# Table of Contents

Welcome Letter .................................................................................................................. 2

Avila University
Contact Information ........................................................................................................... 3
Class Information and Dates ........................................................................................... 4
All Around the World ....................................................................................................... 5
Emergency Information/Health and Counseling Services ................................................. 6
Campus Offices and Departments ................................................................................... 8
Hodes Center Policies ...................................................................................................... 10
Paying Tuition ................................................................................................................ 11
Computers and Email .................................................................................................... 12
Residence Halls (Dormitories) ....................................................................................... 14
Matriculation from the Intensive Language .................................................................... 16

Life in Kansas City
How to get a Cell Phone in the U.S. ............................................................................ 17
Housing Information ....................................................................................................... 19
Banking Information ...................................................................................................... 20
How to get a Driver’s License or ID card ...................................................................... 21
Metroflex ....................................................................................................................... 22
Traditional and Accepted Behavior ............................................................................. 23
Around Kansas City ........................................................................................................ 25
Keeping Safe in Kansas City ........................................................................................ 28

Additional Information You Need to Know
Legal Terms ..................................................................................................................... 29
Helpful words ................................................................................................................ 31
How to be a Successful Student ..................................................................................... 33
Frequently Asked Questions ......................................................................................... 34
Useful Things to Bring With You ............................................................................... 36
What is Culture Shock? ................................................................................................. 37
Creating a Culture Shock Relief Plan ........................................................................... 38
Dealing with Homesickness ......................................................................................... 41
Welcome to Avila University!

We are very pleased that you chose Avila for this next phase of your education. I’m sure you will find us to be a university that is caring and supportive, a place that will challenge you intellectually, engage you in the important issues of our day, and help you understand and act wisely upon them.

At Avila, you will be exposed to an environment rich in many cultures and perspectives. You will have an opportunity to make friends, improve your English communication skills, explore the many cultures of the United States, and share your culture and heritage with others.

The university experience, especially at Avila, is much more than simply attending classes. Your learning will be greatest when you take the opportunities to get involved, develop leadership, participate in clubs and activities, attend cultural and sporting events, and connect with the greater Kansas City community.

As an international student studying in the United States, it is very important that you understand and follow carefully the policies of the University and the United States government, especially those regarding your status as an international student. Should you have any questions, please speak with an advisor in the International Student Center who can help ensure that you are meeting all obligations and expectations.

This handbook will offer information that will be helpful throughout your career at Avila. Keep it with you and stay connected through the Avila international student web page (http://www.avila.edu/international/).

My deepest desire is for you to experience the joy, friendship, and learning that will last a lifetime. May your time at Avila be rich in success and filled with fond memories.

Sincerely,

Ronald A. Slepitza, Ph.D.
President
Important Contact Information for Avila University

**Mailing Address:**

Avila University  
11901 Wornall Rd.  
Kansas City, MO 64145

**Phone Number:**

816-501-3666

**Fax Number:**

816-501-2461

**General Email:**

International@Avila.edu

*The handbook for international students is a supplementary resource and is not intended as a replacement for the Avila University Student Handbook. The Avila University Student Handbook can be accessed digitally through www.avila.edu*
# Important Class Information

## Semester Dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>August 27, 2014 – December 19, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Holiday Closings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>September 1, 2014 – Labor Day; October 15-19, 2014 – Fall Break;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 26-November 30, 2014 – Thanksgiving Break;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All Around the World

Avila University has a diverse population!

65% Caucasian
17% African American
8% International
5% Hispanic
1% Asian American
1% American Indian
1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
2% Two or more races

Avila has over **160 international students** on campus from all over the world. Countries include: Australia, Bahamas, Brazil, Cameroon, Peoples Republic of China, Croatia, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, United Kingdom, Vietnam and Zimbabwe!
Emergency Information and Health/Counseling Services

EMERGENCY
- **Emergency!** From a campus phone, dial 9 then 911 for Police, Ambulance, or the Fire Department. It is better to use a campus phone instead of a cell phone for a “911” phone call, because the emergency system can find your location easier from a local or campus phone. You should also notify an RA ( Resident Assistant) or an RD (Resident Director) immediately.

Closest Hospitals
- Saint Joseph Medical Center, I-435 and State Line Road, 816-942-4400
- Menorah Medical Center, 119th and Nall Avenue

Fire
- Call 816-513-0911 immediately.

Non-Emergency
- Call 816-513-0900

South Patrol Police
- Call 816-234-5550

Health Services
- Health Services, 105 Hodes Center
- You can call the Campus Nurse for an appointment at (816) 501-3668 or you can go to Health Services to be seen during clinic hours. You will check in at the reception desk and wait for your turn to be seen.
- If you live on campus, notify your RA (Resident Assistant) if the campus nurse is unavailable.
- The nurse can help you if:
  - You are sick and need non-prescription medicine
  - You are sick and cannot attend classes
  - You need to be seen by a physician or a dentist
  - You need to discuss a health concern

What should I do if I think I have a medical concern that needs immediate help?
- The campus nurse can be paged to respond to you promptly. Call 9-840-4838. There will be a recording about this being a mobile phone pager. After the beep, use the key pads and key-in your phone number. The nurse will call you back as soon as possible.
**Counseling Services**
- Counseling Services, 119 Hodes Center
- You can call the Clinical Counselor for an appointment at 816-501-3767. You will check in at the reception desk and wait for your turn to be seen
- The counselor can help you if you feel sad or lonely, are using drugs or alcohol to cope with life’s problems, are homesick, or are having a hard time getting along with your roommate.

**Health Insurance**
All Students on F-1 Visa at Avila are required to have health insurance. If you do not have current medical insurance that is equal to or better than what Avila requires, then you need to purchase health insurance through Avila Health Services. Please see the campus nurse to record your health insurance information.

Health costs in the United States are very expensive. Health insurance can help you pay for many of these expenses. Your insurance must be effective in the Unites States. Avila can provide this for you for a relatively low cost.
Campus Offices and Departments

Academic Dean’s Office - The Academic Dean is the head of the teachers at Avila. The Academic Dean’s Office makes sure that your grades stay at a minimum level. Grade appeals from students are handled by the Academic Dean. This office is in the Blasco building.

Admissions Office - This office handles the admission of students who want to come to Avila.

Athletic Office - This office manages all sports activities on campus. Avila sports include men's baseball, basketball, and soccer and women's softball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. These offices are located in Mabee Fieldhouse.

Business Office - This office is where students go if they have questions about their bills. The Business Office is located in the lower level of Blasco building.

Office of Marketing and Communications - This office informs the Kansas City area newspapers, and radio and television stations about any special people or events at Avila. This office is in Blasco building.

Registrar's Office - This office is where you go to register or drop or add a class. The Registrar’s Office handles transcripts. The Designated School Official (DSO) is located in the Registrar’s Office. The Registrar’s Office in the Blasco building.

The Hodes Center - This area includes several offices in addition to the ILCP. Other offices are the Campus Life office, Career Counselor, Clinical Counselor, the Writing Specialist, Study Skills, and Tutor Supervisor, and the Volunteer Coordinator. English tutoring is available in the Hodes Center. The Student Resource Center is located in the Hodes Center.

Campus Life - This office is located in The Hodes Center. It handles the dormitories, student activities, student leadership, roommate conflicts, orientation, etc.

Residence Life/Housing - This office is located on the first floor of Avila Hall. It helps with housing.
IT/Help Desk - Information Technology. It handles computer and internet issues, assist with passwords and logging onto the Avila’s computer system. It is located in the Library to assist students.
Hodes Center Policies

1. Appointments are required.

2. Sign in at the front desk and wait to be told that it is okay to enter an office.

3. The Hodes Center is a quiet study area. Please keep your voices down and do not talk on your cell phone.

Office Visit Requirements for International Student Services

Appointments:
1. Check in at the front desk (appointments are required to see staff in Hodes Center).

2. Tell the person at the front desk what you need. They may be able to answer your question or will make an appointment for you with someone who can.

3. Sign in at the front desk for your appointment.

4. Someone will let you know when it’s time for your appointment to begin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointment times for Bruce Inwards:</th>
<th>Appointment times for Kate Austin:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday: 9:00-11:00 AM</td>
<td>Monday: 2:00-4:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday: 1:00-3:00 PM</td>
<td>Tuesday: 2:00-4:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday: 2:00-4:00 PM</td>
<td>Thursday: 2:30-4:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday: 2:00-4:00 PM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Office appointment requirements for OPT or to ask about an application (Pam’s office)
1. Go to the front desk to sign in.
2. The person at the front desk will schedule an appointment for you to see Pam (you may have to come back at another time).
Paying Avila Tuition

When you arrive at Avila University, one of the very first things you need to do is go to the Business Office. The Business Office is located in Blasco, Building 1.

They are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

You must pay your Avila tuition once you register for classes. If you do not make your payment or show that payment is coming within the first week after you register for classes, you may be withdrawn from your courses for the semester. If you are a returning student, you need to pay your bill by August 5, 2014.

Payment Methods
You can pay your Avila tuition using any of the following ways:
   1. Check from a U.S. bank
   2. Electronic Check (online on MyAU)
   3. Wire transfer funds directly to Avila University (See attachment for wire instructions)
   4. Credit Card (online at MyAU)
      * Please note: There is a .0275% fee if you use your credit card online to pay your tuition as it is handled by a private company. Avila accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover.
   5. Cash (be careful about carrying too much cash around)
   6. Financial Guarantee if your government is paying your tuition

Payment Options
   1. Pay in full for the entire semester.
   2. Set up a payment plan with 5 monthly payments. Your first payment will be due August 5, 2014 (for returning students; it is the first week of arrival/after registering for new students). Your following payments will be Sept. 5, Oct. 5, Nov. 5, and Dec. 5. **There is a fee for the payment plan.**
Computers & Email

1. Avila Computers
   - Your Avila Username and Password is for:
     o Campus Computers
     o Avila Email
     o Campus Web (for class schedules and grades)
     o Library/Database Server

2. Avila Email
   - Your Avila Username is:
     o Last name + student ID Number (example: jones654321)
   - For New International Students, your Avila Password is:
     o Student ID followed by '@AU' (example: 330867@AU)
   - If you forget your password, go to the Information Technology Services offices in the bottom floor of O’Reilly Hall with your Student ID card or Photo ID. Or call (816) 501-2900 Mon – Fri 8AM to 6PM. You may also go to the Library and ask the Help Desk.
   - NEW STUDENTS: You must login to your Avila Email and change your password before using any other university resources.

3. How to Change Your Password
   - To change your Avila password, log into your Avila Email, go the “Options” menu tab (on the lower left side) and click on “Change Password”.
   - Then enter your username, old password, and then your new password twice. Your new password must be at least 8 characters long and must use at least 3 of the 4 character types:
     o Uppercase
     o Lowercase
     o Symbols (!@#$%?)
     o Numbers (0-9)

4. MyAU Website
   - MyAU is where you can see your class schedule, grades and unofficial transcript, tuition balance, and make online payments to your account. To log in use your Avila Username and Password.
   - If you have Holds, a message will appear in the Course Schedules section above the Course Search icon. You may not Add/Drop classes online if you have Holds.

5. Canvas
   - Canvas uses your Avila username and password.
   - Note: Canvas Support hours are the same as the Library hours on holidays and summer hours.
Student phone support:
816-501-2900
Monday - Thursday 8AM to 11PM
Friday 8AM to 6PM
Saturday 10AM - 5PM
Sunday 3PM to 11PM
Residence Halls (Dormitories)

Avila has four residence halls (dormitories). They are Carondelet, Ridgway, Avila, and Thompson. Carondelet and Ridgway house mostly freshmen, sophomores and juniors, and Thompson is for seniors. Avila Hall is new.

Great Things about Living in the Residence Halls!
1. You can make friends and be on campus so you can go to all the fun campus activities.
2. You will be a part of the Avila community.
3. You will not have many extra expenses that you will have if you get an apartment off-campus. Examples are: electricity, television, and a car.
4. You will have less stress because you can just walk to class, do not have to shop for food, and are close by many American and International students.

Can I live off-campus?
Students may live off-campus if:
1. They are 21 years old OR
2. They are living with their parent OR
3. They have completed two full years of college already.

Housing Contract
To live in the residence halls, you must sign a housing contract. To get a housing contract, go to the Campus Life office in The Hodes Center, or to Residence Life in Avila Hall. Once you sign the contract, you must live on campus for the semester or year, depending on what your contract says. The residence halls are for long-term boarding only (a full semester or two full semesters), NOT for short-term boarding (a week or a month).

Sheets and Pillows
New international students are provided sheets and pillows as part of their school charges.

Residence Hall Courtesy and Rules
Students living in the residence halls must respect each other and be on good behavior.
1. You should be courteous when listening to music, watching TV, or playing games so that you do not disturb your roommate and neighbors.
2. You should keep your room clean for your roommate.
3. If you have a bag of garbage from your room or other large trash items, like boxes, take them outside and put them in the dumpster.
4. Smoking is not allowed inside the residence hall or inside your own room. You must go outside to a parking lot to smoke. Avila is a smoke free campus.
5. Drinking alcohol is not allowed inside any resident hall but Thompson.
6. Most things with heat or fire, such as grills, candles, and hot plates, are not allowed inside the residence halls. You are allowed to have a microwave, a refrigerator/icebox, and a coffee maker, though.

7. “Quiet Hours” in the residence halls are when you must be extra quiet to let others sleep. On Sunday night through Thursday night, quiet hours start at 10PM and last until 10AM the next day. On Friday night and Saturday night, quiet hours start at Midnight and last until Noon the next day.

8. There are many other important rules, which can be found online here: http://www.avila.edu/handbook/index.asp

Residence Hall Staff
The residence halls have staff members who are here to assist you.

1. Residence Life Coordinators: A Residence Life Coordinator lives in Carondelet and Ridgway halls. These are professional staff members who work full-time to make sure the residence halls run smoothly.

2. Resident Assistants (“RAs”): RAs are undergraduate students who work for Student Life. One RA lives on each floor and is there to help you with answering questions or solving problems. You should get to know your RA very well so that you feel comfortable talking to him or her.

Moving Out
It is important to move out correctly. If you do not follow these steps when it is time to move out, you may end up charged fines or extra money.

1. Go to the student life office and tell the person at the desk that you are going to be moving out. It is important that the student life staff know you are going to leave.

2. Ask if there is any paperwork you must fill out.

3. Do not leave without checking out of your room with paperwork from your RA. If you leave without checking out, you will be fined extra money.

4. Do not leave without turning in all your keys.

5. Do not leave without taking everything out of your room to either take with you or throw away. It is important to empty your room and throw away the things you do not want before leaving. If you leave garbage or belongings in your room when you move out, you will be charged extra money.

If you have questions about the residence halls, the rules, or anything else with housing...

1. First try to find the RA on your floor and talk to him or her.

2. You can also go to Campus Life in The Hodes Center. The phone number is 816-501-3660.

3. You can also find a Residence Life Coordinator in their office in Avila Hall. The phone number is 816-501-2485.

If you get locked out of your room or need help:
Call the RA On Duty phone. Someone has this phone all day and all night. 816-256-6197.
Matriculation from the Intensive Language Program

There are two ways to matriculate into all academic classes:
1. Score 500 or more on the TOEFL.
   - This is for undergraduate admission only (Education requires 580).
     Please check the catalog for necessary TOEFL score. Some programs may be higher than 500.
   - You need 550 to matriculate into most graduate programs.
2. Take a minimum of 12 hours of core classes and get a good grade in each class.
   Your transcripts will then be evaluated by Admissions and they will determine if you are eligible to matriculate.

Once you have successfully completed the ILCP, you are welcome to apply for admission to a degree seeking program.

The following documents are necessary for matriculation from the Intensive Language and Culture Program to a degree seeking program. You are responsible for preparing or requesting all of these documents!!!
• ILCP and non-ILCP grades
• TOEFL scores
• Official transcripts from your high school, and any college/university, or English program that you have attended

What Should I Do to Get My Documents Ready for Matriculation?
• Take Avila’s institutional TOEFL test
• Request official transcripts from any high school, college/university, or English program that you have attended

Warning: If you are missing any of these documents or if they are turned in late, the decision regarding your matriculation into a degree-seeking program will be delayed!!
Life in Kansas City

How to get a Cell Phone in the U.S.

Major Cell Phone Providers
1. AT&T
2. Sprint
3. T-Mobile
4. Verizon Wireless

Cell Phone Plans
There are two major types of cell phone plans.

1. One, called a monthly plan, is a plan that specifies the number of minutes you can talk, the number of text messages you can send, and the amount of gigabytes (GB) of data you can use. With this type of plan, the cell phone provider typically makes you sign a contract. The contract is usually one or two years.
   • Example: AT&T has a plan that gives the user (you) 450 minutes per month for $39.99 per month. They also have plans that allow the user more minutes per month, but the price also increases. You can also pay extra ($20.00/month) for unlimited text messaging. If you do not text message very often, you can pay per text (20 cents per text message, 30 cents per picture text message).

2. There is also a plan called a "pay-as-you-go" plan. This is a great option if you do not know how long you plan to stay in the United States. There are many different plans you can choose from.
   • Example: If you would like unlimited talking minutes within the United States, unlimited text messages within the United States, unlimited text messages to various countries (you will need to ask if your home country is on the list), and 1 GB of data/web usage, you can get a pay-as-you-go phone for $69.99 per month. This is the most expensive plan available at AT&T.

Shop around at the different cell phone providers, and ask current international students what cell phone provider and plan they have. They may be able to help you!

What To Bring
You must bring your passport, visa, I-20, and your credit card to the cell phone provider. Also, you must know your U.S. address when you go to buy a cell phone.
New SIM Card for your Cell Phone
If you need a new SIM card for your cell phone, you can either go to the cell phone provider and they can help you, or you can go to Wal-Mart or Target and try to find one on your own.

Bringing a Cell Phone from your Home Country
If you have your cell phone from your home country and would like to use it, you must go to the cell phone provider to have it unlocked. Once you do this, you will be able to get a plan from that cell phone provider. Because you did not buy a cell phone from that provider, you may have to put down a deposit.
Housing in the U.S.

Apartments
Apartment living is very common among college students in the United States. An apartment is a one, two, three, or four bedroom living space that you can rent.

You pay your rent one month at a time. A lease usually lasts 12 months. If you want a shorter lease, you must talk to the apartment complex. It may cost more money.

You must also pay for water, trash, sewer, electricity, gas, cable (if you want to watch TV), and internet (if you want to have the internet in your apartment).

Apartment complexes charge different prices depending upon the location, how new the apartments are, and amenities (such as a pool, gym, business center where residents can use the computer and print for free, and parking). In an apartment, you can live alone or with roommates. Living with roommates tends to make the rent cheaper.

We recommend to our international students (especially those without a car) that they live at Coach House apartments if they decide not to live in the dormitories. These apartments are within walking distance of Avila.

If you are going to rent an apartment, you will need the following:
   1. I-94
   2. Visa
   3. Passport
   4. Tuition/Proof of Income – Proof you can pay your bills
   5. You will also need to tell them how long you plan on living there.

When you lease an apartment, it is not yours. You must not make large holes in the walls or damage property. If there is damage to property within the apartment, the apartment complex may make you pay.

The apartment will be yours for however long you sign a lease (i.e. 12 months). If you must end your lease prior to that, you will have to pay a large fee.

You will also need to purchase Renter’s Insurance. You can do so through most insurance providers in the Kansas City area. Renter’s insurance normally covers your personal property and not the apartment.
Banking in the U.S.

There are two types of bank accounts in the United States. One is a checking account, and the other is a savings account.

**Checking Account**
1. The money is always available.
2. Used with debit card or checks.

**Savings Account**
1. Money needs to be transferred to checking account or directly withdrawn from savings account to use. Not used with debit card or check.

We recommend that you bank with US Bank. This is only because they volunteer to come to Avila University and help international students set up bank accounts. It is also within walking distance of Avila, and a US Bank ATM is located in Whitfield on the Avila Campus. US Bank normally has people set up both accounts so that you don’t have to pay fees or more money. However, you can bank wherever you would like.

To set up a bank account, you must have the following documents:
1. I-20
2. Passport/Visa
3. Letter from Avila stating you are a student and your current address
4. Any cash you want to put into your checking or savings account

If your parents need to transfer money into your account from an account in a foreign country, they will need the following:
1. Account Number
2. Routing Number for the bank
3. Swift Code

*There is a fee for transferring money from another country. It is usually approximately $40 but can change depending on the country. Please ask the bank first to know the correct charge.
How to get a Driver’s License or ID Card

1. Go to Social Security Office
   6320 Euclid
   Kansas City, MO 64132
   Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm

   Bring: Passport and I-94

   *Tell the Social Security Office the following information:
   **"I need a letter for the DMV to prove that I have never been issued a social security number."**

2. Bring Social Security letter to Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

   **MISSOURI**
   6138 Raytown Trafficway
   Raytown, MO 64133
   816-737-1100
   Monday-Friday 9am-5pm
   Sat. 9am-12pm (1st and last of month)

   **KANSAS**
   6507 Johnson Drive
   Mission, KS 66202
   913-432-2266
   Tuesday-Friday 7am-5:30pm

   **RENEWALS ONLY**
   1200 Main St., City Hall
   Grandview, MO 64030
   816-316-4835
   M,T,TH,F 8am–5pm
   Wed. 8am–7pm
   Sat. 8am-12pm

   **MISSOURI**
   6507 Johnson Drive
   Mission, KS 66202
   913-432-2266
   Tuesday-Friday 7am-5:30pm

   **KANSAS**
   1839 Ridgeview
   Olathe, KS 66062
   913-829-2501
   Tuesday-Friday 7am-5:45pm

   Bring:
   1. Passport and I-94
   2. I-20
   3. Letter from Avila – see Susan or person at the front desk
   4. Social security number if you have one, or exemption letter from the Social Security Office.
   5. Utility, bank statement, or something from Avila with current address.
   6. Cash – A license is usually $20 (but not always!) You can only pay cash or check
Do you need to go shopping? Do you need to buy groceries? Do you want to visit your friends in another part of Kansas City?

Call MetroFlex!

MetroFlex is Kansas City’s flexible, on-demand bus service. To schedule a pick-up and plan your trip, call (816) 346-0346. You must call 24 hours before you want to bus to pick you up.

The cost is the same as the fixed-route service. It is cheaper than a taxi.

Visit http://www.kcata.org/maps_schedules/metroflex/ for more information.
Traditional and Accepted Behavior

How Should I Act In An Instructor’s Or Advisor’s Office?
• Make appointments as far in advance as possible with the secretary. Do not wait until the end to take care of important tasks!
• Write down your questions so you know what to ask when you have your appointment.
• Do not touch anything on the teacher’s desk or bookcase. These items are not yours!
• If someone is already meeting with the teacher you want to see, wait until they are done before entering.
• When you need to cancel an appointment, call as soon as possible.

People want to help you, but they must be treated politely!

How Should I Act In An American Home?
• Confirm any appointment times and dates to prevent misunderstandings.
• If someone is going to pick you up, be ready and waiting before the agreed upon time.
• If you are driving to a home by yourself, arrive on time or a few minutes late, do not arrive early.
• Always call as soon as possible when you made plans to come to someone’s home, but you can no longer come.
• Do not bring someone else with you unless they were also invited.
• Do not ask a person their age, weight, how much money they make, or about their political beliefs.
• It is not necessary to bring a gift or food when you visit someone’s home. However, it is appreciated.
• Do not touch items on shelves or on the wall in a home unless invited to do so.

Social/Cultural Norms
• All Americans are different in regards to personal space. Typically you should get to know someone before asking personal questions. They also value their privacy.
• Etiquette is very important in American society. Say “please” and “thank you”, and be respectful towards others.
• Americans love to enjoy their free time. They will spend time outside, watch movies and television, go out with friends and families, shop at the mall, and exercise in gyms and fitness centers.
• Americans usually work very hard during the week, and relax and enjoy their free time on the weekends or in the evenings.
• Most Americans are rather impatient. They do not like to wait in line and can find it frustrating when they have to. Despite being frustrated, they typically do not push in line or get angry. They wait quietly for their turn.
• Americans like to give and receive feedback. When in a conversation with an American, an occasional head nod or short phrase is typical.
• Americans also typically smile as they pass someone. It is only a polite gesture.
• If an American bumps into you or someone else, they will usually say, “Excuse me”.
• Do not make any racial comments.
• American life is usually fast-paced and busy. Americans do not like to waste any time. This is why Americans consume so much fast food; they even eat quickly.
• If you do not understand something, ask. Americans like to help. If you do not understand someone, ask them to repeat what they just said. This is common practice in America.
# Around Kansas City

Here is a list of KC attractions along with their addresses and phone numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World of Fun/Oceans of Fun</th>
<th>Amusement Park</th>
<th>4545 Worlds of Fun Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64161 (816) 454-4545</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nelson Atkins</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>4525 Oak St, Kansas City, Missouri 64111 (816) 751-1278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBE/Sprint Center</td>
<td>Basketball, Concerts</td>
<td>161 East 14th Street, Kansas City, MO 64106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Life Aquarium</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>2475 Grand Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri, MO 64108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negro League Baseball Museum</td>
<td>Baseball Museum</td>
<td>1616 East 18th Street, Kansas City, MO 64108 (816) 221-1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haunted Houses (seasonal)</td>
<td>Halloween</td>
<td>1401 West 13th Street, Kansas City, MO 64102 (816) 842-0320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City Zoo</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>6800 Zoo Drive, Kansas City, MO 64132 (816) 513-5800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kauffman Center for Performing Arts</td>
<td>Ballet, Opera, Theater</td>
<td>1601 Broadway, Kansas City (816) 994-7200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World War I Museum</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>100 West 26 Street, Kansas City, MO 64108 (816) 888-8100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Entertainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sporting Kansas City</th>
<th>Soccer</th>
<th>1 Sporting Way, Kansas City, KS 66111 (913) 912-7600</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kauffman Stadium/Chiefs Stadium</td>
<td>Baseball and Football</td>
<td>1 Royal Way, Kansas City, Missouri 64129 (816) 921-8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulevard Brewery</td>
<td>Tourist Attraction</td>
<td>2501 Southwest Boulevard, Kansas City, MO 64108 (816) 474-7095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power and Light</td>
<td>Bars/Night Clubs</td>
<td>13th &amp; Walnut St, Kansas City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westport</td>
<td>Bars/Restaurants</td>
<td>115 Westport Rd, Kansas City, MO 64111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaza</td>
<td>Restaurants/Bars</td>
<td>420 West 47th Street, Kansas City, MO 64112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenwood Movies</td>
<td>Movie Theatre</td>
<td>1118 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO - (816) 942-1131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Food

| Haru Sushi | Japanese | 13133 State Line Rd, Kansas City, MO 64145 (816) 942-1333 |
| Dos Hombres | Mexican | 11134 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO 64131 (816) 942-1500 |
| Thai House | Thai | 9938 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO 64131 (816) 943-1388 |
| Never on Sundays | Greek | 9932 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO 64131 (816) 942-0029 |
| Applebees | American Food | 13201 State Line Rd, Kansas City, MO 64145 (816) 943-8427 |
| Papa Johns | Pizza (delivers) | 12315 State Line Rd, Kansas City, MO 64145 (816) 941-2112 |
| Taco Bell | Fast Food | 13111 State Line Rd, Kansas City, MO 64145 (816) 941-2771 |
### Shopping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Center</td>
<td>Clothing, Electronics, Food</td>
<td>5000 West 119th Street Leawood, KS 66209 (913) 498-1111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Clothing, Electronics, Food</td>
<td>8509 State Line Road Kansas City (816) 444-0019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walmart</td>
<td>Clothing, Electronics, Food</td>
<td>1701 W 133rd St, Kansas City, MO 64145 (913) 428-2992</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legends</td>
<td>Clothing, Electronics, Food</td>
<td>1843 Village West Parkway Kansas City, KS 66111 (913) 428-2992</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Services & Phone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beauty Brands</td>
<td>Salon</td>
<td>13241 State Line Road Kansas City, MO 64145 (816) 943-0574</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quik Trip</td>
<td>Gas Station</td>
<td>10232 Wornall Road Kansas City, MO 64114 (816) 941-9559</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verizon Wireless</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>8600 Ward Parkway #2150 Kansas City, MO 64114 (816) 363-0055</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA</td>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>11300 Holmes Road Kansas City, MO 64131 (816) 942-2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firestone</td>
<td>Auto repair</td>
<td>7575 Wornall Road Kansas City, MO 64114 (816) 333-1221</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-Mobile</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>11812 Roe Avenue Leawood, KS 66211 (913) 491-4251</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprint</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>4901 Town Center Drive Leawood, KS (913) 323-5000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Keeping Safe in Kansas City

Avila is located in a very safe part of Kansas City. The residence halls are protected both by a lock and by a code. Security patrols the campus and lighting is on at night to prevent the campus from being too dark.

Safety At Avila

- Keep your room door locked whenever you leave, even if it is only for a short time.
- Do not keep a lot of money or other valuables in your room. Put your money in the bank. Keep other valuables in a safe deposit box.
- Hide any money or valuables that you keep in your room. Do not put them in your top desk drawer!
- Keep your purse put away and do not have anything of value (TV, stereo) that can be easily seen when the door is open.
- If you have a car, do not leave your car doors unlocked. Always lock your car.
- Report suspicious looking people to a Resident Assistant (RA).
- Talk to your roommate about locking the door and keeping your room safe.
- See the Residence Life Handbook for additional security information.

Safety When You Are Off Campus

- Do not go anywhere at night alone.
- Walk quickly with authority and with your head up.
- Stay in areas with a lot of light if you are out at night.
- If a situation or a place looks dangerous, stay away!
- Call the police (911) immediately if you or someone else is in danger.
Legal Terms You Should Know

Passport
Your passport identifies your country of nationality. Your passport should be valid for a minimum of six months into the future. A passport may be renewed from within the U.S.—contact your country’s embassy regarding the process.

SEVIS Form I-20
This form outlines your reason for being in the U.S. – to be a full time student enrolled at Avila University. It lists your major, your agreed on financial plan, and the length of your academic program.

The I-20 is an essential travel document in addition to your Passport, Visa and I-94 card and it must have a valid signature in order to allow your reentry of the U.S.

The only people who are allowed to sign it are called Designated School Officials. DSOs are allowed to sign and process F-1 paperwork and SEVIS data entry on behalf of a given institution.

Bruce Inwards is allowed to sign your F-1 Paperwork.

F-1 Visa
The visa allows you to enter the country, and it indicates your non-immigrant status at the time of entry. Most Avila University students enter the U.S. on an F-1 visa.

I-94 Arrival/Departure Card
The I-94 card is a small white card stapled to your passport upon entry to the U.S. Your I-94 card shows that you have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. and confirms the status by which you entered the country. You do not want to lose this card!

You will receive a new I-94 number each time you enter the United States. If you entered the country on an F-1 visa, your I-94 card should have the notation “D/S” which stands for Duration of Status. D/S means that you are allowed to remain in the U.S. as long as your I-20 dates are valid and you are enrolled full-time at the issuing institution.

Grace Period
F-1 students have a 60-day grace period following completion of study or completion of optional practical training to
1) depart the U.S.,
2) transfer to another institution, or
3) change status.

F-1 visas cannot be renewed from within the U.S.
Any F-1 student may travel to Canada, Mexico and adjacent islands for less than 30 days with an expired visa. Please contact ISS for additional information.
F-1 Employment:
F-1 students are permitted to work on campus for up to twenty hours per week during the academic year and up to forty hours per week during the breaks.

Occupational Practical Training HOW-TO
- An international student can begin the procedure by requesting the Designated School Official (DSO) in the Hodes Center to recommend the OPT. The DSO can approve this request if it is a legitimate job offer and employer and related to the student’s field of study.
- The DSO will note this on the student’s I-20 form and update the SEVIS records.
- The foreign student then files form I-765 with the USCIS. This filing costs $380 and is paid for by the student.
- This is the Application for Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and this EAD will be issued if the USCIS approve the work.
- Work may only begin after the EAD has been issued.

DSO’s in Hodes Center:
Bruce Inwards
Steps:
1. Make an appointment with Bruce Inwards.
2. Complete Form I-765 (some areas have already been filled in for you) – your student admission number is the same as your I-94 number, place of last entry into U.S. refers to official Port of Entry (P.O.E., i.e. where you came through immigration)
3. Provide (2) photographs of yourself (see specifications on handout**)
4. Provide passport, visa and I-94 for copying
5. Write a check or money order for $380.00 made payable to “Department of Homeland Security.” Make sure you have the funds to cover the check - if not, consider a cashier’s check or money order

Important: All students must report employer and address information to be entered into SEVIS (Student & Exchange Visitor Information System). Send updates to Pam.Sparks@avila.edu.

Photos for Optional Practical Training Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2x2 inches in size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color with plain background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identical photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full face, front view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken within the past 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not wear a hat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If you normally wear prescription glasses, a hearing device, wig or similar articles, they should be worn for the photo.
Helpful Words You Need To Know

Academic Affairs - The part of Avila that includes the teachers, the Registrar’s Office, and the Academic Dean’s Office.

Academic Dean - The leader of the teachers at Avila.

Audit - Only listen to a class but take no tests and receive no credit.

Board-food - Meals available as part of your “Room & Board” housing contract when you live on campus.

Campus - The land and buildings of Avila.

Culture Shock - The confusion and depression that people often have when they visit a foreign country.

Department Chair - The leader of a department of teachers (Humanities, Social Sciences, Business, Nursing, Education/Psychology, Natural Science, Math).


Double Room - A room in the dormitory with two people living in it.

F-1 Visa - A student visa for those who come to the U.S. as full-time students. It only allows you to work on campus when opportunities are available.

GPA - Grade point average, an average of your grades received each semester.

Host Family - Someone from the area who will spend time with you once a month or more for a semester.

ILCP - Intensive Language and Culture Program. A program at Avila for International Students that teaches them English (ESL) and U.S. Culture.

ISS - International Student Services

Major - What you want to study (business, computer science, education, etc.).
**Mall** - A group of stores and restaurants located in one place.

**Matriculation** - When you leave the ILCP and study for a degree full-time.

**Refund** - Get all or some of your money back for something that you bought and no longer want.

**Residence Halls** - Dormitories, the place where students live on campus.

**RA** - Resident Assistant. A person who lives on a dormitory floor and who helps the students living on that floor. First person to talk to if you have a problem in the dormitory.

**RD** - Resident Director. A person who lives in a dormitory and who is in charge of the dormitory and the RA’s.

**Room Deposit** - Money that you pay to protect Avila from any damage that you do to your room.

**Single Room** - A dormitory room with only one person living in it.

**Triple Room** - A room in the dormitory with three people living in it.

**Tuition** - Amount of money paid for classes.

**Tutor** - Student teacher.
How to be a Successful Student

Instructors in the United States may seem to be very informal. However, there are still several expectations that most instructors have for their students.

• Be respectful to the instructor and the other students in the class.
  - Do not talk when someone else is talking.
  - Pay attention when someone else is talking.
  - Do not criticize others.
  - If an instructor has said something that hurts your feelings, talk to him or her about it after class.

• Go to all of your classes regularly.
  - Even if an instructor does not require that you always go to class, you will probably fall behind if you miss class.
  - Some instructors grade on class attendance. If you miss class, your grade may be lowered.

• Complete your homework and assignments.

• Ask the instructor questions.
  - In the United States, you are expected to ask questions if you do not understand. If you do not ask questions, the instructor assumes you understand.

• Do not miss tests.
  - Normally, you are only allowed to miss a test if you have a valid reason such as sickness.
  - If you know that you will miss a test, notify the instructor in advance.
  - Never miss a final test. Students who miss a final test may receive an “F” in the class.

• Always do your best work, so you can achieve the best grades you can in each class.
  - Consistent good grades will help you finish the ILCP and become a full-time degree seeking student.
  - Poor grades may require you to stay in the ILCP longer and will make it difficult or impossible to become a full-time degree seeking student.
  - Very poor grades may result in your dismissal from Avila.

Remember, if you receive low grades in your ESL or other classes, you may have to stay in ESL longer!
Frequently Asked Questions

I have taken several classes at a school in my country. Will these classes transfer to Avila?
Normally, classes that you have taken at an accredited university/college will transfer to Avila. Many of these classes, however, may transfer as electives unless the classes that you have already taken are similar in content and contact hours to Avila's classes.

Which classes should I take?
Students in the ILCP are required to take ESL (English as a Second Language) classes. ILCP students may also take 1 or 2 credit classes with the approval of the ILCP advisor. Normally, these classes would be in the 100 or freshmen level. Undergraduate students with F-1 visas must take a minimum of 12 credits at all times. Graduate students need to take a minimum of 9 credits. Students with F-1 visas who take less than 12 credits are out of status, and may have to leave the country.

Can I change my classes?
Classes may only be dropped or added with the permission of your academic advisor. Certain classes must be taken. For example, ILCP students must take ESL classes. There is a deadline for both dropping and adding classes. (After that date passes you may no longer drop or add a class). Please look at the semester or summer course schedule in order to find the time when you can drop or add a class. The deadlines for dropping and adding classes are different.

How can I add classes?
You may add one or more classes after you have already registered if you have the permission of your academic advisor. Remember that classes must be added before the adding deadline is past.

How can I drop classes?
Occasionally, you may find that you need to drop a class because of its difficulty. Classes may only be dropped after a student first consults with his or her advisor. In addition classes must be dropped before the dropping deadline has past. Please look at the semester or summer course schedule in order to find the deadline for dropping a class. If you drop classes too often, it does not look good on your transcript. Therefore, do your best to choose a class that you believe you will be successful in. It is also recommended that you audit a class instead of dropping it. When you audit a class, you are expected to attend, but you do not have to take test, and you do not receive a grade.

I want to stay at Avila during the breaks. Will the dormitories be open?
Avila's dormitories are open all year including all holidays. In addition, an Avila staff member is always on duty in the dormitories. However, most students leave during breaks, and there is an additional fee for those who want to stay in the dorms. Also, the cafeteria is usually closed during breaks.
What kind of fun activities can I do at Avila?
Students at Avila do all kinds of fun activities. Students can go to plays, shows, sporting events, dances, clubs, and more. You will be able to watch or participate in soccer, baseball, softball, American football, volleyball, and basketball. Avila offers many clubs that students can join.
Useful Things To Bring With You

Credit Cards: Credit cards are widely used in the U.S. and it is important to bring one with you if possible. Even if you don’t want to use credit, a credit card is often needed as a form of guarantee. For example, it is almost impossible to rent a car or hotel room in the U.S. without showing a credit card. Visa and MasterCard are the most common credit cards; it doesn’t matter if they were issued in your own country, since they are recognized throughout the U.S. Please note that you are not eligible to apply for a credit card in this country.

Clothes:
- Clothes for both warm and cold climates, as Missouri weather changes often
  - Gloves, winter coat, hat, and scarf for cold weather
- Swimwear and sunglasses
- Undergarments
- Workout clothing, clothes to play sports and activities in
- Comfortable shoes for both the winter and summer

Equipment (Note: U.S. electrical system is 110/120 volts):
- Camera
- Alarm clock
- Bag to carry books
- Toiletries
- Note: You do not need to bring sheets or pillows; Avila University will provide those for you the day you arrive.

Documents:
- International Driver’s License
- Credit Card(s)
- Photocopies of your passport and any other important document (in case they are lost)
- List of important addresses and phone numbers

What did you forget to bring?
What Is Culture Shock?

Culture shock is the confusion and stress caused by living in a culture that is different from your own. Culture shock is caused by differences. The language, food, clothes, music, behavior, traditions, etc. are all different. Often the greater the difference between your culture and the U.S., the more chance you will have of experiencing culture shock.

Symptoms of Culture Shock:
- Homesick – talk a lot about home
- Confusion
- Depression
- Loneliness
- Critical – most things about the new culture are bad
- Worry
- Frustration
- Fatigue – tired
- Illness

How can I Handle My Culture Shock?
- Relax
- Have an open mind
- Learn to appreciate different ways of thinking
- Make friends from the new culture
- Be positive – look for the good, not the bad, in your new culture
- Say yes to invitations and try new things

Culture Shock is normal and will affect different people in different ways.
Creating a Culture Shock Relief Plan

Directions: There are five steps in this process. Do not skip steps. Follow each step and journal your notes in the places provided on this worksheet or in your own notebook or journal.

**Step 1: What's on your mind? What are you thinking about?**

Many times thoughts we have about past experiences or things we read in books or anything else could affect us. Some of us have an easier time identifying our thoughts. **Identify the situation and your thoughts about it here:**

**Step 2: Be willing to admit your emotions and feelings.**

Are you able to identify and admit your feelings?

What kinds of feelings are you having?

It is important to label your feelings with feeling words, not judgments. Feelings are not good or bad, they are what they are. If we label them, it may cause us to avoid the feelings for fear of admitting we are ‘feeling something negative’. It’s ok. Don’t bury it. Feel it fully. It may be scary, but it’s ok. If you are in a safe place and with someone you trust, talk about it. List your feelings here:
**Step 3: What physical symptoms are you experiencing?**

If you can’t identify your feelings, can you sense what is going on inside your body? Do you have any physical symptoms? What cues does your body give you to tell you that you are feeling different feelings?

**Step 4: Think about any past similar experiences.**

We often feel things based on impending events or events that have already happened. What lessons did you learn from these experiences? Can they be applied to this situation? How? Can you create any plan to help you overcome that? Write your plan here:
Step 5: Identify ways to alleviate these feelings. (Create a culture shock relief plan.)

Try to create a plan here on ways to deal with your situation to relieve your culture shock, anxiety, stress and fear to bring peace and new coping skills.
Dealing with Homesickness

Homesickness is very common among international students. If you find yourself missing home or feeling out of place, do not worry. You are not alone. While there is no specific time limit, these feelings will eventually pass. In the meantime, use these guidelines to start taking an active part in adjusting to your new surroundings.

Identifying Homesickness
Homesickness is a feeling or feelings that occur naturally when a person experiences a sudden change in environment or routine. It can manifest as vague sadness or uncertainty, anxiety, change in sleeping/eating patterns, feelings of isolation, inability to concentrate, and/or a desire to stay in close contact with people from home. For some people, these feelings pass quickly and for others it takes longer, but identifying homesickness is often the first step in resolving it.

Taking Actions
As difficult as it might seem at first, making an effort to meet new people can help tremendously when dealing with homesickness. Opportunities for positive social interaction at your new university can include:

- Making new friends in your classes or on campus
- Attending sporting events
- Signing up for campus activities
- Checking out local music and arts venues
- Joining clubs and groups

With practice, you'll find it easier to make friends and get involved. Look to teachers, advisors, RAs, and other international students for tips on what's happening around campus.

Making Room for It All
Studying in the U.S. will put plenty of physical space between you and your home, but it's also important to distance yourself psychologically—at least for now. Try to focus on creating new routines and setting bigger academic goals. For starters, try to speak English exclusively, and limit phone calls and/or e-mail communication with friends and family back home to one day a week.

At the same time, you don't want to lose your connection to the familiar altogether; in fact, maintaining close friendships and keeping a few personal items from home within reach can help lift your spirits on the difficult days. Remember that by exploring other cultures you are not abandoning your own—you may even be surprised to learn that you're not missing out on much back home. You're simply allowing yourself to grow academically and gain experiences that will shape you for a brighter future. Learning about other cultures can even help you appreciate your own even more!

Taken/adapted from: http://www.usaeducationguides.com/guidance/articles/100419-dealing-with-homesickness.jsp