

Pre-Arrival Guide for International Students



2023-24

Rhodes College



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We will take new international students shopping within the first day or two of your arrival so you may purchase college necessities.

WELCOME TO RHODES COLLEGE!

You've chosen an institution with outstanding academics: Our top-ranked academic program, with a 10:1 student/faculty ratio and rigorous humanities requirement, will challenge you to think for yourself. And Rhodes graduates have an exceptionally high rate of acceptance into graduate and professional programs.

You'll be able to enjoy a balanced life both inside and outside of classes: Relationships and activities outside the classroom combine with your academic experience to make you a balanced person. Our students work hard and they play hard — there is something for everyone at Rhodes, whether it's student government, Greek life, athletics (NCAA Div. III, club and intramural), performing and fine arts, or any of the myriad of student-run clubs and organizations.

You've been accepted to a college whose environment supports learning: The Rhodes campus is an idyllic setting reminiscent of the Ivy League universities of New England. You have the urban center of Memphis as a laboratory to enrich your learning experience. A vital hub of Southern culture, business, and medicine, Memphis offers you the opportunity to apply your academic knowledge and broadened interests through professional internships, research opportunities, and community involvement.

ARRIVAL, ORIENTATION, & LINENS

All international students should plan to arrive at Memphis International Airport on Monday, August 14, 2023. Purchase your tickets early, to find the best fares. A member of the Buckman Center Staff of Rhodes College will meet you at the airport. Students will submit their flight/arrival information to the Buckman Center Staff via an online survey over the summer. If students arrive in Memphis early, they will be responsible for finding accommodations until the above-mentioned arrival date; however, Buckman staff will be able to pick them up from their hotels provided they are within 5 miles of Rhodes College.

Detailed (and frequently updated) information on what to expect when you arrive is located in the international student services website: <https://sites.rhodes.edu/iss>.

An up-to-date International Student Orientation schedule will be emailed to your Rhodes email account over the summer.

Don't Sleep on a Bare Mattress!

Rhodes does not provide sheets, blankets, pillows, or towels. We recommend either of the following two options for you to avoid not having linens on your first night at Rhodes:

1. BRING THEM WITH YOU: Bring sheets, towels, and blankets with you in your luggage. This can be bulky and some students prefer to purchase these in Memphis.

2. PURCHASE THEM IN ADVANCE & SHIP THEM TO OUR OFFICE:

Purchase your linens online and have them shipped to our office. We will have them delivered to your room in advance of your arrival. This only works when you purchase them **AT LEAST FOUR (4) WEEKS PRIOR to your arrival**, and follow these directions to ship them to our office:

For "Delivery Address" use:

YOUR NAME (using letters from the Roman alphabet)
Rhodes College
c/o Buckman Center, Burrow Hall, Lower Level
2000 North Parkway
Memphis, TN 38112

There are two US companies you may like:

www.dormco.com and www.target.com

3. PURCHASE A BED BOX FROM OUR OFFICE:

You can also purchase a very basic set of linens from our office. We only charge you what they cost us; usually these are less than \$60. each Bed Box contains: fitted sheet, flat sheet, thin fleece blanket, pillow, pillow case, bath towel, and washcloth, and everything is packed in a reusable plastic storage box with lid.



STUDENT VISA (Non-ISEP Exchange Students)

Below are some helpful ideas when you're planning to apply for your visa.

When to Apply: June, July, and August are the busiest months in most consular sections, and interview appointments may be difficult to find during that time. It is important to plan ahead to avoid repeat visits to the embassy and to receive the visa in a timely manner to arrive at Rhodes. Please visit the U.S. Department of State website to view visa processing times at U.S. consulates or embassies.

Showing Ties to Home Country: Occasionally students have been denied visas due to the consular officer not being sufficiently convinced of the student's intention to return to their native country after the completion of study. Students must prove, beyond doubt, that they have "strong ties" to their home country.

Here are some tips to demonstrate a student's strong ties to their home country:

- Convince the consular officer that the sole (not just "primary") purpose of the visit to the U.S. is to pursue a program of study
- Outline post-graduation plans upon returning to home country
- Document family ties, business interests, and assets in home country
- Discuss job prospects in home country upon completion of education in the U.S.

Additional Tips on Applying for a Student Visa:

In addition to providing the right documents and having the right reasons, making a positive impression on the consular officer is critical in the application process. Here are some interviewing techniques suggested by NAFSA: Association of International Educators:

- Use English - Practice interviewing in English with a native English speaker. Being fluent and confident will help your application. However, avoid preparing a speech.
- Speak for yourself - Make the case independently. Having parents or others speak on a student's behalf does not make a good impression on the consular officer.
- Be brief - Keep answers and explanations short and to the point, as consular officers can only spend a few minutes with each applicant.
- Be positive - Do not argue with the consular officer or come across as rude and sarcastic, even if the visa application is denied.

In the event that students are denied a student visa, it is important to not get upset or argue with the consular officer. Most often, these students will be given a letter that explains why the request has been denied. Students should politely ask the officer how they can improve their chances the next time and what additional documentation they should provide to reverse the denial. They should thank the officer and take down their name for future reference. Students should conduct a thorough re-evaluation of their case and contact the Buckman Center for assistance.



ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

Here are some frequently asked questions about living on campus: **Q. = Questions** **A. = Answers**

Q. What comes in a room?

A. Residence hall rooms come with the following for each resident: bed, dresser, closet or wardrobe, desk and desk chair. In addition, all rooms come with wireless internet, cable television (you must provide your own TV) and local phone service with voicemail.

Q. What size are the beds?

A. All mattresses in the residence halls are “Twin Extra Long” (39” X 80”). Purchase linens in this size only.

Q. What should I bring from home?

A. Bed linens, a pillow, and towels (unless purchasing them online), toiletries and something to carry them in, clothes, laptop (though remember that U.S. voltage will be different), laundry bag, umbrella, posters for your wall.

Q. What should I plan to purchase when I get here?

A. Clothes hamper, laptop, laundry detergent, desk lamp, and U.L. approved power strips with surge protectors. We encourage you to speak with your roommate(s) about which of you will provide larger items such as TV’s, a microwave, an ironing board, a carpet/rug, stereo, and a mini-refrigerator. The Buckman Center will take you shopping after arrival, or the next day, so you can purchase dorm-essential items. We will give you a “suggested items” shopping list.

Q. What appliances are allowed in a residence hall room? Not allowed?

A. Allowed: Refrigerators (no larger than 33” high or 19” wide), microwaves, coffee makers, blenders.

Not allowed: Appliances with open flames or burners (hot plates, electric grills, electric skillet, toasters, toaster ovens, woks, etc.), multi-outlet expanders, extension cords, neon signs, candle warmers. These are not exhaustive lists.

Q. Where do I live over the winter break?

A. Residence Halls close completely over the winter break and all students must move out. International students should plan to live elsewhere when the Residence Halls are closed. Students may request to remain on campus over winter break if they have extreme circumstances. There is no guarantee of approval to remain on campus. The winter break housing fee is \$600. There are no meal services available. Students will be housed on the basis of availability.

Q. Can I smoke in my room?

A. Smoking is not permitted in the residence halls. Students who do smoke are encouraged to smoke away from entrances and windows. Benches and ashtrays are provided near most buildings.



Q. Can I store my things on campus for the summer when I leave?

A. No. Rhodes College does not offer personal storage space for students. We can provide a list of reliable storage units that students have previously used.

Q. Can I pick my roommate?

A. Yes. We need to hear from both students that each would like to be roommates (phone: 901-843-3241 or email: milligana@rhodes.edu).

Q. How are new students assigned to roommates and to rooms?

A. All new and transfer students are asked to complete the Housing Information Form available online. Information provided on the Housing Information Form is used in roommate matching. Therefore, it is important that the student fill out the form honestly. Roommates are matched together based on commonalities and interest in substance-free theme housing (for students who commit to no using alcohol, drugs, or tobacco), or learning communities. Occupancy for first-year students may be in doubles, triples, or quads.

Q. Can I pick my residence hall?

A. We do not allow first-year or exchange students to choose their residence hall. We provide living-learning communities and house those in different areas. That allows us to place students where we feel they will be most successful. We do allow students to self-select into “theme” area housing. We offer substance-free housing, which means that you agree to live free from substances including alcohol, drugs, and tobacco.

Q. When do I get my housing and roommate assignment?

A. We will make housing and roommate assignments and

notify you of these assignments during the latter part of July (approximately).

Q. How do students change their rooms if the roommate match isn't working out?

A. We ask all students to try to make their room assignment work for the first two weeks of school. If a problem persists, the following are steps to take towards reconciliation or a change, if necessary:

1. Communicate your concerns, frustrations, etc. with your roommate(s)
2. Speak with your RA about completing a roommate agreement and meeting for conflict resolution
3. If neither steps 1 nor 2 work out, then have your RA refer you to an Assistant or Associate Director of Residence Life. These individuals will be able to discuss other options with you.

Q. Do I clean my own room or is there housekeeping?

A. All students are responsible for cleaning their own rooms. The common areas (hallways, stairwells, bathrooms, social rooms, etc.) are cleaned by housekeeping staff.

Q. Where will my mail be delivered?

A. You will be assigned a campus mailbox. The mailboxes are located in Burrow Hall, lower level. Students receive their mailbox assignment along with their room assignment. Your proper address is:

Your Name
Rhodes College
Box # XXXX
2000 North Parkway
Memphis, TN 38112-1690
USA



Q. Where can I do laundry?

A. Laundry facilities are located in each residential building or connected building. There is no additional cost for laundry, as it is included in your housing costs. You will need to provide your own laundry detergent. Students are asked to be mindful of collecting laundry items in a timely manner.

Q. Where do I eat?

A. All students who live on campus are required to have a meal plan. The main dining hall is the Catherine Burrow Refectory. Students also have meal equivalency at the Lynx Lair grill located in the Bryan Campus Life Center. Students can choose from a 15-meal-per-week plan or a 21-meal plan.

Q. What are Rhodes policies about alcohol?

A. Rhodes College upholds state law regarding alcohol use. The legal drinking age in the U.S. is 21 years old. Students under the legal drinking age are prohibited from purchasing, processing, or consuming alcohol beverages on campus or at school-sponsored events. Many countries have a lower legal drinking age; even if you are able to drink legally in your own country, you are prohibited from drinking alcohol in the U.S. until you are 21. Students above the legal drinking age may consume alcohol in a responsible manner within guidelines. Students who violate policy are held accountable for their behavior.

Q. How do I get around Memphis?

A. The International Student Services office will connect international students with International Peer Advisors. These current students love to meet new international students to help them get acquainted with Memphis. They are often willing to help you get around town. Also, Rhodes College has a Bike Shop, where students can “rent” (for free) bikes for two week intervals. The Bike Shop is located in Robinson Hall. When in Downtown Memphis, the Trolley system is a great and cheap way to get around. Lastly, making friends on campus will be a great resource for getting off campus and exploring Memphis.

Contact the Residence Life Office if you have other questions:

Ms. Aretha Milligan
Director, Residence Life
milligana@rhodes.edu
(901) 843-3241

Mr. Jonathan Vizenor
Assistant Director, Residence Life
vizenorj@rhodes.edu
(901) 843-3241



COURSE REGISTRATION

To register for classes at Rhodes, new international students will first meet with their academic advisor, often during their first week at Rhodes.

To help students get more of the courses they want, Rhodes uses a computerized registration system known as WebSTEP, the Web Student Tree Entry Program, commonly referred to as the “Tree.” In order to register, students must request the courses they want to take by entering them into the WebSTEP program. The course requests of all the students are processed at one time to produce class schedules based on the course priorities as expressed by the students in their Trees.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

An up-to-date calendar for this year can be located at: <https://catalog.rhodes.edu/general-information/academic-calendar>

LYNX CARD, KEYS, & FOB

Upon arrival at Rhodes, you will have the opportunity to get your student I.D. card (LynxCARD) made. You will also receive a key to your room and a “fob” — which is a small bit of plastic

with a microchip, giving you access into buildings. Without your fob, you will not be able to get into buildings (including your dorm), so be sure you keep it with your keys and I.D. and carry it with you. Lost keys and fobs incur a replacement/lost fee.

HEALTH INSURANCE (Non-ISEP Exchange Students)

Health insurance coverage is mandatory for all our students. To protect you and your family from financial strain in case you experience a serious illness or injury while studying in the U.S., Rhodes requires health insurance throughout your enrollment.

Rhodes has selected a standardized policy for our international students. This comprehensive health insurance plan is offered by Relation Insurance, which specializes in providing high-quality, affordable health insurance to international students, scholars, and travelers.

All international students on non-immigrant visas are charged for the insurance in two 6-month increments starting July 1 and January 1. The charges will appear on the student’s account.

SAFETY ON CAMPUS

We are proud of the low crime rate and extraordinarily safe campus at Rhodes College. While we recognize that responding to safety and security concerns, and preventing crime and documenting policy violations are essential to a safe learning, working, and living environment, the focus of the Campus Safety Department is also about service and our partnerships with those on our campus.

Campus Safety consists of approximately 30 women and men who are licensed guards with the State of Tennessee. Each of our officers is dedicated to providing professional customer service to the entire college community. We staff three shifts daily, as well as a 24/7 communications desk that can be accessed by calling 901-843-3880. To continue our successful safety and security program there is a three-fold effort:

- Campus Safety must nurture partnerships with the students, faculty, and staff we serve.
- Rhodes community members must take pride in the safety and security of our campus.
- All of us need to understand that maintaining a safe community can be accomplished only if we work in partnership to uphold the values at the heart of Rhodes College.

EMPLOYMENT

Students who are maintaining F-1 status are eligible to work on campus. Work performed on the school premises is “on-campus” employment as long as the employment provides direct services to students. If you are unclear if a job would be considered “on-campus” employment, please check with the Buckman Center.



Students are permitted to work a maximum of 10 hours per week while classes are in session and full-time during holidays or school vacation periods, provided the student intends to enroll full-time during the academic term following the vacation period. This 10-hour total includes hours spent working on an assistantship.

Off-campus employment is not permitted for students on an F-1 visa without prior authorization from the Rhodes principal designated school officer (PDSO), Dr. Erin Hillis, and only in compliance with federal regulations governing Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Curricular Practical Training (CPT). In order to remain lawfully in the United States during your studies in F-1 status, students must follow the regulations that govern F-1 students. It is the responsibility of the student to be sure they do not violate the terms of their visa. Working off-campus without the PDSO's prior authorization violates immigration law and will result in a failure to maintain status, which can revoke your right to remain legally in the United States.

WEATHER

Temperatures throughout the year can be anywhere from below freezing to over 95 degrees Fahrenheit. You will need to be mindful of both very cold weather and extremely warm weather, and everything in between, as Memphis weather can be unpredictable!

STUDENT LIFE

Discover your passions through participation! Rhodes is well known for student involvement in service projects within the Memphis community. We're also famous for excellence in the

arts, commanding enthusiastic audiences for student plays, choral and instrumental performances, and art openings. To help you find your niche at Rhodes, the SACK Fair at the beginning of each term will introduce you to our campus organizations, which fall into the following categories:

- Academic
- Administrative
- Athletics/Sports
- Cultural/Political
- Greek
- Performance
- Publications
- Religious
- Service
- Student Governance
- Student Judiciaries

Get involved with a student organization or campus activity! Fifty percent of Rhodes students participate in Greek organizations, and all Rhodes students socialize as a community at campus-wide events like films, concerts, open-mic nights, and lectures. Major campus activities include Homecoming, the Rites of Spring music festival, Blues Night, athletic events, and the SACK Fair.

THINGS TO DO IN MEMPHIS

The *Memphis Flyer* is a free community newspaper distributed every Wednesday that contains information on many events taking place in Memphis. The *Flyer* is available on campus in the



Refectory as well as in shops and restaurants around Memphis. Things to do within walking distance of campus include restaurants like Café Eclectic and Dino's Grill, as well as other attractions such as the Memphis Zoo, Overton Park, and the Brooks Museum of Art.

Other things to do (that aren't quite as close to campus) include Overton Square and Beale Street, both of which offer authentic Memphis food, music, and fun, the Orpheum Theatre, Ballet Memphis, Opera Memphis, Memphis Symphony Orchestra, The National Civil Rights Museum, Pink Palace Museum, Graceland (Elvis Presley's home), Stax Museum of American Soul Music, Memphis Rock 'n Soul Museum, Sun Studios, Central BBQ, Rendezvous BBQ, Memphis Botanic Gardens, Shelby Farms, Memphis Redbirds games (AAA baseball), and Memphis Grizzlies games (NBA basketball), among other things.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Although Memphis is not known for its public transportation system, it is possible to go most places in the city and to most of the suburbs via bus. If it is necessary to transfer buses (get off one bus and onto another to reach your final destination), tell the bus driver on the first bus that you will need to transfer. By doing this, you only have to pay a small transfer fee. Otherwise, you will have to pay another full fare for each leg of your trip. Transfers are not valid for return or round trips. Catch the bus at the green MATA signs. If you need any help or information call MATA (the Memphis Area Transit Authority) at 274-MATA (274-6282) or visit the MATA website (www.matatransit.com).

Memphis has both Lyft and Uber rides available if you ever find yourself without a ride.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

If you need help along the way, let us know. We'll either be able to help, or we can put you in touch with someone who can. We are looking forward to meeting you soon!

Buckman Center for International Education, Rhodes College

Dr. Erin Hillis, PDSO (she/her)

Director of International Programs

hillise@rhodes.edu

901-843-3403

Dr. Elin Ovrebo, DSO (she/her)

Associate Director of International Programs

ovreboe@rhodes.edu

901-843-3403

Rachel Gasser, DSO (she/her)

International Education Advisor

gasser@rhodes.edu

901-843-3403

Other Important Departments:

Campus Safety (901)-843-3880

Student Life and Dean of Students (901)-843-3815

Bursar (901)-843-3278

Residence Life (901)-843-3241

Student Accessibility Services (901)-843-3815

Health Services (901)-843-3895

Multicultural Affairs (901)-843-3628