# **Table of Contents**

Table of Contents	1	
Cultural Information	2-3	
American Classroom	4	
Job Availability	5	
Taxes	6	
Meal Plans	1	
Campus Resources	8	
Campus Harvest/Campus Closet	9	
Off Campus Housing	10-12	
Housing Timeline	13	
Recreation/Immersion Trips	14	
Service Learning	15	
Blugold Connect	16	
International Student Association	17	
Social Media and Apps	18	
Transportation	19	
Restaurants	20-21	
Events on Campus	22	
Events off Campus	23	
UW-EC Events	24	

## **Cultural Info**

American culture is unique because the United States is so large and includes backgrounds and cultures from all over the world. Here are some general guidelines to help navigate living in the United States and specifically in Wisconsin.

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Credit cards/bank cards over cash is more common.

Tipping in the United States, 15-20% is expected for meals, taxis, haircuts, etc.

American's like their personal space – leave about an arm's distance between you until you know them well. It is also not common to share tables so ask before joining someone else.

**FIPS** 

**One Arm** 

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Stores and shops do not barter for prices. The prices are set and depending on the state include tax. Several students serve in the military at UWEC, so don't be surprised if you see some individuals around campus in uniform as they are doing training for different military branches.

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The legal drinking age is 21 in the US.

When walking on a sidewalk or entering a building, walk or use the doors on the right. People will pass on the left or leave the building on the left.

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911 is the emergency number in the US and can be called from any phone to connect you to emergency services.

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USA is huge! A flight to Los Angeles from Minneapolis (the closest airport) is 3 ½ hours and Minneapolis to New York is 3 hours.

## **American Classroom**

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#### Where to Go For Help

- Connect with other students in class
- Create a study group
- Visit the professor during posted office hours

#### What is Your Grade Based On?

- Class participation
- Homework assignments
- Other assignments/projects

\*Be sure to read through the syllabus to find this information

#### What is in the syllabus?

- Professor's contact information
- Professor's office location and open hours for questions
- Expectations in that class

### **Classroom Culture**

- Be early for class, about 10 minutes
- Do not use your cell phone
- Notify professor if you are going to miss class
- Join in classroom discussions
- Become friends with others in same class
- Working in groups is common

### **Communication with Professors**

- Ask professor what they preferred to be called.
- Some like to be called by their given name, their family name, Doctor, or Professor.

### **Email Customs with Professors**

- Include a proper greeting
- Be specific with which class and section you are emailing about (listed on the syllabus)

#### **Academic Integrity**

- Students are expected to do their own work
- They cannot use information from others without including where they found it

- Get notes if you have to miss a class from other students
- Use the Academic Skills Center and Tutoring
- Presentations
- Exams
- Penalties for not meeting the expectations
- Grade information
- Outline of assignments
- Most assignments and reading are done outside of class (check the syllabus for information about assignment due dates)
- Each class might have a different teaching method

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- If they do not tell you on the first day, use Professor and their family name
- No two classes will be the same so be sure to remember or write down information for each class.
- Ask specific questions or provide information they will need
- Cheating is not allowed including unapproved group work
- Ask questions about academic honesty of your professor to avoid consequences

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# **Jobs On Campus**

International students looking for a job on campus have quite a few options. Students in the past have worked in the following areas:



**Sodexo/Dining Services** Food service which could include being a cashier, making food, serving at larger events, and much more.



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Custodial Services Cleaning within different buildings on campus or in the residence halls.



### Learning and Technology Services

Assisting students and staff with technology questions and needs.



### Facilities Management Helping with everything within

different buildings including repairs, moving furniture, or even helping maintain the gardens of campus.



### Usher Corps

Serving as a helper at larger events by taking tickets, helping guests find their seats, and more.



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### Residence Halls/Housing and Residence Life

Students have worked as Resident Assistants, security officials, front desk staff, and other positions of the halls, and other tasks within Housing and Residence Life.

You can find jobs using the tool Handshake (http://www.uwec.joinhandshake.com).

For assistance contact Career Services at 715-836-3487 or arcc@uwec.edu.

There are times that "work study" might be used in a more general sense to describe on campus jobs.

You can always contact the office that posted the job opening to confirm whether or not you must have a work study award to be eligible for the job.

Make sure your employment is compliant with your Visa status!

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### **Event Production Crew**

Providing event support including lighting, sound, and technology for events on campus and off.

Some on campus jobs are designated as "work study" positions. Work study awards are part of federal financial aid packages and are only available to U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

As an F-1 or J-1 student, generally you are not eligible for a work study position and should not apply.

### **Taxes**

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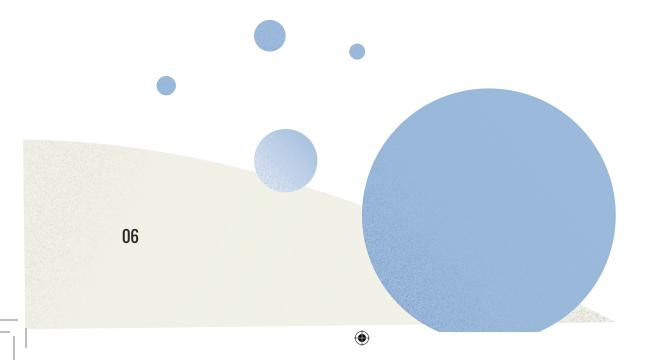
All international students who were in the US anytime in the previous year, must complete and file Federal and Wisconsin state tax forms by April 15th. It is advised to make copies of all of your tax forms.

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Please note that the CIE staff are NOT trained tax professionals, we are legally prohibited from advising you on taxes beyond the information below. Additional information that might be useful to you is located here: https:// www.internationalstudent.com/tax/ (Note: this site is not endorsed, sponsored, or affiliated with UWEC, but provided as a possible resource for you. Professional advice is always most reliable). Almost all international students CANNOT USE TURBO TAX. We highly recommend that you use Sprintax and it is specifically for international students where Turbotax is only for US Citizens.

**Important Deadline: April 15th** 

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## **Meal Plans**

There are different meal plans available for students that live on campus or that live off of campus.

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Meal plan dollars are used as cash equivalent to make dining purchases at any campus dining location.

All plans include some meal plan dollars. They have no cash value and expire at the end of each semester.



Block meals are predetermined meals for students. There are 25 block meals from which to choose.

Additional block meals can be purchased in person at Blugold Card Services, in blocks of 20 for \$150. Unused additional block meals don't expire until your relationship with UWEC ends.

Platinum Meal Plan \$1,565 per semester Dine on upper or	Upper Campus Meal Plan \$1,410 per semester Dine on upper	20 - Block Meal Plan \$150 Dine on upper or	50/50 Meal Plan \$425 Dine on upper or		
lower campus	campus	lower campus	lower campus		
Lower	Declining	60 - Block	Blugold		
Campus	Balance	Meal	Diner's		
Meal	Meal	Plan	Club		
Plan	Plan				
\$1,445 per semester	\$1,400 per semester	\$550 per semester	Price variable		
Dine on upper or	Dine on upper or	Dine on upper or	Dine on upper or		
lower campus	lower campus	lower campus	lower campus		

https://www.uwec.edu/campus-life/housing-dining/dining/meal-plans/

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Hot water is available for free in Marketplace Cafe in Davies Center and Einstein's in Centennial Hall.

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## **Resources on Campus**

There are many offices outside the Center for International Education that can help you while you are a student at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Here are a few and what they provide:

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### **Dean of Students Office**

Help with personal emergencies including academic concerns and illnesses, crisis services, conflict resolutions, and general advice.

### **Center for Writing Excellence**

One-on-one help with writing assignments and projects.

### **Student Health Services**

Free or low-cost healthcare and support for physical and mental health. (Translations available).

### **Career Services**

Help students market their skills and experiences, identify possible internships and jobs, prepare for job applications and processes, and learn how to evaluate and negotiate job offers.

### Legal Services (Student Senate)

Low-cost legal advice including personal injury, landlord issues, small claims and more.

### **Office of Multicultural Affairs**

Supporting multicultural students, celebrating cultures, and connecting multicultural students to resources and opportunities.

### BIRT

A response team to help prevent additional incidents of offensive or hurtful actions and words towards another person based on age, race, religion, sex, color, national origin, etc.

### Academic Skills Center

Academic support including tutoring, additional test time, and facilitated group study.

### **McIntyre Library**

Studying space, research help and tools, and useful materials needed for projects.

#### **Counseling Services**

Free, confidential services for students including emotional, social, and mental support. (Translations available)

### Housing and Residence Life

Help with on-campus living concerns, questions, and support.

### **LTS Help Desk**

Technology support for all students.

#### **Blugold Central**

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Central place to pay your campus bills, add or drop courses, get help with parking and more.

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#### **Gender and Sexuality Resource Center**

The GSRC provides a network of support for the LGBTQIA+ campus community. This office provides active outreach, event programming, and educational opportunities while supporting students of marginalized identities.

https://www.uwec.edu/diversity/bias-incident-response/

# Campus Harvest & Campus Closet

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### **Campus Harvest**

An on-campus food pantry that provides food assistance to any UW-Eau Claire student. The Campus Harvest provides nutritional options for students when it may be challenging to afford food. Students can pick out healthy food options at no cost to them! Students can visit up to once a week just by showing their UW-Eau Claire student ID.

### **Campus Closet**

A resource that is full of free, professional clothing. Set up like a small clothing store, the Campus Closet allows UW-Eau Claire students to find professional items to wear to interviews, presentations, and job opportunities without worrying about the cost. New or gently worn items for all are available for free with your UW-Eau Claire student ID.

The Campus Harvest and Campus Closet are run by student volunteers and all items are donated.

#### **Regular Semester Hours:**

Tuesday: 3-5 p.m.

Wednesday: 2-4 p.m.

Thursday: 3-5 p.m.

Located in the basement level of Brewer Hall, Room 49

## **Off Campus Housing**

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#### **Things to Consider**

- Can you afford it?
- Do you know who you want to live with or who would be a good roommate(s)?
- Think about the home environment you would want
- How you will share costs and items in the home?

#### Looking for and Viewing Potential Rentals

- Craigslist.com
- Local realtors newspaper classified ads (Leader Telegram)

- Other house rules that you should set up together
- Am I willing to take on the extra responsibility?
- How will I get to campus? (Walk, bike, drive, bus?)
- Am I aware of city codes that might affect me and my rental?

• Bulletin Boards in public locations (Davies Center, Restaurants, Coffee Shops, etc.)

### When looking at a potential property online or in person consider the following

- Location
  - How far away from campus is it?
  - Is there a bus stop close by?
  - Are there other students nearby or families?
- Safety
  - Would you feel comfortable living there during the day and at night?
  - Are there smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors?
  - o Is it well lit and windows are lockable?
  - Is there a fire exit from the unit?
- Quality
  - Is there parking available?
  - Are there laundry facilities provided?
  - Are all appliances (stove, refrigerator, etc.) working?
  - Is the plumbing working? Check toilets and faucets.
  - Is there enough storage space?
  - Are the ceilings and walls in good condition?
  - Is there any evidence of pests or previous damage?

#### Maintenance

- Who do I call if there is an emergency in my property?
- When can my landlord enter my property?

- Lease Agreements
  - What is the minimum and maximum length of the lease?
  - Is subletting allowed? If yes, who is responsible? (Subletting is passing your lease onto another person so they take over your spot in the rental.)

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- Are there penalties for violations of the lease?
- Cost
  - How much is rent and when is rent due?
  - How much is the security deposit? (Security deposit is the amount of money you give the landlord when first signing the lease in case there are damages when you move out of the rental. You get this
  - money back if there are no damages.)
    How does the landlord expect to be paid? (One check? Separate payments per person?)
  - What is included in rent? (water, garbage, etc.)
  - What are the late fees if rent is not paid on time?

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### Lease Basics

 What is a lease? A lease is a legal document outlining the terms under which one party agrees to rent property from another. A lease guarantees the renter use of a property and guarantees the property owner regular payments from the renter for a specified length of time. The lease defines rental terms, rules, and expectations. Both the renter and the property owner must uphold the terms of the contract for the lease to remain valid. Read your lease carefully before signing.

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- When do leases normally run? In Eau Claire, most student rentals are a 1-year lease beginning in June. However, if you need a little more flexibility there are 6-month and monthly leases out there.
- If you have questions about your lease or any legal question, students can set up an appointment on campus with an attorney through Student Senate (studentlegal@uwec.edu). A \$10 first-time fee is charged, and \$5 per appointment after on the same issue.

### **Rental Checklist**

When moving into a new property, always go through a checklist of each room and document everything that could be an issue when you move out. Be detailed and take pictures with a time stamp to protect your security deposit. Check and note the condition of:

- Walls
- Ceilina
- Floors/Carpet
- Windows/Screens Sink Baseboards
  - Tub/Shower

Faucet

• Other items within the property or outside of it

### **Tenant Rights**

These are the minimum requirements that must be met for any property in Eau Claire:

- Units must be clean and sanitary prior to moving in.
- Inspection of a unit can be performed with 12 hours notice prior to entering the unit.
- Any corrections deemed necessary through inspection must be completed within 30 days.
- A working kitchen sink and sanitary sewer system is required.
- Bathrooms must have a working flush water closet, a lavatory basin and a bathtub or shower.
- Ground level units must have 2 door exits as a means of escape in an emergency.
- Windows, skylights, exterior doors, and basement hatchways shall be reasonably weather tight, watertight, secure, and rodent proof.
- Landlords/owners are responsible for insect/rodent extermination.
- Landlords/owners are responsible for cleaning of public/shared areas.
- Every bedroom must have at least one window or door that opens to the outdoors.
- Every bathroom must have a window that opens or an exhaust fan.
- All plumbing fixtures must be maintained in a safe, sanitary and functional condition, free from obstructions, leaks, and defects.
- Units must have hot running water.
- Units must have permanent heating that can maintain 70° F.
- Smoke alarms must be installed in any building occupied for sleeping purposes.

- Electrical Outlets Doors Light Fixtures
  - Appliances
  - Countertops
  - Cabinets/Drawers Closets
- Drivewav Sidewalk
- Lawn

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Porch/Patio



# **Off Campus Housing (Cont.d)**

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### Landlord Must Disclose

- Housing code violations they have been notified of but have not been corrected.
- Structural defects, a lack of hot or cold running water, serious plumbing, or electrical problems, and other hazards.
- How the utility charges will be divided if the apartment complex is one of several not individually metered.

Electricity/Gas

• Xcel Energy

 A landlord has the right to inspect, repair, and show the premises at reasonable times. Except for emergency situations, the landlord may only enter after a 12-hour advance notice unless you allow entry on shorter notice.

Water/Sewer

• City of Eau Claire:

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715-839-4954

### **Other Costs**

- Garbage/Recycling:
  - Advanced Disposal
  - BOXX Sanitation
  - Waste Management

#### Safety

Remember to always be safe when you are living off campus. Here are some ideas to keep in mind:

- Get to know your neighbors and let them know when you are going to be gone
- Make an escape plan in case of emergencies
- Clean the lint trap of your clothes dryer regularly
- Never ignore a fire alarm
- Do not overload outlets
- If you are gone for school breaks:
  - Make sure all windows and doors are locked
  - Hide valuable items so they are not visible from windows
  - Contact the post office to hold your mail while you are gone
  - · Leave a few lights on using a timer to create the image that you are home
  - Keep heat on during winter months so water pipes do not freeze or break

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• Have someone clear away snow so it looks like you are home

In case of any emergency, call 9-1-1 from any phone

# **Housing Timeline**

### **On-Campus Timeline**

On-campus students have access to a portal that guides them through the process of living in the residence halls. Housing and Residence Llfe has different resources that provide roomate information, dates for applying for next year's on-campus housing, forms to apply for staying on-campus over break periods, policies you need to know when you live in the residence halls, and much more. You can find it all here:

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http://www.uwec.edu/campus-life/housing-dining/housing/current-students/

Be sure to check the dates and times carefully because they can vary each semester.

### **Off-Campus Timeline**

A typical off-campus lease runs from June 1st through mid to end of May. Students looking for off-campus housing start signing lease agreements around October or November for the next calendar year. The housing options get more expensive, farther from campus, or can be in bad shape the longer you wait, so it is best to start this process early.

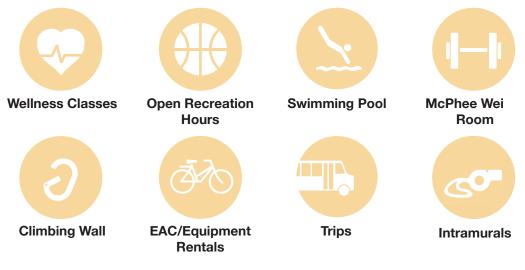
There are often opportunites to sub-lease or take over someone's lease for semesters or summer breaks. Utilitizng social media groups, different websites such as Craigslist.com, etc. can help interested students find off-campus options.

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## Recreation

Recreation and Sport Operations provides a variety of programs and services to meet the needs and interests of the University community. Specific programs include: Group Exercise, Fitness, Adventure Trips, Archery, Climbing Programs, Open Recreation, Massage Therapy, Intramurals, Sports Clubs, Special Events, Wellness Education, Billiards, and an Internship Program. https://www.uwec.edu/recreation/

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## **Immersion Trips**

At UW-Eau Claire, we believe in providing opportunities to engage in intercultural experiences outside the classroom. Explore the options listed below, as well as through the website links, to find an opportunity that can challenge and transform your college experience.

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https://www.uwec.edu/immersion/

Civil Rights Pilgrimage

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Alternative Spring Break Something New Alternative Spring Break ( )

https://www.uwec.edu/immersion/domestic-interculturalimmersion-experiences/dii-award-recipients/

## **Service Learning**

Service Learning is a graduation requirement at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire that allows students to become actively involved in their communities through service. Any student completing a degree through UW-Eau Claire is required to complete 30 hours of Service Learning. It can be completed as one 30 hour project or two 15 hour projects.

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Students can find projects online through the Service Learning website: https://www.uwec.edu/service-learning/students/

The projects list the time frame, requirements, skills needed, and who to contact.

All service learning projects require an on-campus mentor (a faculty or staff member) who will approve your project and complete a reflection activity once the project is complete.

Some students have done the following to earn their Service Learning:

- help the elderly learn new technology
- assist with a community event
- tutor children in a variety of subjects
- conduct a conservation project at a park or nature center
- work with a public interest organization
- work on a project that ties to their major or career goal
- and much more!

Students with questions about Service Learning should contact srvlearn@uwec.edu.

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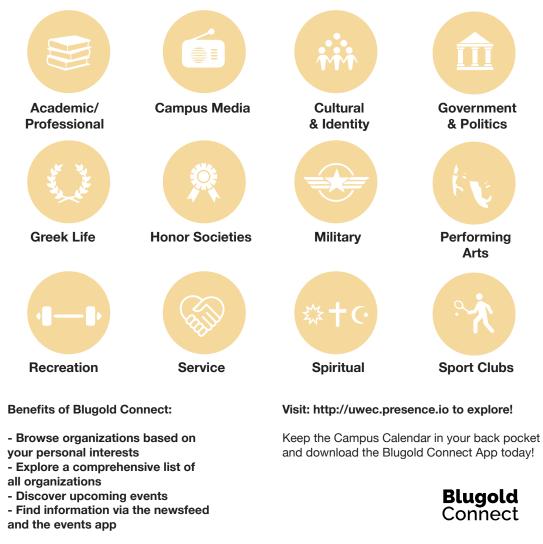
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### **Blugold Connect**

Blugold Connect is web-based program and downloadable application that encourages student involvement through organizations, programs, events, volunteerism and leadership. Students can connect to groups, keep track of their involvement, and learn about upcoming campus events.

Blugold Connect houses all of UW-Eau Claire's 230+ student organizations that cover a wide variety of interest areas including:

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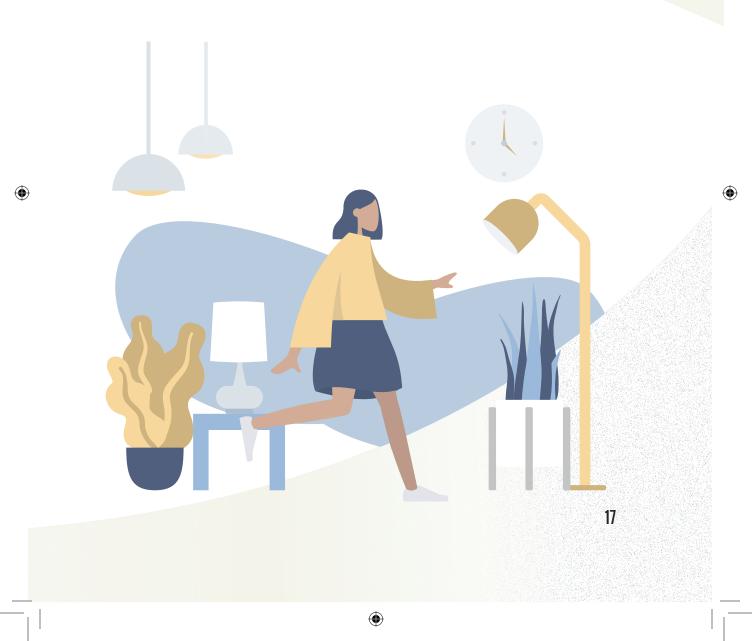
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### **International Student Association**

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The International Student Association (ISA) is a student organization that is designed to advocate for international students and support them during their time at UW-Eau Claire. This organization works on creating fun programs for international students and American students to come together, as well as, events that allow different cultures to be represented on campus and in the community. ISA will be involved with Culture Fest, will have members help guide incoming international students, serve as resources on campus, and much more!

Contact: Organization Advisors, Rachel Steuer (steuerra@uwec.edu) or Jackson Schmidtke (schmidjh@uwec.edu).



### **Social Media and Apps**

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### Applications to Download:



Blugold Connect App Helpful for getting involved on campus



Handshake App Helpful for getting a job



Navigate App Helpful for connecting with your Academic Advisor



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**DoubleMap App** Helpful for keeping track of the bus routes



Tapingo App Helpful for ordering food on campus

### **Streaming Services**



**MyTV10** Free online movie and TV streaming service for students on-campus

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https://mytv10.uwec.edu

### UW-Eau Claire (UWEC) Social Media

Facebook



University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire @uweauclaire



**Twitter** @UWEauClaire @ChancellorJim

Center for International Education (CIE) Social Media



Facebook UW-Eau Claire International Student Services @uweciss ( )



Instagram @uweccie

### WeChat 微信公众号

UWEC 威斯康星欧克莱尔



### **Transportation**

As a UW-Eau Claire student, you are able to use the Eau Claire bus system for free with your Blugold ID. The bus route allows students to get almost everywhere in the city limits including restaurants, shopping areas, and other services.



### **Bus Stops**

All passengers are required to board buses at the areas designated by the ECT Bus Stop signs. The signs are located near the area where the bus will stop. If you wait by the sign this will help the driver understand that you are waiting for the bus. In the winter, please wait in the area that is safe for the driver to stop and allow you to board. This may be the corner or driveway that has been cleared of snow nearest to the sign. For your safety, do not attempt to climb piled snow in order to wait for the bus.

### **Boarding the Bus**

Please have your bus pass (Blugold ID) ready and wait for departing passengers before you board. Front seats should be reserved for elderly and disabled passengers. Remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop while riding.

#### **Transfer Tips**

All bus routes meet downtown at the Transfer Center. Transfers may only be made at the Transfer Center. To avoid missing a connection, notify the bus driver of the route to which the transfer will be made.

#### **Bus Etiquette**

Please keep these things in mind to ensure everyone has a safe and enjoyable ride:

• If no seats are available and standing is required, please stay behind the yellow line and hold on securely.

• Please reserve priority seats for people with disabilities and senior citizens; and offer your seat to those who need it when there are none available.

• Obey the law and instructions of your driver.

• Respect those around you and help keep our buses clean - please do not eat, drink, smoke, litter, or play audio/video equipment.

• Never use foul language.

• There are now designated smoking areas at the Transfer Center. These areas will be designated by signage.

• If you have to cross the street after getting off a bus, wait until the bus has pulled away from the bus stop.

#### **Planning a Route**

For help planning your route please call Eau Claire Transit at **715-839-5111**, use the trip planner, follow the live bus tracker at ecbus.org, or by downloading the DoubleMap app.

#### **Schedules**

Eau Claire Buses run from 6:00 am. - 10:00 p.m. Monday - Friday and 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Buses do not run on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

For information, please visit https://www.eauclairewi.gov/government/our-divisions/transit.

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## Restaurants

Eau Claire has a lot of great dining options! Here are just a few for you to explore:

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### **Dining Out on Water Street:**

	Burrachos mexican • • • • •				
	Dooley's Pub irish/american • • • • • •				
	El Patio mexican • • • • •				
	Erbert & Gerbert sub sandwiches				
	The Goat Coffee House coffee shop				
	Mogie's Pub american • • • • • •				
	The Nucleus american • • • • •				
	Racy D'lene's Coffee Lounge coffee shop				
	Roadside Ice Cream and Diner ice cream/American e e e				
	Subway sub sandwiches • • • • •				
Dir	Dining Out Downtown:				
	Acoustic Café coffee shop • • • • • •				
	The District Pub & Grill american • • • • •				
	ECDC coffee shop				
	Egg Roll Plus Hmong Restaurant hmong • • • • •				
	Galloway Grille american • • • •				
	Girolamo's Court 'n House Bar & Grill american • • • •				
	The Informalist midwest/American • • • • •				
	The Lakely midwest/American • • • •				
	The Livery Resturant & Saloon american • • •				
	Ninja japanese/chinese • • • • •				
	Olsen's Ice Cream ice cream/coffee shop				
	The Plus pizza/American • • • •				
	Ramone's Ice Cream Parlor ice cream				

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# **Things to Do On Campus**

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Events take place all year long on campus. Some places to look for activities and events include:

### The Lookout

Craft nights, karaoke, bingo, live music and more!

### **University Recreation**

Billiards, trips, archery, climbing wall, open swim, etc.

### **University Activities Commission**

Films, concerts, festivals, The Cabin, and more!

### Larger Events

Choir performances, Fire Ball, Homecoming, Viennese Ball, etc.

### **Artists Series/Forum Series**

International and national performers and professional speakers

### Student Organization Events

Our 230+ student organization host a wide variety of fun events like dances, speakers, performing arts, cultural celebrations, and much more!

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### Athletics

Cheer on Blugold teams all year long!

### Summer

Chalkfest, music in parks, summer cinema on the campus mall and more!

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Check the Campus Calendar to find out what is happening on campus!

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# **Things to Do Off Campus**

- The Plus comedy, trivia, open mic, live music, etc.
- The Lakely live music
- Acoustic live music
- Parks Carson Park, Mount Simon Park, Putnam Park, Phoenix Park, Owen Park, Halfmoon Beach, and many more!
- Chippewa Valley Museum history of this area in Wisconsin
- Chippewa State Trail scenic trail along the river
- Pablo Center entertainment center
- Bowling Wagner's Lanes and Bowl Winkle's
- Shopping Downtown and Oakwood Mall
- Movie Theaters Micon, Micon Downtown Budget Cinema and AMC Classic in the Oakwood Mall
- Action City/Chaos Water Park arcade, trampoline park, mini golf, laser tag, etc. and an attached water park
- Ferguson's Orchards apple picking, hayrides, corn maze, farm animals, etc.
- Irvine Park Zoo in Chippewa Falls, small zoo including a petting zoo
- Big Falls County Park picnic areas, waterfalls, fishing, beaches, etc.
- Hobbs Arena Open Skate ice skating in the winter
- Fitness Eau Claire has yoga studios, running organizations, hosts a marathon, many gyms, and other ways to stay in shape

#### Learn about other events in Eau Claire:

Eau Claire Events Calendar through Volume One (https://volumeone.org/events/calendar)

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- Visit Eau Claire (https://www.visiteauclaire.com/events/)
- Downtown Eau Claire, Inc. (https://www.downtowneauclaire.org/)

## **UW-Eau Claire Events**

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### September

Blugold Welcome, Blu's Organization Bash, Part Time Job Fair

October Homecoming, Halloween

November Gatsby Gala, Thanksgiving

### December

Holiday Concert, GeekCon

January Winter Break

### **February**

Blu's Organization Bash, The Fire Ball

### March

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**Spring Break** 

### April

Viennese Ball, Culture Fest

### May

Eau Claire Marathon/Blugold Mile

### Summer

Summer Cinema, Chalkfest, Music in the Park, Floating

