

**New  
International  
Student &  
Exchange Visitor  
Orientation  
Guidebook**





# Welcome to Western Carolina University!

On behalf of the Office of International Programs and Services (IPS), and the faculty and staff of Western Carolina University (WCU), we welcome you to Cullowhee and the WCU campus. IPS has organized this brief handbook specifically to provide you with vital information you will need to best acclimate yourself to WCU and the surrounding community during your stint as an international student or exchange visitor.

During the orientation, IPS will provide informative sessions concerning the academic setting at WCU, international student and exchange visitor immigration procedures, tours of campus, as well as opportunities to interact socially with fellow international and domestic students in an effort to build a stronger sense of community in your first days in Cullowhee.

IPS

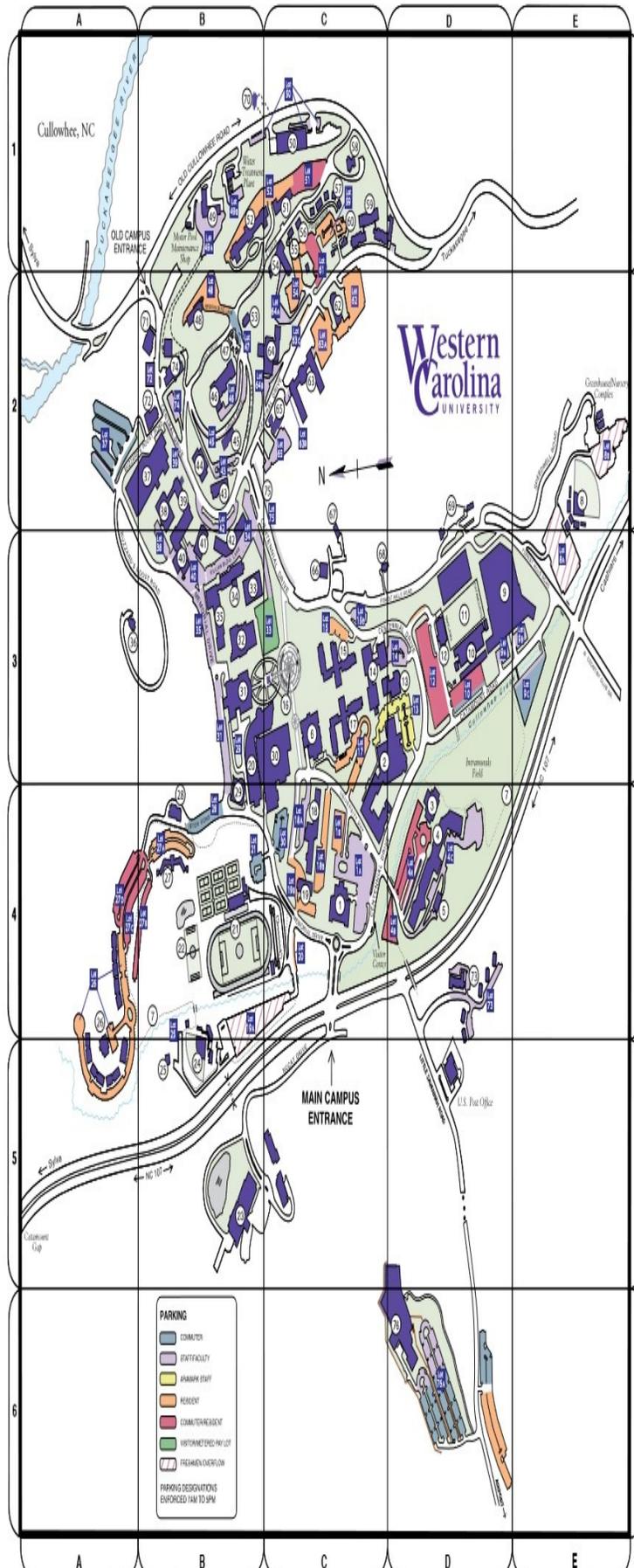
encourages you to visit our office, located at 109 Cordelia Camp Building, with your questions, concerns and/ or feedback. The IPS staff is here to assist you.

IPS trusts you will find the orientation and this handbook valuable tools as you take your first steps here at WCU. IPS wishes you every success as you begin your academic journey at Western Carolina! University!



**LEGEND—Numerical**

- (1) H.F. Robinson Administration Building—Mountain Heritage Center
- (2) John W. Bardo Fine & Performing Arts Center  
Art Gallery, Museum, Performance Hall
- (3) Cordele Camp Gymnasium—softball, track, soccer offices
- (4) Cordele Camp Building—Admission, Educational Outreach, Graduate School, International Programs, Office of the CIO, Kneeder Child Development Center
- (5) Cordele Camp Annex—University Police Department
- (6) Courtyard Dining Hall
- (7) Walking/Logging Trails
- (8) Childress Field/Hennon Stadium (baseball)
- (9) Ramsey Regional Activity Center—Athletics
- (10) E.J. Whitmore Stadium (football)
- (11) Bob Waters Field
- (12) Jordan-Phillips Field House
- (13) Center for Applied Technology—Motion Picture and Television Studios, Center for Rapid Product Realization, College of Business Marketing
- (14) Bekk Building—Health & Human Sciences, The Kimmel School, Fine Arts (Annex)
- (15) Blue Ridge Residence Hall (Honors College)
- (16) Alumni Tower & Central Plaza
- (17) Balsam Residence Hall (Honors College)
- (18) Scott Residence Hall—Residential Living Office, Student Affairs Office
- (19) Walker Residence Hall
- (20) Campus Recreation Center
- (21) Catamount Athletic Complex—Track, Soccer, Tennis
- (22) Schrader Soccer Field (practice field)
- (23) N.C. Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT)
- (24) Catamount Softball Complex
- (25) Picnic Area
- (26) The Village (Student Housing)
- (27) Norton Road Residence Hall
- (28) University Print Shop and Mail Services
- (29) WCU Bookstore
- (30) Reid Gymnasium—pool
- (31) A.K. Hinds University Center—U.C. Food Court, Catamount Clothing & Gifts, Movie Theater
- (32) Coulter Building—Recital Hall
- (33) Forsyth Building—Business
- (34) Killian Annex—One-Stop, Career Services
- (35) Killian Building—Education and Allied Professions
- (36) Chancellor's Guest House
- (37) Hunter Library
- (38) Natural Sciences Building
- (39) Stillwell Building—Arts and Sciences
- (40) Niggi Theatre
- (41) Hoey Auditorium
- (42) McKee Building—Speech and Hearing Center
- (43) Bird Building—Health Services
- (44) Breeze Gymnasium
- (45) Graham Building
- (46) Moore Building—Health Sciences
- (47) Joyner Plaza
- (48) Madison Residence Hall
- (49) Facilities Management
- (50) Warehouse
- (51) Robertson Residence Hall
- (52) Reynolds Residence Hall
- (53) Old Student Union Building—Communications Department, Student Media Center, TV 62 Studio
- (54) Buchanan Residence Hall
- (55) Triplex Apartments
- (56) Claxton House
- (57) Young Drive Apartments
- (58) Chancellor's Residence
- (59) Central Drive Residence Hall
- (60) Bird Alumni House
- (61) University Club
- (62) Harrill Residence Hall
- (63) Albright Residence Hall
- (63) Benton Residence Hall
- (64) Brown Building—Base Camp Cullowhee
- (65) Cullowhee United Methodist Church
- (66) Cullowhee Presbyterian Church and Student Center
- (67) Church of Christ Student Union
- (68) Catholic Student Center and Chapel
- (69) St. David's Episcopal Church and Canterbury House
- (70) Mt. Zion A.M.E. Zion Church
- (71) Cullowhee Baptist Student Union
- (72) Cullowhee Baptist Church
- (73) Faculty and Staff Housing
- (74) Steam Plant
- (75) Centennial Drive establishments
- (76) Health & Human Sciences Building



**LEGEND—Alphabetical by Area**

- Great Places to Learn**
- Bekk Building (14) ..... C3
  - Center for Applied Technology (13) ..... C-03
  - Coulter Building (32) ..... B3
  - Fine and Performing Arts Center (2) ..... C3-4, D3-4
  - Forsyth Building (33) ..... B3
  - Jordan-Phillips Field House (12) ..... D3
  - Killian Building (35) ..... B3
  - McKee Building (42) ..... B2-3
  - Moore Building (46) ..... B2
  - Natural Sciences Building (38) ..... B2-3
  - Old Student Union Building (53) ..... B2
  - Reid Gymnasium (30) ..... B3, C3-4
  - Stillwell Building (39) ..... B2-3
  - Health & Human Sciences Building (76) ..... D6
- Experience the Arts**
- John W. Bardo Fine & Performing Arts Center (2) ..... C3-4, D3-4
  - Fine Art Museum, in the Arts Center (2) ..... C3-4, D3-4
  - Hoey Auditorium (41) ..... B2-3
  - Mountain Heritage Center (1) ..... C4
  - Movie Theater, in the A.K. Hinds University Center (31) ..... B3
  - Niggi Theatre (40) ..... B3
  - Recital Hall, in the Coulter Building (32) ..... B3
- Participate and Show Your Catamount Pride**
- Base Camp Cullowhee, in Brown Building (64) ..... B-C2
  - Bob Waters Field (11) E.J. Whitmore Stadium (football) (10) ..... D3
  - Breeze Gymnasium (44) ..... B2
  - Campus Recreation Center (20) ..... B3-4, C3
  - Catamount Athletic Complex (soccer, track and tennis) (21) ..... B4
  - Catamount Softball Complex (24) ..... B4-5
  - Childress Field/Hennon Stadium (baseball) (8) ..... E2
  - Cordele Camp Gymnasium (3) ..... D4
  - Ramsey Regional Activity Center (9) ..... D-E3
  - Reid Gymnasium pool (30) ..... B3, C3-4
  - Schrader Soccer Field (22) ..... B4
- Nourish Your Body, Clear Your Mind**
- Alumni Tower & Central Plaza (16) ..... C3
  - Convenience Store, in the old Brown Cafeteria (64) ..... B-C2
  - Centennial Drive establishments (75) ..... B-C2, C3
  - Courtyard Dining Hall (6) ..... C3
  - The Alumni Tower & Central Plaza (16) ..... C3
  - U.C. Food Court, in the A.K. Hinds University Center (31) ..... B3
- Great Places to Live**
- Albright Residence Hall (63) ..... C2
  - Balsam Residence Hall (Honors College) (17) ..... C3
  - Benton Residence Hall (63) ..... C2
  - Blue Ridge Residence Hall (Honors College) (15) ..... C3
  - Buchanan Residence Hall (54) ..... C1-2
  - Central Drive Residence Hall (59) ..... C-01
  - Chancellor's Guest House (36) ..... A3
  - Chancellor's Residence (58) ..... C1
  - Claxton House (56) ..... C1
  - Faculty and Staff Housing (55) ..... C1 / (57) ..... C1 / (73) ..... D4
  - Harrill Residence Hall (62) ..... B2
  - Madison Residence Hall (48) ..... C2
  - Norton Road Residence Hall (27) ..... B4
  - Reynolds Residence Hall (52) ..... B-C1
  - Robertson Residence Hall (51) ..... C1
  - Scott Residence Hall (18) ..... C4
  - The Village (26) ..... A4-5
  - Walker Residence Hall (19) ..... C4
- Let Us Help You**
- A.K. Hinds University Center (31) ..... B3
  - Career Services, in Killian Annex (34) ..... B3
  - Catamount Clothing & Gifts (31) ..... B3
  - Health Services, in the Bird Building (43) ..... B2
  - Hunter Library (37) ..... A-B2
  - One-Stop, in the Killian Annex (34) ..... B3
  - WCU Bookstore (29) ..... B3-4
- Support/Administration**
- Admission, in the Cordele Camp Building (4) ..... D4
  - Athletics, in the Ramsey Regional Activity Center (9) ..... D-E3
  - Bird Alumni House (60) ..... C1
  - Educational Outreach, in Cordele Camp Building (4) ..... D4
  - Facilities Management (49) ..... B1
  - University Club (61) ..... C1-2
  - University Police (5) ..... D4
  - University Print Shop and Mail Services (28) ..... B4
  - Warehouse (50) ..... C1

# About Us

## **Western Carolina University Mission**

Western Carolina University creates learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research, service, and engagement through on campus, off campus, online, and international experiences. The university focuses its undergraduate, master's and three doctoral programs, educational outreach, research, creative, and cultural activities to sustain and improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in Western Carolina and beyond.

## **Office Mission**

The overall mission of the Office International Programs and Services is to enable the WCU community to connect and engage with the region, state, and the world by promoting internationalization for the benefit of all university members. Therefore, IPS promotes the well-being of the WCU's international community; sponsors, manages and facilitates various types of international academic programs and connections, such as study abroad, internships and service learning abroad, as well as faculty-led programs, research and exchanges; plans and coordinates on-campus and regional international events; recruits, retains and diversifies WCU's international student population; and assisting academic colleges in internationalizing their programs.

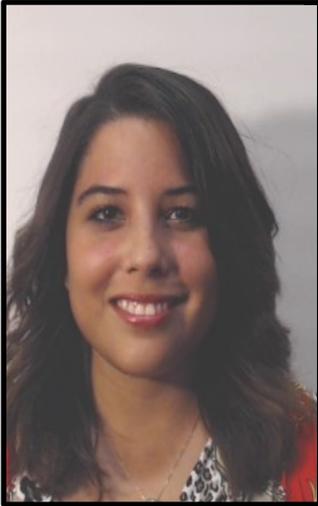
## **Fast Facts**

Founded: 1889

Location: Cullowhee, North Carolina, near the Great Smoky and Blue Ridge mountains, fifty-two miles west of Asheville.

Enrollment: 10,000 students from the United States plus Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America. Student body is 56% female and 44% male.

# Staff Photos



# Arriving at WCU

## Orientation

All newly arrived international students **must** attend the orientation programs coordinated by the Office of International Programs and Services for the Fall and Spring Semesters. Immigration regulations require students to register their presence in the US within 30 days of the program start date listed on their immigration document (I-20/DS-2019). Registration takes place during orientation programs.

If your program has an irregular start date and begins during the academic year, you may not be able to participate in the IPS orientation program. In that case, you **must** visit IPS in person before the 30-day deadline to register your immigration documents with our office.

Orientation programs are designed to provide students with important information about immigration and visa regulations and IPS services. The orientation program also helps acquaint international students with greater opportunities to become involved on campus, to meet and develop relationships with a greater variety of people, and to participate in a living experience that is unique to university life.

Campus life is greatly enhanced by the comforts, conveniences, and experiences that living in a residence hall provides. Studies of college and university students across the country have shown that individuals who live on campus have higher graduation rates, higher GPAs, and report a greater satisfaction with their collegiate experience.

Freshman/First Year students are required to live on campus at Western Carolina University. This is advantageous because it means you will live in the heart of all the activity on campus and everything will be easily accessible.

## Visa, SEVIS, & Other Documents

International Programs and Services supports WCU's international students, serving as a resource and advocate. It is your responsibility to maintain your visa status, obtain or retain your permission to work, and return to the U.S. in proper status if after traveling to your home or to another country. You have the right to obtain information from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) at no charge, but DHS may charge fees, if you file forms to request various benefits, such as work permission.

If you fail to comply with your immigration responsibilities, you may lose your legal nonimmigrant status and, thus, become ineligible for work or for future immigration-related benefits, or even to continue in your academic program.

**If you violate your F-1 or J-1 visa status, DHS will consider you to be here illegally and out of status and possibly subject to arrest and deportation.**

Some common reasons international students fall out of status:

Failure to inform IPS about change in address, name, major, or degree level

Registering with a Reduced Course Load (RCL) without prior approval

Failure to inform IPS about adjustments in academic course load

Failure to keep up mandatory health insurance

Transferring to another school without approval

Failure to obtain new I-20/DS-2019 (if needed)

Failure to inform IPS about any change of status/visa classification

Failure to request I-20/DS-2019 extensions

Failure to request travel endorsements on I-20/DS-2019

Academic dismissal (suspension)

Working off-campus without permission

## Full-Time Enrollment

Complete a full-time class load each Fall and Spring semester. Summer is considered a vacation period unless it is the first or last term of enrollment. You can take a summer vacation only if you intend to re-enroll for the following Fall semester. Enrolling for the summer semester cannot be substituted for the Fall or Spring semester. NOTE: Completion in this situation means you receive a grade at the end of the semester.

**Undergraduates must complete 12 credit hours per semester.**

**Graduates must complete 9 credit hours per semester.**

### Exceptions to Full Time Enrollment

You **must** consult with IPS **before** taking less than a full time load. This “drop below full course study” **must** be verified in SEVIS. In all cases, you **must** obtain permission first, from IPS, and then your academic advisor.

If you are a graduate student, have completed all course work requirements, and are only working on your thesis or dissertation hours, registering for 3 credit hours is mandatory for USCIS purposes. In the final term of a degree program, you may register only for the number of hours required to complete your program. Please inform IPS if this applies to you.

If you become hindered due to a medical condition, you can request to be enrolled less than full-time or not at all. NOTE: A letter from a legitimate physician, which explains why you need to drop below, must be given to IPS. Part-time enrollment is limited to a total of 12 months. If you have a valid academic reason to drop below full-time, you may. Reasons include:

Initial difficulty with English Language or reading requirements

Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods or improper course level placement.

NOTE: If you request a drop below full time enrollment due to academic reasons, you are limited to one semester only. IPS realizes that each case is unique.

# Social Security Card

## How do I obtain a Social Security Number or SSN?

You can apply for a SSN by visiting your local Social Security Administration (SSA) office. Check with the Office of International Programs and Services and/or a Human Resources contact for additional information about this process. Most likely you will receive a Social Security card that has the notation, “VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION.” The SSA issues this type of card to people lawfully admitted to the United States on a temporary basis, who have authorization to work by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Your card should arrive 2-6 weeks after you submit the application.

## When should I go to the Social Security Office?

### **10 BUSINESS DAYS AFTER ARRIVAL!**

SSA must verify your immigration status with the DHS database. It takes some time for the two federal databases to communicate the correct information about your immigration status. The normal processing time is approximately 10 business days. Therefore, IPS strongly recommends waiting at least 10 business days from time of entry into the US before applying for your SSN. Applying prior to this time may result in the delay of issuing your SSN for up to three months

## What should I take to the SSA Office?

Passport

DS- 2019/ from 1-20

I-797 if in H1-B status

EAD Card if in J-2, F-1/OPT

I-94 Card

Letter of employment

Confirmation from IPS that you are active in SEVIS

For more information on OPT and CPT please schedule an appointment with IPS.

### **Social Security Office**

2123 Lakeside Dr. Franklin, NC 28734

Local Number: 1-866-562-0738

Monday-Tuesday: 9:00 am- 4:00 pm

Wednesday: 9:00 am- 12:00 pm

Thursday-Friday: 9:00 am- 4:00 pm

Saturday-Sunday: Closed

### **Driver's License**

The following documents should be taken with you for test(s):

Passport

I-94 card/ DS-2019/ I-20 (according to status)

Proof of residence in the state of North Carolina such as:

Bank statement showing your NC address

Current lease agreement

Employer verification

Current utility bill (i.e.: water, electricity or gas)

(Please note that you can also use your Social Security card or denial letter from social security office if you are not eligible for a card).

### **Driver's License Office**

876 Skyland Drive, Ste.2, Sylva, NC

Monday - Friday: 8:00 am- 4:30 pm

(828) 586-5413



# Jackson County Transit

## **Jackson County Transit**

876 Skyland Drive, Suite 1

Sylva NC 28779

Phone: 828-586-0233

Email: [infotransit@jacksonnc.org](mailto:infotransit@jacksonnc.org)

<http://www.jacksoncountyttransit.com/>

Jackson County Transit is a fully coordinated, public transportation system that operates as a branch of Jackson County Government. This Transit provides transportation for the general public of Jackson County, including picking up students at WCU. It offers deviated fixed routes, para-transit service, and a demand response service between 7:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday through Friday, except holidays. Requests for service must be made before 2:00 pm prior to the scheduled trip except for the Jackson Trolley, which operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm. This is a deviated fixed service that includes 11 fixed bus stops along the route. Limited service is available to Asheville, Waynesville, Franklin and Bryson City.

[OBJ]

### **A 24-hour notice for local service.**

To reserve a seat, call the Dispatcher at **828-586-0233**.

# Student Health Services

## Hours

[OBJ]

### **Medical Appointments:**

(828) 227-7640

### **Emergencies:**

(828) 227-8911

WCU offers services to help meet your healthcare needs while you are a member of our campus community. University Health Services is located in the Bird Building on the upper half of campus, and is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm.

**Services are available to any university student regardless of insurance coverage.**

Our goal is to provide friendly, efficient, and effective healthcare for you while you are a student, as well as help you gain confidence and knowledge in how to manage your health. Health Services is staffed by a mixture of physicians and physician extenders and nursing staff with many years of experience in college health.

Health service's staff looks forward to helping you manage your health in the coming years that you are a Catamount and helping you equip yourself with lifelong health habits.

**Before class registration can be completed, you must comply with [North Carolina Immunization Requirements](#) for university students.**

**UNC system students are required to have health insurance coverage. To have the school sponsored plan you must [Enroll](#) today in order to receive your insurance card in the mail by the effective date of August 1<sup>st</sup> (Fall) or January 1<sup>st</sup> (Spring). If you already have other insurance coverage, you must [Waive](#) enrollment in the school sponsored plan to avoid being billed for the health insurance premium.**

You may contact Health Services at 828-227-7640 or visit their website: <https://www.wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/health-services/>.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **[What urgent requirements need to be addressed before my enrollment?](#)**

Health services requires you to provide two vital pieces of information upon enrollment

#### Complete Immunization Records

Each student must provide completed immunization records as required by NC State Law before attending a NC college or university.

Those requirements are listed on the health services [immunization page](#). Your immunizations **MUST** be finalized before you can complete your class schedule.

#### Health Insurance Coverage

Each student is required to have health insurance coverage while enrolled at WCU. The premium charge for the mandatory health plan will be added to your student account as part of tuition and fees. If you have other health insurance, you can request a waiver and have that charge removed from your student account.

Criteria for mandatory coverage are as follows:

Student is enrolled in  $\geq 6$  semester credit hours

Student pays the health fee

Student is in a degree seeking program

For students that meet the above criteria, the university (in accordance with UNC school system policy) provides a student insurance policy. More information about the administration of that policy, policy benefits, and premium cost can be found at <https://www.wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/health-services/student-health-insurance.aspx>.

If you have other health insurance and would like to waive the mandatory UNC system health plan, please visit [HOW TO WAIVE](#) and follow the instructions on that website. After your waiver request has been verified, the premium charge will be removed from your student account.

If you do not have other health insurance coverage you must enroll in the UNC system health plan, please visit [HOW TO ENROLL](#).

If you do not take action regarding waiver or enrollment, you will be automatically enrolled in the UNC system health plan after the waiver process has ended. Students that wait for the automatic enrollment process will have insurance coverage effective on August 1<sup>st</sup> (for Fall enrollees) and January 1<sup>st</sup> (for Spring enrollees) BUT may not receive an insurance card until mid-semester.

### **What type of information do I need to know before visiting the doctor?**

When visiting university health services, or any other healthcare provider, there are important pieces of information that you should know about your own medical history. This may be your first time visiting a physician without a parent, and it is important that you know vital pieces of information about yourself and your health. Talk to your parent before coming to school to educate yourself about your health history, and your family's health history. It's important to help you receive the best care possible. Also, remember that the information shared between you and your healthcare provider is protected and confidential; if you have a medical condition of any sort it is crucial that you share that information with your doctor. The doctor needs to know critical information to make informed decisions and provide you with an accurate diagnosis.

### Critical things to know:

**Allergies** – have you ever had an allergic reaction to 1) any medication 2) any foods, 3) any environmental agents (i.e. laundry detergent)

If you have had an allergic reaction, what happened?

**Medications** - are you currently taking any prescription or over the counter medications, including vitamins or supplements.

Know the correct name, dosage and frequency of the medication.

**Medical conditions** - do you currently have or have you had in the past any chronic health problems or any history of surgery?

For example, do you have a history of asthma?

Do you have or have you had cancer?

What type of surgery have you had?

**Family History** - What types of medical conditions exist in your family?

For example, does your father have a history of high blood pressure or cardiac problems?

Does your brother have diabetes?

The answers to these questions often help a physician in treating the patient in the most effective way possible, and helps avoid any potential dangers to the patient, for instance prescribing an antibiotic that you may have had an allergic reaction to in the past.

**What services are available at University Health Services?**

## **When should I seek services?**

### Sick Visits

Sick visits are often considered urgent care appointments and are defined as a sudden onset of symptoms, waking with those symptoms, or getting injured.

Health services utilizes a triage process to accommodate walk-in patient's request for services. Each patient will be seen by an RN for evaluation of severity of symptoms. Based on that assessment, the RN will determine the urgency in which the patient may need to see a provider and will schedule as appropriate based on health services provider's protocols.

The RN will ask you the following questions to help assess your care:

What are your symptoms?

How long have you experienced these symptoms?

Have you taken any medications?

### Check-ups and scheduled visits

Patients now have the ability to schedule an appointment online using the [CatHealth Patient Portal](#) for the following:–

routine check-ups or follow up care for ongoing management of

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## **What will a visit to health services cost and how do I pay for those services?**

### Health Services Charges

Each student attending WCU pays a student health fee through the tuition and fee payment process. This fee entitles the student to routine health services provided by health services staff.

Charges that a student might incur during a visit include:

Charges for laboratory services

Pharmacy items dispensed in health services

Minor treatment charges for procedures

Supplies used for treatment (i.e. crutches)

Health services evaluates charges on an annual basis to ensure that the most affordable healthcare is available for the student.

### Payment for Services

Several payment options are available for students to take care of any financial obligations at health services

These options include:

Cash, check, all major credit cards and medical spending account cards.

CatCash

Charge to the student account.

### Insurance Coverage

Students do not have to be enrolled in the UNC system health plan to access University Health Services. For students enrolled in the mandatory UNC plan, UHS will submit an insurance claim to the student health plan for reimbursement, and most charges will be covered at health services at 100%. Currently University Health Services can only file claims to student health services.

Students that are covered under a private or other policy will be provided the necessary information to file an insurance claim with the private policy upon request.

## **What should I do in case of emergency?**

If you find yourself in an emergency situation and you are on the campus of WCU the student EMS service is available for your needs FREE of charge.

University Health Services maintains a Campus EMS service for our student's safety. The campus service is licensed for BLS, or basic life support, care, and is staffed by student workers. Campus EMS may provide transportation to either University Health Services or Harris Regional Hospital depending on the patient's condition and the time of day of the call.

For emergencies that require an advanced level of care, WestCare EMS serves as the paramedic service for campus.

To request Campus EMS call 828-227-8911.

You can obtain more information about utilizing campus EMS or becoming part of our team by visiting [Campus EMS](#).

## **Off Campus Resources**

### Harris Regional Hospital Urgent Care

Walmart Plaza; Sylva

Monday - Sunday: 8:00 am - 6:30 pm

[828-631-9462](tel:828-631-9462)

Urgent Care is located in the Walmart plaza in Sylva. They provide efficient, quality medical care for urgent medical needs that do not require emergency care. They offer general/urgent care, x-ray, laboratory services, urine drug screenings and occupational health.

### Harris Regional Hospital

68 Hospital Road Sylva, NC 28779

[828-586-7000](tel:828-586-7000)

Fully-accredited hospital including an ER.

Orthopedics, cardiology, general surgery, women's care, and emergency medicine. They also offer sports medicine, physical therapy, imaging, and laboratory services, and many other areas of subspecialty care.

# Counseling Services

## How Can Counseling Help?

As an international student, you bring an invaluable perspective to the campus community and help expand the diversity of ideas and knowledge at WCU. You may, however, experience unique stressors as you adjust to the culture, language, and academic expectations of Western North Carolina and WCU. Talking to a counselor may be helpful if you are experiencing concerns with any of the following:

- Homesickness

- Understanding and adjusting to U.S. culture

- Relationship concerns, including relationships from home or new relationships with friends, roommates, or significant others

- Difficulty connecting with others

- Academic issues

- Family concerns

- Feeling overwhelmed or confused

These are just a few of the potential stressors that you could talk to your counselor about, and you may be experiencing other concerns as well. Our counselors can help you work through these issues and develop new goals and coping skills as you adjust to WCU. All sessions are confidential.

## What Is Counseling?

Counseling may not be a familiar process to you, as it is not a common practice in many countries or cultures. Sometimes, people may view counseling as being only for people with serious psychological issues. In the United States, however, it is increasingly being used to help people work through concerns or stressors in their lives, such as adjusting to college life. Meeting with a professional counselor at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help you with your concerns and stressors in a safe, caring, and respectful environment.

Staff at CAPS includes licensed psychologists, licensed counselors, and

### CVS Pharmacy

88 NC Hwy 107; Sylva, NC 28779

Monday - Sunday: 8:00 am - 10:00 pm

[828-586-3558](tel:828-586-3558)

Make-up and personal care items, over the counter medicine, pharmacy for prescription medicine.

### Sylva Walmart Supercenter

210 Walmart Plaza; Sylva, NC 28779

Store: Open 24 Hours

Pharmacy:

Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 9:00 pm

Saturday - 9:00 am - 7:00 pm

Sunday - 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

828-586-0211

Shopping center with a wide variety of items including food, personal items, home items, over the counter medicine, and a pharmacy for prescription medicine.

### Dentists

Dr. David McGuire

45 King Street, Suite 200B, Sylva, NC 28779

Monday-Wednesday: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Thursday: 7:00 am - 3:00 pm

Friday - Sunday: Closed

828-631-3283

Dr. Timothy Spilliards

230 Poplar Drive, Sylva, NC 28721

Monday - Thursday: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

licensed social workers. The staff is focused on being culturally competent and is respectful of all cultures, races, ethnicities, religious beliefs, genders, sexual orientations, and ages.

### **What Is Confidentiality?**

What you discuss with your counselor is private and confidential and is protected by law. It is important that you know that what you share with us is not part of your academic record and will not be provided to any family or other outside agency without your permission.

### **What Services Are Offered?**

#### **Individual Counseling**

If you would like to meet with a counselor in a one-on-one setting, you can schedule individual appointments. CAPS offers free sessions for all students enrolled in classes and paying the student health fee. Individual sessions are typically 50 minutes long and can be on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, but you and your counselor can determine together how frequently you meet. Our counseling model is solution-focused, so you will generate goals and work towards achieving those goals in a short period of time.

#### **Group Counseling**

We offer several different types of group counseling. Group counseling involves meeting with 5-8 other students on a weekly basis and can be particularly helpful for people having difficulty connecting or communicating with others.

As a

result, this is an opportunity for a student to experiment with different ways of expressing her/himself, receive feedback from others on how they perceive her/him, receive support and encouragement, and offer support to the other group members.

We also offer groups for stress management as well as a mindfulness meditation practice group. Call us to ask more about when these sessions may be offered.

## **How Do I Start Counseling?**

Please check out Counseling and Psychological Services' website at [caps.wcu.edu](http://caps.wcu.edu) to learn more about services and how to schedule an appointment. We are located in room 225 Bird Building, on the second floor above Health Services. We utilize walk-in sessions to get you connected with a counselor. Walk-in sessions are on a first-come, first-served basis, so it may be helpful to come early to secure a timeslot. Sessions can fill quickly. During this brief session, you will discuss your concerns with a counselor so that you can get matched with a permanent counselor and begin working through your concerns.

CAPS is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. If you would like to call us to schedule an appointment because you are unavailable during walk-in hours, please call 828-227-7469.

## **Additional Information**

In case of an emergency, a counselor-on-call is available 24 hours a day during the academic year. After office hours and on weekends, please call 828- 227-8911 to access the counselor-on-call. This is the Communication Center Switchboard affiliated with University Police. Ask to speak to the counselor-on-call.

For any additional questions, give us a call at 828- 227-7469 or browse our website at [caps.wcu.edu](http://caps.wcu.edu).

## **Off Campus Resources**

For off campus assistance, please visit [PsychologyToday.com](http://PsychologyToday.com) to find a therapist in the local area.

## Policies & Safety

Western Carolina University (WCU) is dedicated to providing an environment of well-being, learning, and accountability for its members. As an educational institution, WCU provides resources that empower students to inform themselves about the physical, mental, and communal effects of alcohol and drugs. It is our mission to reduce negative consequences experienced due to the use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs in order to empower and retain successful healthy, involved students. As an institution WCU encourages safe and legal behavioral practices regarding student use of alcohol and other drugs. To foster academic achievement, personal success and wellness, and community safety WCU has adopted the following Alcohol and Other Drugs policies:

Possessing, consuming, or distributing alcohol and/or Controlled Substances (and/or other conduct that may result in intoxication or other harmful effects). Examples of behavior in violation of these policies include, but are not limited to:

Possession or consumption of alcohol in a manner that is not authorized by University policies (under 21)

Displaying/possession/consumption of alcohol in campus residence halls by students less than 21 years of age

Furnishing/selling alcohol to any person less than 21 years of age

Presence of kegs, party balls, or other common source containers

Drinking games (beer pong, flip cup, etc.)

Operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs

Public intoxication by alcohol or other drugs

Possession or consumption of drugs and/or Controlled Substances in violation of University policies (marijuana, non-personal prescription medication, etc.)

Possession/use of drug paraphernalia (bongs, pipes, etc.)

Selling/trafficking/manufacturing drugs

Misuse of some consumer products (e.g., medications, spices, bath salts, etc.)

(Note: These policies include, but are not limited to University Policy #38 - Illegal Drugs and Illegal Use of Alcohol, University Policy #81 - General Campus Policy For Alcoholic Beverages, and University Policy #102 - University Center BYOB Alcohol Policy).

Each member of our the WCU community is responsible for his or her own actions and is expected to conduct themselves in a manner that helps enhance an environment of learning in which the rights, dignity, worth, and freedom of each member of the community are respected.

## **Safety**

Although Cullowhee is a relatively safe place to visit, it is good to practice safety. Here are some general guidelines:

Don't carry large sums of money with you.

Don't leave any of your personal belongings alone in public.

Lock your doors.

It is best not to walk alone at night, even on campus. Try to always walk in groups. At night, wear bright colors so that cars will be able to see you.

Always wear a seatbelt when you are in a moving vehicle. It is the law. Never hitchhike.

**If you have an emergency, call Campus Police immediately at 828-227-8911.**



## Get Involved!



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visit the Student Life page at

<http://www.wcu.edu/experience/index.aspx>

### **Last Minute Productions**

LMP shows newly released movies every Friday and Saturday night during the school year! Tickets are free for WCU students.

### **Student Organizations**

There are over 150 student organizations on campus, including the Saudi Student Club and the Japanese Animation Society.

### **Base Camp Cullowhee/Campus Recreation & Wellness**

Feel like an adventure? Head over to Base Camp Cullowhee to climb the rock wall, hike a trail, sign up for a rafting trip, and much more!



# Special Events

## Annual International Festival

The annual International Festival, or I-Fest, has provided WCU and the surrounding Jackson County community with a unique opportunity—that is, a chance to engage and explore world cultures and fascinating traditions through a wide range of medium, including Food, Music, Dance and Artistry.

The I-Fest is a celebration that occurs in early April. Festival coordinators typically expect attendance to reach between 1,000- 1,500 visitors.





# Notes