILIES!

My name is Stephanie Shurling, and I am a proud graduate of the University of Georgia's College of Family and Consumer Sciences. My husband, Fielder, and I are also proud UGA parents: our son, Hunt, is in the Class of 2026, and our daughter, Calder, is in the Class of 2029.

Whether you are new to the Bulldog family or returning as an alumnus, we invite you to join the Parents Leadership Council (PLC) to enhance your experience as a UGA parent. The PLC is a vibrant community of engaged parents who are eager to support the university and make a meaningful impact on undergraduate student life.

Through the Parents Leadership Grants Program, organizations across UGA's campuses

receive vital funding that directly enhances students' experiences and well-being.

For our family, the PLC has been an invaluable way to connect with students, faculty, and university leadership. It has also given us the opportunity to build relationships with other UGA parents and students—connections we would not have made otherwise.

As your family begins its time at UGA, we'd love to share a few suggestions for staying connected with both your student and the university.

Good Luck and Go Dawgs!

Stephanie & Fielder Shurling
UGA Parents Leadership Council Co-chairs



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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TIPS FOR PARENTS

Advice from fellow Dawg moms and dads

SET EXPECTATIONS

Discuss your expectations for their academic performance before classes start, and make them realistic. This helps ensure you are all on the same page.

LET THEM LEAD

While it's important to keep students in check, parents should approach their students with respect for their own ability to take care of themselves.

GET TO KNOW UGA

Make what is important to your child important to you. It may not seem like they want you to care, but they secretly do. That intentionality will help with those desired, yet fleeting conversations.

TEXT OFTEN

Texts are much easier for busy and newly independent students to answer. They are also a great way to remain connected. Be sure to ask a question so your child has to respond.

BUY THEM A PARKING PASS

Passes are much cheaper than parking tickets, trust us. It's really a one or the other situation.

SHARE RESOURCES

Be sure that your student knows about student.uga.edu. It's the best tool to quickly find resources they may need on campus, from career counseling to mental well-being and the Arch Ready Professionalism Certificate Program.

ENCOURAGE INVOLVEMENT

Feelings of isolation and loneliness are common after moving away from home, and nudging students to take advantage of opportunities for social interaction might help them with this transition in the long run.

VISIT ATHENS

Take them out to eat [PAGE 84] and invite their friends. It can be a great way to get to know the new people of influence in their world. If you are able, offer to pay for dinner. Students can't resist free food!

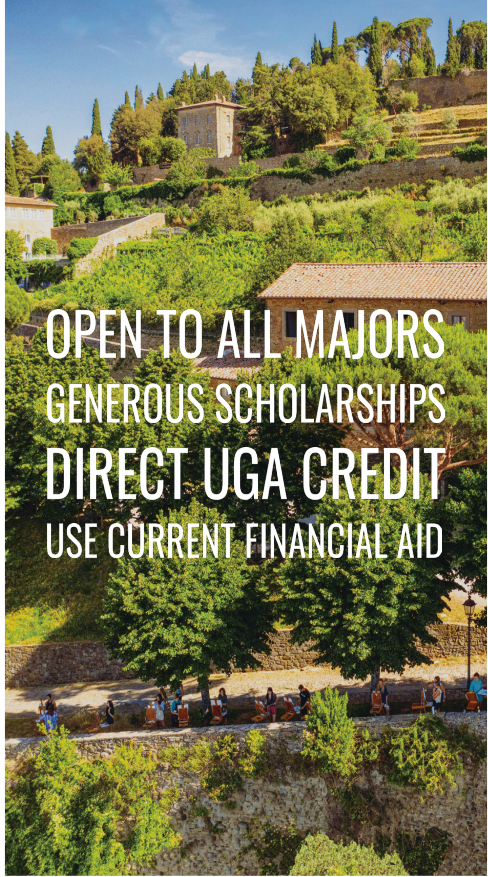
BE POSITIVE

Don't forget — they are excited but nervous. How you act will be their guide.

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UGA Cortona, one of UGA's oldest study abroad programs, has a rich background in the arts. Students are housed in a UGA owned facility overlooking the beautiful Italian countryside. Courses are taught in English by UGA faculty.

cortona.uga.edu

MOVE-IN TIPS

How to make moving easier for you and your student

Arriving at the University of Georgia for move-in is a momentous day for your family, but it also can be stressful and emotional for everyone. Here are a few suggestions to make the experience a little smoother.

TIME YOUR ARRIVAL

Students moving in during the first days of move-in need to schedule arrival times. You will be assigned a 15-minute window to arrive and then have 45 minutes to unload. Don't miss your time slot!

Students arriving later in the week don't have to schedule times, but you could find yourselves waiting to unload during this less structured period.

If your student is arriving early for Panhellenic Recruitment, ask them to coordinate with their roommate so you don't all arrive at once. If your student is not involved in recruitment, consider moving in later when it's less chaotic.

BE ZEN ABOUT THE TRAFFIC

Streets near campus will be backed up. If you can mentally prepare and keep your cool, it will help your student stay calm too.

DRESS LIGHT

In August, it's uncomfortably hot in Athens. You'll be hauling boxes across asphalt lots and in tight elevators. Bringing an extra shirt is not a bad idea.

LEAVE TO GET LUNCH

Go pick up food and give your kid a little alone time to sort their belongings and acclimate. There are dozens of restaurants in downtown Athens. Check out our recommendations for cheap eats on [PAGE 59].

PACK A SUPPLY KIT

You will end up needing things you don't expect. To prepare for emergencies, pack paper towels, spray cleaner, masking tape, a hammer, a screwdriver, wet wipes and more bottles of water than you think you need.

BRING THE FLAT-PACK

Bringing something from IKEA? It's a lot easier to haul the flat-pack for a Hauga or a Vesken into the dorm than having to schlep the assembled item.

BEWARE OF TARGET

Before you run out to buy a bunch of extra stuff, discuss if it's a priority. There are only two Targets in Athens and they will be packed. Can that towel or whiteboard wait? Plus, this gives you an excuse to visit in a few weeks or send a care package.

DON'T LINGER LONG

Once you've helped with the major hauling and unpacking, say goodbye, but don't drag it out and get everyone emotional. Save the tears until you hit the road.



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THANK YOU MOM AND DAD!

Notes of gratitude for parents
from UGA students

Dropping off your child at college can be challenging and full of emotions, but it is also an exciting new chapter in both of your lives. Your child might not always tell you directly how they are feeling or what they need or how you can help. Here are some honest comments from actual UGA students to prove you are doing a good job parents, and it will be okay!

“Thanks for letting me make mistakes and learn from them on my own, while still being there to support me when I wasn’t confident!”

“Your constant support has meant the world to me! Thank you for encouraging me to chase my dreams and being my favorite cheerleaders.”

“Thank you for being there for me everyday throughout these past four years! I didn’t say it enough, but having your support made this huge, new place feel like home from day one.”

“Thank you for helping me move into my tiny shoebox! Try not to miss me too much, you’ll probably get several calls from me tomorrow!”

“Thank you for raising me to be independent enough to go off on my own, I know I’m ready because of everything you’ve taught me.”

“Thank you for encouraging me to try new things and being a shoulder to lean on.”

“You put my wants and needs ahead of your own even though this is just as much a learning experience for you as it is for me. Thank you for always having my best interest at heart and offering the most loyal support and selfless sacrifice.”

“From the beginning, I’ve had a multitude of doubts and challenges come my way. Thank you for reassuring me of my strengths and expressing consistent belief in my abilities to tackle whatever comes my way.”

“Although you aren’t just across the hall anymore, it means the world to know that you’re only a text or phone call away. I’m so lucky to have your unwavering support.”



“MY MENTOR PROVIDED ME WITH CRITICAL LIFE AND PROFESSIONAL ADVICE, AND HAS OPENED MY EYES TO MANY MORE DOORS.” – UGA MENTEE



Mentor Program
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



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- **Quick Chats:** 15–30 min expert sessions

FIND A MENTOR AT [MENTOR.UGA.EDU](https://mentor.uga.edu).



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SCAN FOR DEGREE INFO



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College of Public Health

PURSUE UNDERSTANDING. TAKE ACTION.

ON THE GO

Your guide to Athens transportation

While most visitors drive to Athens, many flying in from out of state arrive at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, then rent a car or hop on a shuttle. Flights to the local Athens-Ben Epps airport, a few miles east of downtown, are available through charter service only.

GETTING THERE

CHARTER FLIGHTS

If you're planning on flying private, Aero Center Atlanta, Wheels Up, Georgia Jet and AirStar Charter all service Athens-Ben Epps airport. Visit accgov.com/airport for more information.

GROOME TRANSPORTATION

This shuttle service runs throughout the day from Hartsfield-Jackson to Athens and back. There are several pick-up and drop-off spots around town, including at the Georgia Center, the Classic Center and many downtown hotels. Fares range from \$39 to \$65, and one pet is allowed to travel with you for an additional \$15 fee. Online booking discounts are available.

GETTING AROUND

CAMPUS TRANSIT

The UGA bus system can save you the time and expense of looking for parking, and it travels far beyond campus, just download the UGA app for route information. Regular bus services do not run during home football games, when the university is closed or the weekend immediately before or after a holiday.

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY TRANSIT

Athens Transit is a free city bus with 20 different routes. Hours of operation end at 9:45 p.m. during the week and at 6:45 p.m. over the weekend. Buses don't run on major holidays.

Download the MyStop app for route tracking and additional information.

DOWNTOWN PARKING

Parking downtown can be tricky for visitors and locals alike, but you'll usually have better luck finding a spot on side streets and farther away from the Arch. Metered parking is \$3 an hour with a two-hour maximum from Monday to Saturday from 8 a.m. to



10 p.m., and all meters take credit cards. After 10 p.m., the meters are not monitored. You can find city-operated decks on College Avenue, a few blocks from the Arch, and on West Washington Street, closer to restaurants and music venues. Parking in these lots is typically free for the first 30 minutes, and \$2 per additional hour. The downtown area has several ParkMobile spots and lots that can be reserved and paid for via the ParkMobile app, which is also utilized by several UGA decks. Most street parking is free on Sundays and major holidays and is not monitored after 10 p.m. Many UGA lots are free and unrestricted on non-game weekends.

VISITORS CENTERS

UGA VISITORS CENTER

405 College Station Road

Here you can schedule campus tours, get directions and find answers to all your UGA-related questions. The Visitors Center is open Monday through Friday and on select Saturdays. Student-led campus tours consist of an admissions presentation, a ride on a UGA bus and an hour-long walking tour of historic North Campus. Registration is required for all guests, but self-guided tour maps are also available.

HISTORIC ATHENS WELCOME CENTER

280 East Dougherty Street

Open seven days a week, stop by the Church-Waddel-Brumby House, which is considered the oldest surviving residence in Athens, to grab a map, sign up for tours and get Athens-themed gifts. The welcome center offers both guided and self-guided tours about Black history, local music, historic homes and more.

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SUITE LIFE

Athens hotels near UGA

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On campus at UGA

If you want to be in the heart of campus, there's no better spot than this UGA-operated complex near Myers Quad and Stegeman Coliseum. It includes a 200-room hotel with large suites, two restaurants and a shuttle service.

GEORGIA GAMEDAY CENTER

0.2 miles from UGA

If you're traveling to Athens for a Georgia game or just want to be immersed in school spirit, this complex in the heart of downtown Athens rents one- two- and three-bedroom condos decked out in red and black. Units include kitchens, washers and dryers, access to a fitness center, parking garage and free Jittery Joe's coffee.

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

0.4 miles from UGA

Just off West Broad Street, the Holiday Inn Express has standard rooms and suites, on-site parking, free breakfast and a pool.

HOMEWOOD SUITES BY HILTON

0.3 miles from UGA

This East Broad Street hotel with larger suites offers several family-friendly features like free hot breakfast, connecting rooms and kitchens. You'll also find an on-site restaurant, The Bourbon Bulldog, gym and meeting spaces.

HOTEL INDIGO

0.4 miles from UGA

This upscale, environmentally-friendly hotel has a wide range of suites featuring modern farmhouse furnishings. Hotel Indigo also hosts music events in The Rialto Room and offers locally-sourced dining at Madison Bar & Bistro. Its private event spaces host meetings, conferences and even weddings.

HYATT PLACE

0.3 miles from UGA

This 190-room hotel on North Thomas Street, adjacent to the Classic Center, has a variety of different suite layouts. Amenities include free breakfast, a restaurant and Hybar, a rooftop bar with panoramic views of downtown Athens. Hyatt Place also offers

meeting and event spaces, as well as catering done in-house.

SPRINGHILL SUITES BY MARRIOTT

0.2 miles from UGA

This downtown hotel offers one- and two-room suites that include sleeper sofas and work areas. Enjoy complimentary breakfast, a fitness center and an on-site restaurant, 1918 Lounge.

THE ATHENIAN

0.4 miles from UGA

This historic inn inside a Greek Revival antebellum home opened in 2024. It features 11 rooms dressed in pastel tones and elegant furnishings all named after Greek gods and goddesses. There's also a lounge with a self-serve bar, snacks and Condor chocolates.

THE BELL BY KASA LIVING

0.2 miles from UGA

The former Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Exchange building built in 1916 was recently transformed into a boutique hotel which opened its doors in May. The Bell features eight unique rooms and a four-bedroom suite for larger parties, as well as a lounge, bar and terrace. No space is without rich colors, art deco patterns and nods to history like the original switchboards lining the hall.

RIVET HOUSE

2 miles from UGA

A 10-minute drive from campus, this luxury hotel in the Southern Mill complex opened in 2024. It offers a variety of stylish suites a little further from downtown, but you can always catch the shuttle to Sanford Stadium on game days. Enjoy the luxury spa, eat at Osteria Olio or Puma Yu's and explore the surrounding historic Boulevard neighborhood.

THE RUSHMORE

0.7 miles from UGA

If you're looking to be closer to Five Points or have a student involved in Greek Life on Milledge Avenue, you might opt for this luxury bed and breakfast from ATH | BNB. It features 14 unique suites and all-inclusive amenities.



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NORTH CAMPUS WALKING TOUR

Explore The historic heart of UGA

If you have an extra hour while visiting your student, take the time to explore the University of Georgia's North Campus. We recommend you start at the intersection of Broad Street and College Avenue. Allow us to guide you on your tour!

THE ARCH

With its cast-iron structure and three pillars, this landmark is hard to miss. Each pillar represents one of UGA's founding principles: wisdom, justice and moderation. Campus superstition says if an undergraduate walks beneath the Arch, they will not graduate.

HOLMES-HUNTER ACADEMIC BUILDING

The large, ornate columned building on your right will be hard to miss. It currently houses the office of the registrar. This building was renamed in 2001 in honor of Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter-Gault, the students who integrated UGA in 1961.

DUELING DEBATERS

As you walk past Holmes-Hunter and onto the lawn, pause for a moment when reaching Demosthenian Hall. Directly across the quad is Phi Kappa Hall. Founded in the 19th century, these buildings have hosted a centuries-old rivalry between debate societies.

THE CHAPEL BELL

Continue walking until you reach the UGA Chapel with its striking white exterior and six Doric columns. On the back of the building, you'll find the beloved Chapel

Bell. The bell used to sit in a tower on top of the building, but in 1913 it was relocated behind the chapel because wood rot damaged the tower. Students today ring the bell after both school-wide and personal victories, like football wins or finishing an exam.

HERTY FIELD

The large expanse next to Moore College is Herty Field, where Georgia played its first official football game in 1892 (Georgia beat Mercer University 50-0). Home games were played on Herty Field until 1911. The fountain in the center of the field is a popular photo spot.

OLD COLLEGE

Continue walking, and you'll soon be face-to-face with UGA's oldest remaining structure. Just look for the statue of UGA's founder, Abraham Baldwin, in front of the building. Old College was built in 1806. The building has housed classrooms, a dormitory, dining facilities and even a training program for the U.S. Navy during World War II.

MAIN LIBRARY

UGA's Main Library has seven floors filled with primary sources and scholarly works. It's also a great place to soak up some air conditioning, rest your legs, use the restroom or even grab lunch at Einstein Bros. Bagels. From the top floor, you have a great view of campus and the surrounding countryside.



VISITING ATHENS

Athens Spots to check out with the whole family

Maybe you're visiting your University of Georgia student with younger siblings along for a ride, or maybe a grandparent or aunt is joining the fun. Here are places that can entertain everyone in a multigenerational group.

BROWSE BOOKS AND MUSIC

Music fans of all ages should head to Wuxtry Records, which has a revered spot in Athens music history. Its second-floor sister store, Bizarro-Wuxtry, is packed with comics, books and collectibles. Avid Bookshop on Barber Street stocks popular and harder-to-find titles, has an exceptional kids section and hosts author readings and other events.

ACCESSIBLE ART

Opened in 1948, the Georgia Museum of Art occupies a contemporary building on UGA's East Campus. It holds nearly 17,000 pieces, including 19th- and 20th-century American paintings, artwork from the Italian Renaissance and a growing collection of Southern decorative arts. The monthly Family Day events allow kids and parents to spend a Saturday morning learning about a specific exhibit. Plus: admission is free.

FARM FRESH

Every Saturday morning, vendors set up shop on the tennis courts at Bishop Park to sell seasonal produce, meats and cheeses, baked goods, fresh flowers and handmade crafts. The weekend market runs all year, while Creature Comforts Brewing Co. hosts a smaller market downtown on Wednesday nights from March to November.

FUN AND GAMES

The Rook & Pawn is a board game cafe that serves food, coffee, tea and spirits. Their impressive selection of over 600 games ranges from Scrabble and Clue to Cranium and The Chameleon. The daily game fee is \$7 per guest, free for kids under 13. For thrill seekers, LumberjAXE offers hourly axe-throwing packages for people looking to test their skills. Participants must be 13 and older.

GEORGIA WILDLIFE

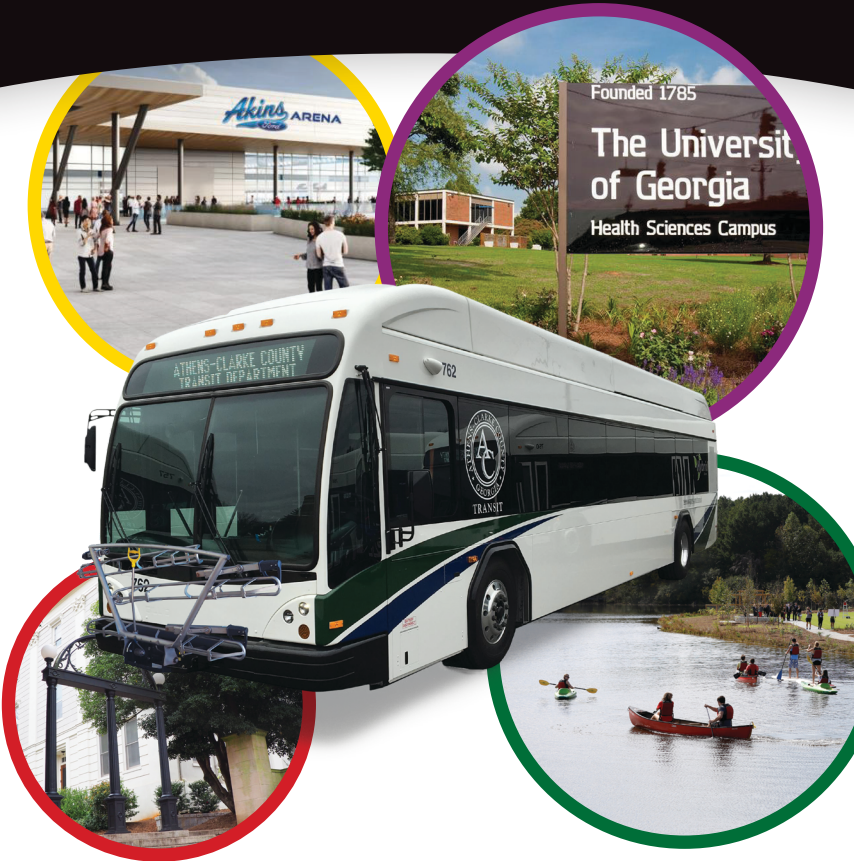
Housed in Memorial Park, Bear Hollow Zoo provides refuge and rehabilitation for animals native to Georgia that have physical disabilities or other challenges. Admission is free and the small zoo is easy to stroll through as you see residents like otters, owls, an alligator and the namesake bears. For an indoor experience, head to Entangled Cat Cafe in Watkinsville to grab a snack and meet some (adoptable) kitties!



TRANSIT

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accgov.com/transit



The myStop app is free and provides real-time bus information, trip planning and more.

DINING FOR ANY OCCASION

Where to eat when you visit Athens

Whether you're in town for a special occasion or just stopping by for a few hours, there are plenty of restaurants in Athens to suit all of your plans.

LEISURELY BRUNCH

BIG CITY BREAD CAFE

This cafe is open for breakfast, lunch and Friday night dinner. There's burgers, sandwiches, salads and baked goods to enjoy in the spacious dining area or on the shaded patio.

THE FARM CART

A family-run business that started as a farmers market food truck, The Farm Cart expanded into a brick-and-mortar restaurant on Baxter Street in 2019 thanks to the popularity of their flaky biscuit sandwiches full of local ingredients.

MAMA'S BOY

Consistently voted Best Brunch in Athens by Red & Black readers, Mama's Boy serves indulgent breakfast fare like salmon cakes Benedict and Georgia peach French toast. There are two locations in Athens and one in Watkinsville now, too.

QUICK LUNCH

AHI HIBACHI & POKE

Ahi Hibachi & Poke offers a cheaper and more casual alternative to a traditional hibachi restaurant. Located in downtown Athens and known for its affordable prices and large portions, Ahi is a go-to for many University of Georgia students.

TRAPPEZE PUB

Famous for its enormous craft and imported beer selection, this pub at the corner of Hull and West Washington streets serves superior bar fare, catering to carnivores with dishes like the Double Pig (braised pork plus bacon), with plant-based options like the veggie Reuben. Don't leave without trying the signature raspberry ketchup.

CALI-N-TITO'S

The Five Points location is close to campus with patio seating and a BYOB policy, while the larger East Side location has a full bar, gelato counter and arcade games. Both spots are beloved by locals, students and families alike, have great atmospheres and some of the best food in town.

TREATING A CROWD

CLOCKED!

Since 2000, this American diner on Washington Street has served the Athens community. Eclectic decor and retro branding adorn the dining room and patio, while the menu ranges from burgers and hot dogs to fried pickles and blackberry milkshakes. Plus: they can make almost anything vegetarian.

SOUTH KITCHEN + BAR

This Washington Street spot was once the Hotel Georgian, which hosted visitors to Athens from 1909 to 1975. South Kitchen now occupies the ground floor, while the original ballroom has been converted into a private event space. The menu features modernized Southern comfort food like Nashville hot chicken and biscuits and gravy as well as beer, wine and cocktails.

THAI SPOON

Voted best family-owned international restaurant by our readers, Thai Spoon is nearing two decades in business between Little Italy and The Globe. Their extensive menu features dozens of authentic Thai rice, noodle, soup and curry dishes.

CELEBRATING YOUR STUDENT

CHUCK'S FISH

Operating in a renovated former Greyhound station, this upscale restaurant features seafood fresh from the owner's Destin, Florida dockside wholesale market. Along with daily specials, Chuck's serves sushi and classics like seared scallops and stuffed shrimp.

LAST RESORT GRILL

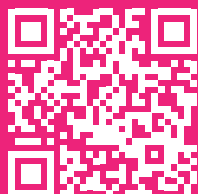
Founded as a music venue in 1966, Last Resort hosted acts like Jimmy Buffett and Towns Van Zandt before it started serving its signature southern fare. Steaks, praline chicken and crab cakes are all on offer, but don't leave without a slice of white chocolate cheesecake.

THE NATIONAL

This Mediterranean-influenced restaurant on West Hancock Avenue was co-founded by Hugh Acheson and Peter Dale. With serene decor, a big patio and stellar service, it's ideal for family celebrations.

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Did you know that George's owner Reggie DiSante was a protégé of Harry Bissett's founder George Davis? Come and experience many of the classics from those glory days of the '80s, '90s, and '00s!

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by Readers of The Red & Black



ACCOLADE
BY GREYSTAR

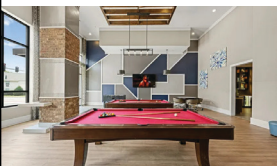
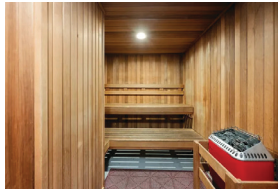
ATHENS

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WHERE TO FIND HELP

Resources both on and off campus

ON CAMPUS

ACCESSIBILITY AND TESTING

Accessibility and Testing (formerly the Disability Resource Center) aims to create a welcoming academic and social environment for students with disabilities. The staff works with each student to develop an individualized accommodation plan for attendance, testing and more.

accessibility.uga.edu | 706-542-8719

COUNSELING AND PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

This service, referred to as CAPS, offers short-term individual and group counseling. An initial screening is free, with reduced rates for visits afterward if the student has paid health fees. CAPS also offers mental health workshops and a 24-hour hotline.

caps.uga.edu | 706-542-2273

THE FONTAINE CENTER

This center is dedicated to alcohol and substance abuse prevention and recovery. They offer learning tools, programming and advocacy services.

healthpromotion.uga.edu/fontaine-center
706-542-8690

THE LOVE AND MONEY CENTER

This College of Family and Consumer Sciences clinic can help with everything from managing student loans to couples counseling. The financial planning, legal advice and nutrition services are free. Other programs, like therapy, are offered on a sliding scale.

fcs.uga.edu/loveandmoneycenter
706-542-4486

NUTRITION SERVICES

The University Health Center's Nutrition Teaching Kitchen offers \$5 cooking classes focused on healthy and simple meals for students who have paid their health fees, \$10 for those who haven't. The department also offers appointments with nutritionists.

healthpromotion.uga.edu/nutrition/kitchen
706-542-8690

PRIDE CENTER

The Pride Center was formed to foster an inclusive and informed community for LGBTQ+ individuals in Athens. It offers a list of resources on its website and provides safe spaces like a student lounge and a quiet study room on campus. They also have helpful Pride Ambassadors and a calendar full of fun events.

pride.uga.edu | 706-542-4077

RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

RSVP offers classes, counseling and educational resources on relationships and sexual violence. Its programs include healthy dating tips, consent education and training on how to be an active bystander.

24-hour hotline: 706-542-7233

healthpromotion.uga.edu/rsvp | 706-542-8690

STUDENT CARE AND OUTREACH

This division's mission is to assist students with any kind of hardship. Get help for a fellow student, find mental health resources and learn about hardship withdrawals.

sco.uga.edu | 706-542-8479

UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER

Many programs are operated by the UHC, which offers medical services through four clinics with services from general checkups to dental, vision and gynecology services.

healthcenter.uga.edu | 706-542-1162

OFF CAMPUS

THE COTTAGE

A sexual assault center and children's advocacy organization, The Cottage operates a 24-hour help line, conducts legal and medical advocacy, provides referrals for survivors and offers crisis counseling.

northgeorgiacottage.org | 706-546-1133

NORTHEAST HEALTH DISTRICT

The public health department offers many free or low-cost services, such as long-term birth control, contraceptive pills, condoms, STI testing and vaccinations.

northeasthealthdistrict.org/locations/clarke-county | 706-389-6921

WHAT'S NEXT?

2026 - 2027 UGA academic calendar

FALL 2026



- AUG. 17 | CLASSES BEGIN
- AUG. 21 | DROP/ADD ENDS
- SEPT. 7 | LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
- OCT. 30 | FALL BREAK
- NOV. 11 | WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE
- NOV. 23-27 | THANKSGIVING BREAK
- NOV. 30 | CLASSES RESUME
- DEC. 1 | CLASSES END
- DEC. 3-9 | FINAL EXAMS
- DEC. 11 | FALL COMMENCEMENT

SPRING 2027



- JAN. 11 | CLASSES BEGIN
- JAN. 15 | DROP/ADD ENDS
- JAN. 18 | MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY HOLIDAY
- MAR. 8-12 | SPRING BREAK
- MAR. 15 | CLASSES RESUME
- APRIL 7 | WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE
- APRIL 26 | CLASSES END
- APRIL 28-MAY 4 | FINAL EXAMS
- MAY 6 | GRADUATE COMMENCEMENT
- MAY 7 | UNDERGRADUATE COMMENCEMENT

SUMMER 2027

- JUNE 3 | CLASSES BEGIN
- JUNE 9 | DROP/ADD ENDS
- JUNE 18 | JUNETEENTH OBSERVANCE HOLIDAY
- JULY 14 | WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE
- JULY 28 | CLASSES END
- JULY 29-30 | FINAL EXAMS
- AUG. 2 | SUMMER CONFERRAL

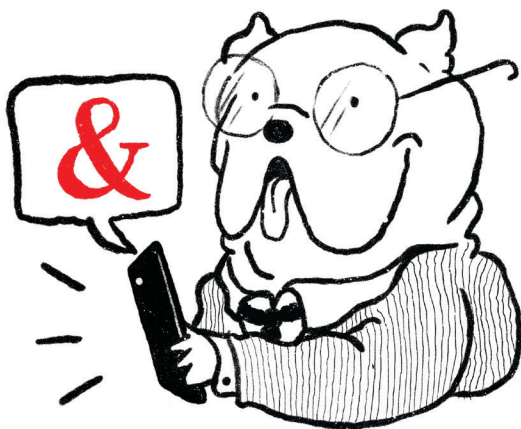
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CLASS OF 2030 BUCKET LIST

Try these Athens activities and University of Georgia traditions to have a well-rounded experience in the Classic City.

DO THE DAWG DAY OF SERVICE

You'll support a worthy cause of your choosing while learning about volunteer opportunities and meeting new people.

GO TO THE GEORGIA THEATRE

There are concerts happening downtown almost every night of the week. Check out the center of the Athens music scene at the Georgia Theatre or its iconic rooftop to see a show and a spectacular view.

GO INSIDE THE CHAPEL

You'll definitely stop by the chapel to ring the iconic bell or take pictures, but this 1830's building also hosts special lectures, student organization events and even the occasional wedding.

LEARN ABOUT ALUMNI

The Hunter-Holmes building was named for Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes, who integrated the University of Georgia in 1961. Learn about them and other notable alumni who have made campus a more inclusive community.

MEET UGA

He's somewhat elusive, but it's entirely possible to meet college football's best mascot in real life, either at a special event or before a game.

VISIT BEAR HOLLOW ZOO

A must for animal lovers, this free zoo in Memorial Park is a refuge for injured and rehabilitated native Georgia species.

GO TO THE GMOA

Spend an afternoon walking through the tranquil halls of the Georgia Museum of Art. The best part? Admission is free.

VISIT THE MORTON THEATRE

Opened in 1910, the Morton Theatre was one of the first vaudeville theaters to be built, owned and operated by an African American, Monroe "Pink" Morton. The theater still hosts performances today.

CHECK OUT THE OBSERVATORY

The UGA Department of Physics and Astronomy hosts open house events for those interested in taking a peek into the night skies.

ATTEND A FOOTBALL GAME

It takes fortitude, hydration and sunscreen to last four quarters of a September game, but it's a quintessential UGA experience, even if you're not into sports.

SEE ALL THE SPORTS

If you are into sports, make it a mission to cheer on as many teams as you can, from basketball to gymnastics. Most events are free or inexpensive for students.

VISIT THE BOTANICAL GARDENS

Taking a stroll through the flower gardens in the spring or the changing colors in the fall makes for a memorable trip.

GO TO WASHINGTON FARMS

Located just outside of Athens in Bogart, Georgia, Washington Farms offers fall festivities and hands-on harvesting in their pumpkin patch. It's a great place for fall dates and Halloween celebrations.

FIND ALL THE BULLDOG STATUES

It takes effort to track down the dozens of statues scattered throughout Athens. Start with the one at The Red & Black office!

HIT THE ICE

In winter, Akins Ford Arena at The Classic Center hosts hockey games for the Rock Lobsters and the Ice Dawgs, but some nights are reserved for public skating.

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SUMMER ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

All students are required to attend an in-person orientation session. Spots are claimed on a first-come, first-served basis for both first-year and transfer students. Registration opened for all students on May 4, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET.

FIRST YEAR REGISTRATION DEADLINE | MAY 22

FIRST YEAR ORIENTATION SESSIONS

MAY 26-27	JUNE 25-26
MAY 28-29	JULY 7-8
JUNE 2-3	JULY 9-10
JUNE 4-5	JULY 13-14
JUNE 9-10	JULY 15-16
JUNE 11-12	JULY 20-21
JUNE 15-16	JULY 22-23
JUNE 17-18	JULY 27-28
	JULY 29-30

TRANSFER REGISTRATION DEADLINE | JUNE 15

TRANSFER ORIENTATION SESSIONS

MAY 20-21
MAY 21-22
JUNE 1-2
JUNE 22-23
JUNE 8-9
JUNE 23-24

LAST CHANCE ORIENTATION SESSION | AUGUST 14

This is the last orientation session available for both first-year and transfer students enrolling in the Fall 2026 semester.

Early Summer Orientation Session | May 11
All students taking a Maymester or extended summer session are required to attend this orientation session. Any other spots are available to transfer students enrolling in the summer 2026 or fall 2026 semesters.

All orientation sessions are available to both summer and fall transfer students. Summer transfer students must attend an orientation session before their start term's first day of classes. For information on terms, visit reg.uga.edu.

DAWG CAMP EXTENDED ORIENTATION

- DAWG CAMP EXPLORE | JUNE 16-20
- DAWG CAMP ADVENTURE ONE | JUNE 23-28
- DAWG CAMP CLASSIC CITY | JUNE 23-27
- DAWG CAMP CONNECT | JUNE 23-27
- DAWG CAMP ADVENTURE TWO | JULY 7-12
- DAWG CAMP INNOVATE | JULY 8-12
- DAWG CAMP DISCOVERY | JULY 16-19

New student orientation is required for all incoming students. Dawg Camp is an optional extended orientation program intended to facilitate continued community-building.

Learn more at transitions.uga.edu.



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