GLOBAL EDUCATION OFFICE
George Mason University

Global Partner- Incoming Exchange Fact Sheet
Fall 2026, Spring 2027
Academic Year 26-27, Calendar Year 2027

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

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Fairfax, VA 22030 USA	Exchange Website	https://masonabroad.gmu.edu/

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Important Dates

APPLICATION CYCLE	Fall 2026 Academic Year 2026-2027	Spring 2027 Calendar Year 2027
Applications & Nominations Open	Monday, February 2, 2026	Monday, August 31, 2026
NOMINATION DEADLINE	**TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2026**	**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2026**
Schedule of Classes Available	Early March 2026	Early October 2026
APPLICATION DEADLINE	**WEDNESDAY APRIL 1, 2026**	**TUESDAY OCTOBER 15, 2026**
Approximate Timeline for Acceptances	Late April 2026	Early November 2026
On-Campus Housing Application	Upon Acceptance	Upon Acceptance
Course Registration Begins	Late April 2026	Mid-November 2026
Suggested Arrival Date	August 16, 2026	*January 11, 2027
MANDATORY ORIENTATION (In-Person)	**August 18, 2026**	***January 12, 2027**
First Day of Classes	August 24, 2026	January 19, 2027
Last Day to Add/Change classes	August 31, 2026	January 26, 2027
Last Day to Drop classes	September 8, 2026	February 2, 2027
Last Day of Classes	December 7, 2026	May 3, 2027
Final Exam Period	December 9-16, 2026	May 5-12, 2027
Departure (*if living in on-campus housing*)	5 PM on last day of exam period	5 PM on last day of exam period

*Dates are tentative

Application Process

ELIGIBILITY

Students must attend a current partner university and be nominated by their home institution for the exchange program.

Academic Requirements

Undergraduate
- Must have the equivalent of a 2.50 cumulative GPA or higher (on a 4.0 scale)
- Must have completed at least one year of study by the time of arrival

Graduate
- Must have the equivalent of a 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher (on a 4.0 scale)
- Must have completed at least one semester of study by the time of arrival

***SEE WES - COUNTRY RESOURCES FOR GRADE SCALE CONVERSIONS**

English Language Proficiency Requirements

**See table below*

Financial Requirements

During the application process, students must also show that they have sufficient funding to apply for a J-1 Student Exchange Visa (non-U.S. Citizens only).

NOMINATION

Students must be nominated by their home institution by nomination deadline *using student's full legal name on passport*.

- Official transcripts can also be sent along with nominations (transcripts forwarded by student are considered *unofficial*)
- GEO will contact nominated students with a link to the Incoming Exchange Application portal (MasonAbroad)

APPLICATION

- **ONLINE APPLICATION**
- **OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT (in English)**
  - MUST be sent by the home institution directly to George Mason/GEO (may be sent via e-mail)
- **COLOR COPY OF VALID PASSPORT**
  - Passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond program END date
- **FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION (non-U.S. citizens only)**
  - Certificate of Financial Responsibility
  - Proof of Funding documentation
- **OFFICIAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAM SCORES (non-U.S. citizens only) – ALL SCORES <2 YEARS OLD**
  - **TOEFL**: *Official* test scores must be sent electronically using Mason's school code (5827)
  - **IELTS**: *Official* test scores must be sent directly to Mason by testing center
  - ***DUOLINGO:*** *Official* test scores must be sent electronically to Mason from Duolingo portal

English Language Proficiency Minimum Score Requirement

Test	**Required Undergraduate Score**	**Required Graduate Score**
IELTS	6.5 and 6.0 each subsection (6.5 all College of Engineering)	7.0 and 6.5 each subsection (6.5 all College of Engineering)
Pearson Test of Academic English	59	67
TOEFL	80 and 18 each subsection (80 all CEC applicants)	88 and 20 each subsection (80 all CEC applicants)
Duolingo English Test	110	120
	https://www.gmu.edu/international/english-language-requirements	

Student Visa Information

Non-U.S. citizens are required to obtain a J-1 visa (students with U.S. citizenship must travel on their U.S. passport). To apply for a J-1 Visa, students must first receive a DS-2019 Form from Mason (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status). This form is issued after students are accepted into the exchange program

Students entering the U.S. on J-1 visas are Exchange Visitor Students in the BridgeUSA program.

REQUIRED AT APPLICATION *(See Application Section Above)*

1. **Passport:** Must be valid for six (6) months beyond the end date of the exchange program
2. **Certificate of Financial Responsibility**
3. **Proof of Funding Documents**
   See the Office of International Programs and Services website for acceptable *Proof of Funding Documentation*

UPON ACCEPTANCE

1. **Welcome Packet**
   Mason will provide an electronic Welcome Packet on student's MasonAbroad application portal. The Welcome Packet includes the DS-2019 form and exchange program acceptance letter.
2. **Pre-Arrival Guide**
   Mason's J-1 Visa Compliance Officer, Christine Bodziak (cbodziak@gmu.edu), with the Office of International Programs and Services will contact accepted students and provide a pre-arrival visa guide that explains the visa process and other important information regarding J-1 regulations.
3. **Student Visa Application and Appointment**
   Once students have their physical Welcome Packet, students will need to apply for their J-1 Exchange Visa

DURING EXCHANGE PROGRAM

1. **Full-time Enrollment & Attendance**: Students are ***required*** to enroll full-time and *attend and participate* in classes Full-time enrollment is 12 credits minimum for undergraduate students and 9 credits for graduate students.
2. **In-Person Requirement:** Current government guidance requires that exchange programs be predominately in-person, so undergraduates must enroll in 9 credit hours of in-person courses. For graduate students, this number is 6 credit hours.
3. **Online/Hybrid Classes:** J-1 students may only take one 3 credit-hour course that is fully online or hybrid as part of their full-time enrollment requirement. Once a student meets the minimum enrollment requirement (12 credits for undergraduates and 9 credits for graduate students) they may enroll in additional hybrid or online courses. Note: in the rare case a hybrid course meets for at least 60% face-to-face, it can count as an in-person course.

Academics & Courses

COLLEGES & SCHOOLS AT MASON

George Mason University is divided into ten schools or colleges (See Colleges & Schools)

- The Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution
- College of Education and Human Development (CEHD)
- College of Engineering and Computing (CEC)
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS)
- College of Public Health (CPH)
- College of Science (COS)
- College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA)
- Schar School of Policy and Government
- Donald G. Costello College of Business (COB)
- Antonin Scalia Law School *(See Restrictions & Limitations below)

COURSE OFFERING

There are two ways students can search for potential classes: the *University Catalog* and the *Schedule of Classes*

University Catalog	Schedule of Classes
Students can search the online catalog to view *all* courses offered at George Mason regardless of term	Students can search here to see courses offered in a *specific term*

- FALL SEMESTER class schedule is finalized and published online in March
- SPRING SEMESTER class schedule is published online in October

RESTRICTIONS & LIMITATIONS

RESTRICTIONS: The following subjects/areas are **unavailable** to exchange students:

- *Courses offered at the Antonin Scalia Law School
- Nursing courses in CPH
- Honor (HNRS) coursework
- Program capstone courses

LIMITATIONS: The following subjects are open to exchange students but may have **limited availability** due to demand:

- Courses in the College of Science (*Specifically undergraduate Physics*)
- Courses with 5 or less seats available

ACADEMIC PREREQUISITES: Individual courses may also have required prerequisites (courses that must be completed prior to taking a more advanced course). Students must show they meet through a Course Override Request process on the MasonAbroad application.

IMPORTANT REGISTRATION NOTE

- ****TOP-CHOICE COURSE REGISTRATION IS NOT GUARANTEED. ALL STUDENTS SHOULD BE PREPARED TO FIND ALTERNATIVE COURSES/SUBJECTS****
- Courses may not be offered in the term being attended, get cancelled, or fill up
- Some courses will have pre/co-requisites that cannot be overridden
- Also, the course override approval process can take time and, in the waiting period, courses may fill. Therefore, students should ensure they have a plan for alternative options
- We are unable to reserve spaces for exchange students or require departments to add spaces for exchange students

REGISTRATION PROCESS

- Registration opens in mid-April for the Fall semester and late October for the Spring semester AFTER acceptance
- Students register themselves online after they have set up their PatriotPass/Mason student email
- Students can ADD or DROP classes generally through the first week of each semester.

Housing & Meal Plans

CAMPUS HOUSING APPLICATION

Students may apply for campus housing ***AFTER*** they have been accepted into the Exchange program. Students will use their Mason NetID to log in to the housing application portal. Further instructions will be on the students' MasonAbroad application portal. After submitting the campus housing application, students will receive a date and time to select their desired housing. Please see https://housing.gmu.edu/housing-applications/housing-application-process for more detailed information about the Housing application process.

Year-long students staying on campus over Winter Break in December must apply for Winter Break housing AND pay additional housing fees.

Undergraduate Students

While not *guaranteed*, George Mason is able to accommodate most undergraduate exchange students on campus as long as housing applications are submitted in a timely manner upon acceptance into the exchange program.

Students are generally placed in double or triple-occupancy bedrooms in on-campus student residences. *Please note that single-occupancy rooms are limited and subject to availability with preference given to those requiring disability accommodations.* George Mason offers two types of accommodations for undergraduate exchange students – Suite and Apartment style:

- **Suite style**: Consists of either a single, double, or triple bed room with a shared hallway bathroom. Each student will receive a bed, chair, desk, dresser, and closet (free Wi-Fi included). Students living in suites must buy a meal plan.
- **Apartment style**: Consists of fully furnished units with full kitchen, dining area, living room, and a combination of single or double rooms with at least one bathroom (maximum of six students per apartment). Each student will receive a bed, chair, desk, dresser, and closest (free Wi-Fi included). Students living in apartments can choose to buy a meal plan, but it's not required.
- **Off-campus Housing:** Students should use the services offered by George Mason's **Off-Campus Housing Service**

Graduate Students

- **Graduate Housing**: The Main Campus (Fairfax, VA) has Townhouses available for graduate students. Beacon Hall is located on Mason's SciTech Campus in Prince William, VA. There are shuttles available to take students between campuses. (https://housing.gmu.edu/residence-halls/graduate-students-residence-halls)
- **Off-Campus Housing:** Students should use the services offered by George Mason's **Off-Campus Housing Service**

Estimated Expenses		
Tuition/Course fees	$0	*Exchange students do NOT pay tuition/course fees to George Mason*
On-Campus Housing (Paid to George Mason)	As low as $3910; as high as $9170/semester	Price depends on whether the student is in a single, double or triple-occupancy room in a traditional residence hall, suite, apartment, townhouse, or Beacon Hall. https://housing.gmu.edu/paying-housing
Mandatory Health Insurance (Paid to George Mason)	About $1500 (Fall) About $2475 (Spring)*	Health insurance is mandatory for students on a J-1 visa. **Please note that insurance prices are higher in the spring as summer coverage must be included, even if the student does not enroll in the summer.* https://shs.gmu.edu/insurance/international/
Meal Plan (Paid to George Mason)	**Independence Plan and Dining Dollars (Both Required)** Independence Plan (Recommended): about $3000/semester Dining Dollars: An additional $100; $200; $350; or $500/semester	The Independence Meal Plan includes unlimited entry swipes and three free guest meals at every campus dining hall. The campus dining halls include Ike's, Southside, The Globe, and The Spot. Dining Dollars are tax-exempt funds that are usable at most on-campus retail dining locations. More information is available on https://new.dineoncampus.com/GMU/on-campus-student-without-a-full-kitchen
Total owed directly to George Mason (Estimated):	Between *$8500 and $14200* (Fall) Between *$9400 and $15150* (Spring)	

POST-PROGRAM TRANSCRIPTS

At the completion of the semester, each student will receive ONE (1) transcript free of charge and sent to the home institution. Transcripts will be sent *digitally* unless physical copies are requested by the home institution.

- Students can order additional transcripts for a fee **online**.
- Post-Program Transcripts will be sent in late-January (Fall students) and late-June (Spring students)