

Honors College Parent Survival Guide

1. About This Guide

- a. This Survival Guide was written by other Honors College parents & staff to help you settle your student at GSU. Information does change so be sure to verify any details at the linked official Honors College or GSU sites. If you find broken links or erroneous information, please contact [LaTisha Mitchell-Johnson](#).
- b. For any questions not answered here or for more details, contact [LaTisha Mitchell-Johnson](#). You can also use the [staff directory](#) to find other Honors College resources. GSU staff or students at the Honors front desk are also very helpful in getting you or your student to the right person/location.
- c. If you want to connect with other parents or the Honors staff, please fill out the Parent/Guardian Information [Form](#) on our website. You will receive the Honors Parents newsletter and notices of parent events.

Additional ways to connect digitally:

- Facebook page for [Georgia State Honors College](#) (students, alumni, parents, and friends)
- GSU Panther Family [Portal](#)
- LinkedIn group for [Georgia State Honors College](#)

2. Well-being

- a. GSU has many options to encourage student well-being including:
 - [Counseling & Testing Center](#)
 - [Psychology Clinic](#)
 - [Student Health Clinic](#)
 - [Student Health Promotion](#) & [Victim Assistance](#)
 - [Recreation](#)
 - [GSU Safety](#)
- b. Students can request mobile transport on or near campus from 7 PM to 11 PM when school is in session via the **Safety Escort Program** by:
 - Calling 404-413-2100 from any cell phone.
 - Calling 3-2100 from any campus phone.
 - Flagging down a GSU Safety Escort van or GSU police officer.
- c. Encourage your student to download GSU's [LiveSafe](#) app and familiarize themselves with its services. Students can also request an escort through this app.
- d. As with all communications with your young adult, seek to understand not lecture. To better facilitate this approach, we suggest using open-ended questions.

3. Residence Life

- a. Living in Honors Housing allows your student to participate in the Honors Living-Learning Community (LLC) with access to educational programming, study sessions, and social activities. These are not intimidating obligations, rather options available depending on your student's interests.
- b. [Honors Housing](#) is on the upper floors of the "A" building of the **University Commons (141 Piedmont Ave NE)**. It is less than two blocks from the **Honors College (100 Auburn Ave)**. The newest 24-hour dining hall at **Piedmont Central (92 Piedmont Ave NE)** is between them. Even numbered rooms offer an urban view facing outward and odd numbered rooms offer a view of the interior courtyard.

- c. The [Campus Map](#) shows that the University Commons sits in the northeast part of campus, but it is an easy walk or campus shuttle ride to classes.
- d. For more details on University Commons and Move-In Day, see section 10.
- e. You may also take a [virtual tour](#).

4. Eating on Campus

- a. There are three buffet-style all-you-can-eat [Dining Halls](#) on campus: Patton, Piedmont Central and Piedmont North.
- b. [Meal Plans](#) are available for both residents and commuters: Meal Plans allow unlimited access to all three campus dining halls for the entire semester.
- c. If your student doesn't eat enough to make the Meal Plan cost efficient, [PantherCash](#) can be added to your student's ID card to use anywhere on campus. This is convenient and gives them a 20% discount at the dining halls, 5% discount at other campus eateries, 8% discount on vending machines, and many other perks and discounts.

5. Eating off Campus

- a. A credit or debit card may be helpful when eating off campus.
- b. Yelp and Google can be helpful apps to find places to eat on and around campus. There are several close areas with multiple casual places to eat: Peachtree Center Mall (underground at [231 Peachtree St NE](#)), The Sweet Auburn Market ([209 Edgewood Ave SE](#)), and the Broad Street area near Woodruff Park. There are many hotels within walking distance with nicer restaurants clustered around them.
- c. If your student is eating at restaurants for the first time on their own, be sure to teach them how to leave an appropriate tip (SAT math scores do not seem to correlate with ability to tip appropriately).

6. Parking and Transportation

- a. Bringing a car to school is a personal/family decision. If your student brings a car and lives in Honors Housing, you will purchase parking through the Housing Office, not the Parking Office. Parking for fall and spring semesters opens in June. Students can sign up for parking at University Commons and Piedmont North through MyHousing portal under personal information. Off-campus students, on the other hand, purchase parking through the [Parking Office](#).
- b. GSU offers the [Panther Express](#) bus service to get around campus quickly and easily.
- c. There are many other ways to get around ATL:
 - Marta offers discount monthly [Breeze Cards](#) for GSU students. These are cost-effective if they are commuting every day but might not be for occasional rides. There is a [GSU Marta Station](#) on the Blue and Green lines (east/west), but the [Peachtree Center Marta Station](#) on the Red and Gold lines (north/south) is closer to the Honors College and Honors Housing and does not require changing trains at Five Points Station in order to go north/south. Leave the Peachtree Center Station exit on the escalator to "Ellis Street/Peachtree Street East" and head south on Peachtree Street to get to campus.
 - The [Atlanta Streetcar](#) makes a small loop to major attractions near campus. There is a stop near the Peachtree Center Marta Station and one very close to the Honors College. It goes from Centennial Olympic Park at one end to the MLK Historic District at the other.
 - Ride-sharing services are commonly used in Atlanta. It might be a good idea to set up one of these apps on your student's phone ahead of time, so if they suddenly need a ride, they have options:
 - [Uber](#)

- [Lyft](#)
 - Taxis are not as common in Atlanta as in some cities, but they are still available. Check Yelp or Google for reviews and information.
- d. If you are visiting your student, campus provides [visitor parking](#) in several lots for \$10.00. The M Deck is closest to the Honors College and Housing. The Honors Housing/University Commons lot only provides very short-term parking (30 minutes) for visitors (you will need to provide your student’s name and room number or have your student come down and meet you outside the deck to scan their key card to get into the deck). There are also many commercial lots available in the area. Two are close to the Honors College are at 139 Auburn Avenue and 17 Courtland Street.

7. Social

- a. Encourage your student to join the [Honors Student Organization](#) or the [Honors College Ambassador Corps](#) to keep in touch with other Honors students and get involved.
- b. Some students need time to settle in before joining organizations, but when they are ready [PIN](#) has more than 400 clubs and groups for your student to find their niche. This is also where the Honors College posts all events, and workshops, so please make sure to encourage your student to check weekly.

8. Classes

- a. Do not intercede by calling your student’s professor, department chair, or dean. However, you can coach your student on how to do it themselves.
- b. Do not help with the coursework but encourage your student to seek out help on campus. Many freshman classes have [Supplemental Instruction Sessions](#). In addition, FREE tutoring and help are available in each department including the [Math Assistance Complex](#), [Writing Studio](#), [Economics Tutoring Lab](#), Chemistry Tutoring Center, and [Biology Tutoring Center](#). Professors have office hours listed on their syllabus if your student has any questions they would prefer not to ask in class. Most professors are also easily contacted by e-mail. GSU, and especially the Honors College, is heavily invested in helping your student succeed.
- c. Be involved, but do not pick your student’s courses or field of study for them. Encourage them to talk to their GSU advisor or Honors advisor about their ideas and options. Most departments also have an undergraduate advisor for that field of study who can share more information with your student.
- d. Have realistic expectations; college is different from high school. Celebrate their successes, both big and small, and remember that their inevitable failures merely provide additional useful life lessons.
- e. Above all else, hone your listening skills; after using you as a supportive sounding board, a student will often solve the problem for themselves.

9. Parenting an Adult (and Empty Nesting)

- a. Communicate your desire to stay connected with your student, but do not hover.
- b. Try to learn new ways of communicating (e.g., Instant Messaging or texting, Facebook, Facetime, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat).
- c. Recognize your student is now “adulting”; do not try to do it for them.
- d. Get involved in the Honors College Parents Club – this is a great way to learn about the Honors College. Visit our [website](#) or join our [Panther Family Portal](#) to learn more.
- e. It is normal to be sad, depressed, and lonely during this transition time. Acknowledge it and then reach out to friends and family for support. Pick up a new interest. Parents typically take between *six to nine months* to

bounce back emotionally from sending a student to college. On the other hand, do not feel guilty if you rank among those parents who enjoy their newfound freedom.

- f. Have a discussion before the first school break about any revisions to house rules. Set new expectations and guidelines. Be aware that your student... Will. Have. Changed.
- g. Send care packages to say, "I love you."

10. The Spring/Summer Before (Primarily for Freshmen)

For new students, the spring and summer before college can be a very busy time. There are many things they can do to get ready for their first semester: <http://admissions.gsu.edu/how-do-i-apply/next-steps/>.

- a. Meal Plan: Consider signing up for a meal plan, if appropriate for your student. In summers past, a discount has been offered for signing up early (7-day plan for the price of a 5-day plan).
- b. Doctor/Immunization/Dentist Appointments: Immunization records must be submitted well before registration to ensure enough processing time. They can be submitted at this [link](#).
- c. Make a doctor's appointment to get a checkup, find out what shots your student needs (for instance, Meningococcal is required for on campus housing and some formulas consist of more than one dose), and get refills on medication. A dentist appointment is a good idea, too. Once classes begin, there will be little time for your student to tend to such matters.
- d. Checking Account: If your student works, they might need a checking account for direct deposit of paychecks (required for University Assistantships), and would also be good for receiving their financial aid refunds. Check with your bank to see if they have a branch near campus. [Georgia's Own Credit Union](#) serves GSU students and has a large branch at the north of campus.
- e. Shopping: Check out the list for the dorms (see 11c) and requirements for each class and try to get this done early; this last summer flies by.
- f. Getting comfortable with the campus: if your student is not familiar with a big city, it is very easy to be lost those first few weeks. A solo or family tour of the campus to get comfortable with the lay of the land and your phone's map app can be very helpful. This would be best after NSO so your student already has the locations of all their classes.

11. Details on Honors Housing and Move-In Day

- a. Registering for Honors Housing – Be sure to check with [Housing](#) for the most up-to-date information and deadlines:
 - Once accepted to the Honors program, your student can apply for Honors Housing by visiting the [Housing website](#); be sure they choose **both** the Honors LLC and Honors Housing on the application. Honors housing placement for incoming first-year students cannot be guaranteed for students who apply and submit payment after May 1st.
 - Once the application and deposit are accepted, your student will choose a room and roommates.
 - Roommates' campus e-mail addresses are listed on your student's housing page. Encourage your student to contact them early in the process, to start regularly checking their campus e-mail until the roommates figure out their preferred method to keep in touch, and to begin coordinating who will bring what commonly used items.
- b. Details on the Honors Housing rooms:
 - In addition to a commonly shared kitchen, dining and living room, all Honors Housing units include four private bedrooms and two shared bathrooms. Even numbered rooms offer an urban view facing outward and odd numbered rooms offer a view of the interior courtyard.

- Each bedroom has a small closet, desk, 3-drawer dresser, chair, and XL twin bed. The bed can be lofted and items (including the dresser) placed underneath to gain additional storage space.
- Approximate measurements:
 - Bedroom – 8' x 12'
 - Closet – 2' x 3.5'
 - Mattress – 36" wide x 80" long x 8" deep
 - Desk – 41" wide x 24" deep
 - Dresser – 29" wide x 18" deep x 30" high (will fit in closet)

c. Move-In Day

- Your student should check their e-mail for details on Move-In Day and Time. To control traffic, parking, and elevator use, students are assigned a specific date and time to move into their room, in the past it has been the Wednesday before classes start and the time has been based on your student's floor.
- You will be allowed to park in the University Commons for a limited time during your student's move-in window. The entrance is on John Wesley Dobbs near the back of the building. There is a pay lot across the street if you need to park at a different time or wish to stay longer. Be sure to pay at the kiosk as they boot regularly.
- For space reasons, only students are allowed in the line for registration and keys. Parents can start unloading or staging things at the car or wait in the lobby. Pick a spot to meet, as cell service is spotty in that part of the basement/deck.
- There are carts for rent to move belongings from your car to the room, but you can also bring your own cart or dolly.
- Be prepared for long lines to get on the elevators (in both parking deck and dorm), or else to use the stairs.

d. What to Bring

- GSU Housing has a [list of items](#) that your student might need.
- From prior parents, some things missing from the list:
 - Shower curtain and hooks

e. Wi-Fi

- GSU Housing provides wi-fi in the University Commons through [Apogee's ResNet](#)
- Your student can register up to 4 devices through this network with their own secure password. Instructions for account set-up are provided at move-in registration. For security reasons, each student should have their own account and not share with their roommates.
- Students do not need to bring (nor are they allowed to use) a private router.
- Phone service is also available through the same company for an additional charge, but most students just use their cell phones.
- In the past, students have been able to upgrade their wi-fi speed at additional charge, but the free option seems to provide all they need.