



NEW STUDENT GUIDE

Indian Graduate Student Association at the University of Florida



Hi everyone!

We, the Indian Graduate Student Association, warmly welcome you to Gator Nation. We are excited to meet all of you and help make your stay in Gainesville as enjoyable and comfortable as possible.

We have put together some information to make your transition into Gainesville as smooth as possible. In case you have any doubts, you are always welcome to contact any of the board members of IGSA.

We advise you to **download** this document onto your devices or **print** it out before departing from India, so that all the information is accessible to you as soon as you land in Gainesville.

We hope you have a wonderful graduate life at the University of Florida.

Thank you.

IGSA Team.

GET STARTED

It is advised to get done with all of these procedures on the same day itself. So follow these steps in order, and you will have no trouble in getting all the essentials done.

Gainesville RTS Buses

1. Visit <http://go-rtts.com/> to download the **schedule for Fall 2016**. This provides all the bus routes as well as their start and end times. You can also check out this short video which explains all the things you need to know about riding the bus: <http://go-rtts.com/rider-information/>
2. The schedule booklet is also available in most of the buses.
3. The following bus routes ply **towards campus**-
 - a. From Campus Club, Greenwich Green - Bus no. 12 and 37
 - b. From Gateway at Glades, Leasing Office side of Stoneridge- Bus no. 12, 35, 36 and 37
 - c. From Brandywine- Bus no. 1, 12 and 37
 - d. From Butler Plaza side of Stoneridge- Bus no. 1
 - e. From Country Side- Bus no.9
 - f. From University Commons- Bus no. 9, 12, 35
4. A **day pass** costs **\$3** or a **single ride** costs **\$1.50**. All rides are free if you show your Gator ID.
5. If you are riding the bus for the first time to go to campus and collect your Gator ID, you can purchase a single ride ticket in the bus.
6. **Eating food or drinking** from an open cup, as well as loud music is **strictly prohibited** in the buses.
7. Do try to talk in **low voices** so that the drivers do not get distracted, just for courtesy sake.

Essential Formalities to Complete

Gator1 ID

1. Carry your **passport, I-20 and some cash** (around \$50). Carry any other document that they might have asked you to get in the UFIC checklist. Also, carry an **umbrella** because the weather in Gainesville is unpredictable.
2. Take one of the above mentioned buses to campus and get down at the **Reitz Union** stop
3. Do ask fellow travelers or the driver for help for the first few times until you receive your mobile connection, after which you can track your location using the Transloc/Rider app.
4. You have to collect your **Gator1 ID** on the first floor of the **UF Welcome Center**, next to the UF Bookstore. This is in the **Reitz Union building** itself.
5. Remember to save your UFID, as you will have to enter it to collect your Gator1 ID. You will have to show your **passport**, and an amount of **\$15** has to be paid and your picture will be taken for your ID. You will receive your card within minutes.
6. Pick up a **campus map** outside the Gator1 ID office to find your way around campus.

Wells Fargo Bank Account

7. After collecting your Gator ID, if you are interested in opening a bank account with **Wells Fargo**, ask around or follow the signs to reach the ground floor of the Reitz Union Building. This can be reached by climbing the stairs up the Bookstore, going through the Food Court to a corridor next to Panda Express, and climbing down the stairs. You will see the Wells Fargo office, next to a Subway restaurant.
8. The staff at Wells Fargo will help you create a bank account with them. You get one **Checking Account**, and one **Savings account** added. The Checking account will be linked to your Debit card as well as your Gator ID.
9. It is advised that **large amounts of money** be stored in the **Savings** account. The Checking account is linked to the card so it is better to have a smaller amount of money in it, in case the card gets misplaced.
10. Your Gator ID can be used as a debit card only in places where it is mandatory for you to enter your PIN.
11. You will receive a temporary debit card at the same time as when you create an account. You will have to provide an address for them to send your permanent card. Give your future address if you know it or give a friend's/host's address.

Checking In at UFIC

12. UFIC is located at the **HUB**. Use the wifi (UF or Eduroam. Enter your GatorLink username and password) to use Google Maps at Reitz to look at directions to reach the HUB/follow the campus map/ask someone.
13. You will be asked to show your **passport** and **I-20**, and will be required to fill some forms. They will give you a folder with instructions to fill AR-11 form, print I-94, and other helpful information about Gainesville.
14. Pick up the **colorful pamphlets and brochures** outside the UFIC office. They contain some useful information.

Lunch on Campus

15. You will be super hungry by now so here are some suggestions on places to have lunch at-
 - a. **Krishna Lunch**- Located at the Plaza of Americas (Google Maps/Ask someone), you get cheap unlimited vegetarian lunch buffet at \$5 (one-time coupon). If you buy 10 coupons at once, it will be \$3.5 per coupon (so either take a big group along or have lunch here every day). They are open from 11:30 AM-1:30 PM. Check their website for semester break schedule.
 - b. **Reitz Union Food court**- Subway, Wendy's, Papa Johns, Starbucks, Panda Express, etc.
 - c. **The Hub**- Chick-Fil-A, Einstein Bagel Bros, Starbucks, P.O.D
 - d. **Turlington Hall**- Subway, Jamba Juice, etc.
 - e. **Marston Science Library**- Starbucks
 - f. **Library West**- Starbucks

GET CONNECTED

Mobile Connection

1. From Reitz Union, take Bus no. 12, 37 or 1 to get to **Butler Plaza**. Welcome to the shopping haven of Gainesville!
2. Go straight to T-Mobile or AT&T to enquire and setup your phone connection.
3. Both providers have family plans which you and your friends can join. The maximum family size on AT&T is 10 people while T mobile accommodates 5 people.
4. Pricing is almost similar and it comes down to your preference. Both AT&T and T mobile average at around \$27-\$44 per month per person in the family plan.
5. On subscribing to a family plan, you get unlimited calls and messages (within USA and Canada) depending on the network provider you choose.
6. Worried about your dear friend the World Wide Web? 4G LTE is offered by both AT&T and T mobile. The monthly limits for each individual in a family plan varies between 2GB-10GB. This is again dependent on the provider you choose.
7. Do make sure that your cellphone supports 4G. If it does not, do not worry. You will be able to browse the net at 3G speeds. Ask at the office for 3G plans!
8. If you feel the need to explore other service providers for other plans and deals, check out Ultra Mobile, Cricket Wireless etc.

Helpful Apps to Download

1. **Google Maps**- Absolutely essential to get around Gainesville and the campus
2. **Uber**- Taxi services for reasonable rates
3. **Transloc** (Android)/ **Rider** (iOS)- Gainesville RTS Bus Tracking App
4. **UF app**- An app that you can check your class timings in, amongst other helpful services provided by UF
5. **Splitwise**- An app that makes life easier by enabling you to keep track of bills and split expenses between friends
6. **CamsScanner**- An app that allows you to scan documents for assignments, etc.
7. **Venmo**- An app that allows transfer of money between one bank to another (for example, Wells Fargo to Bank of America)
8. **UHCSR**- The United Healthcare Student Resources app in which you can download your insurance card for reference purposes (for customers of PSI Health Insurance)
9. **GCM** (Gift Certificates and More)- Provides discounts of small amounts at various restaurants in Gainesville

FOOD

1. There are a variety of options to choose from for grocery shopping such as Publix, Trader Joes, Sam's Club, Target and Walmart.
2. Things related to the initial setup of your house can be bought at Walmart, at reasonable prices.
3. There are a ton of restaurants to go to in and around Butler Plaza such as Cici's Pizza, Falafel King, Blaze Pizza, Papa Johns, Dominos, Pizza Hut, Moe's Southwest Grill, Chipotle, Dunkin Donuts, Relish Burgers, and so on
4. Miss home? Get everything straight from India at India Bazaar located on SW 34th Street, just a block away from Stoneridge apartments.

SHOPPING & ENTERTAINMENT

1. Gainesville has only one go-to mall, The Oaks Mall located on West Newberry Road.
2. You can reach the mall by taking route 20 from Reitz Union, route 62 from the Stoneridge/Gateway at Glades area or route 75 from Butler plaza.
3. There are two movie theatres in Gainesville called Regal Cinemas 14 and 16. Regal 14 is located in Butler Plaza, and Regal 16 is located on West Newberry Road.
4. Avail student tickets online at Fandango for \$10.48!

TIPS & TRICKS

1. Pocket friendly dining options around Butler Plaza are- Taco Bell, Waffle House, McDonalds and Steak n' Shake. Waffle House and Steak n' Shake are open 24 hours, perfect for those all-night study sessions!
2. The closest Indian buffet is at India Cuisine, right next to India Bazaar on SW 34th which serves a lunch buffet throughout the week.
3. On Facebook, join **Free and For Sale** where students buy, sell and trade. **UF Ride Board** is another group that allows UF students to share rides with each other when leaving town for the weekend or a break.
4. Save \$\$\$ in electricity by setting your thermostat between 70° F and 75° F in the summer and 75° F to 80° F in the winter
5. Your **Indian Driver's License** can be used in the US for up to **6 months** after entry, while an International Permit can be used for up to a year. Be cautious! Not all police officers will accept your Indian driving license and hence it is better to get a Florida Driver's License ASAP.
6. The **Alachua Tax Collector Office** located at Butler Plaza will help you obtain a **Florida Driver's License or a Florida State ID**.
7. Do not get shopping carts home. If you do be prepared to face a fine!
8. Avoid **J-Walking**, try to use the pedestrian crossing as much as possible. If hit by a car while J-walking, the driver will not be at fault. You will also be fined if the police catch you.
9. Do keep your apartments **locked** at all times. Also, keep some copies of important documents such as your passport, visa and I-20.
10. Try keeping a set of clothes to cook in at home, and change into a fresh set of clothes when going out. Indian cooking involves a lot of spices whose odors stick to clothes and this might cause discomfort to others.

GOT ANY DOUBTS?

We have an Office Space (Room no. 3114) in the New Reitz Union Building. Our board members will be available at these hours for you to contact regarding any queries you might have-

Board Member	Day	Time
Rohan Dhavalikar	Monday	6 pm to 7 pm
Ishani Thakkar	Tuesday	2.30 pm to 3.30 pm
Niveditha Nagarajan	Thursday	5 pm to 6 pm
Soumitra Sulekar	Wednesday	5 pm to 6 pm
Vaibhavi Solanki	Friday	5 pm to 6 pm
Saurabh Shah	Friday	3 pm to 5 pm