

Summer 2010

International Student Handbook



International Student Handbook Summer 2010

We are pleased to welcome you to the University of the Fraser Valley. You are one of hundreds of international students from dozens of different countries that has chosen to study here. You probably have many questions about studying at a new school and living in a new country. While the friendly staff at UFV International are always willing to help you, this International Student Handbook is an important source of information and guidance.

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First Steps

Complete the list of steps below to ensure a smooth transition into life at UFV. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to drop in to UFV International to speak with our qualified and multilingual staff ([B223](#)).

First Week Checklist

- Introduce yourself to the friendly [staff](#) at [UFV International](#)
- Participate in [International Student Orientation Week](#)
- Find [accommodations](#) if you have not made prior arrangements
- Buy a long-distance phone card and call home
- Pick up your [Student Identification \(ID\) Card](#)
- Make note of [Important Dates for Summer 2010](#)
- Make sure you are [registered for classes](#), pay your [tuition fees](#), and know the [policies](#) associated with tuition fees and [refunds](#)
- Purchase temporary [medical insurance](#) and sign up for the BC Medical Services Plan
- Buy your textbooks and pick up your free UFV daily planner
- Meet your [Student Leader](#)
- Pick up your U-Pass student bus pass
- [Shop for household items you may need](#)
- Make sure that your Study Permit is accurate and valid for study at UFV
- Open a [bank account](#) (optional)
- Apply for a [British Columbia ID Card](#) (optional)

Academic Success

The staff and faculty at UFV are dedicated to your academic success. We encourage you to take advantage of the numerous programs and support services available on campus, and to familiarize yourself with the registration process and academic policies of the university.

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Registration and Programs

In your first semester before you arrive, UFV International registers you for courses depending on your program of study. For your second and later semesters, you are responsible for knowing how to register, understanding [tuition payment and refund policies](#), and registering for your own courses.

- [Registration Resources](#)
- [How to Register](#)
- [Important Dates](#)
- [Timetables and Interactive Course Finder](#)
- [myUFV](#) (access to course registration, email, course materials, UFV news and announcements, calendar, and more)
- [Programs](#)
- [Summer 2010 Quicklinks](#)
- [International Student Tuition Payment Information](#)

Academic Culture

You may notice differences in the academic culture of your home country compared to UFV. This section will link you to the academic policies and terminology of UFV as well as information about academic advising. Reading and acquiring this knowledge is an important step in achieving academic success.

- [UFV Academic Calendar 2009/2010](#)
 - [Regulations, Grading, and Policies](#)
 - [Glossary](#)

UFV International has experienced advisors who can help you with your academic-related questions, including program requirements, institutional processes, and career options. As well, regular information sessions are held every semester that deal with international student-specific processes. Check your UFV email for updates and schedules.

Academic Advising and Counselling

- [Educational Advising for International Students](#)
- [Student Services – Counselling](#) (personal issues, career choice, studying)

Tips for Academic Success

- Introduce yourself to three or four people in each class. Then create study groups or share notes if you are sick.
- Review the course syllabus in each class and be aware of all expectations and dates for assignments and exams. Write these dates on a calendar so you don't miss an important deadline. Keep and file your course syllabi in case you wish to transfer your UFV studies to another institution.
- Connect with your instructors during their office hours. Ask questions about course material or get feedback on your ideas for papers and assignments.
- Get to know the [advisors](#) at UFV. Make an appointment to see them when you have questions about courses and programs.
- Attend activities, workshops, and information sessions organized by [UFV International](#) and [Student Life](#). Information is available on the website.
- Use campus learning resources such as the [Writing Centre](#) and [Math Centre](#).
- Read the [Academic Calendar](#) and learn the academic policies and regulations of UFV, including information on plagiarism, important terms and dates, course descriptions, program entrance, and graduation requirements.
- Remember that for every hour you spend in a classroom, it creates two more hours outside of the class (homework, reading, assignments, presentations, preparations, etc.)
- Explore [myUFV](#) for various kinds of information including official university correspondence. Important notices will be posted there or emailed to your account.

English as a Second Language

The intensive English as a Second Language (ESL) and Foundation programs help students prepare for undergraduate or graduate studies at a Canadian university. Students are assigned to levels and courses based on the results of placement testing. Students can complete three levels each year (12 months).

[ESL and University Foundation Program Overviews](#)

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ESL and University Foundation Program Overviews

The [English Second Language program](#) (ESL) at UFV combines in-depth training in core language skills in six levels with a choice of optional electives to suit the individual needs of students. The gradual shift from ESL into academic subjects gives students practical support during this transition and helps them adjust to academic studies.

This approach also helps maximize student success in further academic or career programs by providing students with the opportunity to develop the language and socio-cultural skills required in Canadian universities. On completion of the University Foundation program, students may receive a [certificate](#) and are eligible for entry into academic programs. Students may also begin taking academic courses while taking the final two levels of the ESL program.

All reading/vocabulary, writing/grammar, and speaking/listening courses are considered “core”. All other courses are “electives”.

- [ESL Summer 2010 Full Session Timetable](#)
- [Important Dates for Summer 2010](#)

Programs	Courses	Entrance Requirements
ESL Program (4 levels: Pre-Intermediate to Advanced I)	ESL courses	Minimum IELTS overall band score of 3.0 or a TOEFL iBT score of 30
Academic ESL Programs		
University Foundation (2 levels: 1 & 2)	ESL and academic courses	IELTS overall band score of 5.0 or a TOEFL iBT score of 61
ESL Academic Bridge (2 levels: ESL 70 & ESL 80)	ESL courses	IELTS overall band score of 5.0 or a TOEFL iBT score of 61

ESL Program

The ESL Program consists of a core curriculum and elective courses. The three core subjects are Writing & Grammar, Reading & Vocabulary and Listening & Speaking. Students at all levels also have [elective course options](#), so students can plan their program to suit their individual needs and interests.

Each level normally takes one 4-month semester delivered in two 7-week sessions to complete. Students who are weak in a particular English skill have the opportunity to complete two levels in that skill within a 4-month semester, one level in each of the 7-week sessions.

ESL Program Outline: Pre-Intermediate to Advanced I Levels

Levels	Core Course: Reading & Vocabulary	Core Course: Writing & Grammar	Core Course: Listening & Speaking	ESL Elective Options	Total Credits	Duration
30 Pre-Intermediate	ESL RV38 6 credits	ESL WG34 6 credits	ESL S36 3 credits	One ESL Elective 3 credits	18	Two 7-week sessions
40 Intermediate I	ESL RV48 6 credits	ESL WG44 6 credits	ESL S46 3 credits	One ESL Elective 3 credits	18	Two 7-week sessions
50 Intermediate II	ESL RV58 6 credits	ESL WG54 6 credits	ESL S56 3 credits	One ESL Elective 3 credits	18	Two 7-week sessions
60 Advanced I	ESL RV68 6 credits	ESL WG64 6 credits	ESL S66 3 credits	One ESL Elective 3 credits	18	Two 7-week sessions

New students are tested prior to the first day of class. Based on test results, each student is placed into one of four levels of study in each core subject area at the appropriate level. For example, if you do well in speaking, but need more help in writing/grammar, your speaking/listening class will be at a higher level than your writing/grammar class.

University Foundation Program

The University Foundation Program Level 1 & 2 (UFP) is an advanced level academic preparation program that combines ESL and academic credit courses. This program is for serious, university-bound students and is designed to help students make the transition from ESL to full-time academic programs.

The two-semester transition program provides students with the English upgrading courses needed to meet academic program requirements as well as the support needed as they begin taking selected college-prep or university courses. Motivated students can progress quickly and can complete up to five academic program courses as well as their UFV English Language requirement over the two semesters.

At level 1, students can take one or two pre-college or university electives while completing their English upgrading, and two to three pre-college or university electives at level 2. **The number of academic or pre-college courses a student can choose is dependent on their grade point average (GPA).** Students are expected to maintain good grades and complete the required English core courses at each level.

University Foundation Certificate Program Outline

Levels & Duration	Core Course: Writing & Grammar	Core Course: Reading/Academic Support	Elective Options ESL, Pre-College, University Courses	Total Courses	Entrance Requirements
University Foundation Level 1 4 months	ESL WG74 6 credits	ESL R70 3 credits	Up to 3 ESL, academic or pre-college electives (9 to 11 credits) Pre-college & university Courses With a GPA 2.33 – can take 1 course With a GPA 3.0 – can take 2 courses	5 courses (20 credit maximum)	ESL Level 60 + GPA 2.33 iBT TOEFL 61 IELTS 5.0 LPI Essay 3
University Foundation Level 2 4 months	ESL WG84 6 credits	CSM 104 3 credits	Up to 3 ESL, academic or pre-college electives (9 to 11 credits) Pre-college & university Courses With a GPA 2.33 – can take 2 courses With a GPA 3.0 – can take 3 courses	5 courses (20 credit maximum)	ESL Level 70 + GPA 2.33 iBT TOEFL 79 IELTS 6.0 LPI Essay 4

Unlike the ESL Program offered in 7 week sessions, the ESL core courses at levels 70 and 80 in the University Foundation Program are delivered over a 4-month semester to blend with delivery of pre-college and university courses. When students successfully complete the Program they can begin full time academic study at UFV.

Entrance Requirements

Students who achieve C+ or higher grades in the ESL Program Level 60 core courses or have the equivalent English proficiency score (TOEFL iBT 61, IELTS 5.0, LPI 3, etc.) can apply to the University Foundation Program.

Certificate



When students successfully complete the program, they qualify for a University Foundation Certificate.

For further information on entrance requirements, Foundation Program info, and a glossary of acronyms, visit [University Foundation Certificate in the Academic Calendar](#).

Academic Bridge Program

The English Academic Bridge Program (ABP) concentrates on advanced level ESL core courses and is designed for students who want to concentrate on improving their English language skills. It is designed to help professionals, business executives, and serious university-bound students who have already studied advanced English but need further preparation to succeed in the professional, business, or academic world.

ESL Academic Bridge Program					
Levels and Duration	Core Course: Reading & Vocabulary	Core Course: Writing & Grammar	Core Course: Listening & Speaking	ESL Elective Options	Total Credits
70 Advanced II 4 months	ESL R70 3 credits ESL V73 3 credits	ESL WG74 6 credits	ESL S76 3 credits	One ESL Elective 3 credits	18
80 Academic Bridge 4 months	ESL R80 3 credits ESL V83 3 credits	ESL WG84 6 credits	ESL L87 3 credits	One ESL Elective 3 credits	18

Entrance Requirements

Students who achieve C+ or higher grades in the ESL Program Level 60 core courses or have the equivalent English proficiency score (TOEFL iBT 61, IELTS 5.0, LPI 3, etc.) can apply to the ESL Academic Bridge Program.

Certificate(s)



When students complete level 1 of the ESL Academic Bridge Program they earn an Advanced II certificate and if they continue and complete level 2 of the ESL Academic Bridge Program they earn an Academic English Proficiency Certificate.

Help Centre

Some students find different areas of English language instruction easier than others. To provide students with the opportunity to focus on the skills they find more challenging, the ESL Program at UFV provides a help centre and a language laboratory. The language laboratory uses

computer-assisted instruction with various software programs that allow students to concentrate on specific or general skills. A lab manager is available to assist students using the equipment and organizing their studies.

ESL Educational Technology

- [Help and Tutorials](#)
- [Internet Resources](#)

Tips for Success

- Practice, practice, practice! Speak with others even if you are unsure of your English abilities. People will be understanding.
- Make friends with native English speakers. By using English in both academic and social situations, you will improve your language skills.
- Read books and newspapers, watch tv, and rent movies in English.
- Use the language laboratory.
- Get involved in campus and community activities and events.
- Remember that good grades are extremely important, so attend and participate in all classes, complete all assignments, and study for tests. Use campus resources to improve your abilities and ask your instructor if you don't understand something. If you need additional help, see an advisor for additional strategies.

Health and Wellness

Health care systems will vary by country and it is important to become familiar with the system in British Columbia. Learn about medical insurance, health care resources, and important tips about life and culture in Canada.

[Medical Insurance](#)

[Health Care](#)

[Safety and Security](#)

[Cultural Adaptation](#)

Medical Insurance

As an international student, you are required to have health insurance for the entire duration of your studies at UFV. UFV International manages a group medical insurance plan for UFV international students, which costs students \$65 per month and includes coverage with StudentGuard for the [first three months](#) in BC, and the British Columbia Medical Services Plan (MSP) thereafter. Find [more information at UFV International](#).

Students registering in the Fall Semester are automatically enrolled in the Student Union Society's (SUS) Health and Dental Plan (\$159.92 annually).

For those registering in the Summer Semester, enrollment into the SUS Health and Dental Plan is **not** automatic. If students want to be included, they have to "opt in" in which the SUS will add you to the plan at a prorated fee. For more information, please visit the [Student Union Society Health and Dental Plan](#).

Important Notes:

- International students are required to pay for medical insurance on an annual basis (12 months of coverage = \$780) which works out to \$65 per month.
- Remember that your insurance is only valid for the year in which you have paid UFV your medical premiums (every year), even if your Care Card has a different expiry date.
- International students must have a valid study permit to be on the MSP. Your Care Card will expire on the same date as your Study Permit.
- When you receive a new Study Permit you must give a copy to UFV International; otherwise, your medical insurance will no longer be valid.
- Check for your MSP Care Card at UFV International about three months after you have applied for MSP.
- When you see a doctor, you will be asked to present your Care Card. MSP pays for healthcare services directly. Carry your Care Card with you at all times.
- If you travel outside of BC, you may not be covered for 100% of medical expenses. You should purchase additional travel insurance before you leave.

- When leaving BC for longer than one month, you may be eligible for a refund of medical insurance premiums. You must provide proof with your passport. **Note:** Please advise UFV International of your departure and return dates to find out if you qualify.

The First Three Months

Upon arrival you will receive a Student Guard Health Insurance card that applies for your first 3 months living in British Columbia. This card can be used at the following two walk-in clinics:

Abbotsford Village Medical Clinic
#302-2050 Sumas Way Abbotsford, BC
Telephone: (604) 504-7145
Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday, Sunday, and Most Holidays 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

McCallum Clinic
2479 McCallum Rd. Abbotsford, BC
Telephone: (604) 852-2279 Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 am – 4:30 pm
Saturday 9:00 am – Noon, Sunday and Holidays Closed

- If you choose to use any other walk-in clinic or hospital you will need to pay for your medical costs upfront.
- Students must pay for all medical costs (ie. prescriptions, x-rays, blood or lab tests) themselves, and will be reimbursed by the insurer.
- To submit a claim, bring receipts for all services to UFV International within 14 days. A cheque will arrive at UFV in approximately one week.

After your first three months, check with UFV International for a list of doctors accepting new patients.

Health Care

Eating a well-balanced diet, getting regular exercise and sleep, and maintaining regular routines are all keys to being a successful student. If you require further information about Canadian health care, check out the links and resources on this page.

Internet Resources

- [BC Health Guide](#)
- [BC Health Guide Files](#) (multilingual)(search for information on nutrition, safe sex, etc.)
- [BC Medical Services Plan](#)
- [BC Nurseline](#)
 - Phone (toll-free in BC) 1-866-215-4700 for 24-hour, confidential health information and advice (translation services available).

Canadian Health Care Tips

- Most people in Canada either have a family doctor or general practitioner (GP) who they make appointments with, or they visit a walk-in clinic and see the physician who is on duty.
- If you require a specialist, your doctor may give you a referral (make an appointment with the specialist). It is usually not possible to see a specialist without a referral.
- Mild medicines are available over-the-counter at the pharmacy, or your doctor will write you a prescription.
- Feel free to ask the doctor questions, even if he/she is in a hurry. If you have more than one concern, be sure to address them all.
- It is common to seek a second opinion and your doctor should not be offended.
- In an emergency, call 911 or go immediately to the nearest hospital's emergency room.

Safety and Security

UFV's Safety and Security Department provides several programs to help create an environment that is safe for work and study.

UFV Campus Security Services

- **Emergency Call Towers:** If you are outside on-campus and do not feel safe, go to one of the Emergency Call Towers. Push the button and tell the operator where you are. They will send someone to help you.
- **Student Safety Patrol:** Trained student employees patrol the campuses from 6:30-10:30 pm, Monday to Friday. They wear bright orange vests. If you need help, let them know.
- **Safe Walk Program:** Use this service when you are walking to parking lots at night. You can ask a Patroller (in a bright orange vest) to escort you to your car.
- **Safe Walk Stations:** There are two stations located on the Abbotsford campus – Building A by the bus stop and Building B in the great hall.
- Important Phone Numbers
 - On-campus Security
 - Abbotsford: 604-786-0279 (or, 604-504-7441 extension 5050) or dial 5050 from an internal phone
 - Chilliwack: 604-991-0225
 - You can also call security if you require a Safe Walk or Student Safety Patroller.
 - For non life-threatening emergency, call:
 - Police: 604-859-5225
 - Fire: 604-853-3566
 - Ambulance: 604-504-7044
 - For life-threatening emergency:
 - Call 911 – a free number and you will not need a coin if you are using a pay phone. This is the number for police, fire, and ambulance.

Cultural Adaptation

It is expected that international students will go through a process of culture “shock” or adaptation, in addition to making the transition to university life. There may be aspects of Canadian life, such as food, relationships, climate, and the education system that may be unfamiliar and difficult to understand.

The majority of international students speak English as a second or third language and it may take longer to adapt to the differences. This is why it is important to make social connections by forming relationships with local people and to become active across campus and in the community, networking with different cultural groups. Find more tips on how to recognize and overcome culture shock in the following links:

[Symptoms of Culture Shock](#)

[Stages of Culture Shock](#)

[Coping with Culture Shock](#)

Symptoms of Culture Shock

Culture shock affects individuals differently, but almost everyone experiences it to some degree. Symptoms may include:

- Poor appetite or over-eating
- Inability to sleep or over-sleeping
- Tiredness and irritability
- Feeling alone, isolated, or helpless
- Feeling powerless
- Feeling boredom
- Withdrawal – spending excessive amounts of time alone without human contact
- Homesickness
- Various aches and pains
- Substance abuse – alcohol, nicotine, drugs, gambling
- Criticism of local customs and culture

Stages of Culture Shock

Culture shock is normal and does not last forever. The time frame will vary by individual. The five stages of culture shock are:

- Honeymoon Stage – You may feel very positive about the new culture, are excited and curious, and may even idealize the new host culture.
- Withdrawal – After having experienced the host culture, you may become anxious, irritable, and frustrated. You may find the behaviour of the host people unusual and unpredictable, and begin to dislike and withdraw from the culture.

- Gradual Adjustment – You may feel more relaxed as you have settled in and developed a routine. You begin to understand and accept the behaviour of the host culture, and feel less isolated.
- Adaptation – You may now feel more “at home” and have a new sense of belonging and sensitivity to the host culture. You may even adopt certain behaviours from the host culture.
- Reverse Culture Shock – If you return home to visit you may go through a similar experience as described above. As you have lived in and experienced a new culture, you may have developed new perceptions, habits, and values. Transitioning back into your home culture may be more difficult than expected.

Coping with Culture Shock

Culture shock may not disappear within a few days, but it will go away eventually. Remember that it is a normal experience. Here are some tips on how to cope with culture shock:

- Establish simple goals for yourself and celebrate each success
- Keep a journal in which you can reflect upon your progress
- Talk to other international students who can give you advice
- Make local and international friends. Practice English and other languages
- Volunteer in the community and get active on campus
- Take up a new hobby that will help you get accustomed to the new culture
- Be patient and give yourself time to adapt
- Stay in touch with family and friends
- Decorate your room with small and familiar objects that remind you of home
- Find activities that help to relieve stress such as exercising
- Find ways to live with the new things that you may find difficult
- Try to stay positive, remain confident, and don't be too hard on yourself

Counsellors are available at [Student Services](#) if you want to talk about what you are experiencing or need help navigating the new cultural environment. UFV International staff and advisors can help you tap into the resources you need. Never hesitate to reach out to resources that can help you if you are feeling overwhelmed.

Immigration

As an international student, you are responsible for maintaining your immigration status and obeying immigration regulations while studying in Canada. You must ensure that your immigration documents are accurate and kept up-to-date if you want to remain in Canada legally and avoid very costly renewal fees. If you require further information, the staff at UFV International are here to help you with your immigration questions. As well, you can also contact [Citizenship and Immigration Canada \(CIC\)](#) or call toll-free 1-888-242-2100. Remember that immigration regulations are subject to change.

[Documents](#)

[Travelling Outside of Canada](#)

[Off-Campus Work Permit](#)

Documents

There are three categories of people in Canada: citizens, permanent residents, and temporary residents. International students, workers, and visitors are all temporary residents. As a temporary resident, you may have one or two types of immigration documents in addition to your passport:

[Study Permit](#)

[Temporary Resident Visa](#)

[Passport](#)

Study Permit

A valid Study Permit authorizes you to remain in Canada while you study. It is the piece of paper issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (usually stapled in your passport) that permits you to study in Canada and work on the campus in which you are enrolled as a full-time student. If you are accepted to a program that is less than six months long, you do not need a study permit, but you should consider applying for one anyway. By doing so, if you decide to study for six months or longer, you can simply extend your study permit and avoid a complicated application process.

Extending Study Permit

It is your responsibility to ensure that your Study Permit remains valid during your studies in Canada. If you need to extend your Study Permit, you should apply 30 to 90 days in advance of the expiry date (90 days is recommended). Processing times are typically 4 to 12 weeks, but can be longer.

To extend your Study Permit, you can [apply online](#) or send a paper application by mail to Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Applying online may save you time and money.

If you plan to travel abroad during a period when your Study Permit is about to expire, you should ensure that you renew it from WITHIN Canada before you leave.

If your passport is expiring, you will need to renew it before you apply to extend your Study Permit.

If your permit expires while you are waiting for a response from CIC, you have “implied status” in Canada until you receive a response. It is important that you remain in Canada while you have this status. You may be unable to re-enter Canada without a valid permit.

Temporary Resident Visa

A Temporary Resident Visa (TRV or entry visa) is a sticker that is placed in your passport if you are a citizen of a country that requires a visa to visit Canada. If this is a requirement for citizens of your country, a valid TRV must be shown along with a valid immigration document (Study Permit or Work Permit) in order to re-enter Canada. A TRV may allow “single entry” or “multiple entry” and may only be obtained from a visa office (consulate or embassy) outside of Canada.

If you are planning a trip outside of Canada and the continental United States (US), you will need a valid TRV in addition to your valid Study Permit to re-enter Canada, unless you are from a country that is exempt from this requirement.

If you do need a TRV, you must apply at a Canadian consulate or embassy outside of Canada. You can apply in your home country or at the Canadian consulate in Seattle, Washington (in person or by mail). If you have any questions, check CIC or see an [international student advisor at UFV International](#).

Passport

If your passport expires while you are in Canada, your immigration documents will also expire at the same time. In most cases, you can apply to extend them after you obtain a new passport. Passport applications can take up to three months, so apply for a new passport as soon as possible to avoid interrupting your studies. To apply for a new passport, [contact the nearest visa office](#) for your country.

Remember, Citizenship and Immigration Canada will not extend your Study Permit past the expiry date of your passport. If both documents are expiring, you should ensure that your passport is renewed well in advance so that you have adequate time to renew your Study Permit, if applicable.

Travelling Outside of Canada

It is important to plan ahead and renew your documents before you travel home or to another country. To return to Canada, you will need a valid Study Permit and passport. If you are from a country that requires a visa to enter Canada, you will also need a valid TRV to re-enter Canada unless you are returning from the continental United States. For most students, re-entry into Canada is a routine procedure, but you should always travel with a current proof of enrollment letter from UFV to be safe.

Visiting the United States

If you have a valid study permit and are visiting the United States, you do not need a valid TRV to re-enter Canada. To enter the United States, however, you must first determine the requirements for citizens of your country. Citizens of most countries require a Non-Immigrant Visa to enter the US for business or pleasure and must apply in advance. Citizens of a select few countries participate in the [Visa Waiver Program](#) which allows them to apply for entry to the United States without a Non-Immigrant Visa if they are seeking entry for 90 days or less as a visitor for business or pleasure as long as they have a machine readable passport.

If you require a Non-Immigrant Visa to enter the US and you are eligible, you must make an appointment for an interview at the [US Consular office in Vancouver](#). Plan ahead as it can take several weeks to get an appointment. You should be aware that if you have been in Canada less than one year or have previously been refused a US visa, you may encounter more difficulty at the time of the interview.

As immigration regulations often change at a moment's notice, you are encouraged to also visit the official website of the [US Embassy-Consulate Services in Vancouver](#) for the most accurate and updated information.

Returning to Canada after visiting the US

An agreement between Canada and the United States allows you to re-enter Canada without a TRV after a visit solely to the US. You will need a valid passport and a valid Study Permit to re-enter Canada.

Whenever you travel outside of Canada, you should take a current letter of enrollment with you that proves your current registration status with UFV.

Important Notes

- Check the expiry dates of all of your important information documents and make notes in your calendar
- Remember to renew your Study Permit 90 days before it expires

- If you are travelling and require a TRV make sure to check processing times and apply far in advance of your travel plans
- If your passport will expire while you are in Canada, take steps to renew it on time
- Remember that your Care Card will also expire at the same time as your Study Permit
- When leaving Canada, make sure to bring with you proof of enrollment at UFV

Off-Campus Work Permit

International students wishing to work off-campus must apply for an [Off-Campus Work Permit](#).

To be eligible for an Off-Campus Work Permit, you must:

- have a valid Study Permit
- have been a full-time student for at least six of the 12 months preceding the date of your work permit application
- be in satisfactory academic standing (minimum GPA 2.0)

Undergraduate students with an Off-Campus Work Permit may work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the regular academic year (September to April) and full-time during scheduled breaks (Summer, Winter, and Reading Breaks).

Find more information and application instructions at [Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#).

Campus and Community

[UFV International](#)

[Activities and Events](#)

[Recreation](#)

[International Student Leader Program](#)

[Student Services](#)

[Social Connections](#)

[Transportation and Travel](#)

UFV International

UFV International supports international students and is dedicated to their success. The department staff speak many languages, organize activities and events for international students, and provide important support services such as academic advising and medical insurance plan administration.

UFV International is committed to expanding international involvement on campus and through its programs. While facilitating and supporting UFV programs, UFV International also develops international exchange opportunities and works to create volunteer and work opportunities for international students.

We are here to provide you with excellent service and support before, during, and after your period of study. If you have any questions or require further information, do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

Activities and Events

UFV International organizes many extra-curricular activities meant to include international and Canadian students. We recognize that intercultural interaction is a fundamental component of a student's overall education process and will enrich your overall experience in Canada.

Therefore, different activities are planned throughout the year by the International Activities Coordinator giving students the opportunity to go skiing, hiking, camping, horse-back riding, and more!

Students are also encouraged to get involved in UFV International's [Volunteer to Work Program](#), World Culture Wednesdays, and UFV [Student Life](#). Also, check out [UFV International's News Centre](#) for information about what's happening on campus and in the community.

Visit UFV International online or in-person and check out the following links for more information:

- [UFV International Activities and Events](#) (facebook)
- [Volunteer to Work Program](#) (facebook)
- [UFV International: News Centre](#)
- [Student Life](#)
- [Current Events at UFV](#)
- [Student Clubs and Associations](#)
- [UFV International Students Wetpaint](#)
- [UFV International Student Newsletter](#)
- [Events Photo Gallery](#)
- [University House](#)

Recreation

Campus recreation and physical activity produce more than just physical benefits. By being active as a student you will be able to concentrate better, be less stressed, have more energy, and sleep more soundly. Physical fitness plays an important part in living a healthy lifestyle.

UFV has brand new [recreational facilities](#) and a wide variety of opportunities on campus. Check out Student Life's [Campus Recreation & Wellness](#) for more information and be sure to become engaged in:

- [Intramurals](#)
- [Athletics](#)
- [Non-athletic clubs](#)
- [Bike to Work](#)
- [SOLAR \(Student Outdoor Life and Recreation\)](#)

Student Services

UFV provides a wide variety of services for its students. UFV students have access to [counselling](#), [computer services](#), and [employment](#). UFV also has [disability services](#), easy access to [educational advising](#), and an excellent [library and learning commons](#). Also, check out the [Student's Guide to Services at UFV](#) for descriptions of the numerous services available.

Academic Calendar 2009/10	Health and Dental Insurance	Scholarships (int'l students)
Admission & Records	Library	Student Activity Centre
Assessment Services	Lost and Found	Student Ambassador Program
Bookstore	Instructional Media Services	Student Forms
Campus Closures	Maps	Student Leader Program
Career Centre	News & Events	Student Life
Conflict Res. and HR Advisor	New Student Orientation	Student Newspaper
Counselling	Parent Orientation	Student Organizations
Disability Services	Parking	Student Records
Educational Advising	Print Services	Student Union Society
Emergency Procedures	Public Transit	Transcripts
Financial Aid & Awards	Radio Station	UFV Today
First Aid	Registration	University House
Food Services	Scholarships	Writing Centre

Social Connections

Cross-cultural understanding is one of the most powerful influences of study abroad both for the student and the host institution. As an international student, you will assist in building international understanding at UFV.

As you begin to learn about Canadian culture and society, you will notice some similarities with, and differences from, your culture. The "connecting point" of the two cultures is when you cherish the similarities and learn to understand and appreciate the differences. For more information, read the section on [Cultural Adaptation](#).

We encourage you to get involved in student life on campus! Connecting with your fellow students, Canadian and international, as well as the local community will enhance your social and academic life while you are studying in Canada. Stay active, fit, and healthy. Volunteer. Get involved.

Transportation and Travel

Whether you are exploring Abbotsford or wishing to travel throughout British Columbia, here are some helpful tips to get you started. All students at UFV have a bus pass which you can use to access local public transportation. If you are travelling to Vancouver and beyond, or wish to go east, taking the bus is your cheapest option. Also, if you are travelling to the United States it is important to know the [immigration proceedings](#). Check out the links for further information:

- [Public Transit](#)
- [City of Abbotsford](#)
- [Travelling Outside of Canada](#)
- [Greyhound](#) (bus)
- [Viarail](#) (train)
- [West Coast Express](#) (train)
- [BC Ferries](#)
- [Quick Shuttle](#) (Vancouver-Seattle)
- [Pacific Coach](#) (Vancouver-Whistler-Nanaimo-Victoria)
- [Rocky Mountaineer](#) (train)
- [Hi-Hostels Canada](#)
- [Discover Camping](#)

Note: The only travel services listed above that operate to and from the Abbotsford area are Greyhound and the West Coast Express (Mission). For the other services, you will have to first travel to Vancouver. You can also take public transit to Vancouver from Abbotsford via Aldergrove, Langley, and Surrey, but this will take a lot longer than the Greyhound (and some buses may not run on weekends).

Financial Resources

[Banking](#)

[Budgeting](#)

[Income Taxes](#)

[Student Awards and Financial Aid](#)

[Student Employment](#)

Banking

To open a bank account, you will probably need to provide your UFV ID card, passport, and local address. When you visit a bank, ask about accounts that offer lower service fees for students. Be sure to ask for details concerning all the possible service fees that may apply. Service fees can add up, so make sure you understand how you will be charged.

You will probably need a chequing account, as cheques are widely used for paying rent and bills. You will have to pay a fee to order cheques, but your bank may be able to give you a few free temporary cheques to use right away.

You will also be issued a debit card, which you can use in bank machines around the city (watch for service fees and withdraw from your bank if possible). In most cases, you can use your card to pay for items directly. Charges to debit cards are deducted from your account immediately, unlike a credit card.

Budgeting

The best way to manage your finances is to create a budget and follow it closely. When making your budget, be sure to consider the number of months you will be studying in Canada and plan accordingly. You don't want to run out of money.

Tips for Saving Money

- Buy used books whenever possible
- Buy second-hand furniture, clothing, and household supplies
- Prepare food to bring with you to school and avoid eating out too often
- Collect discount coupons and watch for sales at the local stores
- Record all of your income, expenses, and expenditures each month. Estimate a monthly budget and do your best to follow it
- Use your student card and ISIC (International Student Identity Card) to take advantage of discounts when applicable

Income Taxes

Most students will not earn enough income from Canadian sources to be required to pay income tax. However, if you earn income in Canada you are expected to file a tax return every year.

Note: Completing Canadian Income Tax forms can be beneficial to international students as you can possibly qualify for immediate tax refunds and long-term tax credits (if you have future Canadian income).

Tax-related receipts are produced in January and February for the previous tax year. Taxes owing must be paid by April 30, or interest charges will apply.

To complete your income tax return, students will typically have:

- T2202A (Tuition and Education Amount) – available through [myUFV](#)
- T4 (Employment Income) – issued by your employer (if applicable)
- T4A (Scholarship and Bursary Income) – (issued by UFV if applicable)

For further information, access the [Canada Revenue Agency's Income Tax Information for International Students](#).

Student Awards and Financial Aid

Financial assistance is available to UFV students through Canadian student loan programs, UFV and externally funded bursaries, work-study opportunities on campus, and scholarships. Scholarships and awards available to Canadian and international students attending UFV range in value from \$400 to \$16,000. Applications are available at [myUFV](#).

- [New scholarships available for international students](#).
- For further information, including a budget worksheet and list of available awards at UFV, visit [Financial Aid and Awards](#).
- Check available [UFV-administered scholarships and awards](#) by category (UFV international students may apply unless otherwise noted).
- For information from the Canadian government about existing award opportunities, costs, and budgeting, visit [Can Learn](#).

Student Employment

Working and volunteering can be a great way to earn extra income and gain valuable experience while you are studying. However, as an international student, there are certain restrictions on the type of employment you can have. This section describes your employment (and volunteer) options.

[Working On-Campus](#)

[Working Off-Campus](#)

[Career Centre](#)

[Co-operative Education](#)

[Social Insurance Number \(SIN\) Card](#)

[Volunteering](#)

Work On-Campus

The [Work-Study Program](#) gives eligible students an on-campus, part-time job that is flexible around their class schedule. A number of positions are available during the Fall, Winter, and Spring/Summer semesters in a variety of different areas.

To be eligible to participate in the Work-Study Program, a student must:

- be enrolled in a minimum of 9 credits for the current semester (3 courses)
- maintain a GPA of 2.0 or greater

To provide proof of eligibility, you may access your student record through [myUFV](#).

Work-study job postings are posted on the first day of classes in each semester. Work-study opportunities are posted online in [CareerLink](#) in which you must register to gain access.

Students may work up to 10 hours per week; the current wage is \$9.00 per hour (inclusive).

Career Centre

At UFV's [Career Centre](#), international students can find all of the necessary information about working on campus while studying at UFV. Check Career Centre's new [International Student Guide Book](#). Check with [CareerLink](#) to search for jobs and other employment-related resources. Check out the [section designed specifically for international students](#) to find relevant information on working off-campus, working after graduation, applying for a SIN card, writing Canadian resumes, and taxes.

Co-operative Education

UFV's Co-operative Education program (Co-op) offers students in several disciplines the option of pursuing a diploma or degree program that incorporates paid work experience.

The Co-op program is designed to enhance students' job prospects by formally integrating full-time study terms with discipline-related work terms. Students earn their academic credentials while gaining valuable applied skills and professional experience.

Find more information through the [Career Centre](#).

Check the Career Centre's [Cooperative Education Handbook for Students](#).

Volunteering

Volunteering in your local community can be a very meaningful and beneficial experience. Not only will you be able to boost your resume or grad school application, volunteer experience looks great on applications for transferring to other universities as well as applying for permanent resident status in Canada.

Volunteering helps students improve language skills, develop employment skills, apply learning in real situations, learn more about Canadian Culture, and make new Canadian friends. Sign up online with [Volunteer Abbotsford](#) or in the Abbotsford Spirit of BC office, Building C at UFV.

Furthermore, the UFV [Volunteer to Work](#) Program provides volunteer opportunities on campus and in the community. Many international students have benefitted greatly from participating in the program.

In the Volunteer to Work Program, students are encouraged to develop a portfolio and resume that will help them find employment once eligible to work. Students will also learn how to gain valuable reference letters and certificates for their volunteer time. Join the facebook group, UFV [Volunteer to Work](#), for all postings, communications, and notifications, and watch for UFV Volunteer to Work information sessions at the beginning of each semester.

[International student volunteerism in the Fraser Valley](#)

Appendix 1 - International Student Leader Program

The International Student Leader Program matches new international students entering their first term at UFV with senior students for mentoring, support, and guidance. The International Student Leaders (ISLs) guide new students through the many processes of adjustment to a new school, new community, and new culture. They are a good source of information about what it's like to be a student at UFV!

Since all the ISLs are international students themselves, they understand the challenges of travelling to study in a new country. For some international students, the ISLs provide a vital service while for others it may be more of a helping hand. Either way, ISLs can help you meet new people and quickly adjust to life at UFV.



Getting to know your Student Leaders

As a new UFV international student, you have been matched with an International Student Leader. We have tried to make sure that your ISL is either from the same country or program as you. Whenever possible, we also try to make sure that the ISL speaks the same language as you. We will try to make sure that you can meet your ISL during Orientation Week. This will give you a chance to:

- Ask them about their experiences at UFV
- Ask them about life in Canada, or in Abbotsford
- Find out where to have fun in your new community
- Ask them for tips on how to cope with cultural adjustment
- Ask them for tips on best practices and learning English