



CAPITOL
Technology University

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDE

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Welcome to Capitol Technology University

Introduction

Capitol Tech is Washington D.C.'s premier STEM University – supplying human capital to America's most technologically advanced government agencies and their private sector supply chains. With an education laser-focused on STEM careers, Capitol Technology University uniquely positions students for top roles in the region's booming tech hub. Located in the Greater Washington D.C area, in Laurel, MD, we welcome you to the DMV and want to help you ease into life as a new student and resident to the area!

Overview of the Guidebook

This guide is meant for international students (like you!) from the Office of Student Life dedicated to making the process of transitioning to the US and on-campus living a smooth one.

Contact Information

With any additional questions or concerns in regards to student life contacts the Student Life Office:

With campus safety concerns contact: security@captechu.edu

Or call at this number: 301-938-2928

With any financial aid questions or concerns contact the Financial Aid Office: finaid@captechu.edu

With concerns in housing and resident life contact Resident Life: residencelife@captechu.edu

For online learning help contact Online Helpdesk/Support: ask@captechu.edu

For learning accommodations, contact Student Life deanofstudents@captechu.edu

Preparing Your Technology

Computer Requirements

As Capitol Technology University takes on a hybrid learning model, it is important that you are well prepared for your classes with the proper technology equipment and settings.

Ensure your success at Capitol Tech by meeting the minimum computing requirements outlined in your enrollment packet.

For operating system:

Windows 10 (or later) or a Linux/Unix flavor is recommended, with proficiency in Windows, virtual machines, and Windows emulators for Linux users.

Your processor should be a Quad Core, 2.6GHz i5/i7 (6th generation or newer) or equivalent,

paired with 8GB DDR3 memory (16GB recommended) and a 500GB 7200 rpm hard drive or SSD. Networking requires Ethernet and N/AC compatible wireless capabilities, and a 1080p display is recommended for the monitor. Essential peripherals include a working mouse, trackpad, or touchscreen, speakers or headphones, a webcam with front-facing camera capabilities, and a noise-canceling microphone.

For software:

Maintain active antivirus with firewall protection and use Microsoft Office 365, which is available for free with your @captechu.edu email address.

*Note that advanced undergraduate classes may have additional hardware and software requirements.

Adapting to Maryland Weather

For more information on the University closings and weather forecasting's the [CapTechU App](#) for real-time updates on weather conditions and university closings and emergencies.

Brief Overview of MD Weather

In the summertime, from June to September, Laurel gets warm and humid. It's great for doing things outside, and the temperatures are usually between 70°F and 87°F.

But when winter comes, usually from December to February, Laurel gets very cold, sometimes snowy, and the wind can be strong. It's important to wear warm clothes during this time, as temperatures can go from 25°F to 40°F.

Throughout the whole year, Laurel has a mix of sun and clouds. It's not too hot or too cold all the time.

The temperatures don't usually go below 12°F or above 94°F, so it's pretty moderate. The range of temperatures you can expect throughout the year is from 25°F to 87°F.

The best times for enjoying warm-weather activities are from early June to early July and then from late July to late September. That's when the weather is most comfortable for doing things outside.

Winter Dress Guide/Proper Attire

As you embark on your journey at Capitol Technology University, we want to ensure that you are well-prepared for the winter months, particularly in the DMV (District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia) area. The following formal guide aims to assist you in selecting appropriate winter attire, considering the diverse and often challenging weather conditions you may encounter.

1. Coat/Jacket:

- Choose a heavy, insulated coat to shield against cold winds.
- Opt for water-resistant material to ensure protection during snow or rain.

2. Sweaters:

- Wear sweaters or thermal shirts under your coat for added warmth.
- Consider a mix of lighter and heavier sweaters for the ability to add or remove clothing when moving throughout different temperatures.

3. Gloves:

- Invest in high-quality, insulated gloves to protect your hands from the harsh cold.
- Opt for touchscreen-friendly gloves for convenient device usage without exposing your fingers.

4. Socks:

- Select warm socks, preferably made of wool or thermal materials for superior insulation.
- Consider layering with thinner socks as needed, especially during extremely cold conditions.

5. Boots:

- Prioritize insulated, waterproof boots to navigate through snow or slush.
- Ensure your boots have excellent traction to prevent slipping on icy surfaces.

6. Non-Slip Shoes:

- In icy conditions, wear shoes with slip-resistant soles for enhanced traction.
- Consider carrying foldable or lightweight overshoes for unforeseen weather changes.

7. Hat/Ear Warmers:

- Cover your head to retain body heat. A hat or ear warmers are excellent choices.
- Opt for windproof materials to guard against chilly gusts.

8. Scarves:

- Wrap a thick scarf around your neck to provide additional warmth.
- It can also act as a face cover during particularly cold days.

9. Umbrella:

- Keep a compact, wind-resistant umbrella for unexpected rain or snow.
- Ensure it fits conveniently into your bag for easy transportation.

10. Layers:

- Embrace the concept of layering. It provides adaptability to changing temperatures.
- Consider thermal leggings or long johns under pants for added insulation.

11. Backpack:

- Utilize a backpack to carry extra layers, gloves, or essential items.
- Consider a waterproof cover to protect your belongings during inclement weather.

12. Sunglasses:

- Snow can be reflective, necessitating sunglasses to protect your eyes from glare.
- Choose lenses that are UV-resistant for overall eye health.

13. Check Weather Updates:

- Stay informed about daily weather conditions to plan your attire effectively.
- Download a reliable weather app for quick and accurate updates.

14. Hydration:

- Given the dry winter air, carry a reusable water bottle to stay hydrated and refill when needed with hydration stations and water fountains on and off campus.
- Utilize lip balm and moisturizer to prevent skin dryness.

Navigating Transportation

Transportation Apps/Options

Capitol Technology University is conveniently located, with [Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport](#) (BWI) just a 20-minute drive away and [Reagan National Airport](#) approximately 30 to 40 minutes away.

Upon your initial arrival at the University, you may not find direct transportation to campus readily available. In such cases, consider the following transportation options:

Taxi Services from BWI to Laurel:

Airport Connection Taxi

Contact: 301-446-2860

Travelers Ride

Contact: 301-483-0019

Alternative Methods:

Rideshare Apps:

Utilize popular rideshare apps such as [Uber](#) and [Lyft](#) for convenient and on-demand transportation.

Important Note: While these modern-day transportation options offer flexibility and ease of use, it's crucial to exercise caution and prioritize your safety. Capitol Technology University does not endorse or provide these services directly.

Safety Tips:

- Share your location with someone you trust, especially when using rideshare apps.
- Inform someone of your destination and expected arrival time.
- Always verify the identity of the driver and the vehicle before entering.

Capitol Technology University Shuttle Bus + Schedule

A free shuttle service is provided to all Capitol students, making loops every two hours to various stops including the metro, grocery store, and local entertainment.

Operating Hours:

Friday: 12:00 p.m. (noon) - 8:00 p.m. (Last pick up at 8 p.m.)

Saturday: 12:00 p.m. (noon) - 8:00 p.m. (last pick-up at 8 p.m.)

*No Summer Hours

The Shuttle will operate exclusively during the academic semesters, including the weekends, and is inactive during breaks or when school is not in session.

Stops:

- Greenbelt Metro, Greenbelt
- Walmart, Laurel
- Target, Laurel
- Laurel Town Center
- Giant Grocery Store, Laurel
- Shoppers Grocery Store, Laurel
- Ikea, College Park

Public Transportation in the DMV

Capitol is a 15-minute drive from the Greenbelt, Maryland, rail station, which connects with the Washington Metro, Amtrak and Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) subway and train lines.

1. Greenbelt, Maryland, Rail Station:

- This is a transportation hub located in [Greenbelt, Maryland](#).
- It serves as a central point for various public transportation services, making it a crucial transit hub in the region.

2. Washington Metro:

- The [Washington Metro](#), often referred to as the Metrorail or Metro, is a rapid transit system that connects various parts of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.
- It operates subway and bus services, providing a convenient way to travel within the urban and suburban areas.

3. Amtrak:

- [Amtrak](#) is a national passenger rail service in the United States.
- It connects major cities and regions across the country, offering long-distance travel options by train.

4. Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Subway and Train Lines:

- [MARC](#) is a commuter rail system that primarily serves the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area.
- It has different train lines, including the Penn Line, Camden Line, and Brunswick Line, connecting cities in Maryland, Washington, D.C., and neighboring states.

How to Use Them:

Getting to Capitol from Greenbelt:

- You can reach by taking a 15-minute drive from the Greenbelt rail station. This drive provides a direct route to the destination.

Using Washington Metro:

- The Greenbelt station connects with the Washington Metro. To use the Metro, you'll need to purchase a fare card, such as a [SmarTrip](#) card, at the station. The card is tapped at the entrance and exit gates to pay for your trip.

Amtrak Travel:

- If you plan to travel long distances, Amtrak provides train services. For example, taking a trip from Maryland to New York for a weekend conference or visiting a friend down in Maine.
- You can purchase Amtrak tickets online or at the station. Save on travel by checking out [their deal and promotions page](#) to see if any of the offers can apply to your travel needs. Board the train at the designated platform, and enjoy the journey to your destination.

MARC Subway and Train Lines:

- MARC train services operate from the Greenbelt station. Tickets can be purchased at the station or online. Board the train according to the schedule, and it will take you to various destinations in the region.

How to get a Metro Card

This is a quick guide on how to get a card to use for Metro transportation services (train, buses, light rail).

Getting a Metro Card:

**This process can also be completed online on the official WMATA [website](#).

1. Visit a Metro Station:

- Go to any Metro station in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

2. Locate Farecard Machines:

- Inside the station, find the farecard machines, often located near the station entrance.

3. Select “Farecard” Option:

- On the farecard machine, choose the “Farecard” option. This is the type of card used for Metrorail and Metrobus services.

4. Choose Card Type:

- Decide whether you want a paper farecard or a plastic SmarTrip card. A [SmarTrip](#) card is a rechargeable, plastic card that is more convenient for regular use.

5. Add Value to the Card:

- If you choose a SmarTrip card, you will need to add value to it. Select the amount you want to load onto the card. For paper farecards, the fare is printed directly on the card.

6. Payment:

- Pay for the farecard using cash, credit, or debit cards at the machine.

7. Receive Your Card:

- Once payment is processed, the machine will dispense your farecard or SmarTrip card.

8. Use Your Metro Card:

- For a paper farecard, simply swipe it at the Metrorail fare gates or insert it into the farebox on Metrobus. If you have a SmarTrip card, tap it on the card reader.

Tips:

SmarTrip Card Benefits:

- Consider getting a SmarTrip card for added convenience. It allows you to add value online and offers faster entry to Metrorail and Metrobus.

Online Reload:

- If you have a SmarTrip card, you can reload it online through the official SmarTrip website.

App Integration:

- SmarTrip cards can also be linked to mobile payment apps for easier management.

Financial Considerations

Bank Accounts

Account Opening Without Social Security Number (SSN):

Banks like [Bank of America](#), Wells Fargo, Chase, [PNC](#) and a few others, allow you to open a checking account without a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN).

Instead, you can provide alternative identification from personal documents. These may include:

- Passport
- Consular identification card
- Government-issued driver's license.

Most banks will also ask for a second form of verification. As a Non-US citizen, you will most likely to produce one of these:

- Alien registration or permanent resident card
- Individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN)

This flexibility ensures that international students can access essential banking services without unnecessary hurdles.

Read the article [here](#) for an in-depth guide to opening an account with Chase. Keep in mind that these requirements may vary depending on the bank so please remain updated on the requirements before seeking a new account.

Taxes

Once a year on April 15, anyone who receives income must file a federal tax return to the state and federal governments.

As an international student, understanding U.S. tax obligations is essential. Here are key considerations:

- **Tax Filing Status:** Determine your tax filing status as a non-resident or resident alien for tax purposes.
- **Tax Forms:** Be aware of the necessary tax forms such as Form 1040NR or Form 1040.
- **Tax Treaties:** Explore tax treaties between the U.S. and your home country to understand any potential benefits.
- **Filing Deadlines:** Adhere to U.S. tax filing deadlines to avoid penalties.
- **Additional Note for International Students:**

- **Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN):** As an international student, you can apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) using an IRS Form W-7. This enables you to fulfill your tax obligations (and open up bank accounts!)
- **Free Tax Assistance:** The IRS and some advocacy groups can assist you in preparing and filing your taxes for free, ensuring that the process is accessible and straightforward.

Ensuring Your Health and Safety

Health Insurance

The University offers two health care options for students to stay insured while on campus via the [EJ Smith service](#) and with [UnitedHealthcare](#).

Importance of Health Insurance for International Students:

1. Financial Protection:

- Health insurance provides crucial financial protection against unexpected medical expenses. It shields international students from significant out-of-pocket costs, ensuring that healthcare does not become a financial burden.

2. Legal Compliance:

- Maintaining health insurance is often a legal requirement for international students in the U.S. It ensures compliance with immigration regulations and helps students avoid potential legal issues, securing their academic standing.

3. Emergency Situations:

- In case of emergencies or unforeseen medical events, health insurance is indispensable. It ensures that international students receive prompt and appropriate medical care, including emergency room visits and urgent treatments.

E.J. Smith Health Plans

International Student Health Insurance

[Click here for an International Student Health Insurance Quote](#)

Product Description: Short-term medical protection for individuals traveling overseas

Comments: Cuba, Iran, Syria Countries not eligible

Underwriter: HCC Life Insurance Company	Options: Different deductibles available
Eligibility: Anybody travelling In or Outbound	Total Maximum Benefit Available: \$500,000
Restrictions: Restricted Countries	Med Evac \$100,000 Repatriation \$20,000
Restricted States: CT, HI, IN, ME, MA, NH, ND, NY, VT	How To Apply: Online Pre-Existing Conditions: 36 month pre-x

As an international student, the plan tailored for your needs under the E.J. Smith plan would be the one as shown above.

UnitedHealthcare

Mr. John Maxwell, our Account Executive from UnitedHealthcare Student Resources, is here to assist you.

Contact Information:

John Maxwell- Account Executive
UnitedHealthcare Student Resources
California License #4213555
Mobile: 215-284-7331
Email: jmaxwell@uhcsr.com

How to Seek Assistance:

1. Reach Out to John Maxwell:

- Feel free to contact Mr. John Maxwell directly through phone or email. He is ready to assist you with any questions related insurance and healthcare plans/options.

2. Visit the Website:

- Explore the website at www.uhcsr.com for additional resources and information. You can find valuable insights into visa compliance, health insurance details, and other essential aspects of your student journey.

Behavioral Medicine Telehealth services

Behavioral Medicine Telehealth Services:

- Innovative therapy available through a referral program.
- Telehealth, in-person, or phone options located in Laurel, covered by the university.

Group Counseling Sessions:

- Held every 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:00 PM in the library conference room.
- Free for all students.

Counseling Session Coverage:

- University pays for 5 counseling sessions annually for each student.
- Students qualifying for state insurance receive free services every year.

Note: Availability for international students may vary.

Maintaining Visa Status

As a student, navigating through academic and visa requirements can be overwhelming. That's

why we provide you with the 24/7 Student Assistance Program, your dedicated resource for comprehensive support, should you have any questions or need guidance on maintaining your F1 Visa status.

Requirements to Maintain an F1 Visa:

To uphold your F1 Visa status, it is imperative to adhere to specific guidelines. For assistance, designated status officers (DSO) are available:

Angel Clay – Director of Admissions:

- Email: aclay@captechu.edu

Christopher Weber – Registrar

- Email: clweber@captechu.edu

Key requirements include:

1. Full-Time Enrollment:

- Ensure enrollment in a full-time academic program following your institution's guidelines.

2. Valid I-20 Form:

- Keep your Form I-20 valid and up-to-date. Report promptly any changes to your program or personal information.

3. Work Authorization:

- If engaging in employment, adhere to the authorized work limits set by your visa.

4. Health Insurance:

- Maintain valid health insurance coverage as required by your institution and U.S. regulations.

For any clarifications or assistance, feel free to contact the designated status officers mentioned above.

Food Supplements

Ensuring access to essential nutrition, our campus offers a 24/7 food pantry.

Students can utilize this service through the Student Life Specialist or by reaching out to the Student Life [email](#) or dropping by the office located in MCI Hall suite C-265 Mon -Thurs 9:00AM to 4:30PM.

To cater to individual needs, we encourage students to be specific about any dietary restrictions when accessing the food supplements. Your well-being is our priority, and we are here to provide support in maintaining a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Student Life Email: studentlife@captechu.edu