

# Cendara University International Student Guide

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## Welcome Letter from the Office of Global Engagement

Dear International Students,

Welcome to Cendara University! Whether you are joining us from across the globe or continuing your studies far from home, we are thrilled to have you as a valued member of our vibrant and diverse campus community. Navigating a new country and academic environment can be both exciting and challenging, but please know you are not alone—our entire community is eager to support your journey and help you thrive.

This guide provides essential information to help you transition smoothly to life at Cendara University and in the city of Albaire. Inside, you'll find details about orientation, support services, immigration compliance, academics, and student life, as well as the many ways you can connect with others and make the most of your experience.

We look forward to supporting your goals and learning from your unique perspectives.

Warm regards,  
Evelyn Zhao, Director  
Office of Global Engagement  
[global@cendara.edu](mailto:global@cendara.edu)

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## 1. Arrival and Orientation

### Pre-Arrival Checklist

- Confirm your student visa (F-1/J-1) is approved and valid.
- Purchase airline tickets, aiming to arrive 7–10 days before classes start.
- Arrange temporary or permanent housing in advance.
- Submit required immunization records to Health Services.
- Register for International Student Orientation via [global.cendara.edu/orientation](http://global.cendara.edu/orientation).

### Transportation to Campus

Cendara University is located in central Albaire, approximately 35 minutes from Sable International Airport (SBL).

Transportation options include:

- **Airport Welcome Shuttle:** Complimentary pick-up service during orientation week (reservation required).
- **City Taxi Service:** Flat rate of \$40 to campus hotels and residence halls.
- **Riverton Bus Line:** Bus #12 connects the airport to downtown; fare: \$3.50 (cash/credit).

### International Student Orientation

**Fall 2024 Orientation:** August 14–18, 2024

All new international students must attend the five-day orientation, which covers:

- Immigration regulations & visa maintenance
- Campus resources and facilities tour
- Academic integrity and classroom expectations
- Health insurance enrollment
- Banking & mobile phone setup
- City walking tour and cultural adjustment workshops

Peer Mentors will be on hand to answer your questions and help you meet fellow new students.

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## 2. Immigration and Legal Matters

### Visa Status Requirements

- Maintain a valid passport (at least 6 months into the future).
- Full-time enrollment:

- Undergraduates: 12 credit hours/semester
- Graduates: 9 credit hours/semester
- Report any address changes to the Office of Global Engagement within 10 days.
- Do not accept employment off-campus without prior authorization.

### **SEVIS Registration**

You must check in with the Office of Global Engagement within 3 days of arrival.  
Please bring:

- Passport (with valid visa)
- I-20 (F-1)/DS-2019 (J-1) document
- I-94 Arrival/Departure record
- Proof of local address

### **Travel/Leave of Absence**

Contact your international advisor before leaving the U.S. for more than 30 days or if you plan to take a semester off.

Re-entering the U.S.? Your I-20/DS-2019 must be signed by a DSO within the last 12 months.

### **Common Immigration Violations**

- Failing to enroll full-time without pre-approved authorization
- Unauthorized employment
- Expired I-20 or DS-2019
- Not updating address promptly

Questions? Meet with a Designated School Official (email: [isss@cendara.edu](mailto:isss@cendara.edu)).

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## **3. Academic Expectations and Support**

### **The American Classroom**

- Active participation is strongly encouraged. Be prepared to ask and answer questions, and contribute to discussions.
- Academic honesty is essential. Plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collaboration can result in disciplinary action.
- Professors hold weekly office hours for additional help—attending is recommended.

### **Grading System**

Grade	Description	Grade Points
A	Excellent	4.0
B	Good	3.0
C	Satisfactory	2.0
D	Passing	1.0
F	Failing	0.0

Courses may also use plus (+) and minus (–) distinctions.

### Academic Support Services

- **International Tutoring Center:** Offers English language and subject tutoring—weekly group sessions and private appointments.
- **Writing Studio:** Specialists help develop writing and presentation skills, including citation practices.
- **Academic Advising:** Dedicated advisors assist with course selection, degree planning, and adjustment to new academic norms.

### Important Dates (Fall 2024)

- Classes Begin: August 21
  - Last Day to Add/Drop: August 30
  - Midterm Exams: October 14–18
  - Thanksgiving Break: November 27–December 1
  - Final Exams: December 10–17
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## 4. Campus Life and Community

### Living On Campus

- **Residence Halls:** On-campus housing for undergraduates; meal plans available.
  - Typical Room: Double occupancy, shared bathroom, Wi-Fi, communal kitchens.
  - International Living Community (ILC): Cultural programming and peer support.
- **Graduate Housing:** Limited apartments available; apply early.

### Dining

- **Dining Commons:** Diverse menu with global cuisine options (vegetarian, halal, gluten-free available).
- **Campus Cafés:** Java Junction and The Garden Table offer coffee, snacks, and study space.

## **Student Organizations**

- **International Students Association (ISA):** Social events, cultural festivals, and mentorship programs.
- **Multicultural Resource Center:** Affinity groups, language exchange, and interfaith dialogues.
- **Student Government Association:** Advocacy and leadership opportunities.

## **Cultural Programs**

- International Night (October): Music, dance, and food from around the world.
  - Lunar New Year Festival (February), Diwali Celebration (November), Eid Gathering (April).
  - Cendara Unity Dialogues: Dialogue series on belonging, identity, and intercultural understanding.
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## **5. Health, Wellness, and Safety**

### **Health Insurance**

All international students are required to enroll in the Cendara University Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP):

- Coverage: On-campus Health Center services, local hospitals, mental health counseling, prescriptions, emergency care.
- Annual Cost (2024–2025): \$1,350
- Waivers: Available if you have comparable insurance.

### **Health Services**

- **Campus Health Center:** Primary care, vaccinations, urgent care, and referral services. Open Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
- **Counseling Services:** Free, confidential counseling with multicultural staff, plus support groups for international students.
- **Accessibility Services:** Academic accommodations and assistive technology support.

### **Campus Safety**

- 24/7 Campus Security patrols and emergency call boxes throughout campus.
- Night Owl free campus shuttle (operates 7:00 p.m.–2:00 a.m.).
- Safety App: Cendara Guardian (real-time alerts and check-in).

For emergencies, dial 911 from any phone.  
Non-emergency Campus Security: (747) 229-6500

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## 6. Working in the U.S.

### On-Campus Employment

- Up to 20 hours per week during semesters; full-time during breaks.
- Opportunities include library assistant, research aide, dining services, and campus events.

### Off-Campus Employment

- **Curricular Practical Training (CPT):** For internships directly related to your major, after 1 academic year.
- **Optional Practical Training (OPT):** Up to 12 months of work authorization upon program completion (F-1 students).
- **Social Security Number (SSN):** Required for employment; apply after securing a job offer.

### Taxes

- All international students, even those without income, must file Form 8843 annually.
  - Guidance webinars available each spring (see [global.cendara.edu/taxinfo](http://global.cendara.edu/taxinfo)).
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## 7. Living in Albaire: Local Resources

### Housing

- On-campus and off-campus options—check the Cendara Housing Portal and bulletin boards.
- Albaire neighborhoods popular with students: Old Port, Rosedale, and Campus Ridge.
- Average off-campus rent:
  - Studio: \$790/month
  - 2-bedroom: \$1,120/month

### Banking

- **RiverBank (on campus branch):** Free checking account for students, multi-language ATMs.
- Other options: Albaire Federal Credit Union, Northfield Bank (down-town).

## **Transportation**

- City bus pass: \$45/month (student discount)
- Bike-share: Cendara Wheels program; annual access \$20
- Cendara University Shuttle: Covers campus and nearby apartments (included in student fees).

## **Shopping and Dining**

- Albaire Market (international groceries)
- Ginkgo Plaza (clothing, electronics, bookstores)
- Restaurants: Taste of Seoul, El Mercado, Le Petit Boulanger, Mumbai Spice, and many more

## **Religious & Cultural Centers**

- Albaire Islamic Center
  - Grace United Church
  - Albaire Buddhist Temple
  - Jewish Student Center (Hillel)
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## **8. Key Contacts and Offices**

Office	Location	Email	Phone
Office of Global Engagement	Taylor Hall 101	global@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6401
International Student Services	Taylor Hall 102	isss@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6507
Campus Health Center	Oak Hall Lower	health@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6520
Counseling & Wellness	MRC Suite 200	wellness@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6544
Housing and Residential Life	Cedar House 1st	housing@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6133
Accessibility Services	Oak Hall 106	access@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6582
Campus Security	Security Bldg	security@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6500
Office of Diversity Initiatives	MRC, Room 220	diversity@cendara.edu	(747) 229-6558

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## Final Tips for Success

- Get involved—join a club, attend events, and connect with your peers.
- Reach out for help early. Our staff are here to support your success.
- Explore Albaire and the surrounding region; embrace new experiences while sharing your culture.

We are delighted you chose Cendara University. Welcome to your new academic home!

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*This guide was produced by the Office of Global Engagement in partnership with International Student Services and the Multicultural Resource Center. For the most current information and updates, please visit [global.cendara.edu/guide](http://global.cendara.edu/guide).*