International Students

Course Load - International Graduate Students

US immigration law requires international students on a student visa to participate in a full course of study which consists of nine (9) credit hours for most majors. In addition, at least six (6) of those credit hours must require physical presence in a classroom or other designated location. Failure to maintain full-time study will result in the loss of immigration status, and the student may be required to leave the United States. Questions regarding the effect of course load upon immigration status should be directed to immigration advisors in the Center for International Studies.

Financial Assistance - International Graduate Students

Graduate Assistantship - International students may apply for Graduate Assistantships.

International Diversity Scholarship - Georgia Southern University also offers a limited number of International Diversity Scholarships (Out-of-country tuition waivers) to exceptional international graduate students. The International Diversity Scholarship will waive the assessment of the non-resident (out-of-state) tuition but students will be assessed in-state tuition.

Visa Information - International Students

The University will issue an I-20 or DS-2019, whichever is appropriate, after the applicant has been fully admitted and all required financial documentation has been submitted. These documents permit the applicant to apply for the appropriate student visa from a U.S. embassy if outside the United States or transfer schools or apply for a change of status if within the United States. Note that immigration law restricts the time between completing a degree or practical/academic training and having a new I-20 or DS-2019 issued to 60 and 30 days respectively and classes must start within five months.

International Graduate Student Advisor

The Office of International Programs and Services at Georgia Southern has experienced and qualified advisors available to help international students with maintaining immigration status and becoming oriented to campus. Advisors are available for advice and support, and a full social and cultural program is available. To help students successfully adjust, international graduate students are required to attend orientation with the Office of International Programs and Services, which is usually scheduled the Friday before classes begin.

Graduate Student Health Insurance

All international students are required to have adequate student health insurance as determined by Georgia Southern University. A health insurance plan is available through the University. Charges for this insurance will be on the student’s invoice and collected with other University fees. Insurance for families is available at a significantly higher cost. Students, who can prove that they have health insurance, equivalent to or better than the Georgia Southern University student insurance plan, may apply for a waiver of the University insurance. Students seeking a waiver must complete an insurance waiver form available from the Center for International Studies prior to arrival in the United States. Proof of health insurance is required before a student may register for classes.

English Proficiency for International Students

International applicants and U.S. Citizens whose native language is not English must demonstrate English proficiency. Prior to consideration for admission, international applicants whose native language is not English must take and pass acceptable scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (http://www.ets.org/toefl) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (http://www.ielts.org) unless they have received a degree from an accredited college or university in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada (except Quebec), Australia, or New Zealand. The TOEFL and IELTS examinations are administered at various times of the year and in many centers throughout the world.

A score of at least 75 (internet-based test, IBT) or 537 (paper-based test) on the TOEFL and 6.0 on the IELTS is normally required to be considered for regular admission to the College of Graduate Studies. The official TOEFL and the official IELTS scores may not be more than two years old. Those who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard may be recommended for enrollment in University English courses or for English courses offered by the English Language Program (ELP) on campus. Successful completion of Intensive English Programs (IEPs) at other English Language Program (ELP) providers will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Certain graduate programs may require a higher TOEFL or IELTS exam score to be considered for admission.