

International Guidebook

UCA

Letter from the President for UCA International Guidebook:

The University of Central Arkansas Division of International Engagement and the Office of the President welcome you to the United States and to UCA!

At UCA, we are guided by our dedication to academic vitality, integrity, and diversity. Our UCA community is built on tolerance, and we value the opportunity to work, learn, and develop in a place that embraces the diversity of ideas, people, and perspectives.

Some of you have already spent a great deal of time in the United States, but many of you are here for the first time. We understand the anxieties you may experience coming to a society and culture that may be quite different from your own, and we are here to help. We go above and beyond to help all of our students, faculty, and staff succeed.

As you adjust to life at UCA, your sponsoring department will be able to assist you with many practical matters. Additionally, this handbook provides important information for living in the United States, and, specifically, the state of Arkansas. We hope you will find the information in this handbook to be useful as you get settled in your new surroundings.

Welcome to the UCA family! We're happy you're here.

Go Bears!

President Houston D. Davis

Housing

Useful Tools -

Best Places: <https://www.bestplaces.net/>

Rent.com: www.rent.com

Realtor.com: <https://www.realtor.com/>

Zillow.com: <https://www.zillow.com/>

ForRentUniversity.com: <https://www.forrentuniversity.com/>

UcaLoop: <https://uca.uloop.com/>

UCA-Net: A communication tool through UCA email.

Short Term Living Options -

Home2Suites by Hilton: <https://home2suites3.hilton.com/en/index.html>

820 Bill Dean Dr. Conway, AR., 3.6 miles from UCA.

Microtel Inn and Suites: <https://www.wyndhamhotels.com/microtel/conway-arkansas/microtel-inn-and-suites-conway/overview>

2475 Sanders Street Conway, AR., 3.0 miles from UCA

Candlewood Suites:

https://www.ihg.com/candlewood/hotels/us/en/conway/cnwcw/hoteldetail?cm_mmc=GoogleMaps--CW--US--CNWCW

2360 Sanders Street Conway, AR., 3.0 miles from UCA

Airbnb: <https://www.airbnb.com/>

CorporateHousing.com: <https://www.corporatehousing.com/ar/conway>

Neighboring Cities and Communities within a 30 mile radius of UCA -

- No. Little Rock - <http://nlr.ar.gov/>
27.6 miles southeast of UCA
- Morrilton - <https://cityofmorrilton.com/>
21.4 miles northeast of UCA
- Maumelle - <https://www.maumelle.org/>
18.7 miles southeast of UCA
- Vilonia - <http://www.cityofvilonia.net/>
15.5 miles east of UCA
- Greenbrier - <https://www.cityofgreenbrierar.com/>
13.5 miles north of UCA
- Conway - <https://conwayarkansas.gov/>

Travel and Transportation

Driving -

If you will be driving a car in the United States, you must have a valid driver's license. You should also be aware that the rules for driving in the U.S. may be very different from the rules in your home country. Knowing these rules is truly a matter of life or death. Even if you are an experienced driver, you need to make yourself aware of the differences between American driving rules and those of your home country. **Please do not drive without a valid driver's license and until you understand the rules thoroughly.**

The link below is for the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration Driver Services' website. Many of your questions about driving requirements in the State of Arkansas can be answered here. Or by calling (501) 371-5581.

<https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/driver-services/>

You can find an Arkansas Driver's License Study Guide and practice test online thru the Arkansas State Police. <http://asp.ark.org/services-and-programs/detail/driver-examination>

Driver's License -

You must have a valid driver's license to drive in the U.S.

- If you already have a valid driver's license from another state:

Go to a local revenue office and surrender your out-of-state license in exchange for an Arkansas driver's license. You will need to bring your Immigration and Naturalization documents with you to show your immigration status. No written or road tests are required if you have a valid out-of-state license.

Conway Revenue Office
2455 Washington Ave
Conway, AR 72032
(501) 329-2601

- If you do not have a valid US driver's license:

Before beginning the process of applying for an Arkansas Driver's License you should review the checklist at the link below which explains all of the documentation needed to apply for a driver's license in the state-

https://static.ark.org/eeuploads/asp/drivers_1-2-3_checklist_121317.pdf

The Arkansas State Police administer the written and driving portions of the license process in Arkansas. Testing information for Conway (Faulkner County) is as follows-

Faulkner County Library 1900 Tyler Street Conway, AR

Tests are given Monday & Tuesday only

Written Exam 8 -10:30 am (must be there before 10 am to take test)

Skills Test (Driving) 11 am (First 15 applicants)

Any questions can be answered at (501) 618-8282

Buying a Car -

- You may buy a new car from an automobile dealer and a used car from a dealer or private individual.
- Financing may be obtained from the dealer or a bank.
- You must obtain a Certificate of Ownership from a car dealer or a Certificate of Title from an individual.
- The car must be registered immediately in the new owner's name.
- In Arkansas, automobiles are considered *personal property* and must be assessed. It is important upon purchase of the vehicle that you go to the Assessment Office and complete the necessary paperwork. On an annual basis, you assess all personal property (car, boat, trailer, tractor, etc.) between January 1st and May 31st. See **Taxes** in this guidebook for further information.
- Registering a car must be done at the local Revenue Office (within 6 months of moving to the state).

Conway Revenue Office
2455 Washington Ave
Conway, AR 72032
(501) 329-2601

- Arkansas law requires you to purchase car insurance.
- This website will answer some of your questions about registering a vehicle:

<https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/motor-vehicle/vehicle-tag-renewal/>

Car Insurance -

If you are planning on owning a car while in Arkansas you are required to maintain liability insurance on your vehicle. Contact a local insurance agent or online insurance company to purchase the required automobile insurance.

Car Seats (Child Passenger Safety Seats) -

There are 3 types of car seats:

- Infant car seat
- Forward facing car seat
- Booster seat

Any of these can be purchased locally at a Walmart or Target store.

Arkansas's Child Passenger Protection Act states:

- A child who is less than (6) six years of age and who weighs less than sixty pounds (60 lbs.) shall be restrained in a child passenger safety seat properly secured to the vehicle.
- If a child is at least six (6) years of age or at least sixty pounds (60 lbs) in weight, a safety belt properly secured to the vehicle shall be sufficient to meet the requirements of the law.

It is important to install the child safety seat properly-please read the instructions carefully.

NOTES: Children under the age of 12 should not sit in the front seat if the car contains a passenger-side air bag. This can be dangerous and even deadly in an accident. Never hold a child on your lap in the car. Do not take a baby out of a car seat while the car is in motion, even if he/she is crying. An unprotected child can be seriously injured in an accident, even if you are driving very slowly.

Seat Belts –

- Up until age 15 all children should be properly secured in a vehicle by a proper child restraint system or seat belt.
- All *front-seat occupants* 15 years old and above must wear a seat belt.

Cell phone use while driving -

Arkansas law prohibits texting while driving, regardless of the driver's age. It is also illegal for drivers to use hand-held cell phones while traveling through school or highway work zones and it's a violation for any driver under the age of 18 to use a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle.

Campus Parking -

If you will be parking on campus you must register your car with the UCA Police Department and obtain a parking permit. There is a \$60 fee for parking on campus. Information about obtaining a permit can be found at this link:

<https://uca.edu/police/2018/07/09/payroll-deduction/> (501) 450-3111

Local Transportation -

Taxi (Cabs): Currently, there are 2 companies in the area.

Conway Yellow Cab	(501) 327-1515
Conway Taxi	(501) 730-4110

Taxi service can be expensive if used on a regular basis. It is also customary to pay the driver 15% of the fair as a “tip.”

Buses: There is not a local bus company in Conway.

Public Transportation: Not available in Conway

Uber or Lyft: These services are available in the area. Please refer to the links below for further information:

UpHail: <https://uphail.com/us/ar/conway/>

Uber: <https://www.uber.com/cities/little-rock/>

Lyft: <https://www.lyft.com/rider/cities/little-rock-ar>

Bicycles: UCA has been officially recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as a Bicycle-Friendly University. More information about bike riding, in and around the UCA campus can be found here:

<http://uca.edu/bikefriendly/>

Zagster bike locations are available on campus and across Conway for use by individuals. More information about this bike sharing network is available here:

<http://bike.zagster.com/conway/>

When riding on the Conway streets you are expected to obey the same road rules as automobiles.

Out of Town Travel -

For information about distances from Conway, please refer to the link below:

Distance to Go: <https://www.distancesto.com/>

Air: The Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport is in Little Rock and is located 35.6 miles from UCA. <http://clintonairport.com/>

You can fly from this airport to larger cities for connecting flights. Airlines flying in and out of this airport includes:

Allegiant Air	American Airlines	Delta
Southwest Airlines	United	Frontier
	VIA Airlines	

Train: The Amtrak train station is located in downtown Little Rock 1400 West Markham. Visit www.amtrak.com/home.html for train schedules throughout the nation.

Bus: The bus station located at Flash Market/Citgo 1030 US Highway 65 Conway provides access to both the Greyhound Bus Line (National routes) and Jefferson Bus Lines (Arkansas routes). To find out more information about travel from Conway visit the websites below:

<https://locations.greyhound.com/bus-stations/us/arkansas/conway/bus-station-650750>
<https://www.jeffersonlines.com/>

Rental Car: Cars may be rented by the day, weekend, week, or month by a person having a U.S. driver's license. Some companies require that the person be of a certain age and have a major credit card. Prices vary. The following are rental car companies in the Conway area:

Enterprise Rent-A-Car
<https://www.enterprise.com/en/car-rental/locations/us/ar/conway-5176.html?mcid=yext:245709>

407 West Oak Street
(501) 336-8100

Hertz
<https://www.hertz.com/rentacar/location/unitedstates/arkansas/conway/litn11>

808 North Creek Drive
(501) 205-8628

Time Zones -

The Continental U.S. is divided into four time zones.

Eastern Standard Time - 5 hours earlier than Greenwich Mean Time. 1 hour later than Central Standard Time.

Central Standard Time - Arkansas is in this time zone.

Mountain Standard Time – 1 hour earlier than Central Standard Time.

Pacific Standard Time – 2 hours earlier than Central Standard Time.

Most states change to Daylight Saving Time during the Spring, and it lasts until Fall.

- On the second Sunday in March (at 2 am) all clocks are advanced one hour to 3 am. This is frequently referred to as *Spring Forward*.
- On the first Sunday in November (at 2 am) all clocks are moved back to 1 am. This is frequently referred to as *Fall Back*.

Banking

All banks have a customer service representative who can assist you in opening your account and answering any questions you may have. They can also assist you if you wish to receive money from or send money to another country.

Choosing a Bank Account -

When you go to open your account, take your passport and immigration documents with you to serve as identification. If you have a Social Security number, take that as well. You might also need proof of your physical address (a lease, utility bill, etc)

There are two basic types of bank accounts: checking accounts and savings accounts.

Checking Accounts are for money you need accessible to pay bills, make purchases, or cover your day to day living expenses.

With a checking account--

- you can deposit your money in the account and access those funds with a debit card or by writing a personal check
- the bank will provide you with a debit card and a few checks to get you started
- you can order additional checks for a fee

Some checking accounts have a minimum balance requirement. If you go below the minimum, you will be charged a fee.

Ask the customer service representative at your bank for assistance if you do not know how to keep records of your banking transactions.

Be sure to ask about any other checking requirements when you go to open your account.

Savings Accounts are for money that you do not need to use immediately, but could need available in the future.

With a savings account you can-

- earn a small amount of interest
- usually deposit and withdraw money from a savings account as you wish, although some banks have limits on the amount of transactions during a month or quarter.

There is sometimes a minimum account balance. If your account balance falls below the minimum requirement, the bank will deduct a monthly fee from your account.

Debit Cards -

- A debit card is a card that can be used to purchase goods and services in stores and online.
- They are given with most new checking accounts.
- They can be used anywhere credit cards are accepted.
- Unlike a credit card, however, the funds are immediately deducted from your account balance when you make a purchase.
- A debit card allows you to get cash, make deposits, transfer funds, or check your account balance at any time of the day or night from a bank ATM machine.

ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) -

- Some people have only ATM cards without having a debit card-these cards cannot be used for purchases in stores.
- ATM machines are located throughout the Conway area, as well as in the UCA Student Center.
- ATM withdrawals from your bank's ATM are usually free.
- A small fee may be incurred when using an ATM to withdraw funds from your account if you use another bank's ATM machine.

Please keep your personal safety in mind when using an ATM, especially after dark and when on foot.

Never give your Personal Identification Number (PIN) or card information out to anyone.

Currency

American Currency -

- Based on the decimal system with 100 cents being equal to one dollar
- Currency is issued in coins or bills.
- The names and values of the coins are as follows:

Penny	1 cent	The only copper colored coin
Nickel	5 cents	Larger than a penny
Dime	10 cents	The smallest coin
Quarter	25 cents	Larger than a nickel
Half-dollar	50 cents	Larger than a quarter; rarely used
Silver Dollar	\$1 dollar	The largest coin; rarely used

Utilities

Conway Corporation -

The city-owned electric, water, wastewater, cable television, broadband Internet, and telephone services **within the city limits**.

650 Locust Street

(501) 450-6000

www.conwaycorp.com

Natural Gas -

817 North Creek Drive

Conway, AR 72032

Phone: (800) 992-7552

www.centerpointenergy.com

Entergy (electricity) -

112 Oak Street

Conway, AR 72032

Phone: (800) 368-3749

www.entergy-arkansas.com

**Outside the city limits

Please note: When securing these services some companies may require a monetary deposit before services will be provided.

Sanitation and Recycling -

Conway Sanitation provides a 96-gallon trash container to each home within the city limits.

Also has convenient and free curbside recycling program.

- Co-mingled program, meaning all recyclables -with the exception of glass – can be mixed together in a blue, city-provided, recycling cart.
- A recycling bin for glass is available to Conway residents at no charge and is picked up on the same day as garbage.

All or part of these may be included in the rent if you are renting a property, you should check with your landlord.

Internet -

If you choose to have internet in your home you will need to contract that with a provider. Many times you can bundle your internet with other services, such as TV or cellular service in order to receive a lower price.

Here are **some** companies in the area-

- Conway Corporation
650 Locust Street
(501) 450-600
www.conwaycorp.com
- ATT
2170 Harkrider Street
(501) 513-2277
www.att.com
- Xfinity
No local store-must order service over the internet or by calling the company
1 (855) 812-4214
www.xfinity.com
- Direct TV
No local store-must order service over the internet or by calling the company
1 (855) 833-4388
www.directtv.com

Telephone service

The telephone system in the U.S. is composed of many privately owned but cooperating companies.

Most of you will need to purchase your own telephone. There are 2 different telephone systems used-landline and cellular service.

Telephone Numbers -

Telephone numbers in the U.S. contain ten digits, a three-digit area code (usually written in parentheses), a three-digit number for the local exchange, and a four-digit number for the individual subscriber.

For example, the number for UCA information is (501) 450-5000

501 (area code)

450 (local exchange)

5000 (subscriber number).

Calls within Your Area Code

When calling another city within your area code **from a landline**, you need to dial only the local exchange and subscriber number.

Outside Your Area Code

The U.S. is divided into many small regions or areas, each reached by an area code that must be dialed when calling from outside that particular "area". When dialing a telephone number outside your area code, dial a "1" followed by the three digit "area code". Plus the seven-digit local phone number. For example, if you were in Arkansas but needed to call Fayetteville, you would dial 1(479) the local exchange and the subscriber number. Even though the number is in the same state, there are several different area codes in the state of Arkansas.

Landline -

- Usually, a landline phone can be installed by plugging the phone into the wall.
- Phones can be purchased at many local stores.
- Landline telephone service has a monthly fee.
- You will be charged a small amount for each local call and an additional amount for each long distance call.
- There are extra charges for calling card calls, directory assistance, operator assistance, etc. You can ask a telephone representative about special plans for people who make many long distance calls.

You will need to make a number of choices such as which local telephone service you want and which long distance. Here are a couple of companies-

- Conway Corporation
650 Locust Street
(501) 450-600
www.conwaycorp.com
- ATT
2170 Harkrider Street
(501) 513-2277
www.att.com

Cellular Service (Mobile Phone) -

Some people have a mobile phone along with their landline telephone, while others only have a mobile phone.

Cellular phone companies in the area-

ATT
2170 Harkrider Street
(501) 513-2277
www.att.com

T-Mobile
935 East Oak Street
(501) 504-2032
www.t-mobile.com

Verizon
975 East Oak Street
(501) 932-2300
www.verizonwireless.com

Cricket
603 East Oak Street
(501) 504-6928
www.cricketwireless.com

Sprint
1008 East Oak Street Suite 100
(501) 329-6300
www.sprint.com

If You Don't Know a Phone Number or Area Code -

- Search online
- Dial "411" for DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE. There is usually a fee for using Directory Assistance, which is added to your phone bill.
- Use a telephone directory (phonebook)
 - The **white** pages of telephone directories usually list individual people or families in alphabetical order by their last (family) names.

- The **yellow** pages list businesses, stores, industries and individuals alphabetically according to their category of service, such as “Laundromats”, “TV Equipment”, “Dentists”, etc.
- On campus directory assistance: Dial 450-5000

Healthcare

Hospitals and Doctors -

It is a good idea to establish contact with a physician and dentist when you arrive here, especially if you have children. You may wish to ask friends or co-workers to recommend doctors. Physicians are also listed in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory under “Physicians and Surgeons” and on the Internet. There are two major **hospitals** in this community.

- Conway Regional Health System
525 Western Ave. Conway, AR 72034
www.conwayregional.org/
- Baptist Health Medical Center
1555 Exchange Ave. Conway, AR 72032 <https://www.baptist-health.com/location/baptist-health-medical-centerconway-conway>

There are a large number of general and specialty doctors at each hospital. Your particular medical insurance may limit your choice of doctors, so it is important to check with them before making an appointment.

UCA Student Health Center-

This is an on campus medical facility that is open to students, faculty and staff.
<https://uca.edu/studenthealth/> (501) 450-3136

Appointments-

It is important to be on time for doctor’s appointments. However, you may experience a long wait to see the doctor. You may ask the doctor’s receptionist how much the fee will be if you miss your appointment. On your first visit to a new doctor, you may have to pay at the time of the visit instead of being mailed a bill to pay later. Take your health insurance papers with you to the doctor’s office.

Urgent Care Facilities -

Urgent care is a type of walk-in clinic focused on the delivery of ambulatory care in a dedicated medical facility outside of a traditional emergency department (emergency room). Urgent care facilities provide a beneficial service for those who need treatment on the weekend or in the evening when their traditional doctor is unavailable.

Sherwood Urgent Care (2 locations in Conway) <https://www.urgentteam.com/sherwood-urgent-care>

Med Express Urgent Care (1 location in Conway)
https://www.medexpress.com/location/ar/conway/cwa/?utm_source=yext&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=Evergreen

Prime Care Medical Clinic (2 locations in Conway) <https://pcmc-ar.com/>

Conway Regional After Care (1 location in Conway)
<http://www.conwayregional.org/locations/afterhoursclinic>

ARcare (1 location in Conway) <https://www.arcare.net/>

Emergencies -

If you cannot contact your doctor, call the Emergency Room of a local hospital. In case of a serious emergency, call 911 for an ambulance. After normal business hours you can normally call your doctor's telephone number, and their answering service will be able to give your doctor, or the doctor on-call a message.

Children -

Schools require a physical examination before a child enters the school system. You will receive proper forms for this when you register your child for school. It is important for healthy children to have regular physical check-ups and immunizations against illnesses. Whenever your child is sick, telephone your doctor's office for advice or to make an appointment. The doctor or nurse can answer many of your questions over the telephone.

Immunizations are required at some daycares and schools. Please open the link below to educate you on the options available.

<https://www.nvic.org/Vaccine-Laws/state-vaccine-requirements/arkansas.aspx>

Maternity Care -

There are obstetricians—specialists in pregnancy care—and general practitioners who begin caring for women as soon as they learn of their pregnancy. There are several female doctors in this area who care for pregnant women.

Many hospitals in the area offer classes for expectant parents. Ask your doctor about these programs.

Insurance -

If you are in a benefits-eligible position at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA), you may elect to become a member of UCA's group health insurance plan. If you choose not to elect the group health insurance, it is highly recommended you purchase a health insurance policy. Without insurance, medical bills can be extremely expensive.

For details regarding the group health insurance and the other UCA insurance programs, please visit the UCA Human Resources website, <http://uca.edu/hr/benefits/> or call 450-3181. After you become a member of the group health insurance, you will receive an insurance card in the mail at your home address. However, a temporary card may be obtained on the group health insurance website, www.myuhc.com. When visiting a physician, you must present this card for the physician's office to file the insurance claim timely and accurately.

Social Security and Taxes

Social Security Cards -

To apply for a social security number, you can go through the Social Security office located at:

2475 Christina Lane
Conway, AR 72034
1 (800) 772-1213

More information about documentation and the process can be found online at:

<https://www.ssa.gov/>

Taxes -

Federal Income Tax information:

Website: <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-individuals>

Information (chat with a representative): <https://www.irs.gov/help/navigate-irsgov>

Phone number: 1-800-829-3676

Arkansas State Income Tax information:

Website: <https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/income-tax/individual-income-tax/faq/>

Email: individual.income@dfa.arkansas.gov

Phone number: 501-682-1100

Faulkner County Taxes:

Personal Property and Real Estate Taxes are used to help support Schools, Cities, Roads, Jails, and County expenses in Faulkner County. It is a tax of about 1% of the value of your home, mobile home, land, car, truck, trailer, four-wheeler, boat, tractor, livestock, business building, inventory, and other items that you may own.

Important Tax Dates:

Remember to assess all personal property between January 1st and May 31st of each year. This will generate a tax to be paid the following year on or before October 10th. Each and every year thereafter, you will assess and pay on these dates. A 10% late assessment fee will be added to anyone assessing personal property after the May 31st deadline. (New purchases will have 30 days after purchase to assess without penalty) Payment of Real Estate or Personal Property taxes after October 10th will result in late fees being charged.

Tax Statements:

Tax statements are mailed in the spring of each year. Call the Tax Assessor Office if your tax statement hasn't arrived by July 1. Arkansas collects Personal Property and Real Estate Taxes one year in the arrear. Example: 2015 taxes are collected on or before October 15, 2016.

Pay Taxes:

Arkansas Collector's tax books are open for payments the first business day of March of each year through October 15th without penalty. You may mail payments to the address listed or come to the Faulkner County Courthouse between the hours of 8:00 AM & 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday (except holidays or posted closures). Payments can also be made on-line at www.faulknercountytax.org or by phone (call 1-866-272-9829). Please note a fee will be charged to your credit card when using official payments.

Tax Collector

806 Faulkner Street

Conway, AR 72034

501-450-4921

<https://www.faulknercounty.org/collector>

Tax Assessor

806 Faulkner Street

Conway, AR 72034

501-450-4905

<https://www.faulknercounty.org/assessor>

Common Courtesies

Helpful link -

<http://internationalstudents.org/Home/ISI-Students/Survival-in-the-US/Tips/Tips-on-being-polite-in-the-US> (International Students Inc.)

Personal Space-

We define personal space as the area surrounding a person that he/she considers personal territory or domain. Crossing or entering someone else's personal space creates discomfort because he/she feels the physical intimacy exceeds the relational intimacy. Keep in mind though, too much space can cause discomfort and indicate rudeness as well. The size of one's personal space varies by culture and situation.

Americans usually have larger personal space boundaries than people from other cultures. If you notice someone backing up a little while talking to you, don't step toward them as they most likely feel uncomfortable with the lack of distance between you.

Under certain circumstances people can accept having their personal space entered without experiencing discomfort. Examples might include romantic encounters and crowded subways or events. In business environments people typically maintain more personal space between them than in social situations. Also, personal space boundaries between a man and a woman usually remain larger than those between two women.

People who live in highly populated areas often have a smaller personal space than those who live in less populated areas. People of higher status or wealth usually have larger personal space bubbles as well.

Appropriate touching in the U.S. depends upon the subjects involved and the situation. Affection between children and their parents, or close friends allows more intimacy than that considered appropriate between a professor and student, or a waitress and patron. Many other countries consider Americans far less "touchy-feely" than their own cultures.

Westerners generally have a larger personal space than people from other parts of the world.

You should refrain from physical contact in business or work relationships. How much physical contact people are comfortable with in non-work settings depends on their upbringing. What one person might intend as an indication of connection or camaraderie might come across to the other as an invasion of space and create discomfort.

Punctuality (being on time) -

In some countries, emphasis is placed on *people*, with *punctuality* (time), being secondary. In America, there is a high value on punctuality. While in many countries time commitments are viewed much more casually, in the U.S. people expect you to arrive when you said you would. Common courtesy suggests arriving a few minutes before the agreed upon time or right on time, but more than 5-10 minutes late may be considered disrespectful.

If you receive a dinner invitation to someone's home, they will expect you to arrive very close to the time they gave you, either a few minutes early or a few minutes late. If you arrive too early, they will likely not feel prepared, but if you arrive too late, you communicate a disrespect for their time. If you find that you are running late, call your host and explain that you still plan to come and give them an estimate of when you will arrive.

However, if you receive an invitation for an "open house" type of event, the time frame becomes much more casual. Often the host will simply set a window of time for the event, and guests can come and go during that window without offending anyone. If the invitation specifies a party from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., and you aren't sure whether it's an open house type of event or not, ask the host specifically if you should plan to arrive at 3 p.m. and leave at 6 p.m. or if you should just come sometime after 3 p.m. and plan to leave by 6 p.m.

When you schedule a business or medical appointment, a conference with a professor or a dinner reservation, you should expect to arrive precisely when you schedule the appointment or just a few minutes early. Businesses tend to run on tight schedules and a late arrival throws off the whole agenda. Often you will be asked to reschedule your appointment if you arrive 15 minutes or more after the arranged time. Regarding a medical appointment, you may be charged or fined for the missed or late appointment.

If businesses do not need you to make an appointment or reservation, they will likely market the fact that "walk-ins are welcome." This means you can arrive without an appointment.

Waiting in Line -

People from other countries and cultures sometimes comment about how orderly lines in the U.S. progress. Whether waiting for your turn to order at a fast food restaurant, taking turns at a stop sign, waiting to purchase tickets or waiting to get into an establishment, Americans generally follow the "first-come-first-serve" rule.

It should not come as a surprise if you decide to eat at a popular restaurant one evening and find that the hostess estimates the wait for a table at 30-45 minutes. According to accepted procedure, you submit your name and wait for a summons to the table prepared for you within that time frame.

While considered a fast-paced and immediate-gratification culture, the sheer number of people in the U.S. guarantees that sometimes you will have to wait. Relax and make the most of the time by reading or starting a conversation with someone near you—the time will pass more quickly.

Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities -

The American Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) defines requirements for accessibility to buildings and facilities by individuals with disabilities. All areas of newly designed or newly constructed buildings and facilities and altered portions of existing buildings and facilities must meet or exceed these guidelines.

The U.S. government has implemented these special accommodations to make maneuvering easier for older and individuals with disabilities. You will notice blue signs with a white wheelchair designating anything from specific parking places to wheelchair accessible accommodations and facilities. Only vehicles with approved handicapped license plates can park in those convenient parking spaces, but facilities with handicap accessibility merely post the signs to let people know that they offer those accommodations.

Out of respect for age and/or disability, Americans generally hold open doors, give up seats and/or help those struggling to manage. Common courtesy assumes that people in the vicinity will do what they can to make the situation easier to handle.

Gender -

Women in the U.S. have come a long way in acquiring a status equal to men, and many hold positions of leadership in business, medicine, law, education and government, earning respect and admiration from others. Most women will not resent men who show chivalry (courtesy) toward them. However, remember that showing courtesy and acting patronizing (superior) or disrespectful toward women are two very different things. Treating any woman disrespectfully, let alone one in a position of authority or prominence, can lead to a great deal of trouble.

Children -

Whether you have children or not, you probably realize that children don't always comply with the rules or guidelines expected of the general public. In the United States you will encounter the sounds of children almost everywhere you go.

If you have children and they become loud or disruptive in a public place, do what you can to distract them or simply remove them to another area, if possible. While many Americans will demonstrate understanding and sympathy, children screaming or acting out can become irritating or distracting if allowed to continue.

In contrast, the sounds of children at play will more likely generate smiles or initiate conversations from others in the area. If the children can't seem to keep their voices at the appropriate level for the surroundings, but aren't crying or misbehaving, use your own discretion as to whether you should remove them or simply allow them to occupy themselves even though it might not exactly fit in with the setting.

Dining Etiquette -

Whether eating out at a restaurant or at someone else's home, exhibiting polite manners will make a good impression on everyone. Do not sit down until the host has taken their seat or indicated to you where to sit. If the host offers a short prayer before the meal, it is respectful to lower your head and close your eyes during that time.

When eating at a restaurant, wait to begin eating until everyone has been served. In a home, you should not begin to eat until the host(ess) has raised their fork to begin.

If dining at a fine restaurant, you often have multiple forks, spoons and knives at each place setting. The general rule is to start with the one furthest from your plate. For example, if the first course served is salad, begin with the fork furthest from your plate. Once you have finished that course, the wait staff will remove that item of cutlery with

the salad plate and the next course should be eaten with the fork now furthest from your plate. Generally that leaves the last one for dessert.

If you should need an item from across the table (salt/pepper, butter, etc.), do not reach across to get it, but ask for someone to pass it to you. Do not talk with food in your mouth. Do not slurp or burp at the table; Americans consider this impolite. Turn off your cell phone or do not bring it to the table. If you need to excuse yourself from the table momentarily, say "Excuse me for a moment." and slide your chair back from the table. If possible (not conflicting with your religion or values), try everything on your plate. You do not have to finish it. Do not ask for anything that has not been served.

Most Americans hold their fork in their dominant hand (most people are right-handed), and then transfer it to their other hand to cut meat while holding the knife in their dominant hand. They lay the knife down when done and transfer the fork back to their dominant hand.

This YouTube video provides information on American dining etiquette-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rN_YVjEZ1zc

Tipping -

There are a number of circumstances in the U.S. when tipping (a percentage of the total bill left or given, at time of service, as a gratuity for the person providing the service) is not only encouraged, it is expected. Many service personnel who work in the U.S. depend on tips for the majority of their income.

Expected tips and circumstances are as follows:

- *Porters at airports, train or bus stations:* \$1.00 per piece of luggage
- *Bellhops* who show you to your hotel room and carry your baggage in hotels, a minimum of \$1.00 per piece of luggage
- *Hotel maid* \$2 to \$3 per night
- *Parking valet* \$3-\$5 at pick up
- *Taxi drivers:* 15% of the fare
- *Barbers or hairdressers:* 10-20% of the bill
- *Waiters or waitresses* in restaurants: In the U.S. restaurant servers often receive low hourly wages because they are expected to earn tips from their customers. 15-20% of the bill is typically the minimum if you are satisfied with the service. For large groups of 6 or more or in more exclusive restaurants, the tip is often already included in the bill so it is wise to check your bill before leaving a tip in those circumstances. This is sometimes referred to as a "gratuity charge." Generally, you should leave no less than a 10% tip even if you did not feel you

received the level of service you expected. This will communicate your dissatisfaction without completely disregarding the service.

Never offer a tip to public officials, including police officers

Smoking/Alcohol/Marijuana -

The number of cigarette smokers in the U.S. continues to drop. More than half of all states have banned smoking in enclosed public places. If you smoke, be sure to check the laws in your area to avoid legal consequences.

UCA's campus is tobacco-free. The Board of Trustees approved a policy that mirrors the state law that prohibits tobacco products on all state-supported institutions of higher education. The use of tobacco products will not be allowed on the grounds, in any vehicle owned or leased by the university and all university-owned buildings including off-campus housing. The ban includes smokeless tobacco products (including vaporizers - vaping). Anyone using tobacco products on campus could face a fine from \$100 to \$500.

Federal law prohibits anyone under the age of 21 from purchasing or publicly possessing alcohol. While some states have that as a blanket regulation, other states like Arkansas have stiffer restrictions on alcohol sales or service in "*dry counties.*" Make sure to check the laws in the state where you live to know specifically what rules apply in that area. While beer and alcohol distributors do a big business in the U.S., it is important to know how much you can handle without affecting your behavior or actions. It is NEVER acceptable to drink and drive.

An arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI) has severe consequences. All 50 states penalize drivers with a blood alcohol content of more than .08%. Not only do the legal aspects of the charges have a high cost, but so do the potential risks of accident and/or injury to yourself and others. In addition, most people convicted will lose their license, and possibly spend some time in jail.

A small number of states have passed laws legalizing marijuana for medicinal or recreational purposes. (Arkansas recently legalized it for medicinal purposes). However, most employers, businesses and educational institutions have not loosened their standards on hiring or accepting individuals under the influence of the drug. Clinically proven to impair judgment and motor skills, it will incur similar (and more severe) penalties and consequences as those currently used for alcohol impairment.

Conversation Tips

Greetings -

The most common form of greeting between acquaintances and business colleagues in the U.S. is the hand shake. It generally calls for a firm hand shake while verbally addressing the other person.

If you get to know someone well enough, a hand shake can sometimes turn into a hug or brief pat on the back or shoulder. In many countries the kissing of one's cheek(s) is customarily used for a greeting. This is not the case in the United States. If you feel unsure on how to greet someone, a handshake is probably your best option. Observe the greetings of those around you for clues to what might be expected in each situation.

Thank you -

Saying thank you always has a positive impact on the recipient of your gratitude. If you have enjoyed someone's hospitality, been the recipient of a thoughtful act or deed, or received something from someone (whether of monetary value or not), you could take a moment to express your gratitude, either verbally, in written form or some other creative way. Even just a short note communicates to that person that you valued their time and/or consideration. You do not need to be elaborate or wordy, simply tell them how much it meant to you and why.

Titles..... How to Address -

Most Americans call one another by their first names, or a nickname, rather than a formal title. Some exceptions would include professors and teachers who usually go by their title (Dr. Smith or Professor Smith), doctors who are addressed as Dr. Smith and possibly religious leaders who use their title as part of their name (Pastor or Reverend Smith). Otherwise acquaintances, friends and peers usually address each other informally, using only their first names. If in doubt, ask.

Conversation topics -

Conversation topics such as religion, politics, race, income, etc. may be difficult to navigate in conversations. Some Americans are not comfortable with discussing these topics, while others are. It depends on the person and the setting. Be mindful and observant of both.

Eye Contact -

In combination with facial expression, we use eye contact to provide important social and emotional information to those around us. In some cultures, direct eye contact communicates rudeness and aggression, while in others it means the complete opposite. In the U.S. eye contact is used to establish interest or attention and to communicate sincerity and authenticity.

Depending on the situation, different rules apply. For example, in an elevator or on the street, people generally do not make eye contact for more than a second, if at all. When holding a general conversation, make visual contact for a few seconds and then periodically break it. People often look away when gathering their thoughts or thinking about what to say and then re-establish eye contact when they begin to express their thoughts. As a listener, you should maintain more eye contact than you do when talking; it communicates your interest in what the speaker has to say.

In the U.S., establishing eye contact when you meet someone is highly regarded. It demonstrates interest and attention, and helps you in committing their name and face to memory.

Non-Verbal Communication -

Nonverbal communication is the sending or receiving of messages without using words. The term *body language* describes this type of silent communication. Some forms of nonverbal communication include expression, posture, gesture or eye contact.

American sayings -

Slang

The informal words and expressions we refer to as *slang* often derive from more formal language that has undergone abbreviation or popularization to some degree. Slang often purposefully excludes those not considered part of a particular subgroup.

See a few examples of common *slang* from American culture below:

airhead (stupid person)	gross (disgusting)
beat (exhausted, tired)	guts (courage)
big mouth (talk too much)	I.D. (identification)
in (fashionable)	glitch (defect)
bombed (intoxicated)	jam (trouble)
booze (alcohol)	john (bathroom)

break (opportunity)	veg out (relax and do nothing)
bummed (depressed)	nuke (heat in the microwave)
catch some Z's (get some sleep)	piece of cake (easy)
cop (police officer)	pig out (overeat)
couch potato (lazy person)	pit stop (stop to go to the bathroom)
cram (study hard)	pro (professional)
cash (money)	racket (noise)
drag (boring)	screw around (waste time)
sharp (intelligent)	split (leave)
freebie (free)	

Regional Dialect-

According to social scientists, U.S. regional dialects can breakdown to anywhere from three to 24 varieties. Deciding where one dialect begins and another ends can prove tricky since gradual differences seem to occur rather than drastic ones. Also, various differences in dialect depend on factors like social class, gender, occupation and ethnicity, in addition to region.

The differences in the regional dialects in the U.S. largely come from a combination of who first settled that area and who migrated there. Dialect differences generally differ more from North to South than East to West because as settlers migrated west across the country, they took their dialects with them. Settlement of the western parts of this country generally occurred by many people from many places, resulting in less distinctive dialects than those east of the Mississippi River.

Social isolation also influences regional dialects. Those who live in more socially isolated groups (whether because of geographical boundaries like mountains or water, or because of immigrant settlements in urban cities) tend to develop more distinguishing speech patterns than those who interact with a larger number of people.

Depending on what part of the country you live in, you will hear people call carbonated drinks either pop or soda, or even a generic coke. Fireflies and lightning bugs are two names for the same insect, and you, y'all, you'uns and you guys offer different ways to address others in the second person plural.

You might notice grammatical differences by the structure of a sentence. Some Southerners would say "I might could mow the lawn today," meaning the same thing as "I could mow the lawn today." Or in Pennsylvania, people typically say "the car needs washed," instead of "the car needs to be washed."

Pronunciation causes the same words to sound different based on how someone pronounces them. In the South, the words “pin” and “pen” sound identical, and in the Northeast you might not hear the “r” in the word “car,” or you might hear a blurred “w” sound instead of a hard “r” sound in the word “born.” You might hear people say that Southerners speak with a drawl and Mid-Westerners have a nasal twang, or that people from certain areas speak more slowly than others.

Profanity-

The use of vulgar or offensive words to insult someone, emphasize something, or express aggression or disrespect is commonly known as swearing or cursing. Although some Americans use profanity in their everyday speech, it can offend others. In business and professional settings it should be avoided.

Note: Although derogatory (a critical or disrespectful attitude) language about groups of people may be heard in American television shows, music, films, the media, etc., the use of such language in everyday life may lead to negative consequences. It is recommended to avoid such language.

Shopping and Restaurants

Conway+ guide -

Produced by the Conway Area Chamber of Commerce, this is an annual guide to the city of Conway, available online (see link below), or in print at the Chamber of Commerce at 900 Oak St. in downtown Conway.

<http://conwayarkansas.org/pages/publications/community-profile-and-resource-guide/>

Conway+ guide includes information about local businesses and the four main shopping districts, which also include a variety of fine dining, casual eateries, and fast food restaurants:

- Downtown Conway (Exit 127 on I-40) - over 40 retail stores, including antiques, clothing, sporting goods, and more
- Conway Towne Center (Exit 125) - Cinemark movie theater, Office Depot, Urban Air Trampoline Park, and more
- Lewis Crossing (Exit 129) - Sam’s Club, Michael’s, Academy Sports, Petco, Bed, Bath, & Beyond, and more
- Conway Commons (Exit 127) - Target, T.J. Maxx, Home Depot, Old Navy, Belk, Kohl’s, and more

Some suggestions for Little Rock Food & Drink -

- The Root Café 1500 Main St
- Rock Town Distillery 1201 Main St
- South on Main 1304 South Main St
- Dave & Buster's 10900 Bass Pro Pkwy
- Lost Forty Brewing 501 Byrd St, Little Rock
- Doe's Eat Place 1023 W Markham St
- Sim's BBQ 2415 Broadway St
- Ciao Italian Restaurant 405 W 7th St
- Local Lime 17809 Chenal Pkwy
- Bravo Cucina Italiana 17815 Chenal Pkwy
- YaYa's Euro Bistro 17711 Chenal Pkwy
- Heights Taco & Tamale 5805 Kavanaugh Blvd
- Samantha's Tap Room & Wood Grill 322 Main St
- Three Fold Noodles & Dumpling 611 S Main St
- Cajun's Wharf 2400 Cantrell Rd
- Big Orange 17809 Chenal Pkwy
- At The Corner 201 E Markham St
- Saffron 12911 Cantrell Road
- Star of India 301 North Shackleford Road
- Taj Mahal 1520 Market Street
- Mehfil 10700 North Rodney Parham Road

Websites -

The websites www.tripadvisor.com and www.yelp.com are both useful for finding menus and reviews for different types of restaurants in any town in the U.S., including Conway.

Recreation/Entertainment

Local -

The **Conway+ guide** also includes information about the Conway bike share program, local and nearby parks and their features, indoor recreation opportunities, live music and performing arts as well as music lessons, and real estate. You may find the calendar of events useful for planning recreational activities as well. These include (among others)

- **Fall:** ArtsFest, EcoFest, and the Faulkner County Fair and parade
- **Winter:** Illuminate (tree lighting) and downtown Christmas parade

- **Spring:** Toad Suck Daze
- **Summer:** Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre

Conway Parks & Recreation (<https://www.conwayparks.com/>) has information about local parks, sports programs for youth and adults, and facilities. The Don Owens and McGee centers are both public recreation centers open for free use by Conway residents. These centers include amenities such as basketball courts, indoor tracks, meeting rooms, skate parks, and community gardens.

Don Owens Sports Complex
10 Lower Ridge Road

McGee Center
3800 College Avenue

UCA also provides access to many forms of recreation for students, faculty, and staff.

- The **HPER Center** - The on-campus fitness center includes an indoor track, a variety of fitness equipment, fitness classes, a swimming pool, racquetball courts, and outdoor recreation equipment rentals. Information about the facilities and who can use them is available online. (<https://uca.edu/campusrecreation/hper-center/>)
- The **COPA (Campus Outdoor Pursuits and Activities)** is located in the HPER Center. It is a place where the UCA community can rent out camping gear, bikes and register for upcoming courses that will make you better prepared for your next outdoor adventure! (<https://uca.edu/campusrecreation/copa/>)
- **Reynolds Performance Hall** - The on-campus performance hall hosts an annual calendar of events, including Broadway shows, touring musicians, public lectures, children's theater, and more. Information about faculty and staff discounted tickets is available online or from the box office. (<https://uca.edu/publicappearances/>)
- **UCA Outreach & Community Engagement** - Offers a variety of classes for all ages for leisure and professional or personal development, including culinary classes, community education classes, and camps. UCA faculty and staff receive a discount on eligible classes. (<https://uca.edu/outreach/>)
- **UCA Community Language School** - Offers language classes to the public. Schedules and languages offered vary, and information is available online and from the Languages, Linguistics, Literatures, and Cultures Department. (<https://uca.edu/wlan/community-language-school/>)
- **UCA Community School of Music** - Offers private and group instruction in a variety of musical instruments for all ages. Information about how to sign up is available online and from the Music Department. (<https://uca.edu/csm/>)
- **Edmond E. Griffin Planetarium** - The planetarium located on UCA's campus offers free public shows on a regular basis. The schedule of shows is available online or from the Physics & Astronomy Department. (<https://uca.edu/physics/planetarium/>)

- **UCA Athletics** - UCA has a variety of athletic events that community members attend as spectators, from beach volleyball to football. The full list of teams and game schedules is available online. Faculty and staff are eligible for free tickets to most games. (<https://uca.edu/athletics/>)

Central Arkansas Activities

Entertainment

- Oaklawn Racing & Gaming 2705 Central Ave., Hot Springs
- River Market E. Markham St., Little Rock
- Little Rock Zoo 1 Zoo Dr, Little Rock
- Verizon Arena 1 Verizon Arena Way, Little Rock
- Arkansas Skatium 1311 S Bowman Rd, Little Rock

Sight-seeing

- Big Dam Bridge 7600 Rebsamen Park Rd, Little Rock
- Riverfront Park 1 Riverfront Drive, Little Rock
- River Rail Electric Streetcar Downtown Little Rock
- Clinton Presidential Park Bridge 1200 President Clinton Avenue, LR

Museums

- William J. Clinton Presidential Library 1200 President Clinton Ave, LR
- Museum of Discovery 500 President Clinton Ave, LR
- Esse Purse Museum 1510 Main St, Little Rock
- Heifer Village (Heifer International) 1 World Ave, Little Rock
- Old State House Museum 300 W Markham St, Little Rock
- Arkansas Arts Center 501 E 9th St, Little Rock
- Historic Arkansas Museum 200 E 3rd St, Little Rock
- Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum 120 Riverfront Park Dr. NLR

Parks

The **state of Arkansas** is known for its natural beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities. There are numerous parks throughout the state, many which are within one hour of UCA, which offer an afternoon or even a weekend away from campus. At these facilities you can camp or stay in a cabin, go hiking or biking, swim or rent a boat, attend educational programs, and much more.

State Parks

You can learn more about all of the 52 state parks, including maps and lists of features, at <https://www.arkansasstateparks.com/>. Here is a list of some within an hour of campus-

Pinnacle Mountain State Park	11901 Pinnacle Valley Rd, Little Rock
Petit Jean State Park	1285 Petit Jean Road, Morrilton
Mount Nebo State Park	16728 State Highway 155, Dardanelle
Woolly Hollow State Park	82 Woolly Hollow Road, Greenbrier

Regional Parks

Cadron Settlement Park	6200 Highway 319W, Conway
Toad Suck Lock and Dam	93 Park Road, Bigelow
Maumelle Recreation Area	9009 Pinnacle Valley Road, Little Rock

Safety

No matter where you are in the U.S., you can always reach emergency personnel by phone by dialing 9-1-1. In the U.S., all firefighters are trained as first responders, and in case of an emergency, they will often be the first emergency personnel at the scene, followed by police and ambulance, if needed.

In Conway, there are several local law enforcement agencies, including the UCA Police Department, Conway Police Department, and Faulkner County Sheriff's Office, dedicated to protecting the safety of Conway residents.

All members of the UCA community are encouraged to sign up for alerts from the UCA Police Department to learn about emergencies on campus, including safety concerns and inclement weather. You can sign up for UCAAlert mass notification system through your MyUCA website.

The UCA Police Department also offers a Safe@UCA app, available for free download on your mobile device. It is a great resource that can notify you about emergency situations, has emergency procedures about how to protect yourself during



certain events, and it also allows you to receive alerts, track shuttles, and request an escort or ride home if you are walking on campus at night.

One concern that many international visitors to and residents of the U.S. have is the prevalence of firearms. While laws regulating firearms and who can carry

them differ by state, if you see a firearm and are concerned about your safety, you can always call local law enforcement.

The UCA Police Department is always available by calling 501-450-3111 non-emergency, or 911 for an emergency.

Policy for Lawful Permanent Residency Petitions

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS
(courtesy UCA General Counsel's Office)

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all University of Central Arkansas (UCA) staff and faculty.

PURPOSE:

The term lawful permanent resident (LPR) is used to describe a foreign national who has been granted the privilege of residing permanently in the United States. This status is conferred via an I-551 stamp in the individual's passport and an I-551 card (commonly known as a "green card"). UCA, in some instances, serves as the sponsor for employer-based permanent residency petitions.

The purpose of the policy is to establish a campus procedure on the issue of permanent residency. The policy (1) clarifies UCA's role in supporting faculty, staff, and researchers who are petitioning to apply for permanent residency; (2) identifies eligibility for which UCA will consider providing employer-based permanent residency sponsorship; (3) establishes procedures for requesting and obtaining approval for the processing of employer-based permanent residency petitions; (4) establishes the

responsibility for payment of attorney's fees and filing fees; (6) addresses retention of outside counsel; and (7) addresses miscellaneous provisions.

All employer-based permanent residency petitions filed by UCA must adhere to the process and procedures given below.

UCA'S ROLE:

UCA will provide support, with the proper approvals, to faculty and to staff members seeking permanent-residency status under an EB-2 category. UCA reserves the right to determine, in consultation with its contracted legal counsel, acceptable cases for sponsorship under a different category, such as EB-1 or EB-3, if in the best interest of UCA.

For faculty, permanent-residency petitions will be processed based upon an official request by the department chair employing the foreign national, with approval from the college dean, and with the approval from the provost/executive vice president for academic affairs.

For staff, permanent-residency petitions will be processed based upon an official request by the immediate supervisor employing the foreign national, with approval from the director of the division employing the foreign national, and approval from the vice president over the area employing the foreign national.

ELIGIBILITY:

A petition for permanent residency may only be filed for an employee who serves in a permanent, full-time position and/or a tenured/tenure track position at UCA. Permanent is defined as those positions that are expected to continue indefinitely and in which the employee intends to remain indefinitely. "Adjunct," "Visiting," "Temporary," or "Interim" positions do not meet the definition of permanent.

The employee will be eligible to pursue permanent-residency status after being employed three full years with UCA. UCA reserves the right, in limited cases, to consult with contracted legal counsel to determine acceptable cases for sponsoring a permanent-residency petition prior to the three-full years of employment. The department chair (or immediate supervisor) may recommend sponsorship of the employee prior to the general three-year period if it is either required for on-going employment or is in the best interest of UCA.

PROCEDURE:

The following steps must be followed to initiate and to complete a request for permanent residency:

1. The department chair (or immediate supervisor) will initiate the “Authorization for Permanent Residence” Form. The department chair (or immediate supervisor) will also provide supporting documentation for the request such as rationale for the request, title of the position in question, credentials of the individual on whose behalf the petition will be filed, and a statement describing the individual’s abilities and qualifications. The department chair (or immediate supervisor) will submit the completed form to the college dean (or director of the division) for consideration. If approved by the college dean (or director of the division), the college dean (or director of the division) will submit the completed form to the provost/executive vice president for academic affairs (or vice president over the area) for consideration.
2. The authorization form will be sent to UCA’s legal counsel (or a designee of UCA’s legal counsel) upon approval of the chair (immediate supervisor), dean (director), and provost (vice president). UCA’s legal counsel (or a designee of UCA’s legal counsel) will notify contracted legal counsel and human resources of the request to petition for permanent residency.
3. Contracted legal counsel will provide a letter of representation designating his/her responsibilities and designating payment of fees by UCA and by the employee. The employee and the provost (or vice president) will sign the letter, which UCA’s legal counsel (or a designee of UCA’s legal counsel) will return to contracted legal counsel.
4. Contracted legal counsel (or a designee of UCA’s legal counsel) will request supporting information as necessary through UCA’s legal counsel.
5. UCA’s legal counsel (or a designee of UCA’s legal counsel) will work with the employing department and the foreign national to obtain all necessary forms and supporting documentation as requested by the contracted legal counsel.
6. If advertising is necessary, UCA’s legal counsel in conjunction with the employing department will requests any necessary recruitment assistance.

ATTORNEY’S FEES AND USCIS FILING FEES:

Employees and UCA will share in the responsibility for all legal fees associated with permanent residency process.

UCA, as the employer sponsor, will cover all attorney expenses related to the Department of Labor Certification Process for PERM filings (both the Prevailing Wage Determination and the Labor Certification Application), and any additional fees that the employer is required to pay as required by law. For faculty, a designated university fund maintained by the provost/executive vice president for academic affairs will be used to pay the attorney expenses related to the Department of Labor Certification Process for

PERM filings (both the Prevailing Wage Determination and the Labor Certification Application). Support from this fund will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis until the funds allocated for the year have been exhausted.

The employee will be responsible for all attorney expenses and filing fees related to (a) the Immigration Petition (Form I-140) and (b) the Adjustment of Status (Form I-485).

All other fees are the responsibility of the department or foreign national. For example, and although not exhaustive, when an I-907 Premium Processing Fee is incurred in processing the I-140 Form, the department or foreign national will be responsible for the fee.

Unless required by law, UCA will not pay any costs associated with applications filed on behalf of dependents of the employee.

SELECTED COUNSEL:

A private attorney may be engaged to represent the foreign national in a permanent-residency petition as long as it is a self-petition. Employees choosing a self-petition to permanent residency may ask supervisors for letters of reference for their petition. The employee's department should confirm that the permanent-residency petition is not signed or filed on behalf of UCA by the employee in reliance on an existing or future position.

If it is an employer-based petition, UCA uses contracted legal counsel to advise and to coordinate the process of sponsoring foreign nationals for permanent residency. Only the designated legal counsel may be engaged to process a UCA sponsored employer-based permanent residency petition. UCA departments may not hire an immigration attorney to file an employer-based permanent residency petition.

Other Helpful Information -

All UCA employer-based permanent residency petitions filed by UCA are considered to be petitions controlled by UCA and, as permitted by law, may be withdrawn by UCA at any time.

Links to immigration information and forms on UCA General Counsel's website:

<https://uca.edu/legal/immigration/>

Climate

Arkansas has mild weather most of the year, but can experience very hot and humid summers (June - August) with temperatures reaching over 100F. During these months it is important to stay hydrated and drink plenty of water. Spring (March-May) is the wettest season and carries the highest chances of severe weather.

Severe thunderstorms are possible any time of year in Arkansas but are more frequent in the spring months and November. Storms can produce large hail capable of injuring those outdoors and produce winds strong enough to cause damage to buildings and topple trees. It is important to seek shelter indoors during a severe thunderstorm.

Tornadoes are possible at any time of the year in Arkansas but are more frequent in spring and November. A tornado is a rapidly rotating column of air that is in contact with the ground. They can destroy large buildings, uproot trees and hurl vehicles hundreds of yards.

When a tornado *watch* is issued it means the weather is capable of producing a tornado. When a tornado *warning* is issued it means a tornado has been spotted.

Being struck by flying debris is the biggest threat from tornadoes. When sheltering from a tornado, go to the lowest level of a building and away from windows and exterior walls. Each residential hall on campus has a designated shelter area. Other shelter areas on campus include basements in the following buildings: Burdick, Old Main, Student Center, and Lewis Science Center.

Flooding can occur in Arkansas anytime but is more likely during late spring and in the winter. This means a large amount of rain has fallen in a short amount of time. If you are driving and come across a flooded section of road, it is important to remember TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN. During floods, sections of road can be washed away, causing your vehicle to get stuck in dangerous waters. Do not drive over flooded roadways.



Winter Weather is possible during the winter months. This will include either snow, sleet, or ice. If conditions are bad enough, a decision might be made to cancel classes for the day. If you must be outside in winter weather, be sure to cover any exposed skin and wear your clothing in layers to protect from the cold.

How to receive Weather Alerts: Arkansas' weather can be followed by downloading a weather application on your mobile phone or by watching local channels or "The Weather Channel".



You can sign up to receive weather alerts such as Tornado Warnings, by signing up for UCAAlert through the myUCA portal. UCAAlert is a way for the University to warn you about issues on campus that may impact your safety or campus closings. This will include receiving an email or text message to notify you of these events and protective actions. The UCA Campus also has outdoor warning sirens that will sound in the event of an emergency.

The Office of International Engagement

The Office of International Engagement (IE), while primarily serving students and scholars on F and J visas, is happy to help any international staff and faculty member that we can. Our office is located in McCastlain Hall 109, and our office hours are 8:00 am-4:30 pm Monday thru Friday.

Shopping Shuttle Services -

One of the main services we offer that may be of interest to you is our shopping shuttles. International Engagement schedules weekly and monthly shopping shuttles for our students. These shuttles travel to both local shopping centers in Conway and make regular trips to Little Rock as well. Local shuttles are available for anyone who wishes to take them. Little Rock shuttles do require you to sign up beforehand. This can be done in the IE office at your convenience. You can view the current shuttle schedule at <https://uca.edu/international/shuttles/>.

Cultural Programming, Events, and Activities -

In addition to our shopping shuttles, International Engagement sponsors several different events and programs year round. IE typically schedules one fun trip per month: these activities vary in cost from free to expensive, can be both local and several hours away, and may be educational or purely entertaining. In the past we have taken trips to museums, fireworks shows, state parks, amusement parks, and professional sporting events. These are open for all international staff and faculty. Participants are also required to sign up for these trips ahead of time in the IE office.

We also schedule regular cultural events on campus! Our office works with the university's cultural student groups to host and publicize events which celebrate the campus's rich diversity. Two of our regular events are *Conversation Partners* and *International Education Week*.

Conversation Partners is a program that restarts each semester, where interested students, staff, and faculty members from one culture are paired with someone from a different culture. There is no set program, but each partnership is asked to commit to spend at least one hour each week together, learning about each other's culture. The hope is that they will spend even more time together and remain friends even after the semester ends. This program is sponsored by both International Engagement and UCA's Intensive English Program. You can see more at our website: <https://uca.edu/iep/conversation-partners/>

International Education Week is a national program that takes place each year in November. During this week International Engagement partners with several different student groups and UCA offices to have a variety of cultural events. Each year offers something different! <https://uca.edu/international/iew/>

All International Engagement programs are emailed to students each Monday. If you would like to be included, please email our office at international@uca.edu. You can also follow up on social media at:

[facebook.com/ucainternational](https://www.facebook.com/ucainternational)

twitter.com/ucaie

[instagram.com/ucaie](https://www.instagram.com/ucaie)

Culture Shock and Anxiety

Living in another country can be exciting and provide opportunities to do and see new things. It can also be quite unsettling. You are facing a different language, different foods, and different ways of doing things. It takes a lot of attention and concentration to do things in the new country that were automatic at home, such as follow a conversation, shop for food, open a bank account, or drive a car. Thus, you may find that you are quite tired at first, and not just because of jet lag. You may feel anxious, sad, or irritable. You may experience such feelings just after arriving, or they may occur later on. This is a normal response to being in a place where nearly everything is unfamiliar and it takes more time and energy to do everyday things. Be patient with yourself, and try to establish a daily routine that includes at least 7-8 hours of sleep a night, healthy eating, time for relaxation, and physical activity. All of these will help your mind and body to settle down, reducing anxiety, as things slowly start to feel familiar.

Counseling Services -

You will hopefully build a support network of friends and colleagues during your time here. Often, simply talking with one of them about your anxiety or a specific problem will help you feel better and figure things out. If that is not effective, however, UCA has a Counseling Center with staff trained to help people sort out feelings and gain perspective on things going on in life, so you feel less stressed. In some cultures, counseling is something only people with very serious problems do; that is not the case in America. While the Counseling Center staff certainly can help a person with serious mental health issues, we also work with less severe and/or temporary problems. We provide individual, group, and couples counseling, as well as crisis intervention and psychiatric services (if someone would benefit from taking medication). We are located in the Student Health Building on the third floor. The following is a link to our webpage: www.uca.edu/counseling.

Education

Arkansas compulsory school attendance age. Arkansas law requires children ages 5–17 as of August 1 to attend school. If a child has not reached his 6th birthday by August 1, parents can waive attendance requirements for one year. However, the parent must file a kindergarten waiver using a Department of Education form.

Public Schools (no fee for attendance) -

If you have children who are school age you will want to register them with the local school district in order for them to attend school. Each school district listed has their own individual school zone map. These zoning maps will let you know what school your child will attend based on where your residence is located. It is best to contact the school district you reside in to find out the appropriate registration process for your child.

New Student Registration Information -

Conway Public Schools <http://www.conwayschools.org/new-student-registration.html>

Greenbrier Public Schools https://www.greenbrierschools.org/24805_1

Vilonia Public Schools <https://www.viloniaschools.org/registration>

Mayflower Public Schools <https://www.mayflower.school/23448>

Wooster Public Schools <http://www.woostercityschools.org/district/content-page/registration>

Private Schools (fee for attendance)-

These schools require a financial commitment from the family in order for your child to attend.

Conway Christian School www.conwaychristianschool.org

St. Joseph School www.stjosephconway.org

Day Care and Preschools -

If your child is not old enough to attend school you might be interested in enrolling them in day care or preschool. These facilities require a fee for their services. Many of these facilities also have services for after-school care or summer care for children who are school age but still require care while the public and private schools are closed.

Day Care and Pre-Schools	All Conway locations	Telephone number
Sugar Bear Child Care	364 Denison St.	501-327-8603
Conway Cradle Care	2400 Prince St.	501-730-0017
Community Action Program	1865 Lucille St	501-329-2169
Faulkner County Day School Inc	1700 South Blvd.	501-329-8102
CAPCA Headstart	630 E Robins St.	501-730-0121
Meadowlake Day School	2690 Meadowlake Road	501-327-2592
Little Miracles Daycare	1262 Spencer St.	313-574-5581
Kiddie Kare Christian Child Care	1511 Bruce St.	501-327-3695
Quality Child Care	790 E German Lane	501-327-6363
Children's Center	2611 Prince St.	501-336-8881
Johnstons Family Day Care	130 Conway Blvd	501-327-0104
Little Stinkers Daycare Inc	1157 Watkins St.	501-205-8759
Kids World Childcare Center	1050 Holiday Dr.	501-548-0038
Childcare Network	1150 AR-365	501-328-5075
Sunshine Inn Child Care	814 Spruce St.	501-548-0038
Over the Rainbow Childcare	624 Spruce St.	501-329-0038
Christian Care at Conway	1150 N Museum Rd.	501-548-0008
MS Carries Day School	4000 W Tyler St.	501-513-0123
Kidz University	2130 Spring Valley Dr.	501-327-7171

1st United Methodist Church Early Childhood Center and Summer Adventure Camp	1610 Prince Street	501-329-1467
Childcare Network	2611 Prince St.	501-336-8881
Laugh & learn Child Care Inc	2425 Tyler St.	501-504-6991
UCA Child Study Center	115 Farris Rd.	501-450-3356
Smart Start Christian Academy	3005 Dave Ward Dr.	501-358-3869
Abundant Blessing Christian	487 Lee Andrew Ln.	501-327-0773
Snuggle Bug Café	12 Jetta Circle	501-327-5309
Little Dumpling	9 Odom Rd.	501-764-4142
Lily Pad Learning Center	4 Dee Ln.	501-450-6332
Lynda Horton Daycare	7 Summerfield Dr.	501-327-8149
Woodland Heights Christian Preschool	4215 Prince St.	501-329-4038
Pediatrics Plus- Conway	2740 College Ave.	501-329-5459
Ms Carol's Daycare	189 Sunny Gap Rd.	501-513-1895
Miss Mary's Day Care	3235 Lakeview Dr.	501-327-4980
Kidco Early Education	1150 AR-365	501-342-1690
Central Christian Academy	1250 Hogan Ln.	501-327-5437
Lollipop Kids Pre-School Day Care	183 Sunny Gap Rd.	501-932-6554
Mommies Inc	1630 Appalachain Dr.	501-960-8408
Conway Montessori School	575 Club Ln.	501-327-6460
First Presbyterian Pre-School	2400 Prince St.	501-513-9881
Caring Hands Early Development Center	6 Foxmoor Circle	501-327-6322
Sallie Cone Preschool	1629 South Blvd.	501-450-6693
Grace Learning Center	1075 Hogan Ln.	501-404-8816
Little Scholars Christian Academy of Conway	1250 Hogan Ln.	501-327-5437