GUIDEBOOK
WELCOME INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
AND VISITING SCHOLARS

Holy Family University offers you a warm welcome and our best wishes for a meaningful and successful stay on our campus. Over the course of your stay here at Holy Family University, the International Affairs Office (IAO) hopes to get to know you better and to become a source of information and comfort to you while you are away from home.

The International Affairs Office provides advisement on immigration regulations and procedures. The office assists students and scholars with nonimmigrant status, which includes but is not limited to visa guidance, employment authorization, travel guidelines and procedures, school transfers, Social Security applications, and extension of stay issues.

There are many benefits and restrictions associated with F-1 and J-1 student or scholar visa regulations. The International Affairs Office will assist you with understanding how the immigration regulations intersect with Holy Family University policies.

GENERAL IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

The United States, like many countries of the world, has laws and regulations regarding non-immigrants temporarily within its borders. These laws and regulations are enforced by US government agencies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF US GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
DEALING WITH IMMIGRATION

HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)
The DHS is a cabinet department of the US federal government. The DHS works in the civilian sphere to protect the US within, at, and outside its borders. Its stated goal is to prepare for, prevent, and respond to domestic emergencies, and in particular, terrorism. The DHS has three agencies that currently interact with nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors on a daily basis. (www.dhs.gov)

- IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE)
ICE’S primary mission is to promote homeland security and public safety through the criminal and civil enforcement of federal laws governing border control, customs, trade and immigration.
UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES (USCIS)
USCIS oversees the granting of benefits to immigrants and non-immigrants while in the United States. USCIS adjudicates nonimmigrant student applications for changes of status, reinstatements, and employment authorizations.

CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION (CBP)
CBP is charged with guarding the United States border. CBP is responsible for the inspection of people seeking to enter the United States. By interviewing individuals and examining the validity of their required documentation, CBP officers determine whether or not an individual may be admitted to the US at the Port of Entry.

BASIC IMMIGRATION TERMS AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

SEVIS
The Student and Exchange Visitors Information System (SEVIS) is an electronic tracking system used by the US government and US universities and colleges to track foreign students. The international student advisors (DSO/ARO) must update records into SEVIS to keep the student/exchange visitor in legal status.

PASSPORT
A document issued by a government to identify a person as a citizen of a particular country, a passport allows the individual travel abroad under the protection of that country as well as reenter to his/her home country. All non-immigrants (except Canadians) are required to possess and keep current a valid passport issued by their country of citizenship. Failure to keep the passport valid renders a non-immigrant out of status and consequently ineligible for employment, extension of stay, or change of status. Questions regarding passport renewals, extensions, or replacements should be addressed to the non-immigrants embassy or consulate in the US. A passport expiration date should not be confused with the visa expiration date (indicated on the Visa page which is inside the passport). A passport expiration date should also not be confused with duration of stay found on your I-20, DS-2019, or I-94.

VISA
A visa is a stamp in the passport issued by a consular officer at a US embassy or consulate abroad that will facilitate entry into the United States for a specific purpose if presented at the
port of entry along with other necessary visa documents. One cannot obtain a visa stamp within the United States. The visa has an expiration date that may not correspond to your authorized period of stay on your form I-20 or DS-2019. A visa indicates that a consular officer (an employee of the US Department or State) has determined that the recipient is qualified to apply for admission to the United States in a particular immigration classification.

I-20
The I-20 is given to the student by a designated school officer at the time of acceptance into the university once all admission requirements are met. The student will use the I-20 to obtain an F-1/J-1 visa. The I-20 must be kept updated at all times and will be used throughout the student’s duration of legal status. The I-20 must be endorsed by the designated school officer before the student leaves the country for travel.

I-94
Travel in and out of the US is recorded electronically by the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) through the I-94 Arrival/Departure Record. This important record lists your entry date, and visa status in which you were admitted to the US. The I-94 record may be required as proof of status for F-1/J-1 benefits applications, employment verification, and other official purposes. Upon arrival in the US, print a paper copy of your electronic I-94 record from the Customs and Border Protection website www.cbp.gov/I94

DS-2019
The DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor J-1 Status) is the visa document that Holy Family University issued verifying admission to the University or the formal acceptance as a visiting scholar. The DS-2019 is very important because it legitimizes your presence in the US. The DS-2019 should always be kept in a secure safe place.

DURATION OF STAY
A D/S notation on an I-94 allows you to stay in the US as long as you continue your course of studies, remain in your exchange program, or qualify for employment. The D/S is the official record of your authorized length of stay in the United States.

F-1 STATUS
The F-1 visa allows an individual to enter the US as a full-time student at an accredited university. You must be enrolled in a program or course of study that culminates in a degree, diploma or certificate. This visa status allows you to remain in the US until the completion of studies date listed on the I-20 form. To maintain full-time status, undergraduates must register for 12 credits each semester and graduate students for 9 credits each semester. F-1 status permits limited employment that includes 1) part-time work on campus that is related to student services and 2) work related to co-op, internship or practicum that has been approved and noted in SEVIS by a designated school officer in the International Affairs Office.
J-1 STATUS
The J-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa issued by the United States to exchange visitors participating in programs that promote cultural exchange. All applicants must meet eligibility criteria and be sponsored by a private sector or government program. J-1 status allows limited employment such as on campus work or Academic Training.

AMERICAN CULTURE

ADJUSTING TO A NEW CULTURE
Students, exchange visitors and their dependents entering the United States and settling in the Philadelphia area, might experience an initial culture shock or period of adjustment. Adjusting to a new culture can be a time of experiencing new customs, values, and beliefs, as you become immersed in a new culture and new language as well. Moving to the United States can be very stressful. Everything is unfamiliar; from weather, landscape, language, food, fashion, values, and customs. Many people dealing with these stressors feel some anxiety, which is normal and has been called “culture shock”.

The symptoms of culture shock will be different for each person, and can include feeling lonely or mildly depressed. Feeling stressed or irritable, and wanting to isolate from others are the common symptoms. You may feel overwhelmed trying to absorb all of the new aspects of living in this country. At times you may feel homesick and think longingly about your native country. You may even feel unsure of yourself as you try to figure out how things are done in this area of the United States.

There are stages to adjusting to a new culture which are normal and that most people pass through (It doesn’t last forever. It just feels that way at times). These include:

• **Everything is Just Great**
  This is often called the “honeymoon phase” when everything looks wonderful and the newness of the being in the United States is exciting and pleasant. You feel excited about being here, and the new opportunities that are waiting for you.

• **Hostility**
  Problems may start occurring because of language and communication difficulties, or because of differences between your native culture and those here in the United States. You may start to feel impatient, irritable, frustrated, anxious, sad, or discontented. Americans may seem abrupt, rude, or too different from the people from your native land, and our culture may seem a mass of new rules that are difficult to learn. You may become homesick for your home country.

• **Understanding**
  At this stage, you begin to feel more “at home” and able to get around, both physically, with the language, and emotionally. You don’t feel as lost and bewildered. At this point
you may start comparing your old culture with your new one, and then decide which practices seem better. Usually you start to regain a sense of humor and even laugh at some of the misunderstanding you have experienced.

• **Acceptance**
  At this stage you will have a better understanding of American culture and realize that it is neither all good or all bad. You will start to feel that you have accepted America as home, and have learned to adjust to differences in culture. Progression through each of these stages occurs at different rates. You will respond uniquely based on your own personality and ability to cope with new experiences.

**HELPFUL TIPS FOR ADJUSTMENT**
Be patient with yourself while adjusting to an American way of life, and learn to utilize the resources available for the support you need. Your language class or local ethnic group can lessen loneliness as you slowly adjust. Other ideas to help you adjust include:

- Realize that these feelings are normal. Everyone who comes to a new country and culture grows through them to some extent.
- Keep an open mind, it is natural to have preconceived ideas and beliefs that come into question while abroad.
- Athletics activities like team sports or taking walks may be helpful.
- Get involved with others to help you become more fluent in English and combat feelings of loneliness. Do not isolate yourself.
- Learn as much as you can about American culture.
- Take good care of yourself by eating nutritiously and getting plenty of rest. Exercise can help with stress reduction and help ease some of the loneliness as well.
- Set realistic goals for yourself. This can help build your confidence as you see yourself reaching towards and achieving new things in your life.

**AMERICAN VALUES**

Americans are an extremely diverse population. Do not assume that all Americans are alike or think the same way. Diversity can be defined by ethnicity, natural origin, gender, religion, socio-economic status and US regional differences.

**INDIVIDUALISM**

Americans value individualism and the right to free expression as guaranteed by the US Constitution. Open discussion of different beliefs and practices and questioning our beliefs and why we do things is common especially by young Americans. From an early age Americans are encouraged to shape their own opinions. American students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and share their views.
EQUALITY
Equality is an American value that goes back to the initial drafting of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Americans who work hard and achieve their dreams are very much admired.

AMERICAN SOCIAL CUSTOMS

POLITENESS AND FORMS OF ADDRESS
Americans tend to be very open and friendly. However, do not be surprised when Americans greet you with, “Hi, how are you?” and quickly walk away. This is merely a way of being polite which Americans highly value. Any strong friendship or close relationships take time to develop, so do not be discouraged and misinterpret politeness for insecurity.

American names are written and spoken with the given name first and the family name last. The family name of John Smith is Smith. In formal setting, address men as “Mister” (Mr.), married women as “Missus” (Mrs.), and unmarried women as “Miss” “Ms.” Currently women prefer to be addressed as “Miz” (Ms. or M.) If the person has a medical degree (M.D.) of or has completed a doctoral degree (Ph.D.) they will be addressed as “Doctor”. Faculty at the University may be addressed as “Professor”.

TIME
Time is high on the American values list. Being “on time” is a sign of respect because it shows consideration of other people’s time. If you are going to be late (10 or more minutes), it is common courtesy to let the other person know you will be arriving late. Time is used as the basis for organizing all the different activities that Americans are involved in, whether it is studying, playing on a sports team, volunteering or spending time with family and friends.

COMMUNICATION
Usually when Americans communicate, they are polite by speaking one at a time. Direct eye contact shows interest and attentiveness. Americans maintain a relatively large physical distance between one another during conversations or social encounters. This is called the “comfort zone or space”. It may be different for individual Americans. Do not be offended if an American takes a step back as you approach her/him in conversation.
First names are used more readily in the United States than in many other countries. It is not unusual for other students and professors to address international students by their first name and expect students to call them by their first name. It is appropriate to use first names from the first introduction if you are about the same age as the person to whom you are introduced; or when an older person requests that you address them by their first name.
GRATUITY CUSTOMS
In the United States, tips (gratuities) are not usually added to a restaurant bill, as is the custom in many other countries. When you receive services in a restaurant you are expected to leave a tip on the table. For waiters or waitresses it is customary to leave a tip equal to 15-20% of the total bill. Bartenders are given a tip that equals 10-15% of the total bill. Barbers and beauticians are tipped 15% of the bill or a least a minimum of $1.00.
If you receive excellent service, you may leave a larger tip, and if service is poor you may leave a smaller amount. Ask if a gratuity is included in the bill, if not leave a tip on the table.
Luggage handlers at the airport or hotel are given $1.00 per bag, and parking attendants expect at least a $1.00 dollar tip. Taxi drivers are usually given 15% of the fare.
Federal regulations prohibit letter carriers from accepting cash gifts in any amount or gifts worth $20.00 or more.
Bribery is unlawful in most cases. Offering a bribe to a police officer can result in your arrest.

AMERICAN CLASSROOM CULTURE
American culture extends to the educational setting of the classroom. Keep in mind, however, that every professor and class is different.

US EDUCATION IS LEARNER-CENTERED
In the US many professors will want the students themselves to be the main focus in the classroom. That means that the instructors are not the main focus, and class time will not be entirely devoted to a professor’s lectures. Instead, many professors may ask the students to work together in groups in and out of class and to freely voice their thoughts when a question is posed. It is encouraged for students to ask questions and voice their thoughts in class.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IS EXPECTED
Professors generally expect and encourage questions and lively discussion. If the class isn’t structured for questions during class time, make sure you have your questions ready to ask your professor after class, during office hours, or before the next class. There is no shame in not understanding something.

INDEPENDENT THINKING IS HIGHLY VALUED
As you pursue your studies, you should critique theories, evaluate options, formulate models, and challenge yourself. Bring your conclusions and questions to class and share your insights with your classmates and professors. Unlike some other cultures, US culture encourages people to stand out from their peers through their achievements and independent and creative thinking.
ACADEMIC HONESTY
Honesty is a critical requirement of American culture and American Colleges and Universities (ACU) standards. Universities operate on an honor system based on academic honesty. Each student oral or written submissions must reflect his/her personal understanding and work.

Forms of student submissions that are considered dishonest and unacceptable include:

- Cheating which is having someone else write your papers, take your exams or give you answers to tests or exams.
- Plagiarism which is submitting someone else’s work as your own.

Infractions of the standards of academic honesty, no matter how minor, are unacceptable and carry serious consequences ranging from a failing grade on a paper or exam to suspension or removal from the University.

RESPECTFUL DISAGREEMENT DURING CLASS DISCUSSION IS ACCEPTED
Always be prepared to present and defend your ideas. Always do so with respect for the ideas presented by your professor and your classmates.

INFORMALITY IS NORMAL
Students may dress casually. They may eat or drink during class if permission is granted by the instructor. Some students may be allowed to address the instructors by their first names. This behavior does not reflect a lack of respect for the instructor or the classroom experience.
AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

Holidays are important to Americans and include national observance as well as local celebrations. The University calendar list all holidays recognized by the government as legal holidays, and also special days of religious observance or of importance to Holy Family University. Classes are not held on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, Good Friday, Easter, Memorial Day, and Independence Day.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS
New Year’s Day – celebrated on January 1st
Martin Luther King Jr. Day – celebrated on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Monday in January
Presidents’ Day – celebrated on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Monday in February
Good Friday and Easter Sunday – celebrated in early spring
Memorial Day – celebrated on the 4\textsuperscript{th} Monday in May
Independence Day – celebrated on July 4\textsuperscript{th}
Labor Day – celebrated on the 1\textsuperscript{st} Monday in September
Columbus Day – celebrated on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Monday of October
Halloween – celebrated on October 31\textsuperscript{st}
Veterans’ Day – celebrated on November 11\textsuperscript{th}
Thanksgiving Day – celebrated on the 4\textsuperscript{th} Thursday of November
Christmas Day – celebrated on December 25\textsuperscript{th}

SPECIAL CAMPUS EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS
Family Weekend – celebrated in early September
Constitution Day – celebrated on September 17th
International Day – celebrated in early November
Christmas Rose – celebrated in early December before final exams
Charter Day – celebrated on February 11th during Charter Week
Spring Break – celebrated in March and classes are not in session this week

WEATHER AND CLOTHING
Philadelphia falls in the humid subtropical climate zone. Summers are typically hot and somewhat muggy, fall and spring seasons are generally mild, and winter is cold. Snowfall is variable, some winters with moderate snow falls and others with significant snowstorms. Philadelphia’s coldest month is January, and the warmest months are July and August.

Students and exchange visitors arriving in late August or early September should have light medium weight clothing with sweaters and light jackets. Warm coats, hats, gloves, and boots are needed for the winter months (December thru March). Spring (March thru early June) are similar to autumn months (September thru early December) with cool mornings and evenings and warm days. Clothing stores with reasonably priced clothing and footwear are readily available near the campus.

CROSS-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES
Holy family University offers numerous cross-cultural activities and experiences to broaden the cultural understanding of international students, visiting scholars and researchers. Programs of general interest include intercollegiate and intramural sporting events, weekend social events, and cultural events. The University’s international community is invited to participate in these experiences based on interest, talents, preferences, and schedules. Dependents of international visitors are encouraged to participate in these activities as well. By becoming part of the campus community international visitors will learn much about American life, and also have opportunities to share language and culture with Americans.

The down-town area of Philadelphia is referred to as Center City and can be reached by public transportation (train or bus) as well as private vehicle. Center City Philadelphia offers much to visitors because of its rich historical story of the American Revolution. Center City is also home
Additional information about historic and cultural venues is available via the following websites.

www.philly.com
www.gophilly.com
www.phila.gov/visitors/
www.visitphilly.com

PHILADELPHIA AREA HISTORIC AND CULTURAL SITES

Academy of Music
African American Museum
American Swedish Museum
Atwater Kent Museum
Azalea Garden at Boathouse Row on the Schuylkill River
Franklin Institute
Independence Hall and Liberty Bell
Independence Visitor Center
International House – University of Pennsylvania
Independent Seaport Museum
Italian Market
Japanese House and Gardens in Fairmont Park
Kimmel Center for Performing Arts
Philadelphia City Hall
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Philadelphia Zoo
National Museum of American History
Reading Terminal Market
Longwood Gardens
Valley Forge Historic Park
TRANSPORTATION

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Philadelphia International Airport is a major world-class hub serving the following airlines: Delta, Air Canada, United, American, Midwest, Continental, Southwest, US Airways, British Airways, Frontier, and AirTran. Flight, ground transportation, and parking information can be found at the airport web site: http://www.phl.org.

Philadelphia International Airport
8000 Essington Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19153
Telephone: 215-937-6937 (General Information)
215-580-7800 (Bus and Rail Information)
215-863-4271 (United States Customs and Immigration)

Newark Liberty International Airport
10 Toler Pl
Newark, NJ 07114
General information: 1-973-961-6000
Ground Transportation
800-AIR-RIDE (247-7433)

John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), Queens, NY
JFK Expy & S Cargo Rd
Jamaica, New York, NY 11430
Telephone: 718- 244-4444

GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation by bus and trains serve Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) provides these services to residents of Philadelphia and surrounding suburbs. The SEPTA website should be accessed for complete information regarding schedules and locations: www.septa.org.
Buses stop directly in front of the University’s Northeast campus on Frankford Avenue and connect with regional terminals. The SEPTA Trenton Line train station is located within walking distance of the campus.

Local Community Resources (insert the file)
DIRECTORY

THE MAILING ADDRESS FOR THE UNIVERSITY:

Holy Family University
9801 Frankford Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19114-2009
USA

General Telephone: 1-215-637-7700
Web site: http://www.holyfamily.edu

International Affairs Office
ATTN: Sister Josita Churla MA, MS.
Designated School Official
Telephone: 1-267-341-3469
E-mail: jchurla@holyfamily.edu

School of Arts and Sciences
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Telephone: 1-267-341-3640
E-mail: srobbins@holyfamily.edu

School of Business Administration
J. Barry Dickinson, PhD, Dean
Telephone: 1-267-341-3440
E-mail: jdickinson@holyfamily.edu

School of Education
Kevin Zook, PhD, Dean
Telephone: 1-267-341-3565
E-mail: kzook@holyfamily.edu

School of Nursing and Allied Health Professions
Mary Wombwell Interim Dean
Telephone: 1-267-341-3292
E-mail: mwombwell@holyfamily.edu

Public Safety
Joseph McBride, BS
Telephone: 1-267-341-3361 or 1-267-341-3362
E-mail: jmcbride@holyfamily.edu

Office of Residence Life
Brett Buckridge, MA
Telephone: 1-267-341-3204
E-mail: bbuckridge@holyfamily.edu

Health Services Office
Maureen Niche CRNP
Telephone: 1-267-341-3262
E-mail: mniche@holyfamily.edu

IMPORTANT OFFICES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND VISITING SCHOLARS:
LOCATION AND PHONE EXTENSION

LOCATIONS

AQ    Aquinas Hall
NWT   Newtown
CC    Campus Center
ETC   Education & Technology Center
HFH   Holy Family Hall
LIB   Library
NEP   Northeast Philadelphia Campus
UAC   Undergraduate Admissions Center
W     Woodhaven

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<tr>
<th>Office/Department</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Advising Center</td>
<td>215 HFH</td>
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<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>225 HFH</td>
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<td>Academic Student Services</td>
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<td>Activities Office</td>
<td>206 CC</td>
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<td>Admissions Office (Undergraduate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>323 HFH</td>
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<td>Athletics</td>
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<td>Bookstore</td>
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<td>Business Office</td>
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<td>Careers Center</td>
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<td>101 CC</td>
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<td>214 CC</td>
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<td>Center for Academic Enhancement</td>
<td>2nd Floor Library</td>
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<td>Computer Technology Services (Woodhaven)</td>
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<td>Health Services</td>
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<td>Human Resources</td>
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**International Affairs Office**

225 HFH  3469

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<td>Instructional Materials Center</td>
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<td>Newtown Campus</td>
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<td>Registrar</td>
<td>205 HFH</td>
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<td>Special Services</td>
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<td>Student Clubs/Organizations</td>
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<td>Switchboard (Newtown)</td>
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**Insert Campus Map**

1. Campus Center: Athletics, Bookstore, Campus Ministry, Careers Center, Chapel, Counseling Center, Dining Hall, Disability Services, Fitness Center, Gymnasium, Residence Life, Security Command Center, Special Services, Student Activities, Student Government, Student Lounge, Student Publications, Student Services

2. St. Joseph’s Hall: Student Residence

3. Nurse Education Building: Duplicating for Faculty/Staff, Nursing Computer Lab, Nursing Simulation and Practice Laboratory, School of Nursing and Allied Health Professions


5. Labyrinth

6. Education & Technology Center: Art Gallery and Studios, Computer Labs, Cooperative Education, School of Education, Student and Faculty Lounges, Tiger Cub Café

7. Undergraduate Admissions Center

8. Marian Hall

9. University Library: Archives, Audio Visual, Center for Academic Enhancement, Computer Lab

10. Alpha House Nursery School and Kindergarten
11. Aquinas Hall: School of Business Administration

12. Garden Residence: Student Residence


14. Stevenson Lane Residence: Student Residence

15. Athletic Field