



# Nichols College

*Embrace Greatness.*

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

*NICHOLS COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES*



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# Table of Contents

## LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

<a href="#">Welcome from ISS</a>	1
<a href="#">Cultural Adjustment &amp; American Behavior</a>	2
<a href="#">Healthcare &amp; Insurance</a>	6
<a href="#">Banking</a>	7
<a href="#">US Postal Services &amp; Mailing Guide</a>	9
<a href="#">Driver's Licenses</a>	10
<a href="#">Common Terms and Phrases</a>	11
<a href="#">The Graduate School</a>	14

## OFF-CAMPUS LOCAL RESOURCES

<a href="#">Lodging &amp; Accommodations</a>	15
<a href="#">Post Offices</a>	15
<a href="#">Banks</a>	15
<a href="#">Clinics &amp; Hospitals</a>	16
<a href="#">Pharmacies</a>	16
<a href="#">Local Restaurants</a>	16
<a href="#">Public Transportation</a>	17
<a href="#">Multicultural Restaurants &amp; Cafés</a>	18
<a href="#">Multicultural Markets &amp; Grocery Stores</a>	22
<a href="#">Salons &amp; Grooming</a>	23
<a href="#">Local Entertainment</a>	24

## GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

<a href="#">General Information</a>	25
<a href="#">Visa Basics &amp; Form I-94</a>	26
<a href="#">Maintaining Status</a>	27
<a href="#">Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS)</a>	27
<a href="#">Duration of Status</a>	28
<a href="#">Leaving the US Temporarily</a>	28
<a href="#">Transferring</a>	28
<a href="#">Travel to Canada, Mexico, &amp; Adjacent Islands</a>	29
<a href="#">Change of Address</a>	29
<a href="#">Social Security Numbers (SSN)</a>	30
<a href="#">US Tax Obligations</a>	31
<a href="#">Employment for F-1 Students</a>	32

## NICHOLS COLLEGE RESOURCES & CAMPUS INFORMATION

<a href="#">Directory Information</a>	33
<a href="#">Academics</a>	34
<a href="#">Academic Center for Excellence and Support</a>	35
<a href="#">Academic Advising</a>	36
<a href="#">Athletics</a>	37
<a href="#">Career and Professional Development Center</a>	38
<a href="#">Conant Library</a>	38
<a href="#">Dining Services</a>	39
<a href="#">Health &amp; Counseling Services</a>	40
<a href="#">Information Technology Services</a>	41
<a href="#">Learning Services</a>	41
<a href="#">Office of Diversity &amp; Inclusion</a>	42
<a href="#">International Programs</a>	42
<a href="#">Public Safety</a>	43
<a href="#">Residence Life</a>	44





# Nichols College

*Learn. Lead. Succeed.*

Dear International Student:

Welcome to Nichols College! The primary objective of Nichols College in hosting international students is to enable them to achieve their academic goals. We also welcome your presence as a means of strengthening our knowledge and understanding of your country and culture.

The Office of International Programs has prepared this handbook, which contains valuable information about Nichols College and living in Dudley. We hope this handbook will be a helpful resource throughout your stay at Nichols.

The staff of International Programs, we welcome you to Nichols College! The international life of Nichols College, as well as the Nichols community, is greatly enhanced by your presence.

Sincerely,

*Kristen Malinowski-Paine*

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## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

# CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

When moving to a new country, the adjustment process may be very different than what you may have experienced while taking an extended vacation to a new place. Below you will find information about culture shock, American social customs, and information about what Americans are generally like in the United States.

## CULTURE SHOCK

"Culture Shock," or "cultural adjustment," is the term for the sense of disorientation and confusion, which almost all people experience to some degree when they arrive in another country and discover a new culture. When you leave what you are familiar with (food, language, family/friends, climate, etc.) and are expected to function in your new culture, you might experience culture shock.

**Symptoms of Culture Shock:** Cultural adjustment can have both emotional and physical symptoms, including sadness, loneliness, insomnia, depression, irritability, lack of confidence, feelings of insecurity, longing for family, feelings of loss of identity, or even physical aches and pains.

**Dealing with Culture Shock:** It is important to acknowledge that cultural adjustment is a real issue and takes time to overcome. It is okay to feel sad or to miss home, and you should allow yourself time to feel this way. However, it is also important to seek ways to connect to American people and culture. This will help you adjust and make you feel more comfortable in your new environment. Getting to know your neighbors, joining campus organizations, and participating in activities will help with this transition. Regular exercise, a proper diet, and adequate amounts of rest and sleep will also help with this process.

There are some simple steps you can take to minimize the impact of culture shock:

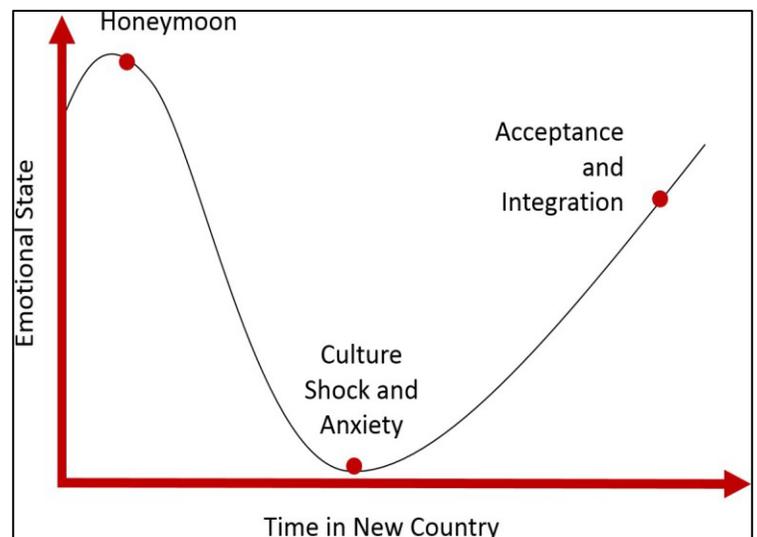
- Listen and observe. Watch the reaction of others in different situations. The more you know about how Americans behave, the less uncomfortable you will feel.
- Ask questions. Don't assume that you will always know what is going on or that you will always understand every communication.
- Try not to evaluate or judge. A lot of things will be different. It is important not to view everything as good or bad in comparison to your own culture.

## STAGES OF CULTURE SHOCK

**Phase 1: Honeymoon:** When a student first arrives in a new culture, every experience tends to be "new," "exciting," and "interesting".

**Phase 2: Culture Shock and Anxiety:** "What am I doing here"? Students tend to transition to this phase after 2-3 weeks in the US. This generally happens after you have settled into the routine of school and things stop being "new" and "exciting". During this period frustration can take hold, and issues like language, food, and figuring out smaller cultural issues become draining and aggravating. This is also the time when most students start to feel homesick.

**Phase 3: Acceptance and Integration:** At this point students start to overcome some frustrations and start to feel more comfortable in their new culture. This initial adjustment generally takes one semester, and some students go through several periods of Phase 2 and Phase 3 while adapting to American culture.



# SOCIAL CUSTOMS IN THE UNITED STATES

It is difficult to generalize about social customs in the US because the American society is very complex and diverse. Hopefully, the following information will be helpful as you adjust to your new "culture".

## GREETINGS

Upon meeting each other for the first time, men (always) and women (usually) shake hands, firmly. "How are you doing?" "good morning," "good afternoon," and "good evening" are formal greetings. Usually, people just say hello" and "hi." (Remember that social customs differ in different sections of the country and between younger and older people.) "How are you?" is a common greeting. It is *not* generally meant as a question; instead, it is an alternative to "hello." A common response to "how are you?" is "I'm well, how are you?" instead of a detailed explanation of how you actually feel.

First names are more readily used in the US than in other countries. It is acceptable automatically to use the first name of someone of approximately your same age or younger. Men and women in the northeast of the US might be surprised if you use Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. with a first, or "given" name, as is the custom in some countries. These titles are generally used with the last name, or "family name" (Although in the southern regions of the US, using these titles with first names might be more common). If you have any doubts about what to call someone, simply ask, "What should I call you?" If people seem unsure how to address you, tell them the name you prefer, and pronounce it slowly, so they will understand.

The use of "nicknames" is common in the US. A nickname is not the person's real name, but a name given by family or friends. Sometimes a nickname is a shortened version of the person's first or his family name – like "Bob" for Robert, or "Andy" for John Anderson. Being called by a nickname is not uncomplimentary; in fact, it often is a sign of acceptance and affection.

Some international students choose to take on an English name once they are in the US. This might be a name they used back home in English class, or a nickname from home/school. Some students feel it is easier to use an English nickname with Americans, especially if their original name is long or complex for an American tongue. Having an English name is a personal preference and is not required. If you prefer to use your original name, even if Americans have difficulty with it, don't feel shy to politely correct them if it is mispronounced, and to encourage its use.

## SOCIAL INVITATIONS

Social invitations are extended by telephone or by written note or a printed invitation, and in this age of social media, sometimes by text, email, or an online card. Some casual, verbal comments that sound like invitations, like "come by and see me" or "maybe we can get together sometime", are generally not intended to be taken literally. An invitation is not firm until a date and time and other arrangements are set.

## RSVPs

If an RSVP is requested, you should reply with a yes or no. RSVPs are often used by the host to predict attendance and to order food and other resources accordingly. To RSVP that you will be attending and then not show up, or vice versa, is considered very rude in the US.

## TIPPING AND GRATUITY

Service charges, or tips, are not added to the bill in restaurants, but are expected (and often needed) by the waiter/waitress as the main source of income. Tips in restaurants are 15% to 20% of the total bill depending on the quality of service. You don't tip in a cafeteria or places where you help yourself. Sometimes if you are eating in a large group, the gratuity might be automatically included in the bill, but this would be noted at the bottom. If you do not see any mention about "gratuity added" on your bill you can assume that you will have to leave a tip.

# WHAT AMERICANS ARE LIKE

The notion of the US as a "melting pot" where all cultures blend is somewhat misleading. Although some immigrants to the US have given up their original languages and customs, there are still many differences among Americans. You should also be aware of the diversity among international students attending Nichols. Being an international student means that you share a common bond with students from countries other than the US. Beyond this similarity, differences between students from Asia, Latin America, Africa and Europe can be great. The United States is populated by a large and highly diverse collection of individuals, and it is difficult to generalize about "what Americans are like." As you read the typical traits listed below, remember that US society is composed of people from many social, cultural, ethnic, and national backgrounds, different economic situations, and vastly different philosophies of life.

## AMERICANS ARE INDIVIDUALS

Probably above everything else, Americans consider themselves individuals. There are strong family ties and strong loyalties to groups, but individuality and individual rights are most important. If this seems like a selfish attitude, it also leads Americans to an honest respect for other individuals and an insistence on human equality.

## AMERICANS ARE DIRECT

Honesty and frankness are more important to Americans than "saving face," which means Americans will be direct when it comes to sharing their thoughts. They may seem blunt at times, and they may bring up topics and issues which you may find embarrassing, too controversial, or even offensive. Americans are quick to get to the point and do not spend much time on formal social amenities. This directness encourages Americans to talk over disagreements and to try to patch up misunderstandings themselves, rather than ask a third party to mediate disputes.

## AMERICANS ARE VERY INFORMAL

In general, Americans are very informal when it comes to interactions with others. International students may consider this cross-generation, cross-class informality disrespectful, even rude, but it is a part of US culture.

## AMERICANS ARE GENERALLY COMPETITIVE

Most Americans have a competitive nature. They place a high value on achievement, which leads them to be focused on their own success. This leads them to compete against each other.

## AMERICANS ARE FRIENDLY...IN THEIR OWN WAY

In general, friendships among Americans tend to be shorter and more casual than friendships among people from other cultures. This has something to do with American mobility and the fact that Americans do not like to be dependent on other people. Americans also tend to "compartmentalize" friendships, having "work friends," "family friends," "school friends," and so on. You may also notice Americans will smile a lot, which is typically genuine and used to show friendliness.

## AMERICANS ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS

Americans can ask some questions that may to you seem pointless, uninformed, or elementary. Someone you have just met may ask you very personal questions. No impertinence is intended; the questions usually grow out of a genuine interest.

# WHAT AMERICANS ARE LIKE (*continued*)

## AMERICANS ARE TIME-CONSCIOUS

Americans keep appointment calendars and live according to schedules. They usually are on time for appointments, or no more than a few minutes late. It is considered rude to show up late to an appointment without notification that you will be arriving more than a few minutes past the agreed upon time. Common courtesy is to let the other party know if you will not be able to make an appointment or meeting as soon as you know, to allow for rescheduling if necessary.

## AMERICAN POLITENESS

Americans often use the words “please,” “thank you,” and “I’m sorry” more often than an international person might be used to. Americans tend to say, “I’m sorry” in situations where you might not think an apology is necessary, such as brushing against someone on a train or bumping into someone in the hallway—it doesn’t have to be a big problem to say, “I’m sorry.” A common response to “I’m sorry” is “no worries” or “it’s okay.” Saying “please” when requesting something, and “thank you” when receiving something is also very customary in the US, and may be considered rude if you don’t also use these phrases, even amongst close friends or family members.

## USING PRONOUNS

The mindful use of pronouns in the United States is important to ensure you are being respectful. Asking about pronouns and being sensitive to pronouns is a relatively new concept in the United States and is more commonly understood and utilized amongst younger generations and people of certain communities, such as the LGBTQIA+ community. Older generations of Americans may not be as familiar or comfortable with the concept of asking about pronouns.

While many people might assume someone’s pronouns are based on how they look, pronouns are not indicative of gender; only the individual can tell you which pronouns they want to be referred to by. Because of this, it is okay (and important) to ask someone about their pronouns, especially when meeting someone new. If the use of pronouns is not common in your native language, it is okay to let the other person know you are learning and might make mistakes along the way, especially if you are okay with being corrected. While there are many pronoun options, and new pronouns are constantly emerging, below is a chart of some of the most common pronouns:

Subjective	Objective	Possessive	Reflexive	Examples
She	Her	Hers	Herself	She is happy.
He	Him	His	Himself	He is happy.
They	Them	Theirs	Themselves	They are happy.
Ze	Hir/Zir	Hirs/Zirs	Hirself/Zirself	Ze is happy.

# Healthcare & Insurance

Health costs in the United States can add up quickly and are often very expensive if not covered by your health insurance. Health insurance in the US is essential to cover the high cost of hospital and medical expenses. Be aware of all costs involved before making medical decisions and what is included in your health insurance. If you have children, it is essential that you obtain adequate health insurance for your family.

In accordance with Commonwealth of Massachusetts's mandatory student health insurance legislation, all students must have primary coverage for sickness. Nichols College offers health insurance that meets the required qualifications for student health insurance. You can find more information and enroll in Nichols College's health plan here: <https://www.universityhealthplans.com/intro/Nichols.html>

## DEDUCTIBLE AMOUNTS

Most insurance policies require the insured individual to pay a small part of the medical cost before the insurance pays anything. This amount that you must pay first is called the deductible.

## CO-PAYMENT PERCENTAGE

Most insurance policies pay a percentage of your medical costs after you pay the deductible. For example, some policies pay 80% of the costs, you pay 20%. Many insurance policies pay a larger co-payment for certain types of illness, a smaller co-pay for other types. Others pay a percentage until you have paid a certain amount (called an out-of-pocket maximum), then they pay 100%.

## SPECIFIED LIMITS

Some policies give specific dollar limits on what they will pay for particular services. For example, they may limit the hospital room and board charge, the doctor's fee, the surgery fees, the psychologist/psychiatrist fees, the anesthesiologist charge, etc. Other policies pay "usual" charges for these costs, meaning they pay what is usually charged in the local area. If you are looking at a policy with specific dollar limits, you can check average costs in your location to be sure that the dollar limits are sufficient to pay for all the services you may need.

## BENEFIT PERIOD

Some insurance policies limit the amount of time they pay for illnesses or injuries. For example, if a policy has a 52-week benefit period, it will stop paying for a medical benefit 52 weeks after it began, even if the insured individual still requires that treatment.

## EXTENSION OF BENEFITS

The extension of benefits provision applies if you are receiving treatment at the time your insurance policy expires and you are not eligible to renew the original policy agreement. Many companies will extend the policy and continue to pay benefits for a limited period of time.

## EXCLUSIONS

Most insurance policies exclude coverage for certain conditions. It is important to read the list of exclusions carefully so that you understand exactly what is not covered by the policy.

# Healthcare & Insurance (*continued*)

## MEDICAL EVACUATION/REPATRIATION

For international visitors in the US, coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation of remains is important. If your policy covers medical evacuation, it will pay your transportation costs if you need to return home because of a covered medical condition. If it covers repatriation, the insurance company will pay the cost of returning your remains home from the US should you die here.

## PREMIUM COST

It is important to compare the cost of the policies you are considering, but keep in mind that you need to judge the policies based on the comparable coverage they provide. Generally, when a policy costs less, it provides less coverage; you usually get what you pay for and no more. Costs shouldn't be the only factor in your decision. Being sure that the insurance protects you adequately against unexpected medical costs is far more important.

## WALK-IN CLINICS & URGENT CARE

Walk-In Clinics and Urgent Care facilities are becoming more and more common and are used for medical issues that arise that require immediate care but are not serious enough to go to the emergency room. Typically, you would visit a Walk-In Clinic or Urgent Care facility if you have a non-life-threatening issue but cannot wait to schedule an appointment with your primary care doctor.

***Please see [page 17](#) for a list of local hospitals and urgent-care facilities.***

# Banking

Americans don't usually carry a lot of cash. They prefer to pay by check, credit card, or debit card, even for small purchases. To function efficiently in the U.S. economy, you will need to open a checking and/or savings account at a local bank. Other services you may find at these banks are foreign currency conversion, traveler's checks, and interbank transfers. Most banks also offer online banking.

## OPENING AN ACCOUNT

When you open an account with a bank, most banks require two pieces of identification, such as your passport and a Nichols student ID. You may open a checking or savings account at any nearby bank. Upon opening the account, you should also bring the initial deposit. You do not need a Social Security Number to open an account. At the time you open your account, you can complete a W-8BEN Form instead of giving the bank a Social Security Number. You can access the form by clicking on [W-8BEN Form](#).

## CHECKING ACCOUNT

A checking account is convenient for payment of bills and occasional expenses. The initial deposit may take up to two weeks to clear before you can withdraw money from your account. Once you can withdraw funds, you can use a debit card linked to your account to access your money. This can be done either at the bank, at an ATM, or by using the debit card to pay for purchases. You can also use personal checks that are connected to your checking account to pay for things such as utility bills and monthly rent.

## SAVINGS ACCOUNT

A savings account enables you to save money and accumulate interest on these savings. These accounts are convenient and safe if you have some extra money that you are not going to use immediately. Most banks pay about 0.01% - 0.05% interest credited annually.

# Banking (*continued*)

## MAKING A DEPOSIT



To make bank deposits, fill out a “deposit slip” and present this (along with the check or cash) to the bank teller. If the money is in the form of a check, you will have to endorse the check by signing your name on the reverse side. Depending on the amount you deposit, it might take a few days for the entire deposit to be available in your account. Many banks nowadays have online banking apps that allow you to deposit a check using a smart phone.

## DEBIT CARDS

Many banks issue debit cards that make deposit and withdrawal services available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week by use of an automated teller machine (ATM). These machines, which are located outside banks and in various locations such as grocery stores, are very convenient. Nichols College has ATMs located in Fels Student Center, Remillard Hall, and Copper Beech II. You can avoid waiting in line at the bank and have access to cash after the bank closes or in an emergency. Banks that are members of a national ATM network allow you access to your funds throughout the country. Usually, a fee of \$3.00 to \$5.00 is charged for this service if you are not using an ATM supported by your bank. When you are withdrawing cash from an ATM after dark, be aware of your surroundings to prevent an assault. Protect your bankcard and your secret access code (PIN) as you do your cash and credit cards.

## CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards can be convenient, especially if you unexpectedly have major expenses. However, you must understand that credit cards are seductive, and before you know it you may be in debt. Before you accept a credit card, you must be sure to understand all your obligations. Most credit cards charge an annual fee. If you are unable to pay your full balance, you will be charged high interest rates (usually 18%-29%) on the remaining balance and any additional charges you make. Being responsible with a credit card can be a great way to begin establishing credit in the United States. Obtaining a credit card requires a Social Security Number.



Credit is usually tied to your “credit score” which is an important number to maintain while you are in the US. A lot of calculations go into the credit score, and it is used to evaluate your reliability, especially when making large purchases that require a loan such as a car. If you pay your bills late or have a large credit card bill that maintains a balance each month, these can contribute to having a bad credit score. If your credit score is very low, it could even effect renting a nice apartment or passing a background check.

## SECURING MONEY FROM HOME

To secure money from home, you may need a certificate of enrollment letter from Nichols College stating that you are currently enrolled as a student. Each country has its own requirements and restrictions on transfer of foreign currency. If you need specific information, you should contact the Education Department at your own country’s embassy. The person sending you money should have all the specific information about your bank and your account. Your bank can also provide you with their identification number so that money can be wired from your family’s bank to your bank and credited to your account. **Wise Bank** and **Revolute Bank** allow you to have family deposit money from your home country easily and safely. **See page 16 for local banks.**

# US Postal Services & Mail

The government provides mail service in the US. It is a federal service. US mail is delivered every day except for Sundays and federal holidays. Although, independent companies like Amazon will deliver on Sunday.

## SENDING & RECEIVING MAIL AT NICHOLS

The *Nichols College Mail Services* office is in the lower level of Fels Student Center, room 007A. All campus mail is delivered directly to this mailroom, where each student is assigned a specific "Unit" or mailbox number. Students may retrieve their mail by visiting the mailroom during posted business hours (may change throughout the year). Mailroom staff are also available to assist with sending mail via USPS, UPS, or FedEx.

To ensure that your mail reaches you, please use the following address/format when receiving mail at Nichols College:

*STUDENT NAME*

Unit #: \_\_\_\_\_ (this will be printed on your student ID card)

Nichols College

PO Box 5000

Dudley, MA 01571



## CERTIFIED MAIL

You can use this service when you want proof of the delivery of your mail. Your mail is treated like ordinary mail, but the receiver's signature is obtained and returned to you as a proof of the delivery.

## SPECIAL DELIVERY

You can use this service when you need your letters to be delivered with certain urgency. Upon its arrival at the post office in the city to which it has been sent, a special postal messenger will deliver the letter at once to the recipient's address.

## REGISTERED MAIL

When you need your mail to be safeguarded, you can use this kind of mail service. Your mail will be covered by insurance. Therefore, if it is lost, the post office will pay you the value of the article.

When you change your address, there is a service that allows you to receive your mail at your new address. Special cards are available at any post office for reporting a change of address. To maintain legal status, International Students must inform the PDSO/DSO of any address changes within 10 days, by emailing International Programs at [IP@nichols.edu](mailto:IP@nichols.edu).



In the US, many people pay their bills by mail or using online bill payment. If you do not have a checking account, money orders can be obtained at any bank, the post office, or local money order facilities such as Price Chopper. Cashier's checks from the bank can also be used. Cash should never be sent through the mail, as it can very easily be lost or delivered to the wrong person, and you have no way to track the delivery if you send cash. It is always advisable to send a check or money order.

# Driver's Licenses

As an international student on a student visa, you are required to obtain a Massachusetts driver's license if you plan to drive a car. This is because you intend to live in Massachusetts long-term to complete your program, which means you are establishing residency in Massachusetts, and you are not categorized as simply a visitor.

## CONVERTING A LICENSE FROM ANOTHER STATE

If you have a driver's license from another state in the US, which has not expired (or expired less than a year ago), you can simply pay the required fees for conversion to a Massachusetts license. You can make the conversion after showing proof of residence in Massachusetts and proof of legal status in the US, given that you do not have any physical disability or prior criminal record.

## CONVERTING A FOREIGN DRIVER'S LICENSE

If you have a foreign driver's license from **Canada, Mexico, South Korea, Germany, France, Taiwan**, or one of the **U.S. Territories**, you may convert your foreign license upon becoming a Massachusetts resident without taking the written or road test. If you are not from one of these countries, you will be required to pass a Massachusetts written test and a road test to obtain your Massachusetts license. Although some foreign visitors may drive in the US with an acceptable foreign license and an International Driver's Permit for up to one year from the date of entry in the US, you must still apply for a Massachusetts license when you establish residency (studying towards a degree is considered establishing residency, as you are more than simply visiting the United States).

## APPLYING FOR A NEW DRIVER'S LICENSE

RMV regulations require that visa holders must have a total authorized stay of at least 12 months to be eligible to apply for a Massachusetts Learners Permit or License. This would be based on the amount of time between your program start date and program end date on your I-20 form or your DS-2019. You must also have at least 30 days remaining on your status before applying.



For more information about the process of obtaining a Massachusetts Driver's License, please visit:  
<https://www.mass.gov/passenger-class-d-drivers-licenses>

Registry of Motor Vehicles – Southbridge Branch  
6 Laroche Way, Southbridge, MA

Phone: 508-831-5540

Hours: Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm

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

## DRIVING SCHOOLS

While you are not required by law to take driver education classes through a certified driving school, it can help you to learn U.S. driving rules and expectations. Additionally, it can help to reduce your insurance premiums.

Local driving schools include:

- Alert Driving Academy, 30 East Main Street, Webster, MA (508-943-1155)
- CMSC Driving School, 186 W Boylston St, West Boylston, MA (508-835-2333)

# Common Academic Terms & Phrases

## ACADEMIC ADVISOR

Member of the faculty who helps and advises the student on academic matters. They may also assist the student during the registration process.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION

A status resulting from unsatisfactory academic work; a student who is on academic probation must improve academic performance (i.e., grades) or be dismissed from the college after a specified length of time.

## ACADEMIC YEAR

The period of formal academic instruction, usually extending from August to May. An academic year is split into 3 semesters: Fall (Aug.-Dec.), Spring (Jan-May), and Summer (May-Aug.)

## ACCREDITATION

Non-governmental approval of institutions and/or certain programs within institutions by nationally recognized accrediting bodies. Accreditation can affect the transferability of credits from one institution to another or can be linked to prerequisites for professional certification or licensure.

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT

A waiver of some of the studies normally required for an undergraduate degree, granted to a student based on prior study or experience (often as indicated by the student's performance on special examinations).

## ALUMNA, ALUMNUS

A woman (alumna) or man (alumnus) who has attended or graduated from a school, college, or university. (Plural forms: alumnae for women, alumni for men or both men and women together)

## ASSISTANTSHIP

A study grant for a graduate student that is offered in return for certain services in teaching or laboratory supervision (as a teaching assistant), or services in research (as a research assistant).

## CLASS

The word "class" has several different definitions:

1. Group of students which meets with an instructor or professor on a regularly scheduled basis
2. The group of students in a particular year of study, i.e., freshman class (1st year), sophomore class (2nd year), junior class (3rd year), senior class (4th year)
3. The group of students who will graduate in a particular year, as "The Class of 2000."

## CURRICULUM

The subjects, content, or topics comprising a course of study in a school or college. Curriculum is the outline of concepts to be taught to students to help them meet the content standards. Curriculum is what is taught in each course or subject.

# Academic Terms & Phrases *(continued)*

## **CRAM**

Intense study for a test, done at the last possible moment.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Activities which are a part of student life, but not part of regular classroom study, such as athletics, student activities, dances, hobbies, clubs, etc.

## **QUIZ**

Short written or oral test, less formal than an examination.

## **REGISTRAR**

The college administrator who maintains student academic records and is responsible for registering a student for their courses.

## **RESEARCH PAPER**

A written report, which includes research findings and the development of the student's original ideas.

## **SEMINAR**

A form of small group instruction combining independent research and class discussions under the guidance of a professor.

## **TRANSCRIPT**

A certified copy of a student's educational record containing titles of courses, the number of credits, and final grades in each course. An official transcript will also state the date a degree has been conferred. Transcripts can be obtained from the Registrar.

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# Common Immigration Terms & Phrases

For a complete listing of immigration terminologies, visit the USCIS homepage.

## **ALIEN REGISTRATION NUMBER**

Identification number assigned to an immigrant for US government purposes. In certain cases, at the discretion of the USCIS, registration numbers may be assigned to non-immigrant students and exchange visitors. However, most F-1, J-1 and M-1 students in the United States do not have "A" Numbers.

## **CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY (FORM I-20)**

Forms I-20 or DS-2019 are issued by a recognized US educational, vocational, or non-academic institution that accepts a foreign student for full-time study. Their sponsor, or the US educational institution they will be attending, issues the DS-2019 to exchange visitors. The I-20 and DS-2019 forms are not visas; they are used to show your eligibility to apply for the non-immigrant student visa status.

# Immigration Terms & Phrases (*continued*)

## CHANGE OF STATUS

Change from one non-immigrant classification to another. Change of status requires an application and USCIS approval.

## DEPENDENT

One who relies on another for support. For immigration purposes, a dependent is usually a spouse or any unmarried minor children (under 21-years-old).

## EXTENSION OF STAY

Permission from USCIS to remain in the United States beyond the expiration date specified on the Form I-94, "Arrival/Departure Record." For F-1 visa holders, this means extending your I-20 program end date.

## FORM I-539

Application form to be filled out by non-immigrants requesting reinstatement or a change of status.

## IMMIGRANT

A person who comes to a country other than his own as a permanent resident.

## NATURALIZATION

Process of becoming a citizen of a country not one's own.

## PDSO/DSO

A "Designated School Official" serves as a resource to international students, as well as assists them with maintaining their student status. All SEVP-certified schools are required to have P/DSOs to communicate with SEVP, update your student record, and help you maintain your student status by providing advice, or helping you fill out important forms. While benefits like employment or driving are available to you in the United States, you need authorization from your P/DSO before enjoying them. Speak to your P/DSO before doing any of the following:

- Working in the United States
- Applying for a driver's license
- Applying for a Social Security number
- Changing your major, program, or degree level
- Changing your education level
- Transferring to a new school
- Being absent from classes
- Taking a vacation
- Traveling outside the United States
- Moving to a new address
- Changing your name
- Requesting a program extension

## SEVIS NUMBER

The number on the I-20 Form or Form DS 2019 assigned to an F-1 or J-1 student. A SEVIS Number will begin with the letter "N", followed by a list of numbers.

## VISA

An endorsement stamped into a passport by a proper authority of a country the bearer wishes to enter. The visa denotes that the passport has been examined, that certain requirements for entry have been met, and that the bearer is permitted to proceed. The visa does not represent permission to enter the country; actual permission is granted at the point of entry.

# The Graduate School

## Overview

Many Nichols College students decide to continue their education after receiving their bachelor's degree at the Graduate School. Programs that are offered are: Executive MBA, MBA, Master of Science in Counterterrorism, Master of Science in Organizational Leadership, and Master of Science in Accounting.

## Changing your Education Level

If you want to continue your education at Nichols, please notify your P/DSO since we need to change your education level, and registration for classes since the graduate courses follow a 7-week schedule

## Transferring to Another Institution

If you want to complete a higher degree at another institution, you are welcome to do so. Speak to your P/DSO since we can transfer your SEVIS record to the school of your choice. Your transfer date will be the date your current program ends. Therefore, if you are engaging in CPT or summer courses, you would transfer your record after you complete your courses or internship.

## Maintaining Your Status

Maintaining your F-1 status is no different than when you were an undergraduate. In order to maintain status, you must PHYSICALLY be on campus. All graduate courses are assigned a room and you must take your class on campus. In ACES, you can swipe in using your ID so we can verify your attendance. If you are continuing your studies after receiving your BA from Nichols, you do not need to wait a year to engage in CPT.

## Graduate School Options

### On-Campus

If you choose to continue your studies in the 3+1 or 4+1 or are coming fresh from an undergraduate program, you have the option to complete your studies on campus. The on-campus experience brings together students worldwide fostering cultural exchange and collaboration. Attend synchronous online classes with other international students in the Academic Center for Excellence and Success, participate in student organizations, and embrace the full Nichols College Experience.

If you choose to complete an internship through Curricular Practical Training (CPT) in the states, or if you wish to work in the states upon graduation, under the Optional Practical Training (OPT), you can stay for an additional year. We have experienced staff on campus that can help you through this process while remaining in legal, immigration status.

### Virtual

If you prefer the flexibility of remote learning, our virtual program enables you to pursue your graduate degree without leaving your home country. Benefit from the same high-quality education delivered by our esteemed faculty, interactive online classrooms, and robust virtual resources. If you prefer to stay completely online, you must stay in your home country.

For additional information or resources, please go to <https://graduate.nichols.edu> or contact Jessica Dias at [Jessica.dias@nichols.edu](mailto:Jessica.dias@nichols.edu)

# Lodging & Accommodations

## AUBURN, MA (15-18 miles from campus)

*Holiday Inn Express*  
10 Johnston Street  
508-832-2500

*Comfort Inn and Suites*  
426 Southbridge Street  
480-719-7972

*Fairfield Inn & Suites*  
718 Southbridge Street  
508-832-9500

## STURBRIDGE, MA (10-15 miles from campus)

*Comfort Inn and Suites Colonial*  
215 Charlton Road (Rt. 20)  
508-347-3306

*Hampton Inn Sturbridge*  
328 Main Street  
508-347-6466

*Publick House Historic Inn*  
277 Main Street  
508-347-3313

## SOUTHBRIDGE, MA (5-7 miles from campus)

*Southbridge Hotel & Conference Center*  
14 Mechanic Street  
508-765-8000

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## Post Offices

*Nichols College Mail Services*  
Fels Student Center, Lower Level  
508-213-2301

*Dudley Post Office*  
124 W Main Street  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-7682

*Webster Post Office*  
339 Main Street  
Webster, MA 01570  
508-943-7525

*North Grosvenordale Post Office*  
831 Riverside Drive  
North Grosvenordale, CT 06255  
860-923-9192

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## Local Banks

*Webster 5 Savings Bank*  
136 Thompson Road  
Webster, MA 01570  
508-943-9401

*Santander Bank*  
206 Main Street  
Webster, MA 01570  
508-943-0755

## Nearest Clinics & Hospitals

### *Harrington Healthcare at Hubbard*

340 Thompson Road  
Webster, MA 01570  
508-943-2600

### *Harrington Memorial Hospital*

100 South Street  
Southbridge, MA 015500  
508-765-9771

### *UMass Memorial Medical Center*

119 Belmont Street  
Worcester, MA  
855-862-7763

### *Day Kimball Healthcare*

320 Pomfret Street  
Putnam, CT 06260  
860-928-6541

### *UrgentCare Express (Oxford)*

78 Sutton Ave  
Oxford, MA 01540  
508-499-1760

### *UrgentCare Express (Charlton)*

10 N Main St f2,  
Charlton, MA 01507  
508-248-1770

## Nearest Pharmacies

### *Walgreens Pharmacy*

5 Schofield Ave  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-949-0513

### *CVS Pharmacy*

112 East Main Street  
Webster, MA 01570  
508-949-0641

### *Rite Aid Pharmacy*

80 East Main Street  
Webster, MA 01570  
508-943-5146

## Local Restaurants (*Dudley & Webster*)

### *Jimmy's Pizza*

185 W. Main Street  
Dudley, MA  
508-949-0722

### *Mexicali Fresh Mex Grill*

41 Worcester Road  
Webster, MA  
508-461-5070

### *Sturbridge Coffee Roasters*

185 W. Main Street  
Dudley, MA  
808-461-9077

### *Dudley House of Pizza*

206 W. Main Street  
Dudley, MA  
508-949-0436

### *Empire Wok*

11 Worcester Road  
Webster, MA  
508-943-8888

### *Firebrands Bar & Grill*

8 Airport Road  
Dudley, MA  
508-949-8881

### *Yummy Chinese Restaurant*

3 Center Road  
Dudley, MA  
508-949-7888

### *Lake Pizza and Restaurant*

39 Thompson Road  
Webster, MA  
508-943-3684

### *Big Al's Pizza Plus*

23 Brandon Road  
Dudley, MA  
508-461-7446

### *Bistro Eighty-Ates*

172 Gore Road  
Webster, MA 01570  
508-949-8888

### *Point Breeze Seafood Restaurant*

114 Point Breeze Road  
Webster, MA  
508-943-0404

### *Leoni's Pizzeria*

59 Schofield Ave.  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-949-0533

# Public Transportation

## BUS SERVICES

*Peter Pan Bus Lines*  
Union Station Bus Terminal  
Worcester, MA 01608  
800-343-9999  
<http://www.peterpanbus.com/>

*Greyhound Bus Lines*  
Union Station Bus Terminal  
Worcester, MA 01608  
508-754-1102  
[www.greyhound.com/home/](http://www.greyhound.com/home/)

## TAXI & RIDE-SHARE SERVICES

*Mobile Whip (student-owned)*  
Dudley, MA  
<https://mobilewhip.com/>

*KC Rides*  
Webster, Dudley, & Oxford,  
MA 508-943-3440  
[www.kcridesco.com/](http://www.kcridesco.com/)

*Knights Airport Limousine Service*  
Shrewsbury,  
MA 1-800-822-  
5456  
[www.knightslimo.com](http://www.knightslimo.com)

*Yellow Cab*  
7 South Crystal Street, Worcester, MA  
01603 508-754-3211  
[www.yellowcabworcester.com/](http://www.yellowcabworcester.com/)

*Red Cab*  
180 Prescott St, Worcester, MA 01605  
508-792-9999  
[www.facebook.com/redcabryde/](http://www.facebook.com/redcabryde/)

*Lyft (Ride share)*  
[www.lyft.com](http://www.lyft.com)

*Uber (Ride share)*  
[www.uber.com](http://www.uber.com)

## TRAIN SERVICES

*Amtrak Trains (Union Station)*  
Worcester, MA 01608  
508-755-0356  
[www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)

*MBTA Commuter Rail (Union Station)*  
Worcester, MA 01608  
617-222-3200  
<http://www.mbta.com/>

## AIRPORT INFORMATION

*Logan International Airport*  
Boston, MA 02128  
1-800-235-6426  
[www.massport.com/logan-airport/](http://www.massport.com/logan-airport/)

*Bradley International Airport*  
Windsor Locks, CT  
06096 1-860-292-2000  
[www.bradleyairport.com/](http://www.bradleyairport.com/)

*T.F. Green  
Airport*  
Warwick, RI  
401-737-8222  
[www.pvdairport.com/](http://www.pvdairport.com/)

*Worcester Regional Airport*  
Worcester, MA 01602  
(508) 849-5550  
[www.massport.com/Worcester-airport](http://www.massport.com/Worcester-airport)

# Multicultural Restaurants & Cafés

The following listing of restaurants, markets, and cafés in Worcester (*and surrounding towns*) is a sampling of the many choices you have when looking for cultural food. Due to the ever-changing nature of COVID-19 restrictions, please contact restaurants for current hours of service.

## AFGHAN

*Pomir Grill*  
119 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-755-7333

## BRAZILIAN

*Terra Brasilis Restaurant*  
480 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-752-0390

*Miranda Bread (Bakery)*  
140 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-791-2030

*Pampas Churrascaria*  
145 E Central St, Worcester, MA  
508-757-1070

## GREEK

*Meze Greek Tapas Bar & Grill*  
156 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-926-8115

*Zorba's Taverna*  
97 Stafford St, Worcester, MA  
508-796-5828

## CHINESE

*Yummy Chinese Restaurant*  
3 Center Road, Dudley, MA  
508-949-7888

*Empire Wok*  
11 Worcester Road, Webster, MA  
508-943-8888

*Eastern Pearl*  
290 Main St, Webster, MA 01570  
508-671-9288

## AFRICAN

*Accra Girls Restaurant (Ghanian)*  
1280 Grafton St, Worcester, MA  
508-459-0054

*Anokye Krom (Ghanian)*  
687 Millbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-753-8471

*Fatima's Café (East African)*  
43 W Boylston St, Worcester, MA  
508-762-9797

## INDIAN

*Bollywood Grill*  
97 Boston Turnpike (Rte 9), Shrewsbury MA  
508-793-9888

*Dharani*  
291 Turnpike Road in Westborough MA  
508-366-0090

*Mayuri*  
30 Lyman St Westborough, MA  
508-898-1888

*Royal Indian Bistro*  
7 Merian St., Lexington, MA  
781-861-7350

*Woodlands (Vegetarian)*  
290 Turnpike Rd. Suite 180, Westborough, MA  
508-459-5099

*Welcome India Cuisine*  
770 Worcester Rd, Framingham, MA  
508-370-9977

# Multicultural Restaurants & Cafés (continued)

## IRISH

*O'Connor's Restaurant*  
1160 W Boylston St, Worcester, MA  
508-853-0789

## JAMAICAN

*Belmont Vegetarian*  
157 Belmont St, Worcester, MA  
508-798-8898

*Home Style*  
82 Harrison St, Worcester, MA  
774-420-2999

*Jamaica Thymes*  
169 Lincoln St, Worcester, MA  
508-868-1511

## KOREAN

*Healthy Food Choose and Mix (Korean and Japanese)*  
5 East Mountain St, Worcester, MA  
774-530-6123

*Koreana*  
158 Prospect St in Cambridge, MA  
617-576-8661

*Sapporo Korean BBQ*  
50 E Main St, Westborough, MA  
508-898-1880

*Simjang*  
72 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
774-243-7750

*Westborough Korean Restaurant*  
7 E Main St, Westborough MA  
508-366-8898

## ITALIAN

*Antonio's Pizza By the Slice*  
268 Chandler St, Worcester, MA  
774-530-6000

*Dino's Ristorante*  
13 Lord St, Worcester, MA  
508-753-9978

*La Scala Ristorante*  
183 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-753-9912

*La Cucina Italiana*  
294 Hamilton St, Worcester, MA  
508-797-3354

*Leo's Ristorante*  
11 Leo Turo Way, Worcester, MA  
508-753-9490

*Mare E Monti*  
Wall St, Worcester, MA  
508-767-1800

*Nuovo*  
97 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-796-5915

*Olis Italian Eatery*  
33 West Boylston St, Worcester, MA  
508-854-1500

*Via Italian Table*  
89 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-754-4842

*Volturno*  
72 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-756-8658

# Multicultural Restaurants & Cafés (continued)

## LATIN AMERICAN

*Café Reyes (Cuban)*  
421 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-762-9900

*Fuente De Vida (Salvadorian)*  
1159 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-929-3266

*Hacienda Don Juan (Salvadorian and Mexican)*  
875 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-756-2076

*Los Andes (Bolivian/Peruvian)*  
904 Chalkstone Ave, Providence RI  
401-649-4911

## LEBANESE/MIDDLE EASTERN

*Bay State Shawarma & Grill (Halal)*  
96 Water St, Worcester, MA  
508-753-6000

*El Basha*  
256 Park Ave, Worcester, MA  
508-795-0222

*Sahara Café*  
143 Highland St, Worcester, MA  
508-798-2181

*Shawarma Palace*  
3 Pleasant St, Worcester, MA  
508-755-6500

*Tandoori Halal Food*  
560 Lincoln St, Worcester, MA  
774-243-7474

*Zaytoon (Halal)*  
72 High St, Clinton, MA  
978-733-4258

## JAPANESE

*Baba Sushi*  
309 Park Ave, Worcester, MA  
508-752-8822

*Broth (American/Japanese Fusion Ramen)*  
106 Green St, Worcester, MA  
508-459-1511

*Kyoto*  
535 Lincoln St, Worcester, MA  
508-852-5788

*Oishi Japanese Restaurant*  
8 Franklin St, Worcester, MA  
508-758-1688

*Sake Bomb Bistro (Sushi)*  
258 Park Ave, Worcester, MA  
508-754-2426

*Stix Noodle Bar (Ramen)*  
72 Franklin St, Worcester, MA  
508-373-2715

*Yama Zakura*  
369 W Main St, Northborough, MA  
508-393-4187

## MEXICAN

*Mexicali Cantina Grill*  
41 Worcester Rd, Webster, MA 01570  
508-461-5070

*Casa Vallarta*  
45 Belmont St, Northborough, MA  
508-366-2153

*El Patron*  
192 Harding St, Worcester, MA  
508-757-8000

*Hola Restaurante*  
154 Turnpike Rd, Southborough, MA  
508-460-2058

# Multicultural Restaurants & Cafés (continued)

## SEAFOOD

Eggroll Lady  
609 W Boylston St, Worcester, MA  
508-755-4451

Ronnie's Seafood and Ice Cream  
871 Southbridge St, Auburn, MA  
508-832-9068

Scales Seafood & Ice Cream  
45 River St, Millbury, MA  
508-865-3377

Sole Proprietor  
118 Highland St, Worcester, MA  
508-798-3474

West Boylston Seafood  
321 W Boylston St., West Boylston, MA  
508-853-3655

## THAI

Thai Cuisine  
267 Main St, Webster, MA 01570  
508-943-0369

Thai Lemongrass  
129 E Main St, Webster, MA 01570  
508-461-5388

Basil n' Spice  
299 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
774-317-9986

Brown Rice Thai Cuisine  
26 Boylston St, West Boylston, MA  
774-261-8322

Racha Thai  
545 Southwest Cutoff (Rte 20), Worcester, MA  
508-757-8884

Thai Place  
50 Boston Turnpike (Rte 9), Shrewsbury, MA  
508-425-3595

## SPANISH

Bocado Tapas Bar  
82 Winter St, Worcester, MA  
508-797-1011

## VIETNAMESE

Anh Thu II  
91 Stafford St, Worcester, MA  
508-796-5333

Dalat Restaurant  
425 Park Ave, Worcester, MA  
508-753-6036

Pho Dakao  
593 Park Ave, Worcester, MA  
508-756-7555

Pho Sure  
114 Boston Turnpike, Shrewsbury, MA  
508-425-3314

Saigon Restaurant  
976 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-799-5250

## VEGETARIAN & HALAL RESOURCES

A resource guide for vegetarian and vegan dining in Worcester, including restaurant suggestions:

<https://www.vegguide.org/region/239>.

Resources for Halal restaurants and markets in Worcester and the surrounding area:

<http://www.zabihah.com/sub/United-States/Massachusetts/Worcester/37Ty4tenfV>

# Multicultural Markets & Grocery Stores

## AFRICAN

*GCN African Market*  
269 Main St, Webster, MA  
508-461-9140

*Danco African Foods*  
195 Pleasant St, Worcester, MA  
508-791-8580

## SPECIALTY BUTCHERS

*Emerald Meats*  
347 Chandler St, Worcester, MA  
508-756-2700

*Tatnuck Meat and Seafood*  
1100 Pleasant St, Worcester, MA  
508-754-8064

*S&S Farms and Deli Marketplace*  
307 W. Boylston St, Worcester, MA  
508-835-9989

*AP Fish Company*  
1059 Grafton St, Worcester, MA  
508-753-7744

## MEDITERRANEAN/MIDDLE EASTERN

*Bahnan's Bakery & Middle Eastern Style Food*  
344 Pleasant St, Worcester, MA  
508-796-5365

*Ed Hyder's Mediterranean Marketplace*  
408 Pleasant St, Worcester, MA  
508-755-0258

*George's Bakery*  
308 Grafton St, Worcester, MA  
508-752-0762

*Kalamos Greek and Mediterranean Market*  
125 June St, Worcester, MA  
508-304-8828

## ASIAN

*Asian Supermarket*  
50 Mill St, Worcester, MA  
508-304-6167

*Binh An Market*  
64 Green St, Worcester, MA  
508-798-6960

*Ha Tien Market*  
892 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-791-2220

*Mekong Market*  
747 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-304-1437

*Nepal Bazaar*  
98A Belmont St, Worcester, MA  
774-420-2146

*Patel Brother's Indian Market*  
504 Boston Turnpike (Rte 9), Shrewsbury MA  
508-842-9600

*Pinoy Republic Asian Store*  
545 SW Cutoff (Rte 20), Worcester, MA  
508-890-8600

## LATIN/CARIBBEAN

*Compare Foods*  
664 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-438-3663

*Plaza Supermarket*  
1000 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-752-5406

# Salons & Grooming

## LOCAL HAIR SALONS

*Supercuts*  
41 Worcester Rd., Webster, MA  
508-461-5102

*The Hair Studio*  
150 Main St., Webster, MA  
508-949-2404

## THREADING

*Salon Thread*  
131 Highland St, Worcester, MA  
508-459-1771

*The Eyebrow Place*  
7 Neponset St, Worcester, MA  
Greendale Mall Ste. 38

*Usha's Salon*  
1000 Boston Turnpike, Suite S10, Shrewsbury, MA  
508-366-9636

## NAIL SALONS

*Golden Nails*  
185 W Main St #5, Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-7055

*Queen Nails*  
129 E Main St, Webster, MA 01570  
508-943-8867

## SPECIALTY HAIR SALONS

*Axe to Grind (European style hair)*  
174 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
774-243-9259

*Bebe's African Hair*  
Braiding 685 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-799-0172

*Carlinto's Barbershop (Black/Hispanic hair)*  
925 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-755-6427

*Henroks Barbershop (Black/African hair)*  
120 Shrewsbury St, Worcester, MA  
508-981-7651

*Les Salon Beauty (Asian hair)*  
10 Kneeland St, Boston, MA  
617-338-9898

*Rosy's Hair Salon*  
(Dominican-owned, focus on Hispanic women's hair)  
820 Main St, Worcester, MA  
508-757-1185

*Santa's Hair Salon and Barber*  
(Dominican-owned salon, black and Hispanic hair)  
198 Chandler St, Worcester, MA  
508-752-3328

*Shi-Shi's Lounge (Black/African style hair)*  
376 Chandler St, Worcester, MA  
508-304-78780  
[www.shishisalon.net](http://www.shishisalon.net)

# Local Entertainment

## THEATERS & PERFORMANCE CENTERS

**Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts:** The Hanover Theatre regularly has performances of musicals, Broadway shows, comedians, and more.

- 2 Southbridge St, Worcester, MA (508-831-0800).

**DCU Center:** The DCU Center is the area's most popular entertainment center attracting top names in music, sports, and entertainment. It is also home to the Worcester Railers of the American Hockey League.

- 50 Foster St, Worcester, MA (508-755-6800)

**Mechanics Hall:** This National Historic Landmark serves as a performing arts center hosting a wide variety of concerts and cultural events. Among these are the unique free "Brown Bag" lunch concerts, the International Artist Series, the Travel Film Series, and the Worcester Music Festival.

- 321 Main St, Worcester, MA (508-752-5608)

## MUSEUMS

**Worcester Art Museum:** The Worcester Art Museum has more than 35,000 works of art from all over the world. Classes are available for all ages, and exhibits are constantly changing.

- 55 Salisbury St, Worcester, MA (508-799-4406)

**Worcester Historical Museum:** This museum is full of local history and artifacts. Learn about Worcester's Industrial history, or check out the Salisbury Mansion off of Institute Road.

- 30 Elm St, Worcester, MA (508-753-8278)

## AMUSEMENT PARKS, HIKING, AND SKIING

**Six Flags New England:** Largest amusement park in New England with roller coasters, rides, and a waterpark.

- Agawam, MA
- <https://www.sixflags.com/newengland>

**Canobie Lake Park:** Over 85 rides, games, live entertainment and attractions.

- Salem, NH
- <http://www.canobie.com/>

**Breezy Picnic Grounds Waterslides:** A place to picnic and to go on waterslides for the summer.

- Douglas, MA
- <https://breezysummer.com/>

**Ski Ward Ski Area:** A local place to go skiing, snow tubing, and other activities

- 1000 Main St, Shrewsbury MA
- <https://www.skiward.com/>

**Additional Hiking in Central Massachusetts:** If you are interested in getting off-campus and into nature, there are many great hiking trails in Massachusetts and greater New England. For a start, check out Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, Cascades Trail System, East Side Trail, Gates Pond, and Midstate Trail. More information can be found here:

- <http://www.golocalworchester.com/lifestyle/six-great-hiking-trails-in-central-mass>

# Government Regulations

As the United States seeks to develop immigration policy which balances security concerns with the desire to remain a welcoming society, we continue to see a pattern of stricter interpretations of existing regulations and introduction of new regulations in a way we have not experienced before. For international students, this means that you must pay close attention to any communication you receive from your PDSO or DSO regarding changes in immigration policies.

The US immigration law classifies international students in the US as temporary non-immigrant aliens ("aliens" means any person not a citizen or national of the United States). As international students, you are in the US on a non-immigrant visa, usually F-1 or J-1. If you have any questions, please don't ever hesitate to contact your PDSO or DSO for advice. You will find many useful websites published by US government agencies and different organizations or immigration attorneys. However, for the most accurate and up to date advice, we always ask that you rely on information provided by your PDSO/DSO.

The following information is meant to make you aware of your rights and responsibilities as an international student; it is not meant to be a complete listing of all government regulations as they pertain to you.

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The primary objective of the Department of Homeland Security is to protect the US against terrorist attacks, but it is also an objective of the department to enhance public service. There are three major organizations under DHS charged with enforcing immigration regulations in the US:



### U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

**Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE):** The primary functions of ICE are immigration and customs investigations, customs air and marine interdiction, immigration and customs intelligence, detention, and removal.



### U.S. Customs and Border Protection

**Customs and Border Protection (CBP):** As a single unified border agency, CBP is charged with border patrolling, customs service, and immigration inspection at the ports of entry (land borders, airports, and harbors). When you enter the US, your first contact will be with an agent from this agency.



### U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

**US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS):** Most adjudication of immigrant and non-immigrant benefits will be done by USCIS either at the local USCIS Office or by mailing applications to a USCIS Service Center. As a student you might be filing an application for change of status, for Optional Practical Training (OPT), or for re-instatement. These are all examples of applications adjudicated by USCIS. For more information, visit:

<http://www.dhs.gov/>

## PASSPORT

Before coming to the United States, you were issued a passport by your government allowing you to leave and re-enter your own country. Your passport must always be valid for a period of *six months longer* than you expect to stay in the US. If necessary, your own consulate or embassy in the US will extend your passport. Consult with them to learn what forms and fees are required. If you have a valid US visa in an expired passport you can still use the visa as long as it is presented at the port of entry together with a new and valid passport.

You can locate your Embassy or Consulate [here](#).

# Government Regulations (*continued*)

## VISA BASICS

The US visa is the label placed by a United States consular office on a page of your passport. It indicates that the consular office has determined that you are qualified to apply for admission to the United States in a particular immigration classification. A valid visa does not ensure an alien's entry into the US. An immigration officer at the port of entry makes this decision.

A visa contains the following information:

- The visa number
- The location of the issuing consular post
- The visa classification (F-1, J-1, etc.)
- The date of issuance
- The expiration date
- The number of applications for admission to the US for which it is valid
  - *The letter "M" will appear if you have indefinite (multiple) entries to the US during the period of the visa's validity*



The expiration date on the visa does not have any relationship to the length of time you can stay in the US, but only to the length of time it is valid to present to immigration when entering the country. The duration of your legal stay in the US will be noted on your immigration entry stamp.

## FORM I-94

For those of you who have traveled to the US in the past, you may be familiar with the small white cards you filled out in duplicate on the airplane before landing. This card, called an I-94 arrival/departure record, would then be turned in at the US immigration desk at the airport and stamped by a Customs and Border Protection official before being stapled into your passport. The card proved your legal entry and status in the US.

As of May 2013, CBP has moved to an automated I-94 system, meaning the I-94 cards are now electronic. When you enter the US, the CBP officer will stamp your travel document (passport) at your port of entry. The stamp will show your date of admission, class of admission (F-1, J-1, etc.), and the date that you are admitted until, which for students is "D/S", or Duration of Status. In order to access your electronic I-94, you must visit the Customs and Border Protection's website and fill out your personal information (name, birth date, passport number, passport country). We recommend that you do this shortly after entering the US (and each time you leave and re-enter the US) and print a copy for your records. A printed paper version of your I-94 card is still necessary for certain processes, such as applying for a Social Security Number (SSN).

Please note that the electronic I-94 will have an expiration date at the top right corner of the page when printed. This expiration date does not refer to the validity of your presence in the US. The only date that you should be concerned with is the date you are admitted until, which should read D/S. If you are concerned about this expiration date on the top of the I-94, you should be able to reprint a new copy of your I-94 with a future expiration date.

To access your electronic I-94, visit CBP's website [here](#).

# Government Regulations (*continued*)

## MAINTAINING STATUS

The responsibility for maintaining your visa status lies with you. Being out of status can have serious consequences for your academic plans. There are several important things you must do to maintain your status:

- Keep your passport valid. Your passport must be valid for a minimum of six (6) months into the future.
- Do not work off campus without USCIS approval. Before beginning any work, talk to your PDSO or DSO to obtain approval.
- Obtain extensions as needed. Allow ample time for your PDSO/DSO to assist you with any application for extension of stay by talking to the PDSO/DSO well before the program end date listed on your I-20 form or DS-2019. Extensions must be recorded in SEVIS by your PDSO/DSO, and you will receive an updated I-20 form or DS-2019.
- Maintain full-time enrollment and normal progress towards your degree. To remain in status, you must carry a full course of study every semester, except the summer term. For valid educational or medical reasons you can be allowed to carry a reduced course load. Only your PDSO/DSO can approve this exception. Permission must be obtained prior to enrollment for a reduced course load.

## OVERSTAYING AND UNLAWFUL PRESENCE

The provisions of The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRAIRA) affect all non-immigrants, and in some cases, even immigrants (*green card holders*) are affected. These provisions are to inform you of what will happen if you are out-of-status and remain in the United States illegally. As an F-1 or J-1 student, you need to know, as a minimum, the following about IIRAIRA:

*Unlawful presence in the US can result in up to a 10-year bar from re-entering the US. For the purpose of this regulation, you are unlawfully present when an immigration judge, a CBP officer, ICE officer, or a CIS officer determines that a status violation has occurred.*

## STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEVIS)

SEVIS is a tracking system for international students and exchange visitors in the US on F or J visas. The program facilitates timely reporting and monitoring of international students and exchange visitors. All F-1, F-2, J-1 and J-2 visa holders have a permanent SEVIS ID number, and all actions taken by the International Student Advisor, the US Consulate issuing initial visa, and the immigration inspector at the port of entry will be recorded in the individuals SEVIS record in the government database. **Nichols College is required to keep our part of SEVIS up to date with the following information:**

*Your US local as well as foreign home address, your program of study, your enrollment status, any employment we have authorized or recommended, program extension, dismissal from Nichols College, transfer to another school/program in the US, and date of completion of studies.*

Your PDSO/DSO will do everything possible to update each student's SEVIS record as we become aware of any changes, but it is ultimately **YOUR responsibility** to inform the PDSO/DSO of any changes in your circumstances. All reporting in SEVIS must be completed within specific timeframes, thus it is VERY important that you inform us immediately when you change your address, major, etc. Furthermore, certain actions on your part require prior approval by the PDSO/DSO and updates in SEVIS. If you plan to enroll for less than full-time, you need to see the PDSO/DSO prior to enrolling. If you need an extension, you must apply for the extension prior to the expiration date on your current I-20 or DS-2019. Finally, because we have to report your enrollment status every semester, it is very important that you adhere to the enrollment dates and complete your enrollment and registration no later than the first week of classes at the start of each semester.

# Government Regulations (*continued*)

## STUDENTS WITH F-1 VISA

If you were issued an I-20 form in order to obtain your US visa, you are on an F-1 visa. Any accompanying family members will be on an F-2 visa, unless they are full-time students as well or if they have their own visa status. The following is a very brief overview of the F-1 regulations.

## DURATION OF STATUS



Your immigration entry stamp should have a D/S written on it. Duration of Status is defined as the period of time necessary to complete a full course of study in any educational program, plus any authorized period of practical training following completion of that program, plus 60 days in which to depart the US. The term "duration of status" is not an indication that you can stay in the US indefinitely as long as you are enrolled at a university. You must have a valid I-20 form to support your D/S.

## I-20 FORM

The first time an F-1 student comes into contact with the Department of Homeland Security, the student must present a properly completed Form I-20. The I-20 is provided to the student by the Designated School Official from the US school the student will be attending, and is the student's permanent record of his/her non-immigrant F-1 student status in the US. The Form I-20 is also used to record work and practical training. It should remain with your passport and should not be surrendered when leaving the US. Always be in possession of your I-20, and never allow someone else to keep your I-20 (for example, never allow your employer to keep your I-20). If you are given a new I-20 at any point, you must keep your past I-20s for your records - **do not throw them away!** A new I-20 form is only required if there has been a change in your field of study, degree program, in the source or amount of funding, or if all of the travel endorsement lines have been used.

## LEAVING THE US TEMPORARILY AND RE-ENTERING

F-1 visa holders need the following documents to re-enter the US after a temporary absence:

- Valid I-20 form recently signed by one of the International Student Advisors
- Valid passport
- Valid US visa (must at least be valid through the day you return to the US)
- Recent verification of adequate financial support, such as bank statements
- It is recommended that you carry an official copy of your transcript obtained from the Registrar's Office
- It is recommended that you carry an enrollment verification letter obtained through the Registrar's Office
- If you are on Optional Practical Training, you must bring your valid EAD card and, if possible, a letter from your employer stating you will resume your position upon your return to the US

## TRANSFERRING

If you are considering transferring from Nichols to another college or university in the US, you need to inform the PDSO/DSO once you have been accepted to another school and decide to transfer. You should also provide a copy of your acceptance letter to the new school to the PDSO/DSO and set up an appointment with the PDSO/DSO to discuss your transfer release date. Nichols College will need to enter a "release" date into SEVIS and indicate the school you are transferring to. As soon as your record is released to another school, you will lose all Practical Training privileges (CPT/OPT) associated with your time at Nichols, even if you have been pre-authorized to work until a later date. If you are a transfer student starting at Nichols College, you need to make sure your SEVIS record from your previous school has been released, and you must register within the first week of class. You are expected to check in with the PDSO/DSO as soon as you arrive to Nichols.

# Government Regulations (*continued*)

## TRAVEL TO CANADA, MEXICO, & ADJACENT ISLANDS



Students on an F-1 or J-1 visa may travel to Canada, Mexico, or select islands adjacent to the United States with an expired US visa if you have all other required documents. So long as you are traveling to Canada, Mexico, or adjacent islands for pleasure/tourism for a duration of less than 30 days, you can use an expired F-1 or J-1 visa to reenter the US. If you apply for a US visa while in Canada, Mexico, or an adjacent island, automatic revalidation no longer applies. Automatic revalidation of non-immigrant visas does *not* apply to nationals of Iran, Syria, and Sudan.



If you wish to apply for a non-immigrant visa from any of the US Consulate Posts in Canada, Mexico, or the adjacent islands, you must schedule an appointment. For more information on how to apply for a visa at a US Consulate in Canada or Mexico, click [here](#).

You should note that if your application for a new visa from a US Consulate in Canada or Mexico is denied, you must return to your country of residence and apply for the visa from there.

Check first to see if you need a visa to enter Canada, Mexico, or the adjacent islands. Applications and instructions for a Canadian Tourist visa are available [here](#).

To find out if you need a tourist visa to visit Mexico click [here](#).

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Foreign nationals are required to advise the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) of any change of US address within 10 days. Since the events of September 11, 2001, the DHS appears to seriously enforce this rule. If you are a student on an F-1 or J-1 visa, you can satisfy this requirement by informing your PDSO/DSO of your address change within 10 days, by emailing International Student Services IP@nichols.edu.



# Government Regulations (continued)

## SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)

A Social Security Number is a unique number that is assigned by the Social Security Administration, and is used primarily for tax and identification purposes. If you are authorized to work and receive payment in the United States, you will need a Social Security Number. Only students who have proof of employment are eligible to apply for a Social Security Number. Once you have received an offer of employment, you must complete the following steps to obtain your SSN:

### 1 Make an appointment to get started:

Kristen Malinowski-Paine  
PDSO Director of ACES 508-213-2232  
[kristen.malinowski-paine@Nichols.edu](mailto:kristen.malinowski-paine@Nichols.edu)

### 2 Complete the SSA application here: <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>

➤ For more information, visit: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm> (choose "Adult Original" and "Noncitizen")

### 3 Gather Supporting documents:

- Your passport
- Current electronic 1-94 (you retrieve this online here: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/>)
- Current I-20 form (no copies – you must bring the most up-to-date **signed original** document)
- Proof of employment and work authorization letters (2) from International Programs (See Kristen Malinowski-Paine, ACES) that prove your eligibility for On-Campus Employment; **letters must be dated within 30 days of your visit to SS Administration.**
  - **WORK AUTHORIZATION LETTER:** For on-campus employment, we will provide you with a letter from a designated school official that identifies you, confirms your current school status; and identifies your employer and the type of work you are, or will be, doing.
  - **PROOF OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER:** For on-campus employment, we also help you get evidence of the employment offer through a document letter from your Nichols supervisor. These will describe your job; an employment start date; the estimated number of hours you will be working; your weekly estimated pay total, and your supervisor's name and telephone number.

### 4 Go with all your documents in-person to:

51 Myrtle Street  
Madison Place  
Worcester, MA  
866-331-9069

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

Check website for hours accuracy: <https://www.ssofficelocation.com/worcester-social-security-office-so1678>

### 5 Wait for your SS Card to arrive!

Upon visiting the Social Security office, you will be given a receipt letter to show that you have submitted the application. Your Social Security Card will then be sent to you in the mail. Most of the time, the Social Security Administration can verify your documents quickly on-line through the Department of Homeland Security, however if your documents cannot be verified on-line, it may take DHS longer than normal to respond to the request.

# Government Regulations (*continued*)

## US TAX OBLIGATIONS

As a F1 or J1 visa holder, ***you are required to submit forms each year*** to the US Government as a part of your US Tax Obligations. This is a requirement regardless of whether you were employed.

In the US, every person who earns money must pay income tax. This tax is usually deducted from your paycheck. At the end of the tax year (January 1 to December 31), all employers are required to create a summary statement of how much money each employee has earned or has been given (i.e., scholarships and grants) and how much tax was withheld from each paycheck during the tax year. The most used forms of summary statements are called W-2 forms and 1042-S forms. These forms are mailed during the month of January to those who have earned income. It is the responsibility of each person to file federal and state income tax return forms with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the State of Massachusetts by April 15.

Some facts about tax obligations for non-US citizens:

- International students and exchange visitors are not automatically exempt from paying income tax.
- Most stipends, scholarships, grants, and fellowships are taxable.
- All F and J visa holders--even those who earn no money--must file a statement by April 15th of each year.
- If you make more than \$8,000 in a tax year, you are required to file state taxes. If you make less than \$8,000, filing state taxes is optional.
- If you have been in the US for less than 5 calendar years, you are considered a non- resident alien for tax purposes. If you have been in the US for more than 5 calendar years, you are considered a resident alien for tax purposes.
  - *A calendar year is considered any time present in the US during a specific calendar year. If you arrived on December 31st, 2017, you will count 2017 as your first calendar year.*
  - *While you are considered a non-resident alien you are exempt from paying Social Security and Medicare taxes (payroll or FICA tax). Make sure you tell your employer when you begin work or they will automatically deduct this tax from your paycheck.*
- As a non-resident alien, you cannot use the same tax software advertised for American residents. The International House has a tax software available for you to purchase.
- Some countries have tax treaties with the US. If you are applying for tax treaty benefits, you must complete Form 8233.

All F and J visa holders are required to file a tax return whether they earned any US source income or not. If you had NO income from the US, you only have to file Form 8843. If you HAD US income, you must file Form 1040 NR-EZ. Individuals with more complicated tax situation should use Form 1040 NR instead of Form NR-EZ.

## WHERE TO GO FOR TAX HELP AND INFORMATION

- There are several government publications that are very helpful:
- Publication 519 US Tax Guide for Aliens
- Publication 901 US Tax Treaties
- Publication 513 Tax Info for Visitors to the US
- Publication 520 Scholarships and Fellowships
- Publication 515 Withholding of Tax on Non-resident Aliens.

You can contact the IRS by phone at 1-800-829-3676 or 1-800-829-1040 if you have questions about your tax return. There is also an IRS office in Worcester at 120 Front St, 508-793-8227.

# Employment for F-1 Students

The basic requirement for all types of employment is that you must maintain lawful F-1 status. The USCIS defines employment as work performed or services provided *in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, meals, room and/or board, or any other benefit.*

## ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

You can work on campus as soon as your program begins provided you are otherwise maintaining your F-1 status. On-campus employment must not exceed 20 hours per week while school is in session. During vacation periods, you can work full time. Once you receive a job offer, you need to obtain on-campus employment authorization from your PDSO/DSO before starting any employment on campus. This can be done by bringing a copy of your official employment offer letter to your PDSO/DSO and filling out the necessary paperwork. OCE is restricted to actual departments of Nichols on the Nichols campus. Only non-federal financial aid may be used to fund on-campus employment.

## SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

If you are experiencing severe economic hardship based on unforeseen circumstances beyond your control, you may be eligible to apply for Employment Authorization from the USCIS. You should see your PDSO/DSO before applying.

## CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as work experience directly related to the student's field of study that is completed while the student is still working towards their degree requirements. More specifically, CPT is the employment authorization used for F-1 students participating in off-campus co-ops or internships as part of their academic curriculum. To be eligible for CPT, you must be an F-1 student for one full academic year. You must apply for CPT and receive a new I-20 form with CPT employment authorization before you begin working.

For more information about receiving authorization for CPT, please contact your PDSO/DSO.

## OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is defined as a work experience directly related to your field of study that is available after you have completed your degree requirements. The term "optional" refers to your option of whether or not to exercise your 12-month practical training privileges. requires an approval from the Office of Student Life, a fee-bearing US government application for an Earning Authorization Document (EAD), along with a \*Social Security number. OPT must be professional employment directly related to the Nichols major and course of study. Employment begins after graduation (post-completion OPT) and extends for 12 months of professional employment. Students should begin the EAD application process through the Office of International Student Services (see your PDSO/DSO) 90 days before the graduation date.

Under certain circumstances, you can also apply for a 24-month extension of your OPT, known as the STEM Extension. To apply for an OPT STEM extension, your degree must be a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) degree, which is determined based on the CIP code assigned by Nichols College to your major field of study.

For more information about receiving authorization for OPT, please contact your PDSO/DSO.

## Student's Contact Information

Nichols College Email Address (*FirstName.LastName@nichols.edu*): \_\_\_\_\_

Residence Hall & Room Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: STUDENT NAME

Unit #: \_\_\_\_\_ (*student can find this on their Nichols ID card*)

Nichols College

PO Box 5000

Dudley, MA 01571

## Campus Office Hours

Regular office hours during the academic year for all administrative offices are Monday through Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm, unless otherwise posted. Summer hours are Monday – Thursday, 8:30am – 4:30pm, unless otherwise posted.

## Campus Phone Numbers

Academic Deans Office.....	508-213-2201
Academic Center for Excellence and Support.....	508-213-2200
Advising Center.....	508-213-2431
Athletic Department.....	508-213-2281
Bookstore.....	508-213-2408
Student Financial Services.....	508-213-2288
Career and Professional Development Center.....	508-213-2489
Counseling Services.....	508-213-2108
Dean of Students.....	508-213-2216
Health Center.....	508-213-2238
Information Technology.....	508-213-2206
International Engagement.....	508-213-2230
Learning Services.....	508-213-2293
Public Safety.....	508-213-2298
Registrar's Office.....	508-213-2290
Residence Life.....	508-213-2480
Student Involvement.....	508-213-2113



## Official College Social Media

[Facebook.com/Nichols.College](https://www.facebook.com/Nichols.College)

[Twitter.com/Nichols\\_College](https://twitter.com/Nichols_College)

[Instagram.com/Nichols\\_College](https://www.instagram.com/Nichols_College)



# Academics

Academics are the reason for attending Nichols College; we pride ourselves on holding a high level of academic standards. Below is a brief overview of academics at Nichols College.

For a more in-depth view of academics, please refer to the College Catalog found online on the Nichols Hub here: <https://www.nichols.edu/academics/course-catalog>

Statistics indicate that attendance is a top predictor of student success. Faculty members record attendance electronically daily. Recorded absences generate courtesy Absence Alerts by direct email to students, to advisors and to coaches the following day. Attendance may or may not be built into the grade structure for a course. All faculty course attendance policies are published as part of the course syllabi.

When unable to attend class, students should communicate directly with their professors. Students are responsible for notifying faculty about absences.

<b>A</b>	4.0	Excellent	<b>AU</b>	Only with the permission of the Registrar during Add/Drop
<b>A-</b>	3.7		<b>W</b>	Withdrawn with the first 10 weeks of a semester
<b>B+</b>	3.3		<b>WF</b>	Grade is awarded in instances of academic dishonesty
<b>B</b>	3.0	Above Average	<b>P</b>	Pass for courses on a pass/fail basis
<b>B-</b>	2.7		<b>I</b>	Indicated course work not completed. I grades must be removed within seven weeks of being issued by the professor or the Registrar will change the grade to F
<b>C+</b>	2.3			
<b>C</b>	2.0	Average		
<b>C-</b>	1.7			
<b>D+</b>	1.3			
<b>D</b>	1.0	Below Average		
<b>D-</b>	0.7			
<b>F</b>	0.0			

For detailed information about Academics as listed below, please visit our College Catalog, available on the Nichols College website at <https://www.nichols.edu/academics/course-catalog>

- Appeal Procedure for Contesting a Grade
- Continued Enrollment/Academic Suspension
  - Suspension Warning and Academic Suspension
  - Academic Probation
  - Readmission After Long-Term Suspension
- Course Load
- Course Repeat
- Degree Programs
  - Business Administration
  - Liberal Arts
- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Grade Reports
- Honors
  - Dean's List
  - Commencement Honors
- Minors in Business
- Minors in Liberal Arts
- Requirements for Degrees
- Special Academic Programs
- Transcripts
- Transfer Courses
- Unit of Credit
- Withdrawal from a Course
- Withdrawal from the College

# Academic Center for Excellence and Support

The Academic Center for Excellence and Support (ACES) at Nichols College helps students become stronger, more confident learners and realize their academic goals. Whether students need help with a paper, are preparing for an exam, or prefer on-going support, our peer tutors are consistently available as a resource.

All our services are available to all undergraduate students and are made available for no additional charge. Our tutors are current Nichols College students who have been recommended by members of our faculty and receive extensive training to work with their fellow classmates.

Through peer assistance, ACES works to help Nichols' students improve their skills and strengths for academic success. ACES offers programs such as peer tutoring (one-on-one, group, and weekly), math help sessions, academic enrichment workshops, and a writing fellow program.

For more information, please go to our page on the Nichols College website:

[ACES](#)

## Contact Information

Kristen Malinowski-Paine, Director of ACES

508-213-2232

[kristen.malinowski-paine@nichols.edu](mailto:kristen.malinowski-paine@nichols.edu)



# Academic Advising

It is important for students to remember that help is available from academic advisors. Advisors serve as a resource for information and assistance throughout students' academic careers at Nichols College.

## Academic Advisors

Academic advisors can assist a student in a number of ways. They are here to help monitor the student's progress throughout completion of classes and to keep the student on track to fulfill degree requirements. Students should discuss any issues or concerns about their transition to the campus with their academic advisor. In addition, advisors provide necessary information regarding college policies and procedures so the student can make well-informed decisions.

Advisors do not make decisions for students but work with them to help them develop their own decision-making skills. Each student needs to be an active participant in their own education and must assume full responsibility for their own choices. When the advisor and the student work together as a team, the advising relationship can be very rewarding.

**Advisors for first-year students:** Students who are new to the college will be assigned a first-year advisor. At the end of the first year, students will be reassigned to a faculty advisor based on their concentration/major.

**Advisors for transfer students:** Students who transfer to Nichols are assigned a member of the faculty as an academic advisor based on their concentration/major.

## Student Advisee Responsibilities

Students are ultimately responsible for keeping current on academic policies, procedures, and requirements. They should review the College Catalog and course registration documents, all of which are available online. Each student should meet with their advisors on a regular basis. It is important for a student to accept responsibility for their academic choices and maintain personal copies of tentative academic plans and program evaluations. In order for the advising process to work, students should come to advising sessions prepared.

## Why Students Should See Their Academic Advisor

- To find out what courses are appropriate to take the following semester
- To discuss making academic and career choices or to receive more information about a particular major or minor
- To better understand the College's academic policies
- To discuss strategies to improve their academic performance
- To address an academic problem or concern
- To review general education requirements and prerequisites for classes



## Contact Information

KC Poplawski, Director of Advising Services  
508-213-2431  
[KC.Poplawski@nichols.edu](mailto:KC.Poplawski@nichols.edu)  
[Advising@nichols.edu](mailto:Advising@nichols.edu)

# Athletics

Nichols College is a Division III Institution governed by the NCAA and conference policies and procedures. Our teams include:

## MEN'S SPORTS

Baseball  
Basketball  
Cross Country  
Football  
Golf  
Ice Hockey  
Lacrosse  
Soccer  
Tennis  
Track & Field  
Volleyball

## WOMEN'S SPORTS

Basketball  
Cross Country  
Field Hockey  
Ice Hockey  
Lacrosse  
Soccer  
Softball  
Tennis  
Track & Field  
Volleyball

## GENDER NEUTRAL

eSports



Student-athletes must provide the Athletics Department with an updated and completed health record along with proof of medical insurance. (A copy of the completed health record for the college will be shared with the Athletics Department.)

A student-athlete agreement is signed by all team members noting department policies dealing with academics, conduct, alcohol, drugs, hazing, equipment, medical care, etc.

## ***DIII = DISCOVER, DEVELOP, DEDICATE***



# Career and Professional Development Center

The Career and Professional Development Center supports and empowers students as they identify, pursue, and achieve career related goals. Drop-in hours are offered daily for quick questions; students are also able to schedule individual counseling appointments tailored to their needs. Topics covered include resume/cover letter writing, interview preparation, professional networks development, and job search strategies. Additionally, students can reserve interview rooms equipped for web and telephone-based interviews, borrow from the Bison Boutique (a professional lending clothing closet), and take advantage of excellent online resources like Handshake, a recruiting and job search database. The CPDC hosts many career related events including two career fairs, on-campus recruiting, industry-specific networking sessions, and an etiquette dinner. Additionally, the center manages the Professional Development Seminar (PDS) program, a series of four requirement one-credit courses in which students learn, develop, and practice the skills they need to successful enter their chosen career fields.

## Contact Information

Liz Horgan, *Director of the CPDC*  
508-213-2489  
[CPDC@nichols.edu](mailto:CPDC@nichols.edu)  
[Career.nichols.edu](http://Career.nichols.edu)



# Conant Library

An integral part of the Nichols learning community, the Library provides access to a wide array of academic resources (many available online 24/7), experienced information specialists committed to helping users find the information they need, the latest research tools and technology, and a facility conducive to individual and/or group work.

## Contact Information

Carrie Grimshaw  
*Digital Access Instructional Services Librarian*  
508-213-2234  
[Carrie.Grimshaw@nichols.edu](mailto:Carrie.Grimshaw@nichols.edu)

Circulation Desk  
508-213-2334  
[Circulation@Nichols.edu](mailto:Circulation@Nichols.edu)



# Dining Services



## Campus Dining Meal Plans

### RESIDENT STUDENTS

First-year students are assigned the *Unlimited Meal Plan*, which includes \$150 in Bison Bucks per semester. Please visit our [Dining Services website](#) for information about additional meal plan options for upper-class students.

### COMMUTER STUDENTS

Commuter students have the option of purchasing a *Commuter Meal Plan*, which consists of:

- 25 meals per semester in the Lombard Dining Hall
- \$75.00 in Bison Bucks

Students may add more Bison Bucks to their Student ID card at any time by visiting [www.BisonBucks.com](http://www.BisonBucks.com)

## Dietary Needs

Do you have a dietary need? No Problem! Our Campus Dining Services program can help accommodate your dietary requirements. For more information, please contact General Manager Sophia Cornell at 570-690-9591 or [Sophia.cornell@Nichols.edu](mailto:Sophia.cornell@Nichols.edu).

To request an ADA accommodation, please email [ResLife@nichols.edu](mailto:ResLife@nichols.edu) to receive necessary forms.

## FAQS

**Q:** What happens to Bison Bucks if they are not used by the end of the first semester?

**A:** Bison Bucks remaining at the end of the first semester can be carried over to the spring semester. Bison Bucks remaining at the end of the school year are forfeited.

**Q:** What if a student loses an ID card or it is stolen, and it is not reported?

**A:** If the card is found by someone and points are used, those points will be lost from the student's account because it was not reported. Nichols College is not responsible for lost or stolen cards or Bison Bucks.

**Q:** What if a student has questions about a meal, menu suggestions, or wants to join the Culinary Council?

**A:** Contact General Manager Sophia Cornell at [Sophia.cornell@nichols.edu](mailto:Sophia.cornell@nichols.edu) or find her in Lombard Dining Hall!

## Lost ID

Lost or stolen IDs can be replaced. Should this happen, the student will need to contact the Department of Public Safety at 208-213-2298 to report the card missing. The ID Card will be placed on 'lost status' in order to protect the Bison Bucks account until the ID card is either found, or a new/replacement ID card is issued. Students may obtain a new ID by visiting Residence Life in Fels Student Center, Suite 301.

## More Information

For more information about meal plan options, dining locations, menus, and more, please visit: [American Dining](#)

To learn more about the Bison Bucks program, participating merchants, and adding Bison Bucks to your ID Card, please visit: <http://www.BisonBucks.com>



# Merrill Health Center

Health Services is available to help meet the students' needs during minor illnesses and injury as well as to promote optimum health and wellness. Services include physician evaluation, limited testing for strep, mono, pregnancy, urinalysis, blood sugar and cholesterol levels. The Health Services staff provides some over-the-counter medications. Any student requiring medication by injection may contact Health Services staff to determine availability to provide.

The College Physician is available daily in her office located in Southbridge, she is also here on campus for limited times on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Students who need to see a physician must contact Health Services to have an appointment scheduled. We can be reached at 508-213-2238. Students will be referred to Harrington Memorial Hospital in Southbridge, MA or the Hubbard Campus in Webster, MA for any diagnostics tests or lab work determined to be medically necessary. The student's health insurance will be billed directly for services rendered outside of campus Health Services.

All services provided at Nichols College Merrill Health Center are free of cost to full-time day students. If a student requires medical attention after hours or on weekends, they are advised to go to Harrington Healthcare in Webster or Harrington Memorial Hospital. If they need immediate assistance and are calling from campus, they should contact Public Safety at extension 5555 or 508-213-2298. Health Services staff are located in South Hall. A Registered Nurse is available Monday – Friday during daytime hours.

## Contact Information

508-213-2238

FAX: 508-213-2134

[Health.Services@nichols.edu](mailto:Health.Services@nichols.edu)

# Counseling Services

The mission of Mental Health Services is to provide professional, confidential counseling services, free of charge to students in a supportive, caring and respectful environment. Services are available to all full-time, undergraduate day students. We are dedicated to helping students enrich their college experiences by assisting with problem-solving around feelings, choices and concerns. We help facilitate self-growth, self-esteem and foster the student's ability to cope with a wide range of life's challenges. We can provide assistance for a wide variety of issues. Services include short term individual counseling designed to help with personal problems. We can also help students find the resources that they need, should there be a need for more intensive services than we can provide.

It should be noted that students with a primary and significant drug and alcohol abuse issues and/or students with court involvement will not be seen on campus. However, we can provide information for appropriate resources in the community if needed. Additionally, please note we do not have a psychiatrist on campus and therefore cannot offer medical evaluations or prescriptions.

## Contact Information

508-213-2108

[Counseling.Services@nichols.edu](mailto:Counseling.Services@nichols.edu)

# Information Technology Services

In this constantly evolving technological landscape, the Information Technology team provides high quality, reliable, cost-effective, and innovative solutions to all Nichols students. Whether on campus or learning remotely, Nichols I.T. is here to support students with their technology needs. Our support ranges from access to your Nichols account, Wi-Fi, email sync, Office 365, Zoom and more!

For more information on how to get **FREE** Office 365 and other I.T. services, visit <https://newhub.nichols.edu> > click on **Departments > Information Technology**. For answers to commonly asked technology questions, visit <https://answers.nichols.edu>.

## Contact Information

508-213-2206

[HelpDesk@nichols.edu](mailto:HelpDesk@nichols.edu)

Located on the main

floor of the library



# Office of Learning Services

Our mission is to help students with learning differences reach their academic potential. If students choose to tell us about a learning difference, we ask them to submit their intelligence test scores along the other appropriate tests and letters from qualified medical professionals. Most students already have these documents. Please note that testing and/or information should be current within three years of acceptance into Nichols.

## How can we help?

- We meet with students for academic mentoring.
- We coach students with tips on study skills and learning styles.
- We coordinate with faculty for student accommodations.

## Individualized Accommodations (examples)

- Extended time on exams
- Use of a computer in the classroom
- Other individualized accommodations as appropriate.
  - For non-academic accommodations, please contact Student Life, Fels 301

## Contact Information

Dr. Edward Kolek Jr., *Assistant Dean for Learning Services*

508-213-2293

[Edward.Kolek@nichols.edu](mailto:Edward.Kolek@nichols.edu)

[LearningServices@nichols.edu](mailto:LearningServices@nichols.edu)

FAX: 508-213-2448



# Center for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CDEI), located in the Fels Student Center, is dedicated to supporting students, stories, and conversations about the unique challenges and opportunities of fostering a diverse and inclusive working and learning environment. The goal of CDEI is to create a more inclusive community through awareness, education and a focus on issues and culture surrounding the diversity of students, staff and faculty.

CDEI was created to be a resource for students of underrepresented identities and to be the advocate for minority populations, ensuring that voices are heard, and concerns are met. Under the direction of both Enrollment and Student Affairs, the office strives to promote leadership, relationship building and reinforces the college's emphasis on diversity and inclusion in the recruitment, retention and advancement of the institution.

## Contact Information

Fels Student Center  
[diversity.nichols@nichols.edu](mailto:diversity.nichols@nichols.edu)



## International Programs

The Office for International Programs (IP) at Nichols College is home to inbound International Student Services. IP serves as a resource to international students, as well as assists them with maintaining their student status. All SEVP-certified schools are required to have a PDSO/DSO to communicate with SEVP, update your student record, and help you maintain your student status by providing advice, or helping you fill out important forms. Speak to your PDSO/DSO before doing any of the following:

- Working in the United States
- Applying for a driver's license
- Applying for a Social Security number
- Changing your major, program, or degree level
- Changing your education level
- Transferring to a new school
- Being absent from classes
- Taking a vacation
- Traveling outside the United States
- Moving to a new address
- Changing your name
- Requesting a program extension

## Contact Information

Kristen Malinowski-Paine, PDSO  
508-213-2232  
[kristen.malinowski-paine@Nichols.edu](mailto:kristen.malinowski-paine@Nichols.edu)



# Public Safety

The Nichols College Department of Public Safety is comprised of a team of dedicated and professional security officers. All officers are trained in basic first aid, CPR and in the use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Each Public Safety vehicle used on campus is equipped with an AED. Training and development in areas involving the protection of life and properties is ongoing. The Public Safety Department is staffed around the clock throughout the year. Our mission is three-fold:

1. To provide protection of life and property to the Nichols College Community.
2. To provide educational programs throughout the campus in assisting students with their living styles and habits within the college community.
3. To enforce all laws, policies and procedures on campus.

## Parking

Massachusetts General Law requires all vehicles that are on a college campus to be properly registered with their respective campus parking administrator. A color-coded decal is provided to each properly registered vehicle. The decal must be properly affixed and displayed in the prescribed location to avoid receiving parking violations. The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles requires every nonresident (of Massachusetts) enrolled as a student at a college in the Commonwealth who operates a vehicle registered in another state or country during the school year to display a sticker in the upper center of the windshield of the vehicle with information prescribed by the Registrar. The sticker will be issued by the Nichols College Department of Public Safety Parking Supervisor.

To request a parking decal for the academic year, please visit [hub.nichols.edu/departments/public-safety](http://hub.nichols.edu/departments/public-safety) to submit the online application form. A copy of the vehicle's registration will be required to be uploaded into the form. Once submitted the applicant will receive a confirmation email once the application has been reviewed and finalized. Once a decal has been issued to a student the parking fee charge will be added to their student account.

First-year and returning students will each have an initial reserved number of decals. Parking is limited on campus. Decals will be issued on a first come, first served system. Each day Public Safety will review the parking decal requests whereby a decal (if available) will be issued that day to the student and held until move in day. Once all decals are distributed, any other vehicle requests will be put on a waiting list until a decal is available to issue.

## Identification Cards

Public Safety also provides all Nichols College students, faculty and staff with photo identification cards. All students are required to carry their college ID with them at all times while on campus property. The College ID card also serves as the exterior door entrance key to the students Residence Hall, student's meal card for the Dining Hall, Davis Café, Malt and Main and the Bison Bucks Program. Each student is issued an initial ID card free of charge. The cost for a replacement ID card (lost or stolen) is \$25.00.

ID photos for incoming students will be taken when students arrive to campus. ID Cards will be issued to incoming students at fall semester check-in. Replacement ID cards may be obtained at the Public Safety Office Monday – Friday from 9:00am – Noon and 1:00pm – 4:00pm

## Contact Information

Ext. 5555 (if dialing from campus phone)  
508-213-2298

The Office of Residence Life is located in the Fels Student Center, Suite 301. A webpage that you will find useful is <http://reslife.nichols.edu>. Staff can be contacted at [reslife@nichols.edu](mailto:reslife@nichols.edu) if you have any questions.

While in the Fels Student Center, you will find the Director of Residence Life. Our Area Coordinators (ACs), are full-time professional staff members, who live and work in the residence halls. These staff members are responsible for supervising student Resident Assistants (RAs) housed throughout campus. They are also responsible for following up on any reported maintenance concerns, assisting with hall programs and are on-call in the evenings to provide emergency services to our students. The Shamie AC office is located off the lobby of Shamie Hall.

The RAs on staff live among the resident students and are trained throughout the year to address a wide range of issues that our students face. The Residence Life Staff work with the RAs to support our students with issues such as homesickness, alcohol misuse, roommate conflicts, eating disorders and student skills.

## Residence Hall Options

There are 11 residence halls on campus- Budleigh, Center, Copper Beech I & II Apartments, Kuppenheimer, North, Olsen, Remillard, South, Winston, And Shamie Hall. Budleigh, Center, North, South, Winston ad Olsen are traditional residence halls with community bathrooms. Students are housed primarily in doubles in these buildings. Kuppenheimer and Remillard Halls primarily house returning students in a suite-style setting. Each suite includes a private bathroom as well. The Copper Beech I & II Apartments house 124 students in an apartment setting which includes a living room and kitchen. Shamie Hall, which houses the majority of our first-year students, houses students in triple rooms with private bathrooms. Shamie Hall also has several lounges, a game room, community kitchens and updated laundry facilities.

## Residence Hall Amenities

All residence hall rooms are equipped with cable TV access, as well as wireless computer connectivity. Other amenities include: Free washers and dryers available for student use, a wardrobe, desk and chair, and twin XL bed per resident, hall study and recreational spaces, 24-hour card-only access to each building where the student resides.

## What to/not to bring to campus

Incoming students should wait until they have received their official room assignments before doing any major shopping for their rooms. It is recommended that roommates contact each other to discuss what they will bring so that they don't arrive with multiples of everything in their room. Students will receive their Fall room and roommate assignments no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in July for their assigned roommates via their Nichols College email. As a reminder, there are some items **not** permitted in the Residence Halls, *including*:

- Cooking appliances with open heating elements such as: toaster, toaster oven, electric burner, air fryers, and pressure cookers/Instapots. (*George Foreman-type grills ARE permitted*)
- Space Heater
- Air Conditioner (window or floor models)
- Ceiling Fan
- Extension Cord (UL rated surge protectors are allowed)
- Candles, incense, e-cigarettes, hoverboards, etc.
- Halogen light bulbs; lava lamps
- Pets (*except fish in 10 gallon or less tanks*)



For a full list of prohibited items, please refer to the [Nichols College Student Code of Conduct](#).

# Office of Residence Life (*continued*)

## Important Information & Helpful Hints

- The College does not carry personal property insurance. If belongings are not included in the parents' homeowner's policy, students are advised to purchase it.
- Visit <https://www.nssi.com/portal/nicholscollege> for more information.
- When making travel plans, please be aware of the exact dates/times that residence halls close during the year (see ACADEMIC CALENDAR). We close all buildings during the Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Breaks. Arrangements cannot be made for students to live on campus during these times. The campus calendar, outlining these dates, can be found on the Nichols website.
- If you encounter a maintenance problem, please refer to your RA or AC so that they made ask specific questions regarding their problem to best resolve the issue. RAs and ACs actually submit work requests so if a problem is not resolved, they would be the best person to contact for follow up.
- We encourage students to discuss roommate concerns with their roommate rather than allowing the issue to fester. Although the Residence Life Staff certainly allow and facilitate room changes, they may require students to work through their issues as well. This helps to prepare students for life outside Nichols when confronting any situation that they have concerns about.
- Students are ultimately responsible for meeting all deadlines (i.e., housing sign-ups, conduct hearing deadlines) so please promptly respond to any written correspondence, emails or voicemails from faculty or staff.
- If you are concerned about anything, including something that is occurring in your residence hall or room, please find an RA or their Area Coordinator for assistance. The Residence Life Staff are dedicated and trained in a number of areas and can also refer you to a variety of other resources on campus as needed.

## Contact Information

Veronica Hills, Assistant Director of  
Residence Life 508-213-2480  
[ResLife@Nichols.edu](mailto:ResLife@Nichols.edu)



OFFICE OF RESIDENCE LIFE  
RESLIFE.NICHOLS.EDU 508•213•2480



# Student Involvement & Campus Recreation

The Student Involvement Office works to maximize the personal growth and development of our students by facilitating a variety of opportunities for Involvement, Service and leadership through co-curricular activities. Activities in Student Organizations, Student Government, the Campus Activities Board, Campus Recreation, Service Learning and a varied event calendar, creates a vibrant and purposeful college community. Engagement with the college community through student activities is rewarding and provides opportunities to explore new interests.

The majority of Nichols College students are involved in some capacity, with over 700 involvement opportunities; we try and make getting involved as easy as possible!

Here are just a few of the of Student Organizations offered on campus:

- Accounting Club
- Bowling Club
- History Club
- Hospitality
- Men of Distinction
- Ski & Snowboard Club
- Windfall (Literary Magazine)
- WNRC (Radio)

Campus Recreation at Nichols College aims to create an environment of wellness and healthy competition among students. We work with Club Sports, Intramurals, Wellness Class and offer a Co-Op of items students can borrow!



## Club Sports

- Dance Team
- Cheerleading
- eSports
- Golf
- Ice Hockey
- Rugby

## Contact Information

Cari Cyr, Director of Student Involvement  
508-213-2113  
[Involvement@Nichols.edu](mailto:Involvement@Nichols.edu)



# Student Success & Retention

The Director of Student Success and Retention, KC Poplawski, works on several different levels to impact the success of students. KC works directly with students who are encountering challenges to earning their degrees by helping them to problem solve and connection them with other resources on campus. She also works with other offices throughout campus to create processes and practices that foster student success. KC's office is located in Learning Services on the 3rd floor of NAB.

## Contact Information

KC Poplawski, Director of Advising Services  
508-213-2431  
[Kc.poplawski@nichols.edu](mailto:Kc.poplawski@nichols.edu)

# The Nichols WAY (Who Are You)

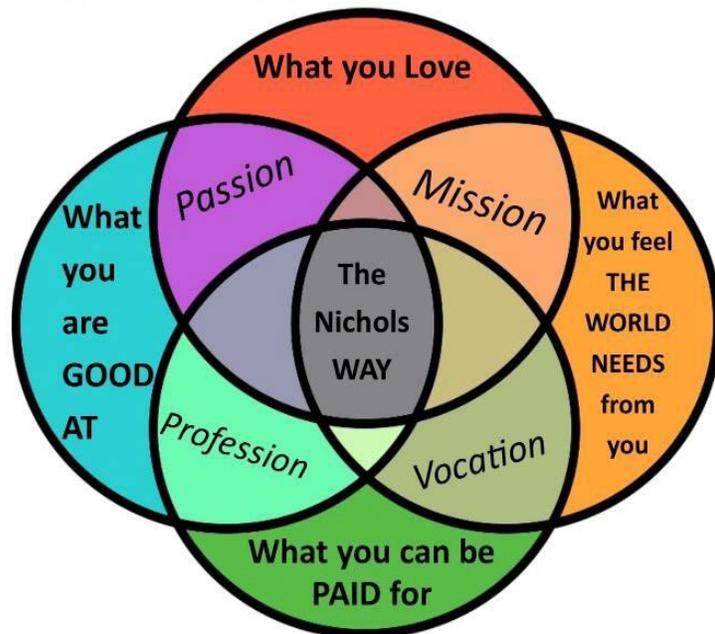
## The Nichols WAY is:

- The WAY students launch their future from the interests and passions that move them today
- The WAY students tap into the web of connections to the expertise, experience and passions of the members of the Nichols College community
- The WAY Nichols builds curriculum and programming precisely to support students in developing their interests and passions
- The WAY Nichols creates an environment where we listen and share interests, where we are valued and find value in the Nichols experience
- The WAY Nichols supports an exploration of the connection between who we are and where we are going

The Nichols WAY is an underlying philosophy—a way of approaching the students, staff and faculty, the classroom, and co-curricular activities. The goal is to help students recognize they already have a head start on their academics, *if* they build on what they bring to Nichols: their Assets, their Interests, their Experiences, their Skills, and their Goals. At the same time, it is intended to help them recognize how they are informed by ideas, values, ethics beyond themselves and, then, to understand how they will take what we do here and apply it outward.

The Nichols WAY is a blend of philosophy, practice, and concrete opportunities. At the heart of the WAY are students—their interests, their strengths, and their aspirations. To help students along their own WAY, a strong connection of classroom, extracurricular, and professionalization experiences are scaffolded through students' four years. Students form a strong foundation of self-awareness in the First-Year Core Five (College Writing, Digital Apps, Effective Speaking, Learning to Lead, and PDS) by reflecting on who they are and where they would like to go. As they progress through their college career, students benefit from curricular opportunities like the Idea-Lab, and on- and off-campus connections. Through the Nichols WAY create *their* path, developing strong connections with faculty, community members, alum, and business leaders.

The Nichols WAY *is* Nichols: a place where we listen and share interests, where we are valued and find value in the Nichols experience, and where we learn to each make our own mark.

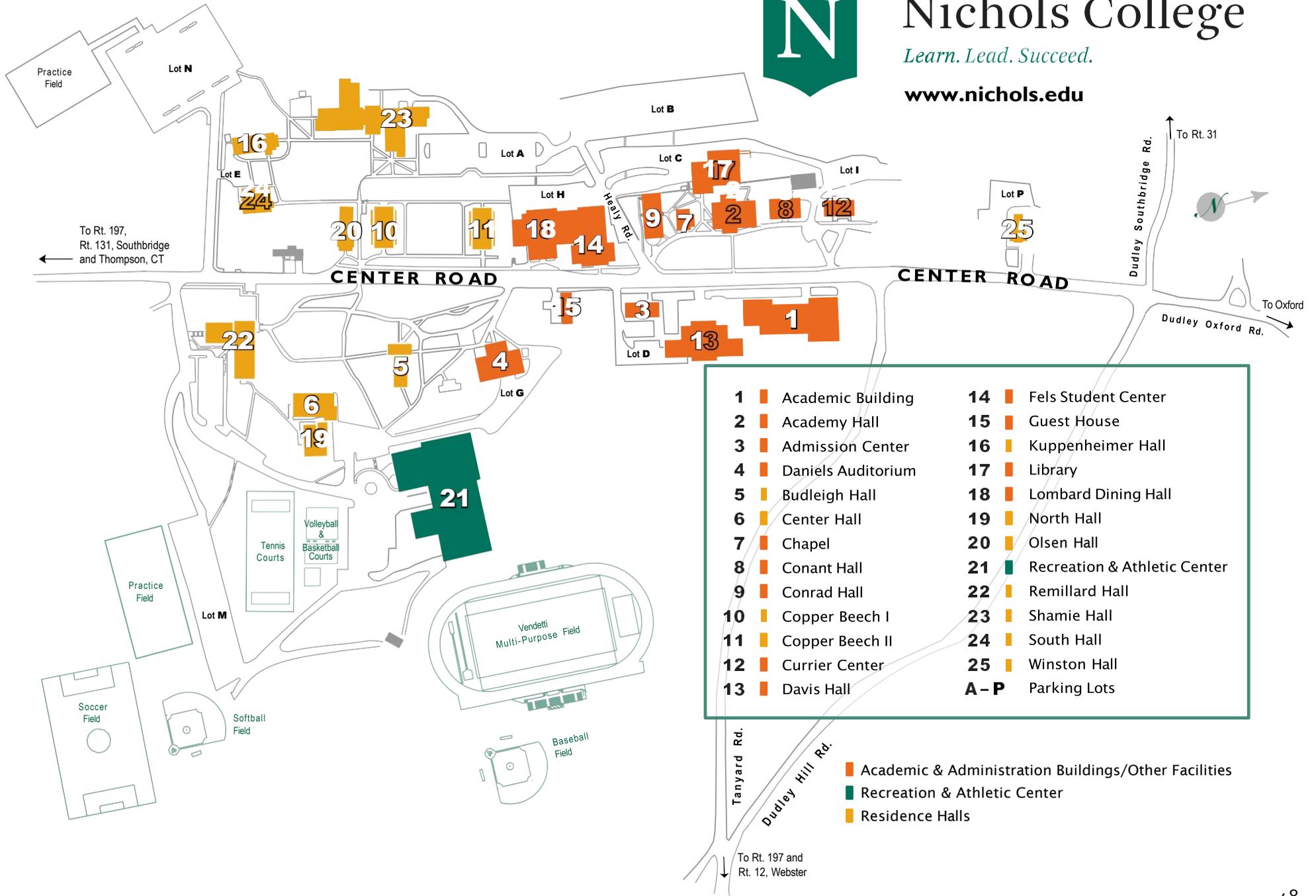




# Nichols College

*Learn. Lead. Succeed.*

[www.nichols.edu](http://www.nichols.edu)



1	Academic Building	14	Fels Student Center
2	Academy Hall	15	Guest House
3	Admission Center	16	Kuppenheimer Hall
4	Daniels Auditorium	17	Library
5	Budleigh Hall	18	Lombard Dining Hall
6	Center Hall	19	North Hall
7	Chapel	20	Olsen Hall
8	Conant Hall	21	Recreation & Athletic Center
9	Conrad Hall	22	Remillard Hall
10	Copper Beech I	23	Shamie Hall
11	Copper Beech II	24	South Hall
12	Currier Center	25	Winston Hall
13	Davis Hall	A - P	Parking Lots

- Academic & Administration Buildings/Other Facilities
- Recreation & Athletic Center
- Residence Halls



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

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# Nichols College

*Embrace Greatness.*

Office of International Programs

ACES in the library

508-213-2232

[kristen.malinowski-paine@Nichols.edu](mailto:kristen.malinowski-paine@Nichols.edu)

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