

THE CITADEL  
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK



OFFICE OF MULTI-CULTURAL STUDENT  
SERVICES & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



## **The Office of Multicultural Student Services & International Studies**

The Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies offer a variety of services for international and American cadets at The Citadel. It provides freshmen orientation programs for international cadets, as well as immigration advising and assistance, and help with personal and academic concerns. In addition, the office serves as a liaison with embassies, acts as an advocate for international cadets with campus offices and departments and organizes on-campus cultural programs and international activities.

The Office Multicultural Student Services and of International Studies also offers a variety of study abroad opportunities for American and international cadets who are interested in a study abroad experience. Cadets considering overseas study are encouraged to come to the office where they are able to view study abroad resource materials, given guidance on various programs that are available and assisted with the study abroad application process.

The Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies is committed to making social, cultural and educational transitions as smooth as possible for those international cadets entering The Citadel and those cadets who wish to study abroad.

## **Immigration Responsibilities of Students in F-1 Status**

Under United States law, International students in the United States have certain responsibilities. In order to maintain proper legal status, you must comply with the United States immigration laws. It is extremely important that you do so. It is also imperative that you keep your passport, visas, and other official documents (i.e. I-20) up to date and do not lose them!! By failing to keep your documents up to date, you may cause an unnecessary inconvenience that may interfere with your education.

Enforcing United States immigration laws and regulations is the responsibility of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS). The BCIS District Office that has jurisdiction for international students at The Citadel is located in Atlanta, Georgia. The local BCIS office is located at the following address:

Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services  
170 Meeting Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Charleston, South Carolina 29401  
Phone: (843) 727-4350

### **Immigration Documents**

**Passport.** You must maintain the validity of your passport at all times (unless you are exempt from passport requirements). If you lose your passport, you should immediately take steps to have it replaced.

**BCIS Form I-20.** You should read and clearly understand the material on page 2 of *BCIS Form I-20 (Student) Copy*. If you lose the *I-20*, you should immediately request a new form from your Office of International Studies.

**BCIS Form I-94.** If you lose your *I-94*, you should immediately apply to the for a BCIS replacement document.

**Note:** You must have your passport (unless you are exempt from passport requirements); *BCIS Form I-20 ID (Student) Copy* and *BCIS Form I-94* in your possession at all times.

## **Registration, Attendance and Course load Requirements**

### Registration and Attendance

You must register for classes and attend the school that the BCIS has authorized you to attend. You must register for all normal school terms except summer terms or "short" terms (usually four weeks or less in duration).

Course load. You must register for a "full course load" (*at least 12 semester hours of instruction per academic term*), as defined by the BCIS, unless: (1) you will complete all degree requirements by the end of that school term, or (2) your international student advisor approves, in advance, a reduction in course load for one or more of the following reasons:

- Difficulties with the English language
- Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods or reading requirements
- Improper course level placement
- Illness or other medical condition that compels you to interrupt or reduce your course of study when the difficulties or conditions listed above have been resolved.

You must resume a full course of study when the difficulties or conditions listed above have been resolved.

## **Coursework at or Transfer to a Different School**

If you wish to obtain a degree or certificate from your current school but want to temporarily take courses at a different school, you should consult with your international student advisor to determine if any special procedures must be followed to authorize this study. If, instead, you wish to cease study at your current school and transfer to a different school, you must consult with staff of your Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies before you transfer and follow proper transfer procedures.

### Change of Program or Major

If you complete one program and wish to continue study in another program at the same school or change your major, you should visit the Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies to request a new I-20 which will reflect these changes.

## **Important Things to Remember**

Length of Time You May Remain in the United States. You must request an extension of your permission to remain in the U.S. if you will require more time than allowed by Item #5 on your *BCIS Form I-20 ID (Student) Copy*.

### **Failure to comply with Responsibilities**

If you fail to comply with your Immigration responsibilities, you may lose your student status and thus not be eligible for benefits normally granted to F-1 students.

### **Further Information.**

Additional information is available from the Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies on your campus. The office is pleased to offer information, counseling and assistance on all federal regulations related to maintaining your student status.

International Students are permitted to use the telephone in the Office of Multicultural Student Service and International Studies to contact their countries for Official Business and/or Emergencies.

## **Employment**

### **On-Campus Employment.**

While you may be employed in most on-campus jobs without special permission, you must limit employment to a total of 20 hours per week while school is in session. Full-time on-campus employment is allowed only when school is not in session (vacations and holidays), during summer vacation and during "short" terms (usually four weeks or less in duration).

Citadel 24-Hour Job Line - 843-953-5115  
Or on-line at <http://www.citadel.edu/hr/>  
Human Resources Contact: 953-5379

### **Off-Campus Employment.**

You cannot be employed off-campus unless it is for purposes of "Economic Hardship" or "Practical Training." Written authorization is required for both.

**Economic Hardship.**

An eligible F-1 student may request off-campus employment work authorization based on economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control.

**Practical Training Employment**

"Practical Training" is work that is directly related to your major field of study. You may be eligible for two types of training: (1) "Curricular Practical Training" during your studies and (2) "Optional Practical Training" before or after completion of your studies. Such work may be performed anywhere in the U.S. You must apply and be granted written authorization for practical training before beginning employment.

**Contact the Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies for further information on the type of employment opportunities available to you.**

**!!PLEASE NOTE: In addition to the above immigration rules of employment, the Citadel Blue Book Regulations pertain to each international cadet as well.**

**It States: "Cadets will not accept off-campus employment during the school year. Cadets may be employed on-campus by The Citadel but must receive written permission from the Commandant and the Director of Human Resources. No cadet will work in excess of 30 hours per week without the written approval of the Commandant and the Director of Human Services"**

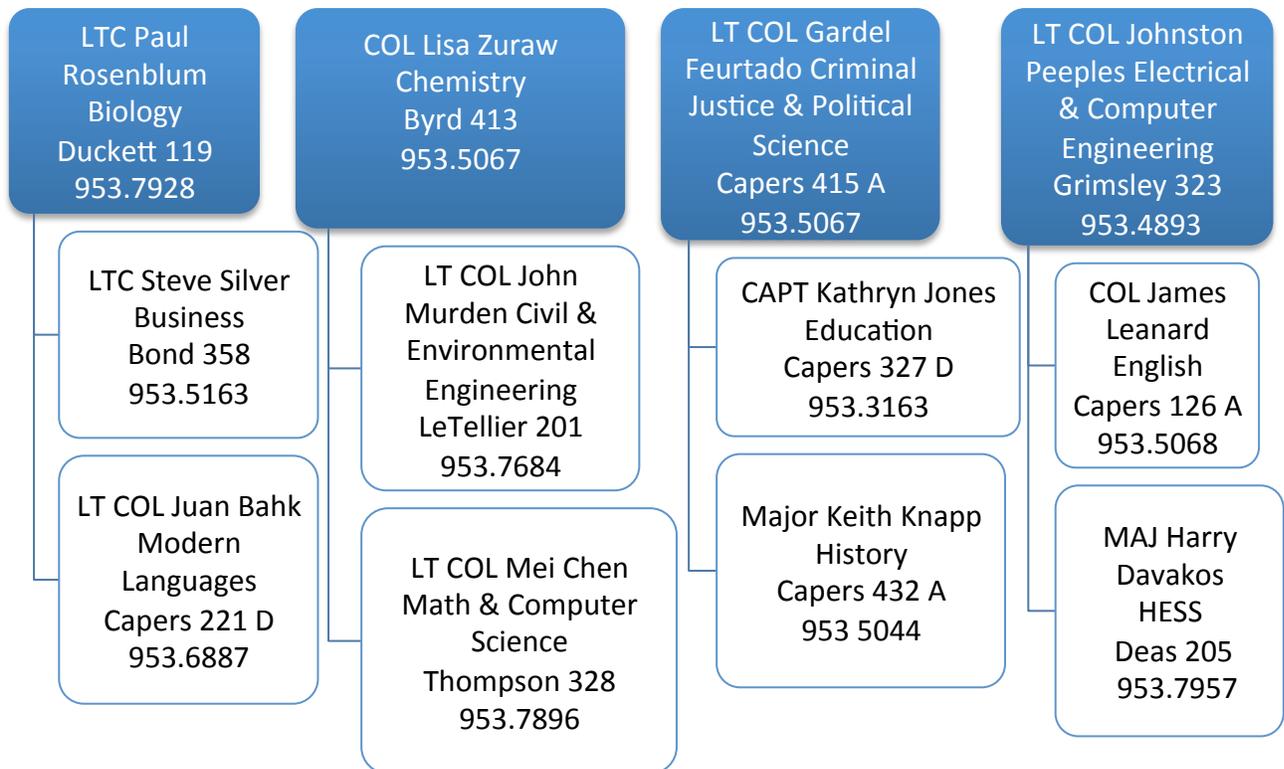
# Employment Facts for International Students in F-1 Status

- **Students may work on-campus for 20 hours per week during the academic year provided full-time enrollment is maintained.** (12 hours undergraduate, 9 hours graduate)
- **“Federal Work Study Programs” (FSWP) are not available to international students, but international students are eligible for other “Student Employment Opportunities” on campus.**
- **Employment off-campus is restricted for F-1 students unless authorized by the Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies.** Please check with the Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies regarding authorized employment options including “Curricular Practical Training”, “Optional Practical Training” and “Economic Hardship”.
- **Internships and Graduate Assistantships must be authorized by the Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies as “Curricular Practical Training” or “Optional Practical Training”.** Please check with the MSSIS Office concerning the application procedure and your eligibility for CPT and OPT.
- **Students can work on-campus 40 hours per week during school holidays including the summer term.** Note: enrollment is not required by the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services during the summer; however, students who choose to enroll full-time in the summer can only be employed 20 hours per week.
- **Social security numbers are necessary for payroll purposes. To obtain a “Social Security Card” an international student must bring the following to the Social Security Office: Passport, I-94 card, I-20 form, a letter from the Office of Human Resources stating that you are eligible to work on campus, and a completed “Social Security Application”.** Please check with the MSSIS Office to obtain the application and directions to the Social Security Office.
- **Job listing locations: 1. The Citadel VAX e-mail system. 2. The Citadel Home Page** under general information. **3. Office of Human Resources: 202 Richardson Avenue: 953-5379**

## Contact Information:

LTC. Robert P. Pickering  
Office of Multicultural Student Services and International Studies  
171 Moultrie Street  
Charleston, SC 29409  
Office: 843-953-5096

## Faculty Contacts



## Faculty Contacts Continued

COL Saul Adelman Physics  
Grimsley 240  
953.7896

CDR Chip Nimmich  
Admissions  
Bond 119  
953.5204

CAPT Virginia DeRoma Psychology  
Capers 226 B  
953.7081

CPT Elizabeth Connor  
Daniel Library  
953.7469

## TRANSPORTATION

There will be times during the year—three-day weekends, semester breaks, and holidays—when everyone on campus may be gone. And if everybody is going, you might as well go to, but how will you reach your destination?

### **Cars: Buy a car, rent a car or share a ride?**

Unless you want to use public transportation, you may want to consider buying a car and reselling it before you return home. Whether you purchase a new or used car, it is important to remember that you must also purchase automobile insurance. In case of an accident, the insurance will protect you against most of the cost of injuries and the repair of your car or the other vehicle involved in the accident. It is also important to remember that insurance may be more expensive than the car itself depending on your age, how long you have had a driver's license, and other factors. Having your own car will allow you more freedom to visit the surrounding Charleston area, go on trips during vacation, go to the movies, or go to the local shopping mall.

In the United States, renting a car is easy and affordable. Rental car companies vary and their prices are competitive. You will need to check the local telephone directory for a list of companies in the Charleston area. To rent a car all you need is a credit card and a driver's license. **Note: Some companies may impose an age limit.**

Another alternative is to have somebody give you a ride. Students with cars will often offer a ride if you are going to the same destination. All you have to do is share the expenses.

### **Bus:**

Traveling by bus is also another affordable option. In the United States, most towns are connected by bus even when they are not connected by train or air. Although you can go anywhere in the United States by bus, they make frequent stops, which may make the trip much longer. Bus terminals are not the safest place, so remember to be a smart traveler and keep your eyes wide open, especially in big cities. There are several different bus lines available. **Greyhound is one of the larger bus lines and they have a local terminal at 3610 Dorchester Road in North Charleston. For information about Greyhound lines and prices, call 1-800-231-2222. In Charleston, call 744-4247.**

## **Trains:**

Trains connect all the major cities. Although they are usually more expensive than an airline, the ride can be fun and the scenery is great. AMTRAK is America's passenger rail system. **For station information call 744-8263. For reservations and schedule information call 1-800-872-7245.**

## **Airlines:**

Because distances are so great in the United States, you may find that the fastest way to travel is to fly. Airlines are very competitive, so you need to do some cost comparison to find the best possible flight for your money. It is important to remember that scheduling your flight at least 21 days in advance will insure that you get the cheapest flight available and the flight schedule that is most convenient. The following is a list of travel agencies in the Charleston area and travel services that may offer some inexpensive flights.

- AAA Travel Agency  
843-766-2394 or on-line at: [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com)
- Absolute Travel  
843-747-5100 or on-line at: [www.Absolute-Travel.com](http://www.Absolute-Travel.com)  
Contact: Beth Sanborn
- Priceline  
1-800-PRICELINE or on-line at: [www.priceline.com](http://www.priceline.com)

# Traveling

## **Traveling Inside The U.S**

There are no restrictions placed on international students for travel within the United States.

Documents:

- While traveling short distances in the surrounding area with no overnight stay it is not necessary for you to carry your passport or BCIS documents. However, if you will be traveling long distances within the United States it is usually a good idea to carry these documents with you.
- For safety reasons, you should not carry these documents on you. Lock the documents in the hotel safe and carry photocopies with you. Although photocopied documents are not legal they may help if you lose your passport or I-20, or if it is stolen.

## **Traveling Outside The U.S.**

Documents:

- In order to reenter the U.S as an F-1 student you will need a valid I-20, a valid visa stamp, and a valid passport. In addition you may be asked to show a transcript, student ID or financial documentation so it is a good idea to have copies of these in your possession when traveling.
- If your visa stamp is still valid when you return all you will need is a current signature of the designated school official (DSO) on your I-20. A signature is valid for one year; but to be safe, it is good to have a more recent one if the last signature is more than 6 months old.
- The visa stamp is an entrance document to the U.S. Therefore, you will need to obtain a new F-1 visa stamp prior to entering the U.S. if the visa stamp in your passport is expired.

- To obtain a new visa, you will need to depart from the U.S and go to the U.S. Embassy in your country to apply for the visa (**you cannot obtain a new visa in the U.S.**). Before leaving the U.S you will also need to be issued a new I-20 by the school you are attending. Immigration officials at the U.S. Embassy in your country will want to see the new I-20 along with your passport and financial documents. They may also want to see old I-20s, transcripts, and financial documents.

### **Returning to the Same School.**

You should take the following documents to your Office of International Studies **before** departing the U. S. and request travel authorization: (1) your valid passport, (2) *your BCIS Form I-20 ID (Student) Copy* and (3) *your BCIS Form I-94*.

### **Returning to a Different School.**

You must obtain a new and complete BCIS Form I-20 A-B from your new school before you attempt to reenter the U.S. Entering this country using an I-20 form a school you do not plan to immediately attend can cause serious immigration problems.

## Traveling to Canada, Mexico, or Islands in the Caribbean (except Cuba)

There are **special rules** for traveling to these countries because Immigration officials do not consider traveling to these countries as travel outside the U.S. Visa:

- Contact the embassy of the country you wish to visit to find out if a visa is necessary. This information can also be located on the Internet. Do not depend on the advice of other students who may have visited there, especially if they hold a different passport. Immigration rules change and each country may be treated differently.

**Keep in mind that obtaining a visa may take several weeks.**

Getting Back into the U.S:

- If you are going to be in Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean Islands less than 30 days and will be returning directly to the U.S. you must follow a certain procedure.
- As you leave the U.S. tell the INS officer that you are going to visit for less than 30 days. The BCIS officer will look at your I-20 and valid passport. **You should not give up your I-94 card.**
- When you reenter the U.S. present your documents and you will be allowed to enter the U.S. Technically, you have never left the U.S because you never turned in the I-94 card. Even if your visa stamp has expired you should have no trouble reentering the U.S. The visa stamp is automatically revalidated for the day you reenter.

## Important Travel Tips To Remember

### **Packing:**

- Don't carry everything in one place!
- Never pack essential documents, medicine, and jewelry - anything you could not do without - in checked luggage. Put them in a carry-on bag.

### **Luggage:**

- Mark all luggage inside and out with names and addresses.
- Mark all bags in some distinctive way, so they are easily found.
- Count pieces of luggage before and after each stage of the journey.
- Make sure all luggage is securely locked.

### **Luggage Weight:**

- Travel light!! Be careful of luggage weight.
- For International travel you are allowed 2 checked pieces of luggage weighing 70 pounds each. You can also have 1 carry-on piece of luggage.
- Remember that whatever you pack, at some point you will have to carry.

### **Documents:**

- Keep all important documents together (i.e. passport, traveler's checks, insurance information, travel itinerary, ticket).
- Carry a copy of your passport and I-20 separate from the originals, in case they are lost or stolen.
- Carry a copy of your ticket separate from the original.
- Carry traveler's checks receipts in a separate place, in case your traveler's checks are lost or stolen.

**Airport:**

- For international travel you should arrive at the airport 2 hours prior to your scheduled flight.
- Plan your travel itinerary so that you make allowances for unexpected flight delays or other problems that may arise that may affect your returning to The Citadel on time.
- Reserve your flight 21 days in advance to secure a less expensive ticket.

**Travel Agencies:**

- AAA Travel Agency  
843-766-2394 or on-line at: [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com)
- Absolute Travel  
843-747-5100 or on-line at: [www.Absolute-Travel.com](http://www.Absolute-Travel.com)  
Contact: Beth Sanborn
- Priceline  
1-800-PRICELINE or on-line at: [www.priceline.com](http://www.priceline.com)
- [www.Kayak.com](http://www.Kayak.com), [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com), [www.southwest.com](http://www.southwest.com), etc.

## **Understanding Americans: Some Key Values**

**America's population reflects remarkable ethnic diversity. More than 20 percent of the population of two major cities, Los Angeles and New York, were born in another country. In some other major cities (including San Francisco and Chicago) more than one of every ten residents is foreign born. Non-white people outnumber whites in several large cities. Newspapers commonly use such terms as "Asian American," "Italian American," and "Arab American" to reflect the persistence of various ethnic heritages within the United States.**

America's population includes Catholics, Protestants of many denominations, and Jews of several persuasions, Moslems, Buddhists, animists, and people who believe in no supreme being or higher power. There are people who have many years of formal education and people who have nearly none. There are the very rich as well as the very poor. There are Republicans, Democrats, independents, Socialists, Communists, Libertarians, and adherents of other political views as well. There are lawyers, farmers, plumbers, teachers, social workers, immigration officers, and people in thousands of other occupations. Some live in urban areas and some in rural ones.

**Given all this diversity, can one usefully talk about "Americans"? Probably so, if one is careful.**

### **How Americans See Themselves**

Americans do not usually see themselves, when they are in the United States, as representatives of their country. They see themselves as individuals who are different from all other individuals, whether those others are Americans or foreigners. Americans may say they have no culture, since they often conceive of culture as an overlay of arbitrary customs to be found only in other countries. Individual Americans may think they chose their own values, rather than having had their values and the assumptions on which they are based imposed on them by the society in which they were born. If you ask them to tell you something about "American culture," they may be unable to answer and they may even deny that there is an "American culture."

At the same time, Americans will readily generalize about various subgroups within their own country. Northerners have stereotypes (that are, generalized, simplified notions) about Southerners, and vice versa. There are stereotypes of people from the country and people from the city; people from the coasts and people from inland; people from the Midwest; minority ethnic groups; minority religious groups; Texans; New Yorkers; Californians; and so on.

## **Individualism and Privacy**

The most important thing to understand about Americans is probably their devotion to individualism. They have been trained since very early in their lives to consider themselves as separate individuals who are responsible for their own situations in life and their own destinies. They have not been trained to see themselves as members of a close-knit, tightly interdependent family, religious group, tribe, nation, or other collectivity.

It is this concept of themselves as individual decision-makers that blinds at least some Americans to the fact that they share a culture with each other. They have the idea, as mentioned above, that they have independently made up their own minds about the values and assumptions they hold. The notion that social factors outside themselves have made them "just like everyone else" in important ways offends their sense of dignity.

Foreigners who understand the degree to which Americans are imbued with the notion that the free, self-reliant individual is the ideal kind of human being will be able to understand many aspects of American behavior and thinking that otherwise might not make sense.

Many Americans do not display the degree of respect for their parents that people in more traditional or family-oriented societies commonly display. They have the conception that it was a sort of historical or biological accident that put them in the hands of particular parents, that the parents fulfilled their responsibilities to the children while the children were young, and now that the children have reached "the age of independence" the close child-parent tie is loosened, if not broken.

Closely associated with the value they place on individualism is the importance Americans assign to privacy. Americans assume that people "need some time to themselves" or "some time alone" to think about things or recover their spent psychological energy. Americans have great difficulty understanding foreigners who always want to be with another person, who dislike being alone.

## **Equality**

Americans are also distinctive in the degree to which they believe in the ideal, as stated in their Declaration of Independence, that "all men are created equal." Although they sometimes violate the ideal in their daily lives, particularly in matters of interracial relationships, Americans have a deep faith that in some fundamental way all people (at least all American people) are of equal value,

that no one is born superior to anyone else. "One man, one vote," they say, conveying the idea that any person's opinion is as valid and worthy of attention as any other person's opinion.

This is not to say that Americans make no distinctions among themselves as a result of such factors as sex, age, wealth, or social position. They do. But the distinctions are acknowledged in subtle ways. Tone of voice, order of speaking, choice of words, seating arrangements—such are the means by which Americans acknowledge status differences among themselves.

### **Informality**

Their notions of equality lead Americans to be quite informal in their general behavior and in their relationships with other people.

People from societies where general behavior is more formal than it is in America are struck by the informality of American speech, dress, and posture. Idiomatic speech (commonly called "slang") is heavily used on most occasions, with formal speech reserved for public events and fairly formal situations. People of almost any station in life can be seen in public wearing jeans, sandals, or other informal attire. People slouch down in chairs or lean on walls or furniture when they talk, rather than maintaining an erect bearing.

### **The Future, Change, and Progress**

Americans are generally less concerned about history and traditions than are people from older societies. "History doesn't matter," many of them will say. "It's the future that counts." They look ahead.

This fundamental American belief in progress and a better future contrasts sharply with the fatalistic (Americans are likely to use that term with a negative or critical connotation) attitude that characterizes people from many other cultures, notably Latin, Asian, and Arab, where there is a pronounced reverence for the past. In those cultures the future is considered to be in the hands of "fate," "God," or at least the few powerful people or families that dominate the society.

### **Goodness of Humanity**

The future cannot be better if people are not fundamentally good and improvable. Americans assume that human nature is basically good, not basically evil. Foreign visitors will see them doing many things that are based on the assumption that people are good and can make themselves better.

"Where there's a will there's a way," the Americans say. People who want to make things better can do so if only they have a strong enough motivation.

## **Time**

For Americans, time is a "resource" that, like water or coal, can be used well or poorly. "Time is money," they say. "You only get so much time in this life; you'd best use it wisely." The future will not be better than the past or the present, as Americans are trained to see things, unless people use their time for constructive, future-oriented activities. Thus, Americans admire a "Well-organized" person, one who has a written list of things to do and a schedule for doing them. The ideal person is punctual (that is, arrives at the scheduled time for a meeting or event) and is considerate of other people's time (that is, does not "waste people's time" with conversation or other activity that has no visible, beneficial outcome).

The American attitude toward time is not necessarily shared by others, especially non-Europeans. They are more likely to conceive of time as something that is simply there around them, not something they can "use." One of the more difficult things to which many foreign businessmen and students must adjust in the States is the notion that time must be saved whenever possible and used wisely every day.

## **Achievement, Action, Work, and Materialism**

"He's a hard worker," one American might say in praise of another. Or, "She gets the job done." These expressions convey the typical American's admiration for a person who approaches a task conscientiously and persistently, seeing it through to a successful conclusion. More than that, these expressions convey an admiration for achievers, people whose lives are centered around efforts to accomplish some physical, measurable thing.

Foreign visitors commonly remark that "Americans work harder than I expected them to." (Perhaps these visitors have been excessively influenced by American movies and television programs, which are less likely to show people working than to show them driving around in fast cars or pursuing members of the opposite sex.) While the so-called Protestant work ethic may have lost some of its hold on Americans, there is still a strong belief that the ideal person is a "hard worker." A hard worker is one who "gets right to work" on a task without delay, works efficiently, and completes the task in a way that meets reasonably high standards of quality.

More generally, Americans like action. They do indeed believe it is important to devote significant energy to their jobs or to other daily responsibilities. Beyond that, they tend to believe they should be doing something most of the time. They are usually not content, as people from many other countries are, to sit for hours and talk with other people. They get restless and impatient. They believe they should be doing something, or at least making plans and arrangements for doing something later.

### **Directness and Assertiveness**

Americans, as has been said before, generally consider themselves to be frank, open, and direct in their dealings with other people.

Americans will often speak openly and directly to others about things they dislike. They will try to do so in a manner they call "constructive," that is, a manner which the other person will not find offensive or unacceptable. If they do not speak openly about what is on their minds, they will often convey their reactions in nonverbal way (without words, but through facial expressions, body positions, and gestures). Americans are not taught, as people in many Asian countries are, that they should mask their emotional responses. Their words, the tone of their voices or their facial expressions will usually reveal when they are feeling angry, unhappy, confused, or happy and content. They do not think it improper to display these feelings, at least within limits. Many Asians feel embarrassed around Americans who are exhibiting a strong emotional response to something. (On the other hand, Latinos and Arabs are generally inclined to display their emotions more openly than Americans do and to view Americans as unemotional and "cold.")

But Americans are often less direct and open than they realize. There are in fact many restrictions on their willingness to discuss things openly.

Despite these limitations, Americans are generally more direct and open than most people from many other countries. They will not try to mask their emotions, as Scandinavians tend to do. They are much less concerned with "face" (that is, avoiding embarrassment to themselves or others) than most Asians are. To them, being "honest" is usually more important than preserving harmony in interpersonal relationships.

Americans use the words "pushy" or "aggressive" to describe a person who is excessively assertive in expressing opinions or making requests. The line between acceptable assertiveness and unacceptable aggressiveness is difficult to draw.

## **Culture Shock**

**Initially you may find a new culture exciting, a time of new experiences, sights, sounds, and activities. This initial period of settling in to the new culture seems like an adventure. However, as you become more involved in activities and get to know the people around you, differences rather than similarities become apparent to you.**

Differences such as: language, religion, climate, food, educational system, absence of family and friends, how students relate to teachers, how people make decisions, how people resolve conflicts, how people express emotion, and the meaning of certain hand, face and body movements.

These differences may cause feelings of uncertainty and anxiety because you do not know what to do or what to expect in certain situations.

- "Am I speaking properly?"
- "Will I be a successful student?"
- "Will I find friends?"
- "Should I discuss my personal beliefs?"

As these differences emerge during cultural adjustment they can be confusing, troubling and sometimes **shocking**. You no longer know what to do, or what is expected. You feel like you are an outsider and that life was easier back home because you understood "the rules".

For many this process of cultural adjustment results in an emotional state (stress) known as "**Culture Shock**". Culture shock does not happen all at once. It grows little by little as you interact with other students, faculty, and people in the community. The main thing to remember is that this discomfort or stress (Culture Shock) is a normal part of the process of cultural adjustment that nearly everyone goes through.

**According to Robert Kohls, "Culture shock is in some degree inevitable....and is the occupational hazard of overseas living through which one has to be willing to go through in order to enjoy the pleasures of experiencing other countries and cultures in depth."**

***Many students have found that they experience a predictable series of stages leading to culture shock.***

## Stages of Culture Shock

### **Stage I: Enthusiasm /Excitement**

*The individual:*

- is very positive about the culture
- is overwhelmed with impressions finds the culture exotic and is fascinated by it
- doesn't confront the culture

### **Stage II: Withdrawal/Loneliness**

*The individual:*

- begins to interact with the culture
- finds the behavior of the people unusual and unpredictable
- begins to dislike the culture
- feels anxiety
- begins to withdraw
- begins to criticize the culture/people

### **Stage III: Adjustment**

*The individual:*

- begins to understand more of the behavior of the people
- feels more comfortable living in the culture
- regains sense of humor

### **Stage IV: Achievement/Enthusiasm**

*The individual:*

- enjoys being in the culture
- functions easily in the culture
- prefers certain cultural behavior to that of his/her country
- adopts certain behaviors

***Your body and mind may react in unusual ways to the stress and confusion of living in a new culture. There are certain symptoms of culture shock that you need to be aware of.***

#### **Symptoms of Culture Shock**

|                      |                               |                  |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| extreme homesickness | excessive sleeping            | withdrawal       |
| boredom              | loss of sense of humor        | depression       |
| lethargy             | difficulty with course work   | irritability     |
| physical complaints  | hostility toward host culture | irrational anger |

## Coping with Culture Shock

Throughout the period of cultural adjustment (culture shock) remember to take good care of yourself. Read a book or watch a video in your home language, take a short trip if possible, exercise and get plenty of rest, keep in touch with family and friends, make friends immediately...and not just with people from the same country as you, eat good food, and do things you enjoy with friends. It is also helpful to focus on the positive things you enjoy about living in the host culture.

**A very typical way students cope with culture shock is to "hang out" only with other Americans. Remember however, that you are in another country to learn about its people, language and culture. If you avoid contact with foreign culture you not only cheat yourself of a wonderful experience, but also lengthen the period of adjustment to the new culture.**

Although this period of adjustment can be rather scary, the "shock" will gradually ease as you begin to understand the new culture. It will help if you are able to realize that the reaction and perceptions of others toward you and you toward them are not personal but a result of a conflict between your cultural values and their cultural values (cultural clashes). The more skilled you become in recognizing how and when cultural values and behaviors are more likely to come into conflict, the easier it becomes to make adjustments that can help you avoid serious difficulties in the host country.

**Some students worry that by becoming adjusted to the host culture they may "lose their culture". However, it is highly unlikely that you will lose the culture in which you were raised. In fact, learning about a new culture can increase your appreciation and understanding of your own culture.**

### **"The American Way"**

It is also important to remember that the "American Way" is only one of the many ways to get something accomplished. If you can accept this, you will be on your way to make your stay in the foreign country more enjoyable.

**In any situation, try to remember what is culturally acceptable not just the "American Way" of doing things!**

## **Reverse Culture Shock**

**Just as you have gone through a period of adjustment while you were abroad, you need to prepare yourself for a period of readjustment when you return "home".**

You have had a very unique cultural experience living and learning abroad, and you have likely changed some while you have been away. Because you have changed, you may feel the place that you are returning to (home, school) has also changed, and indeed it might have. You will most likely be very sensitive to even the smallest of changes, and because these changes will be so unexpected you may need some time to readjust.

Immediately after you return, you will probably go through a time of euphoria and excitement. However, as you try to settle back into your former routine, you may find that your overseas experience has changed some or many of your perceptions and assumptions, your way of doing things, and even the way you see yourself. In a sense you have become a new person, a new "self". This period of intellectual and personal growth that you have experienced may result in you feeling disoriented as you adjust to your "new" environment.

The length of the period of readjustment depends on how immersed you had become in the foreign culture. The more immersed you were in the culture the more difficult it will be to have things get back to your sense of what is "normal". However, if you are aware that changes have taken place and try to learn from them, a smooth readjustment period is more likely.

Your experience of having dealt successfully with culture shock while abroad will also give you the psychological tools you will need during this period of readjustment.

### **Ways to Cope with Reverse Culture Shock:**

- maintain contact with friends you made abroad
- maintain contact with the culture you have left (via letters, e-mail, magazines, phone)
- talk to your friends in your home country
- discuss the things you are feeling with friends, family members, teachers, counselors
- use your experiences to help others by tutoring and mentoring
- make connections with other study abroad returnees or students preparing to study abroad

***It is important to find a way to integrate this new "self" into your personal and academic life. This is an opportunity for you to become bicultural (being able to function competently in two cultural environments).***

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## **Social Security Information**

### **Social Security**

1463 Tobias Gadson Blvd.

Charleston, SC 29407

1.866.495.0111

843.573.3615

For an international student to obtain a social security card they must bring the following forms to the Social Security Office:

- Passport
- I-94 Card (white card in passport)
- I-20 Form (student copy)
- Letter from The Citadel stating that the student is eligible to work on campus.
- Completed social security application form.
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The letter of eligibility from The Citadel may be obtained from the Human Resources Office. This letter will also require the signature of the Director of Multi-cultural Student Services & International Studies.

**For additional information go [to Social Security Online](#)**

## **SC Driver's License**

Because a driver's license serves as a form of identification in the United States (when you are writing checks) many international students feel it would be to their advantage to obtain a South Carolina Driver's License.

To obtain a South Carolina Driver's License you will be asked to pass a vision test, a written test on SC traffic laws and signals, and possibly a driving test. To learn the laws, you can obtain a driver's manual at the Department of Motor Vehicles located on Lockwood Drive (out The Citadel back gate). The driving test will not be given in rainy conditions, and you must bring an insured car to take the test.

***According to a new South Carolina Law proof of a valid visa will no longer determine eligibility for a South Carolina Driver's License. The South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will accept the following documentation as proof of immigration status***

- Passport with I-94 Card
- Current & updated I-20 Form

Additional documentation that may be helpful:

- Social Security Card
- Driver's License from your home country or International Driver's License

**Please contact the Office of International Studies if the DMV requests proof of a valid visa in order to apply for a South Carolina Driver's License.**

***IMPORTANT: It is against the law to drive in South Carolina without a valid driver's license.***

## Banking in America

Banks offer many different financial services. You may wish to compare the services and costs of several banks before choosing one at which to open an account. One bank may be more conveniently located than others; another may have more automated teller machines around town; a third may charge less to maintain a checking account; a fourth may allow you to do your banking from home via computer. Banks are competing for your business; so don't be shy about asking questions. Ask your foreign-student adviser for recommendations on local banks.

Before you select a bank and set up your account these are some questions you need to ask:

- Is a minimum account balance required and is there a penalty if my balance goes below the minimum?
- Will my checking account earn interest?
- Is there "Free Checking"? Are there monthly service charges? (Some banks offer students checking accounts with no service charge).
- What other services does this bank offer and is there a charge for them? (safe deposit box, exchange foreign currency, cashier's checks/certified checks)

### **Bank Accounts**

Checking Account:

A **checking account** will permit you to write checks to make purchases and pay bills. Most retailers and service providers will accept a personal check drawn on any U.S. bank (it need not be a local bank) as long as you can show appropriate identification (passport, student identification card, or driver's license).

By using checks, it is easy to keep records of your purchases and payments. At most banks you need not keep a substantial sum (or "balance") in the account-just enough to cover your checks and any fees the bank charges to maintain the account. Many banks offer "overdraft protection," enabling you to write a check that exceeds your balance with the understanding that you will pay interest on the overdraft amount. Finally, checking accounts have the advantage of providing you with immediate access to your funds.

Savings Account:

Unlike most checking accounts, **savings accounts** earn interest on the balance in the account. If you plan to bring money for the entire academic year or for your entire academic program, you should be sure that your money earns interest! You can withdraw money from an ordinary savings account, but you cannot do so by writing a check.

Certificates of Deposit:

**Certificates of deposit (CDs)** pay higher rates of interest than savings accounts, but your deposits must be made in certain amounts (usually in increments of \$1,000 or more) and must remain in the bank for a specified period of time (usually a minimum of three months) before you can use them. The penalties for withdrawing money before the specified time has elapsed can be quite substantial. A CD account makes sense if you bring money that you will not need right away.

## Other Banking Services

Safety Deposit Boxes:

A **safety deposit box**, available at most banks, is a good place to store valuable possessions such as the airline ticket for your flight home, foreign currency, and any important documents you brought with you.

Debit Cards:

Many banks will issue you a **debit card also known as a checking card** when you open your account. This card will allow you to withdraw or deposit money to your account using an **automatic teller machine (ATM)** and to make purchases at stores that accept the card. Some debit cards carry a credit-card logo (such as MasterCard or Visa), and can be used in place of a check or credit card.

**However, debit cards are not credit cards and they can be used only to the extent that you have funds available in the account to which the card is linked.** When you make a purchase, you will need to subtract the amount from your banking account just as you would when writing a check. The bank will automatically subtract this from your balance.

When you receive your card you will also receive a PIN number (personal identification number) that will allow you to gain access to the account.

You will be able to use your debit card in the ATM machines of other banks as well, but these banks will charge a **\$1.50-\$2.00 service charge** for any transaction. There is an ATM machine located on campus in Mark Clark Hall for your convenience. It is a Nations Bank machine, but it will accept cards from other banks.

**IMPORTANT!! For security purposes it is very important that you: do not tell anyone your PIN; do not write your PIN on the card; use an ATM machine in a well lit area; avoid going to the ATM machine alone; try not to let people see you enter your PIN or how much money you are taking out of your account.**

Credit Cards:

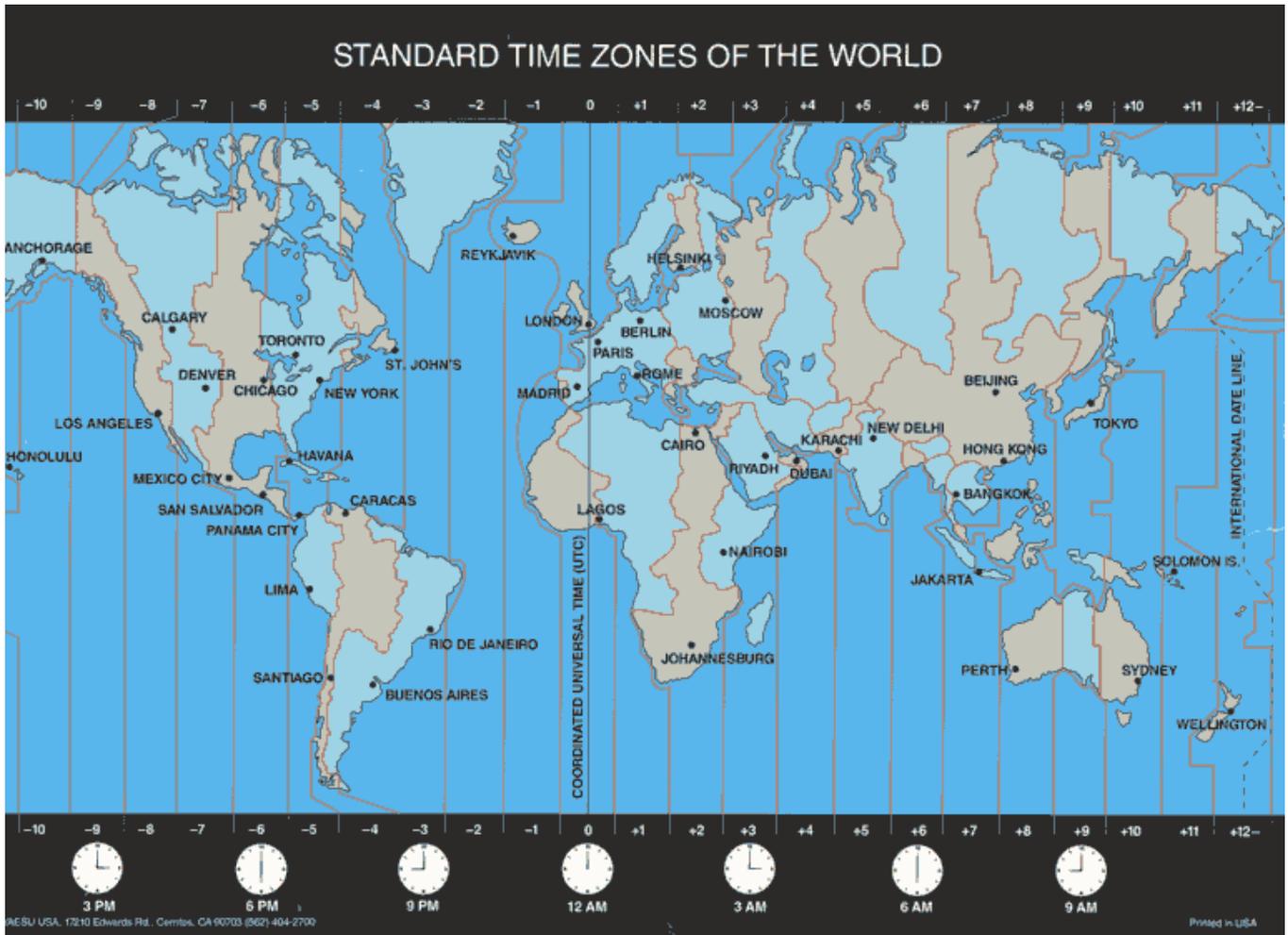
**Credit cards** will allow you to make purchases even when you have no money immediately available. Banks and other financial institutions, department stores, and gasoline companies all issue credit cards that can be used to buy goods. You are billed every month and are required to pay at least a portion of your balance each month. If you do not pay the entire amount due, interest (or a "finance charge") will accrue on the unpaid balance. The interest rate can be quite high, particularly if you have not established your credit worthiness.

The cost of credit cards varies greatly. The annual fees and interest rates charged by some financial institutions are much higher than others. Once you establish a "credit history" you should be able to obtain a card with a lower interest rate and little or no annual fee.

**IMPORTANT!! Credit cards are convenient, but unless you are careful you may be shocked when you get your monthly bill. Keep all of your receipts to keep track of what you spend.**

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# World Time Zones



# International Size Chart

## Clothing and Footwear

| <b>Men</b>                 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-------|-----|------|
| <b>Suits and Overcoats</b> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>British</b>             | 36   | 38   | 40   | 42   | 44   | 46   | 48   |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>European</b>            | 46   | 48   | 50   | 52   | 54   | 56   | 58   |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>American</b>            | 36   | 38   | 40   | 42   | 44   | 46   | 48   |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>Shirts</b>              |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>British</b>             | 14   | 14.5 | 15   | 15.5 | 16   | 16.5 | 17   | 17.5 | 18  | 18.5+ |     |      |
| <b>European</b>            | 36   | 37   | 38   | 39   | 41   | 42   | 43   | 44   | 45  | 46+   |     |      |
| <b>American</b>            | 14   | 14.5 | 15   | 15.5 | 16   | 16.5 | 17   | 17.5 | 18  | 18.5+ |     |      |
| <b>Shoes</b>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>British</b>             | 4.5  | 5    | 5.5  | 6    | 6.5  | 7    | 7.5  | 8.5  | 9.5 | 10.5  | 11  | 11.5 |
| <b>European</b>            | 37.5 | 38   | 38.5 | 39   | 39.5 | 40   | 40.5 | 41   | 42  | 43    | 44  | 45   |
| <b>American</b>            | 5    | 5.5  | 6    | 6.5  | 7    | 7.5  | 8    | 8.5  | 9.5 | 10.5  | 11  | 11.5 |
| <b>Socks</b>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>British</b>             | 9.5  | 10   | 10.5 | 11   | 11.5 | 12   |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>European</b>            | 39   | 40   | 41   | 42   | 43   | 44   |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>American</b>            | 9.5  | 10   | 10.5 | 11   | 11.5 | 12   |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>Women</b>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>Dresses and Suits</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>British</b>             | 2    | 4    | 6    | 8    | 10   | 12   | 14   | 16   | 18  | 20    | 22+ |      |
| <b>European</b>            | 30   | 32   | 34   | 36   | 38   | 40   | 42   | 44   | 46  | 48    | 48+ |      |
| <b>American</b>            | 0    | 0/2  | 4    | 6    | 8    | 10   | 12   | 14   | 16  | 18    | 20+ |      |
| <b>Shoes</b>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |       |     |      |
| <b>British</b>             | 2.5  | 3    | 3.5  | 4    | 4.5  | 5    | 5.5  | 6    | 6.5 | 7     | 7.5 | 8    |
| <b>European</b>            | 35   | 35.5 | 36   | 37   | 37.5 | 38   | 38.5 | 39   | 40  | 41    | 42  | 43   |
| <b>American</b>            | 5    | 5.5  | 6    | 6.5  | 7    | 7.5  | 8    | 8.5  | 9   | 9.5   | 10  | 10.5 |

## SHOPPING: CLOTHING & SHOE SIZES

Women's Clothing

Men's Suits, Overcoats, & Sweaters

Collar Sizes, Men's Shirts

Women's Shoes

Men's Shoes

## Major Holidays

### **New Year's Day: January 1**

An official holiday for schools, offices, and stores. New Year's Eve, December 31 is more important to Americans than New Year's Day. Everyone gathers with family and friends to "ring out the old and ring in the new," an expression that reflects the old custom of ringing church bells to greet the new year.

### **Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday: January 15**

An official holiday that began in 1986. Martin Luther King, Jr. organized and led the Civil-Rights movement in America during the 1960s.

### **President's Day: Third Monday in February**

An official Holiday. Commemorates the birthday of George Washington, commander-in-chief of the Revolutionary Army that freed America from the colonial rule of England. Washington was also the first president of the United States. Abraham Lincoln was president during the Civil War (1861-1865). Believing that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," Lincoln acted to free the slaves and bring the seceded states back into the union.

### **Valentine's Day: February 14**

Not an official holiday. A lover's holiday celebrated by sending cards and giving candy or flowers. Many Americans also use this holiday to tell the people who are special to them that they love them (mother, father, brother, sister, grandparents).

### **Saint Patrick's Day: March 17**

Not an official holiday. St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland, and this holiday was brought to America by Irish immigrants. People celebrate this holiday by wearing green and getting together with friends to party and sing Irish folk songs. Many states have St. Patrick's Day parades.

### **April Fool's Day: April 1**

Not an official holiday. As in many other countries, this day is marked by the custom of playing practical jokes on friends and colleagues.

### **Easter: A Sunday in March or April**

Not an official holiday. A religious holiday for Christians who believe that on this day Christ rose from the dead. Many folk traditions are now connected with Easter, including the decorating of brightly colored eggs, and the giving of Easter baskets filled with gifts to children and loved ones.

### **Mother's Day: Second Sunday in May**

Not an official holiday. On this day Americans honor their mothers by sending flowers, buying small gifts, and taking their mothers out to eat so that they don't have to cook or do work around the house.

**Father's Day: Third Sunday in June**

Not an official holiday. Children honor their fathers on this day with cards and gifts.

**Memorial Day: Last Monday in May**

An official holiday. Memorial Day is the day on which Americans remember those who died in military service to their country. Many families visit graves and decorate them with flowers. The day is also marked with patriotic parades. Memorial Day is considered the beginning of the summer season.

**Independence Day: July 4**

An official holiday. Independence Day commemorates the day the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776. The holiday is celebrated all over the country with picnics, political speeches, and community get-togethers that culminate in fireworks displays.

**Labor Day: In September**

An official holiday. This holiday was established in recognition of the labor movement's contribution to the productivity of the country. This day is the last holiday of the summer season and is celebrated with picnics and other outings.

**Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur: Late September/Early October**

Rosh Hashanah, commemorating the creation of the world, is the first of the Ten Days of Penitence, which end with Yom Kippur, the most solemn of Jewish holidays. For Rosh Hashanah, families gather for a feast in which an apple is dipped in honey to express hope for a sweet year ahead. In Judaism, Yom Kippur is a day of judgment; on the eve of Yom Kippur, Jews ask forgiveness from those they may have wronged. The keynotes of the holiday are fasting and a collective confession, repeated several times throughout the day.

**Halloween: October 31**

Not an official holiday. This was originally a religious holiday, but its religious character has been lost in the United States, and is now celebrated mostly as a children's holiday. Traditions include carving out pumpkins with funny faces as well as dressing up in costumes and going around the neighborhood to receive treats of candy, fruit, and cookies. When people come to the door, children say, "trick or treat," meaning "if you don't give me a treat, I will trick you."

**Thanksgiving Day: Fourth Thursday in November**

An official holiday. The first Thanksgiving Day was celebrated by the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts in 1621, to give thanks for the bountiful harvest and their triumph of survival over the wilderness. Now it is a time when Americans give thanks for the good life they enjoy. They celebrate by getting together with family to eat traditional foods such as turkey, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin pie.

**Hanukkah: Eight Days, usually in December**

One of the less solemn of the Jewish holidays, but one widely observed even by non-

religious Jews. The only Jewish holiday connected with war, Hanukkah celebrates the victory of Jewish Maccabees over their Syrian rulers in 167 B.C. Hanukkah is marked with parties, games, gifts for children, and the lighting of the nine candles of the menorah.

**Christmas: December 25**

An official holiday. Many people regard Christmas as the most important holiday of the year, with the holiday season extending from a few days before Christmas to New Year's Day. Although its origins are religious in nature (Christians believe it is the birthday of Christ), it is celebrated by almost everyone in the country. Family members travel great distances to be together on this day on which gifts are exchanged, a tree is decorated and a traditional dinner is shared.

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### **5. Holidays p. 34-36**

Source: Malaysian-American Commission on Educational Exchange (MACEE)



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