



Chattahoochee TECHNICAL COLLEGE

*The Center for Corporate and
Professional Education*

Intensive English Program Marietta Campus



Student Handbook

Chattahoochee Technical College is a Unit of the Technical College System of Georgia. It is comprised of eight campuses that serve a six-county area in North Georgia: Bartow, Cherokee, Cobb, Gilmer, Paulding, and Pickens. It offers diplomas, certificates, and two-year associate degrees in over 45 programs of study in areas like Business Sciences, Computer Sciences and Engineering Technology, Health Sciences, Personal and Public Services, and Technical Studies.

The Intensive English Program is offered at the Marietta Campus.

Chattahoochee Technical College

980 South Cobb Drive, Marietta GA 30060

Hours of Operation: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 am - 5:00 pm; Friday, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm

Marietta Campus



July 2013

Building Directory

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| A. Chattahoochee Hall/Administration | H. Economic Development |
| B. Jack Vaughan, Jr. Classroom Building | I. Maintenance |
| C. Campus Life Center | J. Public Safety |
| D. Library Building | K. Fitness Center |
| E. Instructional Building | L. Business Center Operations |
| F. Academic Building | X. Walking Bridge |
| G. Student Services/Admissions | |

 Parking Areas

Contact Information

All students that are interested in the IEP should begin by contacting our International Services office. Students will also be in communication with staff from our Academic Affairs Division and The Center for Corporate and Professional Education throughout their enrollment with the program. Important contact information for each of the staff within these divisions are listed below.

International Services – Fax#: 770-528-5817

- Greg Moor, Coordinator
Office G1125, Mail Stop: MG-103
770-528-4528
Greg.Moor@chattahoocheetech.edu
- Angie Gonzalez, Specialist
Office G1124, Mail Stop: MG-103
770-528-5804
Angie.Gonzalez@chattahoocheetech.edu

Academic Affairs

- Milena Eneva, ESL Resource Instructor
Office B116.2, Mail Stop: MB-102
770-528-4403
Milena.Eneva@chattahoocheetech.edu

The Center for Corporate and Professional Education – Fax#: 770-528-4470

- Justin Vanoy, Coordinator
Office H1105B, Mail Stop: MH-101
770-528-3967
Justin.Vanoy@chattahoocheetech.edu
- Trevena Williams, Assistant
Office H1105A, Mail Stop: MH-101
770-528-4471
Trevena.Williams@chattahoocheetech.edu

Intensive English Program

- We offer eight (8) levels from Beginners to College-Prep
- Classes are Monday through Friday
- Each level is eight (8) weeks long; this is called a **term** and there are **five (5) terms** per year.
- There is a Cultural Activity during the last day of each term

This is a sample schedule of the classes. Levels may be offered either in the morning or afternoon.

Time/Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00-11:00	Grammar	Writing	Grammar	Writing	Speaking
11:30-1:30	Integrated Skills Accuplacer/TOEFL	Reading	Integrated Skills Accuplacer/TOEFL	Reading	Speaking
1:45-3:45	Grammar	Writing	Grammar	Writing	Speaking
4:00-6:00	Integrated Skills Accuplacer/TOEFL	Reading	Integrated Skills Accuplacer/TOEFL	Reading	Speaking

Placement Test

Every student must take a placement test to determine his/her level. The placement test is given a week before classes start. Please, refer to the general schedule to see the date for each placement test. The placement test has sections in Reading, Grammar, Listening and Writing. Students will also be given an oral interview by an IEP faculty member. Usually, it takes students about 3 hours to complete the placement test, so plan accordingly. If arrangements need to be made for a student to take the placement test on an alternate date, the student must pay a \$25.00 alternate date testing fee.

Advancement in Levels

Students advance in Levels only if they have scored 80% on their final exit test from that class **AND** have 80% as their total grade in class.

Part-Time or Full Time

- Students on F1 visas are required to be full-time and must enroll in five (5) courses.
- Students on F2, B1, B2, or HB visas must be part-time and enroll for three (3) classes maximum.

IEP Description of Classes

Integrated Skills (Levels 1-6)

This is a **general ESL class** that practices all skills simultaneously: listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar. Students learn through themes and topics that include everyday situations and examples of various cultures. The exercises provide opportunities for realistic, meaningful communication using target language. Generally, it has a dialogue that is followed by vocabulary and grammar presentation. Reading and writing are practiced at the end of each lesson.

This class is recommended for students who want to improve their **general knowledge** of English in order to communicate better in **everyday situations**.

Speaking and Listening (Levels 1-8)

This is a class that practices **listening and speaking skills**. The class usually involves listening to a conversation and responding to it. Some new vocabulary may be introduced as well for the purposes of communication.

In levels 1-4 the students practice **everyday conversations** that involve topics like shopping, visiting a hospital, calling utilities, going on vacation, going to the bank, etc.

Levels 5-8 practice **academic conversations**: speaking with a professor, a college counselor, or a fellow student, listening to a lecture or having a discussion on topics from science or humanities. Students also learn how to do basic group and individual presentations for college. Vocabulary focuses on college terms.

Grammar (Levels 1-8)

This class practices **in depth various grammar rules** of the English language. It starts with the most simple English structures and tenses and continues up to the most difficult ones. It involves presentation of the rule and exercises with it in basic sentences, longer paragraphs, and in listening activities.

This class is recommended for all types of students and can be used as an additional class to the **Integrated Skills** since it provides more time and more practice for the concepts introduced in Integrated Skills.

Reading and Vocabulary (Levels 1-8)

This class focuses on building **academic vocabulary** and **reading comprehension skills** necessary for an academic setting. Intensive vocabulary practice takes students through the most common English words and the Academic Word list. Exercises after reading include: discovering main idea and details, inferences, fact and opinion and etc. The class focuses on building critical thinking skills for academic settings.

IEP Description of Classes - continued

Writing (Levels 1-8)

This class focuses on **the process of writing** in English. It starts with writing English sentences (in Beginner and Lower Intermediate Levels), then moves to the rules of writing a paragraph (in Intermediate Levels) and finishes with rules of writing various types of essays (Advanced levels). The class prepares students for academic writings in a college setting.

Accuplacer Test Prep (Level 7)

The class prepares student to take the Accuplacer Test which is given as an entrance exam to Community Colleges.

TOEFL Prep (Level 8)

This class introduces students to the questions given on the TOEFL test, which is required as the official entrance exam to most English speaking colleges and universities both in the USA and in the world.

American Culture (Levels 1-8)

This class is open to all students, but it is required for all F1 students. Part-time students do not need to pay for this class. It covers wide range of topics about American life, history, geography, government, pop culture, and literature.

Field Trip

This is a cultural activity that is organized by the IEP coordinator and is included in the tuition for all students. It is held on the Friday of the 4th week of each term. Attendance is MANDATORY and the regular attendance policy will be adhered to for this activity. Transportation is provided for the students who sign up. The cultural activity is around two (2) hours + transportation time. After the cultural activity there is a small ceremony at the campus for graduation certificates. This is followed by a meal.

Recommendations for Part-Time Students

Students who want to improve their **general English**, with no intentions of going to college, should take one or more of these classes: Integrated Skills, Speaking/Listening, or Grammar.

Students who want to **enter college** should take one or more of these classes: Reading, Writing, Grammar and Speaking/Listening classes or the TOEFL class.

The Application Process

1. Complete the Application Form.

- You can obtain the application form from the website or come to International Services at Marietta, GA. To visit the webpage: go to www.chattahoocheetech.edu then Enrollment and then Admissions, click on the left side where it says Intensive English Program or International Enrollment.

2. If you are a resident of the United States:

- Come to International Services at the Marietta, GA Campus to submit your application and payment.
- Come to take the Placement Test on the date given to you during the application process.
- Come to pick up your books and schedule on the date given to you during the application process.

3. If you are an International Student outside the United States seeking a non-immigrant visa

- The process of obtaining a visa may take about 3 to 4 months, so plan in advance.
- Carefully review all the information on the CTC website. Contact the International Services Office with any questions or needs.
<http://www.chattahoocheetech.edu/enrollment/international-enrollment/>
- Prior to travelling to the USA, you must have a valid I-20, valid passport and visa.
- You must pay by the payment deadline using wire transfer outside the USA or in person, using cash or credit card.
- You should arrive at least 1 day before the placement test, according to the schedule posted online.
- You are required to attend the International Student Orientation held on Friday before your IEP classes begin.
- You will have to pick up your schedule and books on the day of your orientation.

4. If you are a non-immigrant visa or student visa holder currently residing in the United States:

- You must contact International Services at least a month before the new session starts to process required documents.
- You must show that you have sufficient finances to pay for your school with a bank statement. Contact International Services for details.
- You are required to pay by the payment deadline.
- You are required to come to the Placement Test indicated on the schedule.
- You will need to attend the International Student Orientation held on Friday before your IEP classes begin and pick up your books and schedule.

Payment

All payments must be made before a student may go to class. Payment is due **(five) 5** business days before class starts. Tuition includes books, workbooks, and the cultural activity (field trip and a meal).

- **Full time tuition is \$1,580.00**
- **Part-Time tuition is \$340.00 (per course)**

Payments made after the deadline are subject to a **late payment fee**. For full-time students the late fee is **\$70** which will result in your total tuition fee being **\$1,650**. For Part-Time students the late fee is **\$20** per course, which will result in your tuition being **\$360 per course**.

The late fee is non-negotiable and will not be reversed/waived for any reason.

There is no fee for the placement test taken during the scheduled time. Alternate date placement testing fee is **\$25**.

Parking at all Chattahoochee Tech campuses is free.

Students may pay in person at the Center for Corporate and Professional Education Office, Marietta Campus, Building H, with cash, credit card or a personal check issued from a bank in Georgia.

Students can also pay via wire transfer using peerTransfer/Flywire (www.peertransfer.com)

With all payments, please reference Intensive English Program and the **student's name and ID number (example: 900123456)**.

Students may not register or pay after the first week of class.

Policies

Attendance Policy

As with any educational programs, attendance and participation is not only expected, but is necessary to reap the benefits of the program. Regular and punctual class attendance is expected of all students. The IEP has a **strict** attendance policy, but we do understand that there are circumstances that will prevent students from attending class.

Therefore, students are permitted **3 absences per term, per class**. A student is considered tardy if he/she is **1 minute late** to a class and early departure is considered a tardy as well. In each case, the following policy is applied:

- **3 tardies = 1 absence**
- **3 early departures = 1 absence**

Additionally, students who arrive more than 30 minutes late or leave class 30 minutes early will be considered absent for that class, and this will count toward the 3 absences per term, per class rule.

*****Please note: Students who are late will also receive a ZERO on their homework.*****

If a student is absent due to extenuating circumstances, IEP administration will discuss the situation with the student and may request documentation of the situation in order to determine appropriate steps. Otherwise, if a student exhibits poor attendance and there is not an extenuating circumstance, the following policy will be applied:

- **4 absences (per class)** = the instructor will document the absences in the gradebook and will complete a **Policy Violation Form**, which will be given to the IEP Coordinator. The IEP Coordinator will make every effort to meet with the student to alert them that they have reached 4 absences and that they have been placed on **“WATCH”**
- **5 absences (per class)** = a **“WARNING”** will be issued and the student will need to meet with the instructor, the IEP Coordinator and the International Services Coordinator; the student will sign a letter indicating an understanding that the next absence will result in removal from the program which could affect the student’s F1 Visa status
- **6 absences (per class)** = the student will be removed from the program, and International Services will be notified, which could affect the student’s F1 Visa status

If a student is removed due to absences, they will be given an opportunity to reenroll in a subsequent term. However, if the student continues with the excessive absences, they will be removed and will not be permitted to enroll in future terms.

Policies - continued

Attention: F-1 Visa Students

The IEP is required by law to report to Immigration Services any F-1 Visa student who is no longer attending the program or enrolls for less than a full course load (20 clock hours) without permission. Therefore, it is your responsibility to alert the *International Services Department immediately, if:*

- You are entering the U.S as a new student
- You change your address
- You are planning to take a vacation term
- You have serious illness or a serious problem that stops you from attending class
- You are thinking about changing schools or taking a vacation inside or outside the U.S

Make up Policy

If a student misses class, arrangements should be made with the Instructor for make-up assignments. A student is responsible for getting class notes from a classmate. Make-up assignments are due by the end of the class following the missed class.

Evaluation/Placement Determination

Upon application to the IEP Program, students are assessed to determine the appropriate level placement. In the event that the placement is not appropriate, the student may request to be changed through the last day of the first week. Throughout the term, assignments and tests are given and graded according to the following scale:

- A = 90 to 100
- B = 80 to 89
- C = 70 to 79
- D = 60 to 69
- F = 60 and below

There will also be an **End of Term** assessment that will take place during the last week of the term. The **End of Term** assessments are given in Grammar, Writing and Reading courses.

A student must earn at least an 80% to go onto the next level. If a student does not earn an 80%, the following rules apply:

- **70% to 79%** - The student will be placed on **Academic Probation** and will be permitted to repeat the current level; if the student earns a 70% to 79% again, then the student will be suspended and will not allowed to enroll in the IEP program for a minimum of one year.
- **<70%** - The student will be placed on **Academic Probation** and will be demoted to the previous level; if the student earns <70% again, then the student will be suspended and will not be allowed to enroll in the IEP Program for a minimum of one year.

Policies - continued

Scholastic Dishonesty

Plagiarism, also known as **CHEATING**, is **NOT ACCEPTABLE!** If a student cheats, the following consequences will be applied:

- The student will be given a **ZERO** on the assignment that they cheated on, **AS WELL AS**, a **ZERO** on all other related classwork, homework, project, etc. **within that chapter or unit**.
- If a student is caught cheating a **2nd time**, they will be **EXPELLED** from the program, and **will not** be permitted to enroll in the IEP program in the future.

Group Etiquette

During all instruction, whether it is individual or within a group setting, students must be respectful and courteous to instructors, fellow students, and staff. In order to ensure respect for privacy and confidentiality, while also providing an optimum learning environment:

- *This is an **Intensive English Program**; therefore, students are expected to speak **ENGLISH** at all times! This will only benefit the student as they prepare for further studies in the United States of America.*
- Texting, talking, or making phone calls during instruction time are not allowed.
- Cell phones are to be placed on silent or vibrate during class time.
- Food or drinks are not allowed in any of the computer labs.
- Disrespectful behavior or actions toward instructors, fellow students, and staff is not tolerated, and may result in removal from the Chattahoochee Technical College Intensive English Program.
- NO children are allowed at any time, under any circumstances, during class time.

Group Etiquette Violations:

The following steps will be taken when a student violates group etiquette for behaviors such as using their phone in class, browsing the internet, sleeping, verbal outbursts, or any other distraction that disrupts the class:

1. **Verbal Warning** – The instructor will have a discussion with the student to address the behavior and clearly explain the expectation and corresponding consequence should the disruptive behavior continue. The student will be permitted to return to class; a student will receive two verbal warnings before a referral will be made to administration.
2. **Policy Violation Referral** – After a student has received **two verbal warnings** of the same violation, the instructor will complete a **Policy Violation Referral** and advise the student that they must meet with administration (Building H – Justin Vanoy or Amy Leatherman). The student may not return to class if the **Policy Violation Referral** is not signed by somebody from administration. A copy of this slip will be kept in the student's record.

Policies - continued

- Suspension Letter** – If the student continues to violate the school policy, he or she will be suspended from class. The instructor will give the student a **Suspension Letter** and will be directed to go to the International Services Office (Building G – Greg Moor or Angie Gonzalez) for a meeting to discuss the behavior. This will be the final and official warning that the next occurrence of disruptive behavior will result in removal from the program.

Procedures for Grievances

If a student has any academic or personal issues with a teacher, the student is encouraged to speak to the teacher first. If the student feels that the issue has not been resolved, he or she should speak to **Justin Vanoy, Coordinator, in Building H, Office 1105B.**

If a student has questions relating to his/her immigration status or I-20s, the student should be directed to the **International Services Office; Greg Moor, Coordinator, in Building G, Office 1125** or **Angie Gonzalez, Specialist, in Building G, Office 1124.**

If a student is dissatisfied with his/her level, the student should speak with or email the **ESL Resource Instructor, Milena Eneva in Building B, Room 1162.**

Inclement Weather

Please be advised that the Intensive English Program follows the Chattahoochee Technical College's school calendar, however, there are times that we have to close for inclement weather. If the program is closed due to inclement weather, please note that the Field Trip will be cancelled and a make-up session will be held in its place. Please be advised that in the event of inclement weather, Chattahoochee Technical College will announce any and all closings or delayed openings via the home page, www.ChattahoocheeTech.edu. You can also check various news outlets as well. Individual instructors may also email or text their students, but this is at their discretion only.

It is your responsibility to check the above outlets for the latest information. If the campus is closed or delayed, then you are expected to adhere to the same information.

Campus Police

For any emergency situation, please call campus police at **770-529-2311.**

Policies - continued

Visitation

Children are not allowed in the classrooms during class time. If you have a friend or a relative who wants to observe a class, you need to get permission from the instructor and coordinator first.

Student ID

As a student at Chattahoochee Tech you have a student ID. This is a number that starts with **900**. You may obtain a student ID card from Room 1106 in Building C. This ID card can be used on campus in the library. As a student, you may be able to get student discounts to various cultural events in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Please carry it with you at all times.

Campus Life

The Office of Campus Life is located in Building C, Room 1105 (next to the bookstore). It provides information about various clubs, events, and organizations that are active on campus and you may join.

Each term, each student will be asked to sign a Student Acknowledgement Statement indicating that they have received and reviewed the IEP Policies as included in this Student Handbook. This will be maintained in the student's record.

Employment

F-1 visa students are able to work on campus for up to 20 hours per week. See International Services for more information on work permissions.

Social Security Number

A Social Security Number is given ONLY to students who have an offer of employment on campus and ONLY after you have an actual job offer, you may apply for your Social Security Number.

Applying for a Social Security Number:

1. Ask the office that is hiring you to write a letter that includes: the position are hired for, start date, number of work hours, supervisor's name and the telephone number.
2. Ask the office of International Services for a letter that identifies you, confirms your I-20 status and identifies your employer and the type of work you will be doing.
3. Wait at least 10 days after you enter the United States to visit the Social Security Administration Office.
4. Go to the Social Security Administration Office with these two letters, your passport and visa, your I-94 form that was given to you during the customs check, and a completed form SS-5 (Application for Social Security Number). You can print the form from the <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/> or it may be possible to obtain one at the specific office location.

The closest Social Security Office is located at:
1415 FRANKLIN RD SE
MARIETTA, GA 30067

Check online for work days and work hours and go early, as the office is usually quite busy. When you enter the office, you will have to take a number and wait for your number to be called.

5. If your application is successful, you will receive your social security card in the mail within two to four weeks. You will be able to work on campus while you wait for your Social Security Card. The Social Security office can provide you with a letter if you need one.
6. Keep your Social Security Card some place safe and do NOT carry it with you in your wallet.

Taxes

- If you work in the United States with an immigrant visa, your employer will collect federal and state taxes directly from your paycheck. You will see that as a deduction on your paycheck.
- At the end of January, each year you will receive a W2 form from your employer in the mail.
- You will use this form to file your tax returns. Tax returns are filed **from February until April 14** either by regular mail or electronically. You have to file a Federal Tax Return and a State of Georgia Tax Return.
- Most international students who work part-time use **short forms 1040NR-EZ** or **1040NR** for a Federal Tax Return and form **500-EZ** for State of Georgia Tax Return. These forms are easy to fill in and you may be able to do them yourself.
- For Federal taxes visit <https://www.irs.gov/Individuals/International-Taxpayers>
- For Georgia taxes visit <http://dor.georgia.gov/individual-taxes>
- You can obtain those forms from any public library from February until April. The forms are usually located right next to the entrance of the library and are free to anyone who needs them. You don't need a library card to get them. Remember to also pick up the booklet with the instructions to filling in the form. You may also find the forms and the instructions online.
- You can prepare the taxes yourself and mail them to the locations given in the instructions. You have to include the tax form and one of the W2 forms given to you by your employer.
- You can also use an online program, like *Turbo Tax* or others. Some of them will file electronically your Federal Tax Return for free, but for your State Tax Return you will have to pay from \$30.00-90.00.
- You can also pay a tax preparer to do your tax returns, which will cost you around \$250.00.
- Most international students will receive back (as a refund) all or most of their income taxes which the employer deducted from their paychecks for the previous year.
- If you are receiving a refund, the best option is to request a direct deposit into a bank account. The second option is to request a check to be sent to your address, but be aware that those can be stolen. The final option, which may cost you additionally, is to get a refund card.
- Try to file your taxes as early as possible, since there are cases when others may steal your identity and file the tax returns in your name to receive your refund.

Transportation

Public Transportation

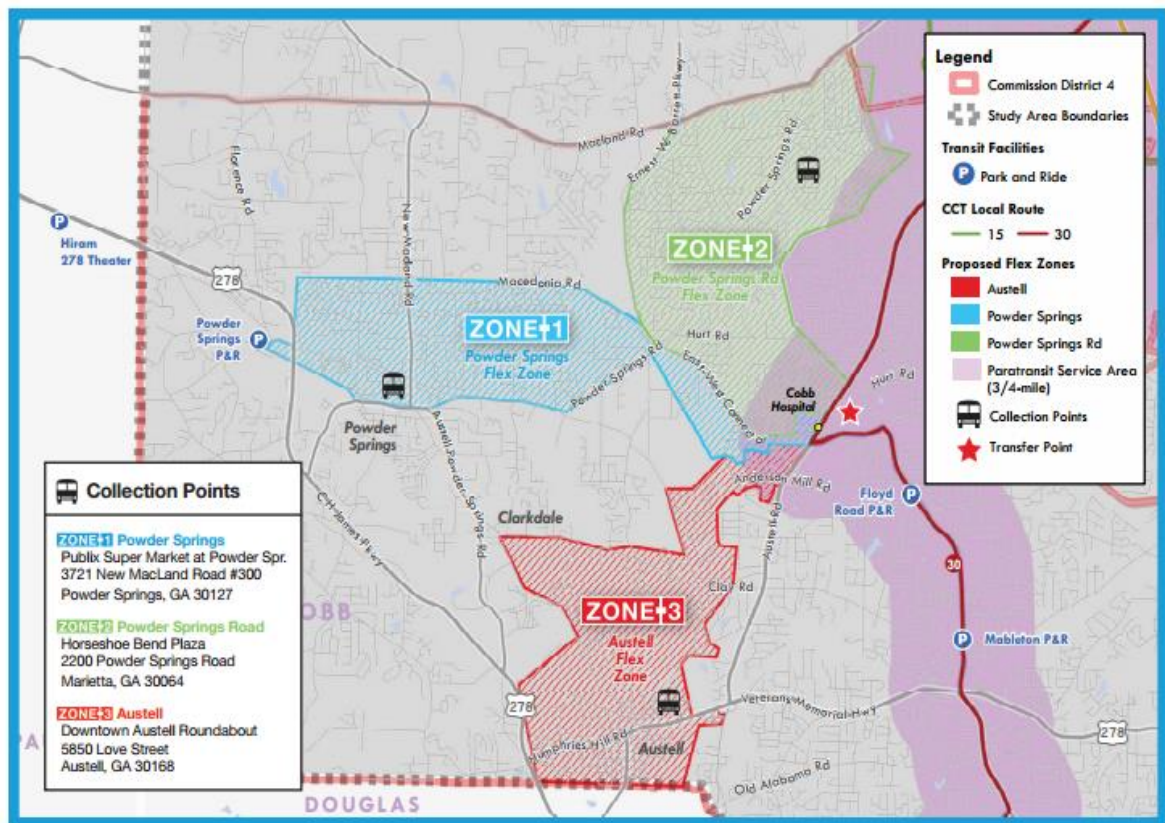
Public transportation in and around Atlanta is not very well developed. Most international students find it hard to get to different places using only public transportation. There is a subway that runs from the airport to major places inside the city of Atlanta. The subway system, together with the public bus system that serves the city of Atlanta is called Marta. You can find information about it at www.itsmarta.com. Below is the map of the Atlanta subway system.



Transportation – continued

Chattahoochee Technical College, Marietta Campus is located in the town of Marietta, which is about 20 miles north-east of the city of Atlanta.

- The local public transportation system here is called *Cobb Community Transit* or CCT. You can get information about buses, routes and schedule of busses at <http://www.cobbcounty.org/> and then click on Routes and Schedules.
- Cobb Community Transit connects with the Atlanta Marta system by several buses.
- There is also a bus connection with Kennesaw State University and Town Center Mall.
- **Bus #20** stops in front of Building B of the Chattahoochee Technical College.
- You can call **770-427-4444** and tell your location and where you want to go and the operator will tell you how to get there using public transportation.
- Effective March 23, 2015, there is an additional transportation service available called *Flex Cobb Community Transit*. It allows you to call and get on-demand curb-side bus service. The buses run M-F from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm and service three zones in South Cobb area. One ride costs \$2.50. They can take you from any place in your zone to any other destination within your zone or transfer to Route 30! You have to call **770-528-1053** to schedule your reservation between 2-24 hours in advance. For more information go to www.cobbcounty.org and click on Flex.



Driver's License

The easiest way to move in metropolitan Atlanta is by car. In order to drive a car in Georgia, you need to have a driver's license. Your government can issue you an International Driver's License, but it is valid only for the first 30 days you are in the United States. After that, you must obtain a valid Georgia State Driver's License.

1. Collect the following documents: passport with stamped visa, I-20, I-94 (a document issued at customs on entering the USA), any bill that shows you are living at the address you gave the school (like phone, electric, gas, rent, credit card). It will take you at least a month of service before you receive a bill from any company.
2. Go to the Social Security Administration office with all the documents and fill and application for a Social Security Card. If you are not eligible to receive one, the office will send you a letter within 2 to 4 weeks SSA-L676, SSN Card Denial/Letter of Ineligibility.
3. Study for the written test. The test includes rules and signs. You can find the Driver's Manual with all the information and practice tests on the Department of Driver Safety
4. Go to the DMV office with all the documents (including the letter from the Social Security Office) and take the written test. You do not need an appointment for the written test but you may have to wait in line if there are many people. You must begin the test at least 30 minutes before the DMV closes. You must get 15 out of 20 questions correct on the rules questions and on the sign questions.
5. After you successfully pass the written test, you need to schedule an appointment for the road test. Call 678-413-8400, 678-413-8500, or 678-413-8600 to schedule the road test.
6. For the road test, you must provide a car and arrive with somebody who has a valid driver's license. The instructor will go with you in the car and tell you where and how to drive. At the end of the test, he or she will tell you if you failed or passes.
7. You can now apply for your driver's license. The application fee is \$20 and you must present all the documents listed in #1 and #2 above.

Driving in the USA

- You must have at least liability insurance with your name on it for the car that you will be driving.
- If you buy a car, your car has to be registered with Georgia registration plates. These are renewed every year on your birthday. Registration costs \$20 and is also done at the local tax commissioner office.
- Before registration, if your car is more than 3 years old, it needs to pass an emission inspection, which is offered at many gas stations and costs between \$15 - \$25.

Common Visa Questions

In response to national security concerns, changes in government policy and regulations pertaining to international students and foreign nationals can occur very rapidly. Although every effort will be made to notify you of these changes, USCIS hold the student responsible for maintaining his or her status at all times.

General Guidelines

- You must report to Chattahoochee Technical College's International Services with passport, I-94, stamped I-20, and any other immigration document within the first two weeks of the beginning of your first term. USCIS requires CTC to maintain copies of these documents in your file.
- **Student must register for a full course of study, meaning 18- 21 clock hours.**
- Student must report any change in immigration status to International Services.

Duration of Stay

- F-1 Students are usually given Duration of Status (D/S) on the I-94 which means that they are allowed to be in the U.S. as long as they are attending school full time and are not in violation of their status for any reason.

Extension of Stay

- Students who wish to extend their I-20 for additional terms of IEP must apply for an extension **before** the date of completion indicated on the current I-20.
- If the date has expired and the extension has not been requested, the student is considered out of status and if eligible, may apply for reinstatement.
- I-20 Form of F-1 students is not subject to periodic renewal.

Dropping Classes

- International students cannot drop below a full course of study during any term. There are a few circumstances under which a student may be authorized to enroll less than fulltime or withdraw from a class; however, **prior approval** from International Services must be obtained.
- Students must notify International Services of any emergency or medical problem beyond their control necessitating a request to drop courses or drop out of school for the semester. Without permission from International Services and documentation on file, a student dropping below a full course of study will have the SEVIS record terminated.
- If you drop out of school, USCIS requires you leave the United States immediately with no grace period. You will automatically be considered out of student status.

Common Visa Questions - continued

Transition to CTC

- You must contact International Services to update your record in SEVIS if you wish to transition from the Intensive English Program (IEP) to the college-side of CTC. You must first be accepted to the college before International Services can issue you a new I-20.

Address Changes

- Students are **required** to notify the school and USCIS of any changes in address or telephone number within 10 days of this change.

Changing Schools

- Students who are in current F-1 status can transfer to or from CTC. Students need to notify International Services of their current school using the Transfer Clearance form obtained from CTC's International Services to transfer to CTC.
- Student should continue to attend school and maintain fulltime status until he/she is accepted to the new school.
- **All balances must be paid in full prior to transferring to another school. The Center for Corporate and Professional Education office will verify this information before the International Services Office will process the transfer.**

Vacation

- An IEP student is eligible to take a vacation term after attending 4 consecutive terms at CTC.
- A vacation term means the student can take the term off as long as the student will return for the next available term.

Abbreviations and Definitions

- *Full-time student status:* A full course of study is defined as 18 - 20 clock hours.
- *SEVIS:* Student and Exchange Visitor Information System
- *USCIS:* United States Citizenship and Immigration Service
- *DSO:* Designated School Officer

Useful Links for Immigration Questions:

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS): www.uscis.gov
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE): www.ice.gov
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP): www.cbp.gov
 - I-94 Form: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ): www.usdoj.gov
- Student Visas Information: <http://travel.state.gov/>
- Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS): <https://egov.ice.gov/sevis/>
 - I-901 fee: www.fmjfee.com/i901fee

Health Care

Health Insurance

Currently, Chattahoochee Technical College does not require international students to purchase health insurance, but it is highly recommended you do so. In the United States, the government does not pay for health care. Health care in the United States is very expensive, so health insurance is a wise investment in case a medical need occurs.

For international students there are several options to purchase health insurance:

- International Student Health Insurance plan: www.isoa.org
- Compass International Student Scholar Health Insurance Plan: www.compassbenefits.com
- TW Lord: www.twlord.com

Whenever you go to a doctor's office, hospital, clinic, urgent care facility, or emergency room, make sure you have your insurance information with you. Before going, check to see if your insurance will pay for treatment at that facility and what percentage of the treatment it will cover. Some insurance companies and policies will only pay for care at certain places. Most visits will also require you to pay a co-payment from \$25 to \$50 in the form of cash or credit card, so be prepared to pay before seeing the doctor.

Health Care Facilities:

- Doctor's Office
 - Most people go to see a doctor for annual routine check-ups or specialty non-urgent care.
 - If you have insurance, use their website to see which doctors you can visit
 - You will have to call and set up an appointment first. The first available appointment may be days or weeks later.
- Emergency Room
 - If you have a serious medical problem that must be addressed as soon as possible, you will have to **go to the emergency room**.
 - If your emergency is so serious that you cannot drive to the hospital, **dial 911** on your phone to speak to an emergency operator for an ambulance.
 - Emergency rooms are located at hospitals.
 - When you go there, you will have to wait to be admitted, based on how serious or life threatening your medical issue is. Some people who come after you may be admitted before you. If your medical issue is not life threatening, be prepared to wait a few hours.

Health Care - continued

- **Urgent Care**

- These facilities are for non-life threatening situations when you need to see a doctor as soon as possible: like a sprain ankle or a really bad headache or an infection
- Some common urgent care facilities:
 - Concentra Urgent Care, <http://www.concentra.com/>
 - Wellstar Medical Care <http://www.wellstar.org/>
 - American Family Care <http://www.americanfamilycare.com/>

- **Hospital**

- You will be admitted into the hospital either through an emergency room or through a doctor's referral.
- Some procedures in the hospital will be "out-patient", which means you visit the doctor there for a procedure and then you leave. If you are referred to a hospital by a doctor, you will have to see an administrator to arrange payment before the procedure is done.
- If you are admitted through emergency, your payment will come later.
- Hospital stays are usually very expensive; around \$1,000 per night.
- The closest hospital is Wellstar Kennestone Hospital, 677 Church St, Marietta, GA 30060.

- **Dental Office**

- Dental insurance is separate from health insurance and dental offices are privately owned. They are separate from other medical facilities.
- You have to call to set up an appointment, but some dentists will accept walk-in patients too.
- You can pay cash for your dental treatments.
- Look for a convenient dental office using the Internet.

- **Vision Care**

- There are vision care centers available in many big stores, like *Target*, *Walmart* and *Costco* or in the malls. Sometimes, they accept walk-in but often you need to call or go there and set up an appointment.
- These specialists will check your vision and give you a prescription for glasses, contact lenses or minor eye problems.
- A vision check for glasses is usually around \$45, and a vision check for glasses and contact lenses is around \$100.
- If your eye problem is more serious, they will refer you to a specialist.

Health Care - continued

- **Clinic**
 - These may be located in pharmacy stores such as *CVS*, *Walgreens* or in supermarkets such as *Publix* or *Kroger*.
 - You can go there for flu shots and diagnosis of minor issues.
 - There is usually a Nurse Practitioner or a Physician Assistant, but not a doctor.
 - Some clinics are bigger facilities and you may get additional exams there.
 - Some colleges or universities have clinics on campus. Chattahoochee Tech currently does not have a clinic.
 - Clinics are usually cheaper and may even provide services for free, depending on the clinic.

- **Lab Testing**
 - If you don't have insurance, you can pay for some blood and urine tests in lab facilities instead of hospitals or doctor's offices. These are cheaper.
 - Check the internet for the closest location of
 - Any Lab Test (www.anuylabtestnow.com)
 - Quests Diagnostics (<https://secure.questdiagnostics.com>)

Cultural Tips

Personal Space

People in the United States feel comfortable when they speak with each other and the space between them is about one meter. This is called their comfort zone. Some countries have a much smaller comfort zone. Try to stay a little further when speaking with Americans. Try not to touch people that are new to you. Hugging and touching is allowed for friends and family. When you are greeting someone you have not met before, it is best to simply say “hello” or shake their hand.

Culture Shock

All new immigrants will experience a period of time that is known as culture shock. It usually starts about a few weeks after arriving in the country. It may be a long or a short period depending on how quickly you can adapt to the new culture. During this period you will feel sad, nervous, and easily angered by small changes. You will also feel very homesick and look for friends from your country to spend time with. In order to adapt better, we suggest you try to learn more about the American culture and try to meet American friends too.

Personal Cleanliness

People in the United States are sensitive to body odor. Americans take a shower at least once a day and use deodorants after showering. Perfume is used only on special occasions and in very small quantities. Be careful with strong perfume, since many people have allergies. Americans also change clothes daily. It is considered “unclean” to wear the same shirt/dress for several days in a row without cleaning.

Time Management

Time is very important for Americans. If you have any appointment (business or friends), you must arrive on time or be about 10 minutes early. If you are going to be late, you must call to tell how late you will be. Being late more than 10 minutes is considered very rude in America. If you are taking a class, you need to be on time or early. You do NOT call to let the teacher know you are late, but you enter very quietly and try not to disturb the class in any way.

Tipping

If you eat at a sit-down restaurant with a server, you need to leave a tip of 15-20 %. For buffet and self-serving restaurants, you leave \$1.00 per person at the table for the cleaning person. You may leave a small tip for cashiers in some coffee shops or small diners if there is a tip jar. You also tip taxi drivers, hair stylists, barbers, and hotel cleaning services. If you have bags at the airport and a person helps you with the bags check-in, you tip a dollar per bag.

Traditional and Government Holidays in the United States

New Year's Day

Beginning on the evening of December 31st, Americans celebrate the New Year. Schools, colleges, government buildings and banks will be closed. Some stores may close earlier on December 31st and open late on January 1st. Some stores are closed on January 1st.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

It is observed the third Monday in January. This is a holiday that celebrates the civil rights activist Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Public schools, government buildings and banks are closed. Private businesses are open.

President's Day

It is observed the third Monday of February. Public schools, government buildings and banks are closed. Private businesses are open.

Valentine's Day

It is celebrated on February 14th. This is not an official government holiday. This holiday celebrates love and romance with cards, candy, presents and special dinners.

St. Patrick's Day

This is not an official holiday. This is a holiday that celebrates St. Patrick, a patron saint of Ireland on March 14th. In America, it is celebrated by parades with Irish music and parties with a lot of drinking. People should wear something green on that day.

Easter

This is not a government holiday but a traditional Christian holiday. The time for this holiday varies depending on the religious calendar. It is usually in late March or April. People decorate or buy Easter eggs and hide them for small children to find.

Memorial Day

It is celebrated the last Monday of May. It is unofficially the beginning on summer. Public schools finish spring semester then. Government buildings and banks are closed. People usually get together outside on this day with friends to do barbecue.

Independence Day

Celebrated on July 4th with parades and fireworks at night. This is a government holiday but also many private businesses will be closed on that day.

Traditional and Government Holidays in the United States - continued

Labor Day

It is celebrated on the first Monday of September. It is unofficially the end of summer. It is celebrated with cook-outs. Government buildings, banks and public schools are closed but most private businesses are open.

Halloween

This is not an official holiday. It is celebrated on October 31st. Many people wear scary costumes and go to parties. Children go around the neighborhood in early evening dressed in costumes, knocking on doors and saying “Trick or Treat.” If you open the door, you will have to give them some candy.

Thanksgiving

This is an official holiday and also one of the biggest traditional holidays in the country. It is celebrated the last Thursday of November. People in the United States cook a special meal of roasted turkey and gather together for a big dinner early afternoon with family and friends. The day after Thanksgiving is also known as Black Friday, when many people go shopping really early on that day for Christmas presents and stores have special sales. Schools, Government buildings, and banks are closed Thursday and Friday of that week.

Christmas

It is an official government and a traditional family holiday. Most businesses close early on December 24th. Schools, banks and government buildings are closed December 24th and December 25th. Several weeks earlier, people decorate houses, buildings, and yards with Christmas decorations. Offices and schools may have early Christmas parties where people exchange gifts and get together to eat. On Christmas Day, December 25th, Americans celebrate at home with friends and family with gifts exchanged and a big meal around lunchtime.

Other traditional holidays you may hear:

Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, April’s Fool Day, Cinco De Mayo

U.S. Measurements

For liquids: pint, quart, half a gallon, and gallon

- 2 cups = 1 pint
- 2 pints or 4 cups = 1 quart (close to 1 liter)
- 4 quarts = 1 gallon (close to 4 liters)

For dry materials: ounces (oz), pound (lb)

- 16 ounces = 1 pound (close to half a kilogram)

For distance: inches, foot/feet, yard, and mile (close to 1.6 km)

- 12 inches = 1 foot (30 centimeters)
- 3 feet = 1 yard (close to 1 meter)

For temperature: Fahrenheit; 98.6 normal body temperature; 40- cold outside, 90-hot outside

How to Apply to a College Program at Chattahoochee Tech

See International Services for advisement on all admissions steps. If you are an IEP student, you can transition to the college side and continue your education in any of the 45 college degrees offered. We advise you to start preparing your documents for college at the latest, by the beginning of level 7, since you will need at least 2 months to complete the process. There are several steps you should follow.

ADMISSION STEPS

1. Submit a completed admission application and a nonrefundable \$20 application fee in U.S. currency by credit card, money order or check drawn on a U.S. bank payable to Chattahoochee Technical College by the appropriate admission deadline.
2. Submit official transcripts from your high school (or GED) and all colleges attended by the application deadline. All transcripts must be received in envelopes sealed by the sending institution. Applicants with a college degree will send college transcripts from all colleges attended but are not required to submit a high school or GED transcript.
3. All international transcripts must be evaluated by an approved evaluation service and sent directly to CTC. We recommend the following evaluation agencies:

Foreign Credential Evaluations, INC

1425 Market Boulevard, Suite 330, Box 305

Roswell, GA 30076

Telephone: 770.642.1108

Fax: 770.641.8381

Website: www.fceatlanta.net

Email: powell_cotter@fceatlanta.com

Lisano International (high school evaluations only)

1381 Lee Road 400

Opelika, AL 36804

Telephone: 334.745.0425

Website: www.lisano-intl.com

Email: lisanointl@aol.com

Josef Silny and Associates, Inc.

7101 SW 102 Avenue

Miami, FL 33173

Telephone: 305.273.1616

Fax: 305.273.1338, Fax for translations 305.273.1984

Website: www.jsilny.com

Email: info@jsilny.com

Applying to CTC - continued

1. Apply for admission

- Obtain the application online
<http://www.chattahoocheetech.edu/enrollment/international-enrollment/> or go to Building G, Marietta Campus and fill out the application there.
- Pay the application fee (\$20)
- Get a sample of the placement test and review the type of questions you will have on the test.

2. Take a Placement Test

- The test is given at Chattahoochee Technical College, Building G, Marietta Campus.
- You do not need to schedule a time to take the test. You can come at the times when the testing lab is open.
- The test is not timed, but it takes students about 3 hours to complete, so plan accordingly. There is a Writing, Reading and Math section of the test.
- At the end of the test, the lab assistant there will tell you if you have scored enough to enroll in college and will give you the test results.

3. You will receive a letter of acceptance from the college in your mail

- If you are an F1 student you must be accepted as a regular college student.
- Please see Milena Eneva in building B116.2 if you need help with registration.

4. Register for classes

- As an international student, you must be a full-time college student, which requires you to take 12 or more credit hours per semester. You must attend the International Student Orientation and the Admissions and Registration Advisement. Students can register online, but we advise that you go to the first registration event in person.
- For programs and classes offered go to:
<http://www.chattahoocheetech.edu/programsandcourses/>
- For class schedule go to:
<http://www.chattahoocheetech.edu/programsandcourses/class-schedule/>

As set forth in its student catalog, Chattahoochee Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, veteran status, or citizenship status (except in those special circumstances permitted or mandated by law). The following person(s) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Chattahoochee Technical College Title IX Coordinator, Brannon Jones, 980 South Cobb Drive, Building C 1102B, Marietta, GA 30060, (770) 975-4023 or Brannon.Jones@chattahoocheetech.edu and Chattahoochee Technical College Section 504 Coordinator, Mary Frances Bernard, 980 South Cobb Drive, Building G1106, Marietta, GA 30060, (770) 528-4529, or maryfrances.bernard@chattahoocheetech.edu.