

International Orientation Guide



Capstone International Center
International Student & Scholar Services



Welcome to The University of Alabama!

Welcome to your first day at The University of Alabama! We are excited you are here, and the purpose of today's orientation is to provide you with the information you need to be successful at UA. Get ready to learn, make new friends, and start your UA experience. Roll Tide!

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Transportation

Bike

Register

Register your bike by logging into your MyBama account. If your bike is lost or stolen, report the theft to UAPD immediately. If your bike is registered, it is more likely to be returned to you.

Repair

The UA Outdoor Recreation Center offers a full service bike shop for UA students, faculty, and staff.

Rent

Need to rent a bicycle? Contact BAMA Bikes at (205)348-7045 located in the Outdoor Recreation Center to rent a bike for only \$15 a month.

Where to Ride

If there is a bike lane, ride with the traffic on the bike lane. When a bike lane is not available, cyclists should use the roadways, not sidewalks. Be aware of other vehicles and always use hand signals.

Where Not to Ride

Crosswalks, sidewalks, and areas such as the Quad or Crimson Promenade are for pedestrians only. If a cyclist must use a crosswalk or sidewalk, they should walk across on foot with the bike.

Obey the Laws

Cyclists must obey all traffic laws. Always stop at stop signs, traffic lights, yield to pedestrians, and signal when turning. Refer to UA's Bike Information for policy and rules regarding riding a bike.



Bus

The University of Alabama offers a free bus service called The Crimson Ride which offers transportation throughout campus, and to some off-campus apartments and shopping options.

Tuscaloosa Transit Authority operates public buses in Tuscaloosa and offers rides throughout Tuscaloosa for \$2 per ride. Make sure to have exact change because the bus driver cannot give you change on the bus.

Download the TransLoc Rider App to track the buses in real time and know when the next bus is coming to your bus stop.



Car

You may decide after you get to campus that you want to have your own car. Before purchasing or leasing a vehicle, do some research to determine the value and quality of the car. Some good websites to consult include [CARFAX](#), [Kelly Blue Book](#), and [Consumer Reports](#). Unlike most shopping experiences in the US, it is actually acceptable and expected to bargain when purchasing a car. Each car dealer may also offer the same car for a different price, so it is a good idea to shop around before determining the best car dealership to buy or lease from. Do not just get advice from salespeople since it is their job to sell you a car. Also get advice from experienced car buyers who can help you know what to look for. If you are buying a used car, you may want to consider taking the car to a mechanic for a diagnostic check before purchasing the car.

In the state of Alabama, every car owner is required to buy liability insurance for their car. Car insurance is there to help cover the cost of damages, medical costs, and legal fees if you ever get into a car accident. Make sure to buy car insurance prior to going to the [Alabama Vehicle Registration Office](#) to purchase your car registration.

To park on campus, you will need to purchase a parking permit from [Parking Services](#) located in the Bus Hub. Students can either purchase their parking permit in person, at the Bus Hub, or register through their MyBama portal.

Off-Campus Food

Ethnic Restaurants

- [Sitar Indian Cuisine](#) (Indian/Vegetarian)
- [Zee Doner Kebab](#) (Halal)
- [Mediterranean Market and Restaurant](#) (Halal)
- [Quick Grill](#) (Mediterranean)
- [Big Daddy's Café](#) (Mediterranean)
- [Hooligans](#) (Mediterranean)
- [Mr. Chen's Authentic Chinese Cooking and Oriental Market](#)
- [Lai Lai](#) (Chinese)
- [Swen Chinese Restaurant](#)
- [Pho Town](#) (Vietnamese)
- [Ichiban](#) (Japanese)
- [Hokkaido](#) (Japanese)
- [Surin of Thailand](#)
- [Ruan Thai Restaurant](#)
- [301 Bistro](#) (German)
- [Taqueria La Michoacana](#)
- [Sazón Jarocho](#)
- [Antojitos Izcalli - Authentic Mexican Restaurant](#)

Ethnic Grocery Stores

- [Mediterranean Market and Restaurant](#)
- [Mr. Chen's Authentic Chinese Cooking and Oriental Market](#)
- [Asian Market](#)
- [Carniceria Y Tienda La Mexicana](#)
- [Tienda Latina El Puerto](#)
- [Guatemex](#)
- [Tienda La Espranza](#)



Academic Success at The University of Alabama

What are classes like?

Classes at UA may be very different from the experiences you have had so far. The U.S. university system can be very different from systems in other countries, and universities are very different from two-year or junior colleges. The classroom atmosphere is typically more informal than other countries. Students are expected to ask questions and participate in discussions during class. Lectures with some form of interaction make up the typical class period. The emphasis of most class sessions is the application of information you have learned from the lecture or from reading the course materials. This means that it is not sufficient to simply memorize information. You are expected to be able to use the knowledge you have gained to create specific outcomes.

What am I expected to do?

Individual responsibility is highly valued at UA. The expectation is that you will actively develop the skills and knowledge you need to be successful. This means that students at UA are expected to do the following:

- Review the [Academic Catalog](#)
- Have a thorough knowledge of the academic regulations and policies of the University
- Attend every class they register for
- Register for classes that maintain reasonable progress towards a degree
- Pursue successful completion of all registered courses
- Maintain a current mailing and local address in MyBama
- Maintain your personal information in UA Alerts and keep your Emergency Contacts up to date in MyBama
- Promptly respond to all communications from The University of Alabama
- Follow the [Code of Academic Conduct](#)



Code of Academic Conduct

The Code of Academic Conduct outlines the academic behavior expected of all students at The University of Alabama.

It states:

I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at The University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary procedures that will result from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will result in penalties as severe as indefinite suspension from the University.

Plagiarism is using someone else's ideas or information as your own. Remember, unless a project is designated as a group project, the expectation is that you will complete it without help. It is also important to remember that not telling everything about a situation or withholding part of the information is also considered fabrication or misrepresentation. It is not simply telling a lie. It is also leaving out the exact truth.

Three Ways to Guarantee Success

Adapting to a new educational system and a new country can seem very intimidating, but there are several things you can do to ensure that you will be successful here.



Keep Focused on Your Goals

Making friends, having a social life, and experiencing American culture are all important parts of your experience, but remember, you are here to get a degree! The classes at The University of Alabama are some of the most challenging courses you will find in the U.S., and it takes dedication to be successful. For every hour you spend in class, you should spend two hours a week preparing for the course. This means the average undergraduate should spend 24 to 30 hours outside of class reading, studying, and working on assignments. You should attend every class. If you skip class to spend time with friends or participate in a social activity, you are making a mistake!

Have a Plan

Make sure that you pay attention to your course syllabi. Once you know what you must accomplish, plan out your semester and create a weekly schedule that works for you. It is important that you spend time every week working on assignments. Waiting until the deadline and rushing an assignment is not a good strategy. Plan ahead for visits home so that you don't miss finals or advising appointments. It is very important that you plan your course registration ahead of time. Classes fill up quickly, so you need to be ready to register as soon as possible.

Take Responsibility for Your Education

It is not enough to just do what you are told to do. Your success is your responsibility. This means that you must actively participate in achieving your goals. You can do this in several ways. Introduce yourself to your professors and ask questions about things that you do not understand. Talk with your classmates about the course material. Visit the Capstone Center for Student Success if you need additional practice in a particular area.

Ten Common Student Mistakes



We all make mistakes when learning to live and learn in a new environment. We have put together a list of ten common mistakes new UA students make. Avoiding these common mistakes will make adjusting to UA much easier!

- 1. Cramming:** Waiting to study or work on a project until it is almost due is a serious mistake. Planning ahead and working on projects and studying consistently every week will greatly help you succeed in your classes.
- 2. Going to Class Unprepared:** Most classes have assigned readings and things to review for each class. Make sure you do these before class. Be prepared to explain what you are studying and be able to ask at least one thoughtful question about the material.
- 3. Only Studying Late at Night:** It is important to study during the day as well. The best time to review material from class is right after the class is over. Putting off studying to do other activities will hurt your chances of academic success.
- 4. Reading without Thinking:** Take notes while you read. To pass your courses, you will have to be able to use the material and explain it.
- 5. Waiting Too Long to Get Help:** If you are having trouble with a class, talk to your professor or adviser right away. See about getting tutoring or see if you need to change your study routine. Trying to get help after you are already failing a class does not work!
- 6. Not Listening in Class:** It is not enough to sit in class. Make sure you are actively listening and taking notes. If you are struggling with academic listening in English, there are supplemental classes available that can help improve your listening skills.
- 7. Not Participating in Class:** Take part in class discussions. When you are working in a group, make sure that you are contributing. Sitting at the front of a class is a great way to show a professor that you want to participate in the material.
- 8. Not Reviewing Notes Right After Class:** The best time to review your lecture notes is right after class. Make sure you understand what has happened in the class you just attended. If you don't know what is going on, you probably need to talk to the professor.
- 9. Not Spending Time Reviewing:** Notes will only help you if you review them. Take time every week to review and re-summarize your notes. Review your readings several times. Make sure that you understand what has happened in labs and projects.
- 10. Not Getting Involved:** There are many academic student organizations at UA. Your major or college probably has a group you can get involved with. This can provide an excellent support network for you while you are pursuing your degree.

Understanding American Culture



Individualism

Most Americans understand their identity as an individual separate from the greater context of society as a whole. This means that Americans tend to value their own accomplishments and the accomplishments of other individuals more than the accomplishments of their families or culture groups. Americans value independence. Most systems in America place the responsibility for success or failure on the individual and expect each person to handle their responsibilities on their own.

Equity

Successful individuals are admired and respected, but most Americans are not impressed by social standing, wealth, seniority, or titles. The idea that people are equal despite these factors is a very critical American ideal. The overall effect is that Americans treat each other very casually and informally. Americans will often say what they think even if this disagrees with what a wealthier, older, or more powerful person says.

Time Consciousness

Time is very important to American culture. Being late to a meeting or a scheduled event is considered very rude. Most professional and academic activities have strict schedules. The expectation is that everyone will be present, and the event or activity will start at the scheduled time.

Friendships

Friendship in America can be very confusing. Most Americans try to be friendly to everyone, but these friendships are casual and quick. Most Americans have many acquaintances who are people they know and will talk to but are not close friends. Most Americans have a small group of close friends. These are the people that they share personal problems and sensitive thoughts with. Americans also tend to sort their friends into different groups. This means Americans might have school friends, gym friends, work friends, and so on. Each group of friends is important, but the activities and depth of the relationships may vary greatly.

American Social Behavior

Greetings

It is common to greet people you know with “Hi,” “Hello,” “How are you?” or some other short acknowledgement of a person’s presence. The expected response is a short friendly statement matching what was initially said. For example, if you are greeted with “How are you?” the expected response might be, “I am fine.” The first time you meet someone, it is expected that you will exchange names. If the context is more formal, men will typically shake hands. Women may shake hands but often do not. Shaking hands is rare when meeting people informally.

Small Talk

At professional meetings and social gatherings, it is generally expected that people will engage in “small talk.” Small talk represents topics of discussion that are considered non-offensive and within general knowledge. This allows people to engage in light, friendly conversation and meet one another. Topics to avoid include: personal finances, religion, political beliefs and affiliations, sexuality and sexual behavior, and personal family issues. Ideal topics include things that all persons present would be able to contribute to, which is why sports, weather, and travel are such popular topics for small talk. For example, an in-depth description of specialized research is not a good topic for small talk unless the people around you have a general understanding of the research.

Social behavior among Americans varies depending on the group context, the familiarity of the people involved, and the setting. In general, the following information covers typical American behaviors in a casual professional environment, such as you will find at The University of Alabama.



Personal Space

Personal space is an area of space extending two to three feet (about an arm’s length) around a person. Personal space is extremely important to Americans. Unless you are very close to a person, you should never be within a person’s personal space in a professional or social setting. In addition, most Americans do not engage in physical contact outside of shaking hands. There are exceptions to this among friends, but in a professional or public setting, most Americans do not want to be touched. If you accidentally enter someone’s personal space or touch them, the polite thing to do is to say, “Excuse me,” or “I’m sorry.”

Profanity and Taboo Gestures

Profanity and taboo gestures are very common in American cultural media. Despite the casualness of this language in American movies, television, and music, most Americans are deeply offended if profanity is used at professional, academic, or social gatherings. Friends may use profanity when together to indicate a type of social closeness, but overall, this language should be avoided in professional settings. You can find the words, phrases, and gestures considered profane by searching the Simple English Wikipedia for “profanity.”

Drinking Alcohol

Alcohol is legal to consume in America if you are 21 years old. Not all Americans drink alcohol, but alcohol is often a part of professional and social gatherings. In American culture, there is never an obligation to drink alcohol, and over-consumption (drunkenness) should be avoided in professional situations. Never consume alcohol and drive a vehicle! It is dangerous and against the law. As an international student, your visa can be revoked for driving after consuming alcohol. On campus, students under the age of 21 are not permitted to consume alcohol or be in possession of alcohol. UA's [Alcohol Policy](#) outlines that students 21 and over are not permitted to give students under the age of 21 alcohol, and public intoxication for any age will not be tolerated.

Smoking

Smoking cigarettes is not common in American society, but many Americans do smoke. The University of Alabama campus is smoke-free, so you are not allowed to smoke anywhere on campus. Typically, Americans do not smoke inside buildings or houses, and it is very important to determine if you are in a place that allows smoking before lighting a cigarette. Smoking around children is generally considered rude even if you are outside. Cigarette butts should be extinguished and thrown away or placed in dedicated receptacles. Tossing cigarette butts on the ground is very rude and illegal in some places.



Interpersonal Relationships and Sexual Misconduct

Relationships in America

There are several important things to understand about having a healthy relationship while studying at The University of Alabama. You may choose to have a relationship or you may not, but there are several things that you need to be aware of.

Consent is Required

This means that you and your partner must both agree to the relationship and anything that happens during the relationship. You can choose to end a relationship at any time for any reason. In addition, direct consent is needed every time there is sex or physical touching of any kind. This includes hugging and kissing. This is not just a cultural value—it is the law!

Abusive Relationships and Stalking

It is against the law to hit, slap, or physically touch someone without their consent. This law includes spouses. Abuse can also be psychological. If your partner is threatening you or yelling at you, you may be in an emotionally abusive relationship. Stalking is where someone intentionally interacts with, and contacts another person because of their gender or interest in a relationship causing the targeted person to feel emotional distress or fear. Stalking is prohibited and should be reported.

How to Get Help

If you are experiencing a negative or abusive relationship, there are places you can get help.

- The University of Alabama Police Department at (205)348-5454 can help you right away if you are experiencing physical or sexual abuse.
- The [Women and Gender Resource Center](#) can provide counseling and advocacy. This is a completely free and confidential service.
- [UAct](#) is a place to report abusive behavior to The University of Alabama. This includes people who witness abusive behavior as well as victims.
- The [Title IX Office](#) (205)348-5496 is a place to report sexual harassment and misconduct.

Sexual Misconduct and Harassment

It is everyone's obligation to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault. The University of Alabama is committed to being a place free of these things. If you experience or observe harassment or sexual assault, it should be reported.

The University of Alabama's Sexual Misconduct Policy defines sexual harassment as:

...including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment or academic advancement; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance as an employee or student or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.



ISSS Sponsored Activities

International Coffee Hour

Throughout the academic year (August through May), Capstone International Center (CIC) and International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) host a weekly event, International Coffee Hour.

This social event is an excellent time to meet new people from across the globe while enjoying free coffee, tea, snacks, and internationally themed foods. All international and American students, scholars, faculty and staff are welcome to join.

International Coffee Hour is held on each Friday during fall and spring semesters, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Room 121 B.B. Comer Hall.



International Spouse Group

The International Spouse Group is designed to bring together the spouses (wives or husbands) of international students, faculty, staff and scholars for activities and interaction. At the International Spouse Group meeting spouses can meet new friends, talk about challenges and how to overcome them, and enjoy friendly conversations. During meetings, group members can offer support, learn new skills and share ideas that may assist you with adjustment while living in the U.S.

The International Spouse Group meets each Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the International Student & Scholar Services offices in 105 BB Comer Hall. Join the International Spouse Group Facebook group or email UofA.ISG@gmail.com for more information.



International Peer Advisory Council (IPAC)

IPAC is a volunteer-based organization designed to assist newly-arrived international students at UA with cultural adjustment, and to provide an opportunity for intercultural exchange among students, both international and American. IPAC members are a group of selected leaders among the International community at UA. IPAC members assist International Student & Scholar Services with International Student Check-In and Orientation each semester as well as social activities throughout the year.

To join IPAC, you must apply to become a member. IPAC applications open in late December, and will be due in mid-February.



International Organizations

Looking for a specific interest or to become a leader and make a difference? The University of Alabama offers over 600 different student organizations, some of which are dedicated to supporting international students and encouraging cultural exchange. If you would like to get involved, here are a few international organizations below that you may like.



- [The African Students Association \(ASA\)](#)
- [Alabama International Relations Club](#)
- [Arabic Culture Club](#)
- [The Association of Chinese Students & Scholars at UA \(ACSS\)](#)
- [Bangladesh Student Association](#)
- [Caribbean Students' Association](#)
- [Chinese Culture Club](#)
- [French Club](#)
- [German Club](#)
- [Golden Key International Honor Society](#)
- [Hispanic-Latino Association](#)
- [Indian Students Association of Tuscaloosa \(ISAT\)](#)
- [International Student Association \(ISA\)](#)
- [Iranian Students Association at UA](#)
- [Italian Club](#)
- [Korean Student Association](#)
- [Kuwait Students Organization](#)
- [Muslim Student Association](#)
- [Nepalese Student Association](#)
- [Russian and Eastern European Club](#)
- [Saudi Student Association](#)
- [Spanish Club LEAF](#)
- [The South Asian Society \(TSAS\)](#)
- [Turkish Student Association](#)
- [UA Vedic Society](#)
- [Vietnamese Student & Scholar Association](#)

International Student Life

Tuscaloosa's International Friends (TIF)

Moving to the U.S. can be overwhelming and some may experience cultural shock. As a new international student, learning about American culture can be difficult, but Tuscaloosa International Friends can help.

TIF is a community organization dedicated to providing opportunities for international visitors to learn more about life in the United States and for local residents to learn more about other cultures. Additionally, TIF offers international students the chance to be paired with a friendship family that can assist with learning about American culture and life in Tuscaloosa. Throughout the year, TIF sponsors picnics, dinners, and parties that allow people to come together and share their culture and customs with each other.



If you are interested in joining, please complete the [TIF application online](#), or fill out one in our office, 105 BB Comer Hall.



Global Café

Connect with the world right here in Tuscaloosa. Global Café, an initiative of the Center for Community-Based Partnerships, is a place where travelers from all over the world can strengthen their language skills and explore international customs. Throughout the year, Global Café offers lunchtime seminars and special events, as well as the Language Partner Program. The Language Partner Program gives internationals and Americans the opportunity to practice their foreign language conversation skills in a weekly one-on-one meeting. [Global Café](#) is located in Capital Hall, on the Bryce

Campus of The University of Alabama. If you would like to sign up for a language partner, or want more information about Global Café's events, please email beverly.hawk@ua.edu, check out their website globalcafe.ua.edu, or call (205)348-7392.





You may hear sirens go off on campus. These are our tornado sirens. When the tornado sirens go off, it means there is a tornado warning, which is when a tornado has been sighted or detected by radar.

What to do if there is a tornado warning:

- Move to the lowest level of the building and towards the center of the building away from windows and remain there until the tornado warning has expired.
- If you are outside, try to seek shelter inside.
- Stay tuned to radio or television for further weather updates.
- Remain inside until the severe weather leaves the Tuscaloosa area.



The tornado sirens are tested the first Wednesday of every month. Do not be alarmed, as this is only to make sure the tornado sirens are working properly.

Download the [UA Safety App](#) to stay updated during a campus emergency. The UA Safety App also features weather information, and you can stream UA Info's Radio Station, 92.5 FM. There is also a list of safety guidelines and resources, including the UA Safer Living Guide.



Safety and Police

Personal Safety

As a new student, you should always be aware of your personal safety here in the U.S. Always keep an eye on your valuables, and don't leave your possessions alone in public. After dark, travel on the enhanced-lighting routes on campus, which also have emergency blue-light phones along the path that can call UAPD, and follow these tips:

- Save UAPD's phone number **(205)348-5454** to your phone so you can call if you do not feel safe on campus
- Walk with a friend at night and use the recommended after-dark walking routes
- Use the Rave Guardian App as a personal alarm beacon
- Always keep your windows and doors locked
- Don't let anyone into your building that you don't know

Emergency

To report an emergency, call 911.

When to call 911:

- There is a fire
- A medical emergency such as someone passed out, choking, or seems suddenly sick and is having a hard time speaking or breathing
- When you witness a crime such as theft, violence, or burglary
- You are in or see a serious car accident

What to tell 911:

- Who needs help
- Where the emergency happened
- What happened

Police

The University of Alabama Police Department (UAPD) is a fully accredited agency with highly trained professional officers who are prepared to respond to emergencies of all types. The police are here to provide a safe and secure environment for all members of our community.

You may feel nervous when talking to the police, so here are some tips to help you in your interaction with police:

- If pulled over by the police, roll your window down and keep your hands on the steering wheel. Do not get out of the car unless the police tell you to.
- Stay calm and respectful at all times. Do not argue or yell.
- Keep your hands where the police can see them, and only reach for something after the police officer has granted you permission to reach for something.





What is culture shock?

Coming to the U.S. should be an exciting and positive experience. Prior to arriving, you may have thought about places to visit or things to do. Adapting to a new environment is not easy, and many assume that adjusting to the U.S. culture is very easy. For some this may be true, but others may experience culture shock.

Culture shock is when a person experiences a change in mood due to the absence of familiar surroundings, family, and friends. Common signs of culture shock may include:

- Sadness
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Frustration

What to do if you experience culture shock

If you experience any of the symptoms of culture shock, seek professional help. Please understand that you are not the only one experiencing culture shock, and The University of Alabama offers several resources that may be of great assistance to you. Practicing good mental health habits and stress management plays a key role in academic success.

Where can I go for help?

The Student Counseling Center helps students achieve academic success and personal growth through counseling and psychological services, and outreach and consultative services. Services are offered by mental health professionals and all counseling records are entirely confidential. To schedule an appointment, call (205)348-3863 or after hours at (205)348-5454. You can also visit their website at <http://counseling.ua.edu>.

What are the resources at UA?

One of UA's goals is to promote a healthy campus environment in hopes of enhancing students' well-being. During your stay at UA, maintaining a healthy lifestyle can become difficult and you may need a little extra help. There are programs offered that are very beneficial. Such programs include:

Student Health Center and Pharmacy

- Clinic Services
- On-Site Pharmacy
- Accepts walk-in and appointments for general health care needs

Women & Gender Resource Center

- Provides free, confidential, and voluntary counseling and advocacy
- Offers a variety of programming designed to promote social justice and address gender disparities

Collegiate Recovery & Intervention Services

- Provides care for students whose lives have been impacted by substance use.
- Offers alcohol and drug counseling

University Recreation

- Fitness Services such as personal training, group exercise classes and Pilates
- Outdoor recreation offers bike and equipment rentals

Success & Growth in the U.S.

- Led by Dr. Nahree Doh
- 14-week workshop for international students
- Members discuss different topics, share experiences, and engage in group activities
- Students must submit a [Success and Growth Workshop Application Form](#) at the beginning of the semester to join.

Disability Services

Prior to beginning your studies at UA, you may have been diagnosed with a disability that affected your mental, physical, visual, or psychological state. As you prepare to begin your new educational journey, you may need access to accommodations that could aid in your academic success. The University of Alabama believes in your success and strives to provide equal and accessible services for everyone. If you have a current disability and need assistance, please visit The Office of Disability Services.



What is the Office of Disability Services?

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) works with faculty and other members of UA to provide students who have a documented disability with reasonable accommodations. Services are individualized and determined on a case-by-case basis. ODS encourages you to self-advocate and self-identify your need for academic accommodations and services by:

- Providing appropriate documentation of the disability to ODS
- Requesting accommodations by meeting with an ODS Accommodations Specialist
- Meeting with each instructor to present a formal ODS accommodation notice and to discuss the implementation of accommodations.

How do I schedule an appointment?

As soon as you become an official UA student and know that you will need accommodations you should register with ODS immediately. As there is no deadline, ODS encourages students to be proactive and register as early as possible. It is your responsibility to contact the ODS office and make them aware that you are in need of services or accommodations.

Do I need documentation of my diagnosis?

Yes. It is very important that you submit documentation from a qualified or licensed professional related to each disability or diagnosis for which accommodations are needed.

What if I receive a diagnosis after my first semester at UA?

The ODS office can assist you with accommodations and services during any semester while you are a student at UA. However, please remember that services are not retroactive. What this means, is the day that you are approved for accommodations, is the day your services will begin. Services cannot be back-dated to a past date and can only be utilized from the day of approval until the specified end date.

What disabilities can ODS provide for?

ODS can provide accommodations for:

- Cognitive disabilities (ADHD, learning disorders, traumatic brain injury)
- Psychiatric disabilities (anxiety, depression, Autism Spectrum Disorder)
- Medical disabilities (any chronic medical condition impacting the student academically)
- Sensory (hearing, vision impairments) or mobility disabilities
- Temporary impairments or injuries



For more information on accommodation services please contact:

Office of Disability Services

1000 Houser Hall

Box 870185

Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

E-mail: ods@ua.edu

Phone: (205)348-4285



CONTACT US



Capstone International Center
International Student & Scholar Services

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