

# International Student Handbook Framingham State University



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# Welcome to the United States!

## Arrival Information

### Customs and Immigration

Before landing at any International Airport, flight assistants will give you immigration forms. A flight assistant will also distribute Customs Declaration Forms. Follow the instructions on the forms and have them ready for Customs.

After disembarking, you must go to immigration to present your passport and visa to DHS. Inside the airport a DHS inspector will examine your passport, customs forms, and I-20 form (or DS-2019 for J-1 students). The immigration officer may ask you questions. Students leaving the United States will return the I-94 when checking-in for the departing flight. When you finish with immigration, go to Customs with your passport and Customs Declaration Form and then go to the Baggage Claim area.

### Transportation to Campus

From Logan International Airport: Boston's Logan International Airport is about an hour from Framingham State University. You can either take a taxi from the airport to Framingham for about \$90.00 or take the Framingham Logan Express.

Logan Express offers regular shuttles from Logan to Framingham for about \$12.00. Service from Logan to Framingham starts at 6:30AM and ends at midnight on weekdays and runs every 30 minutes. Weekend service runs hourly.

Once at the Framingham station, take a taxi to Framingham. Do not accept a ride from anyone not driving a Taxicab. Taxi fare should be between \$18-20 and it is customary to tip the driver 10-15% of the total cab fare. For more info on the shuttle, [http://www.massport.com/Logan/getti\\_logan\\_frami.html](http://www.massport.com/Logan/getti_logan_frami.html).

Tommy's Taxi, 167 Franklin St., Phone: 508-872-3500.

Town Taxi Co., Phone: 508-875-4241.

Executive Coach, Phone: 508-872-6100.

Typically several taxis are waiting for arrivals from the airport at the Logan Express station.

### Checking in your residence hall at Framingham State University

For undergraduate students living in an on-campus dormitory: Tell the taxi driver to take you to 100 State Street and your dormitory name. Please be certain to check on the day and time you will be expected to check in to your room.

Students staying with a sponsor usually make arrangements to get to their Massachusetts address with their sponsor.

## Immigration Issues

SEVIS is the web-based tracking system that is used by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS, formally INS) to monitor all non-immigrants. SEVIS stands for the “Student and Exchange Visitor Information System”. The regulations for F1 international students are stricter than in the past, as well as carrying more severe consequences if violated. The two main violations of status are unapproved employment and enrolling less than full-time while at Framingham. Therefore, be sure to review all of the following information on immigration issues. Keep this handbook with you during your entire time at Framingham so that you can review it as necessary. In addition, always ask the Office of International Education (OIE) at Framingham if you have any questions or are uncertain of policy. The main contact at Framingham is Jane Decatur, Director of International Education. All of Framingham’s Designated School Officials can sign your immigration documents when you travel.

### Changes in Name or Address

All students must report to Framingham’s DSO any name or address changes within 10 days. These changes will be recorded into the SEVIS system. It is a legal requirement to keep your current address accurate.

### Employment

#### *On Campus Employment*

Any Framingham student can apply for on-campus jobs. During the academic year, many Framingham students work part-time and a few remain on campus over winter and summer breaks to work full-time. You may inquire about positions at offices or facilities at the beginning of the academic year. Once you find a job on campus, you will need to obtain a letter from your campus employer and one from Jane Decatur in order to apply for a social security number. F1 students may work on-campus part-time (20 hours/week) during the academic year and full-time (40 hours/week) during the summer and University breaks without formal authorization. You are NOT allowed to work off-campus your first year of attendance and never without applying for authorization.

#### *Off Campus Employment*

F1 Students: Contact the Office of International Education with questions regarding the two types of employment that an international student may undertake; one is Optional Practical Training (OPT) and the other is Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Off-campus employment due to an emergency severe economic hardship may be applied for, please see Jane Decatur for all requirements. Approval from USCIS to work can take up to 90 days, so you should plan ahead and apply early. **You may NOT work without approval from USCIS.**

#### *Optional Practical Training (OPT) - F1 students*

If you have been enrolled as a full-time student for at least nine months, you are eligible for Optional Practical Training. An OPT job must be related to your academic major and be intended to cultivate practical experience. As an F1 student, you have a total of 12 months of OPT. You may use the OPT during the summers or all of it after graduation; just keep in mind that the total of all OPT is 12 months. The only exception to this is the recent addition of certain science, technology, engineering, and mathematics degrees. Students with degrees in these areas may qualify for an OPT extension, if your employer is designated as a STEM employer. You should discuss this with the Director of International Education if you are planning a major in one of these fields. You are excluded from OPT if you use one year of Curricular Practical Training. OPT can be granted while school is in session, summer breaks, or after graduation. Visit [studyinthestates.dhs.gov](http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov) for more information regarding OPT.

#### *Curricular Practical Training (CPT) - F1 students*

Curricular Practical Training allows F-1 students to work before graduation in an internship or independent study

related to their field of study, but you must receive academic credit for this to be approved. You must have been a full-time student for at least nine consecutive months to qualify for CPT. The benefit of CPT is that it does not reduce the amount of OPT available, unless you use 12 or more months of CPT. Visit [studyinthestates.dhs.gov](http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov) for more information regarding CPT.

#### Off-Campus Employment Due to Severe Economic Hardship- F1 Students

F1 students who encounter unforeseen, severe economic hardship after completing one academic year (also defined as nine consecutive months) may apply to the USCIS for permission to work off-campus. To apply, you must document an unanticipated change in your financial support showing that your expenses have increased significantly or that your income has decreased significantly. You must also show DHS that you have exhausted other employment opportunities. Students who can document that they have encountered an unforeseen economic hardship after completing one academic year in the U.S. should contact the Office of International Programs. Generally, it takes the USCIS two months to approve an application for off-campus work based on severe economic hardship. This type of approval is not frequently granted.

#### Enrollment

##### Part Time Approval

**All F students are required to be enrolled in a minimum of 3.0 credits or more, full time status, and a normal course load is 4.0.** A student must receive permission from the DSO prior to enrolling part time in any semester. Generally, the only possible scenarios for approval are medical emergencies (which require medical documentation) and the final semester prior to your degrees. If permission is not granted prior to part time enrollment, a student's record in SEVIS will reflect the violation of status and the student's record will be closed in SEVIS. The only possibility to reopen the record is to apply for a reinstatement through the USCIS; reinstatements are difficult to obtain.

#### Extension

The timeframe given to a student for completion of the degree is indicated on the I20 form. In rare situations it is possible that a student may need more time to complete the degree in various, for instance a medical emergency or adding another major. In this case, a student must request the extension prior to the ending date on the I20. A new I20 would be issued including the extra semester(s) needed.

#### English Language Program (ELP)

The English Language Program at Framingham State University offers courses designed for international students seeking to increase their English proficiency for academic study or to improve their general English skills to prepare for and enhance their careers.

Students with an F-1 Visa must enroll in at least 18 hours of class per week. New students seeking an F-1 student visa must submit their application and supporting documents. You will receive an I20 from Framingham in order to enroll in the English Language Program and you will be subject to all rules and regulations of full degree seeking students, especially as related to restrictions on working and maintaining full-time status, which means, you may NOT work off-campus.

#### Grace Period for Departures

Students are given varying times to leave the country based on the circumstances at hand:

- Completion of degree or authorized employment: 60 days after the expiration date of I20
- Authorized withdrawal by DSO: 30 days after the expiration date of I20
- Violation of Status: immediate departure, NO grace period

## Graduation

Student records in SEVIS are automatically completed once the student's graduation date is reached. If a student applies for OPT, the student's record remains open until the OPT is completed. Students who wish to transfer their F status from Framingham to a graduate school must notify Framingham's DSO so that the transfer process can be completed. Otherwise, the student's record in SEVIS will be completed automatically upon graduation.

## Income Taxes

All people employed in the United States must pay state and federal income taxes. These taxes are deducted from employees' paychecks and go to fund various local, state, and federal programs. The tax deducted from your paycheck each pay period is called Income Tax Withholding. Income tax forms are due on or before April 15th.

Frequently, full-time students make so little income that they usually get a tax refund, which means that too much tax was withheld from your yearly income. In this case, when you file your taxes, you will determine the amount owed to you by the United States government and/or Massachusetts.

All international students must file tax forms with the government, even if no money was earned. International students and scholars must file Form 8843 to report their presence in the United States. If you were a nonresident who had no source income in that tax year, you still must file, but you only have to file Form 8843; you do not need to file Form 1040NR or Form 1040NR-EZ if you had no U.S. source income (you also file only Form 8843 if your only U.S. income was interest earned by your U.S. bank account; this is not considered U.S. source income for nonresidents).

## Social Security Number

Students who work while in the United States are required to get a Social Security Number (SSN). All United States workers must have a SSN so the government can track earnings and appropriate state and federal taxes. Once you have a job offer, come to the Office of International Programs to pick up an application form and ask Jane Decatur for a letter indicating that you are eligible for employment and enrolled full time. International students are not permitted to work off-campus during their first year of study in the U.S.

Take the following items to the Social Security Administration Office:

- a letter from Jane Decatur indicating that you are eligible for employment on campus and are enrolled full-time
- a letter from your supervisor describing your job on campus and total hours per week of work.
- your completed SSN Application
- your passport
- your form I-94
- your form I-20

Social Security Administration Office, Framingham, MA

1 Clarks Hill, Suite 101, Framingham MA 01702

The office is open Monday-Friday from 9:00AM – 4:00PM.

For more information, call the Social Security's toll-free number 1-800-772-1213.

### Study Abroad

Some international students at Framingham choose to study abroad during their 4 years here. Keep in mind that a new I20 is needed if you are out of the U.S. for 5 months or more. In this case, Framingham's DSO will send a new I20 to the student abroad. You must meet with Jane Decatur to discuss all aspects of study away including the financial issues, and length of time you expect to be out of the United States.

### Travel and Non-Immigrant Status

Your I20 must be signed by one of Framingham's Designated School Officials in order to reenter the country when you travel. The signatures are good for one year. (Except during OPT when signatures are good for only 6 months.) You should have your I20 endorsed before traveling if you are before, but close to, the one-year mark on the previous signature. Be sure to travel with your I20.

Remember that no one can guarantee your entry back into the United States. A DHS Official can decide not to let you back in if there are problems with your documentation or other related issues. Framingham has not had this problem as of yet, but you should keep it in mind.

In light of stricter policies at ports of entry, international students should travel with several documents: your signed I20, your passport with the visa page, evidence of financial support (that you used to obtain your visa), and a transcript showing your full-time enrollment at Framingham. The DHS official may not require anything in addition to your passport and I20, but it is always good to be prepared.

### Visas

International students must have a visa to attend school in the United States. All international students (including ELP students) are required by law to be full-time students in order to get a student visa. For full-time status, Framingham students enroll in a minimum of 3 credits.

Once you are accepted at Framingham State University, you will receive an I-20 form from the Office of International Education. Sign this form immediately and have it with you whenever you enter or leave the country. As an F-1 student, you may enter the country 30 days prior to the start date on your I-20. However, housing at FSU is not available until regular dormitory check-in Fall semester, or the beginning of spring semester.

An F-1 visa allows you to enter the United States as a nonimmigrant to attend school. Prospective F-1 students will receive an I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status) form from Framingham State University. Your name on the I20 should match that on your passport.

Note the financial portion of the I20 that indicates the amount of money you (or your sponsor) are expected to contribute at Framingham under Personal Funds. Strictly speaking, the U.S. embassy will require you to provide documents that prove you have personal funds for your entire program in the U.S. At FSU, this means four years of study. In practice, the U.S. Embassy will normally look for funds for one year of study and sufficient income from your parents. Proof of funding may be established through U.S. tax returns, employer letters, pay stubs, accountant statements, bank statements, etc. Each U.S. Embassy will require different documentation based on the location.

**Do not enter the U.S. with a B-1, B-2, or B-1/2 Visa unless it is marked "Prospective Student". As a tourist you are not eligible to study. You will have to apply to change your status to F1!**

Do not attempt to enter the U.S. without a visa (unless you are a Canadian or Bermudian citizen). Canadian and Bermudian citizens must still pay the SEVIS fee and obtain an I20 from Framingham in order to enter the country. The U.S. allows individual from certain countries to simply show a round-trip ticket to enter the U.S. Do NOT do this. You will not be allowed to stay past 90 days and you cannot change to student status.

### Applying for a Student Visa at the U.S. Consulate

1. Pay your SEVIS fee and bring your receipt to the Embassy. See your packet from the Office of International Education for instructions on how to pay the fee.
2. Go to the United States Embassy or United States Consulate with jurisdiction over your permanent residence with all the pages of your I-20 form issued by Framingham State University, the letter of your acceptance to Framingham, your passport, and proof of sufficient funds to live and attend school in the United States.
3. At the Embassy or Consulate, fill out a visa application form DS-156. The application fee is non-refundable.
4. You must provide documentation that shows a residence in your home country to return to when your student visa expires.
5. In addition, you may be required to prove that you are qualified to attend school in the United States. Proof includes transcripts of past grades or TOEFL scores.
6. Visa applications require the following information: address in country of origin; names and addresses of spouse, children, parents, and siblings; references who can verify accuracy of application; employment history including names and addresses of employers.
7. Consulates will run extensive background checks on all visa applicants from alleged terrorist countries such as Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria. This likely will add significantly to the processing time to obtain a visa.

## Adjusting to Life in the United States

By electing to study abroad, you have asserted a desire to immerse yourself in a different culture for the purpose of learning. This adventurous and courageous act sets you apart from other students who may never explore the world around them and the energy and enthusiasm required to get you this far are qualities that will help you be a successful student. The initial thrill of international study, however, may wane if unfamiliar cultural systems, customs, and languages begin to overwhelm you. This phenomenon is colloquially referred to as “culture shock.” The best defense against culture shock is an understanding of the circumstances that create it and a cursory understanding of the new cultural environment you are about to enter.

### What is “Culture Shock”?

Cultures are made up of various spoken and unspoken rules. A student who wishes to learn about another cultural system can read about the history of a country, study its political structure, or become acquainted with the national religious practices. These aspects of culture are often clearly stated and accessible to visitors. Other aspects of culture are less clearly articulated.

When we are home, there are many different cultural cues that we unconsciously experience and respond to. For example, when you are in your home country, you seldom consider how to greet a friend or how to behave in a classroom. These are all things that a person does easily while at home. Cultural cues govern these simple acts. People assimilate their cultural cues throughout their lives until certain behavior becomes “automatic.” When familiar cultural cues no longer apply and unfamiliar ones begin to threaten security and confidence, culture shock may result.



Culture shock is the feeling of being out of place in an unfamiliar environment. The initial excitement of moving to a new country often subsides when different cultural expectations challenge you to attend to daily responses and behaviors previously taken for granted. The potential stress of dealing with these persistent challenges can result in feelings of hostility and frustration with your host country as well as a profound longing for home. If you are a person who has already exhibited the courage and sense of adventure required of embracing international study, overcoming culture shock can be a cultural and personal educational opportunity particularly suited to your sense of adventure.

## American Culture

Americans value individualism. European immigrants who rejected the religion, politics, and economics of their home cultures established a new American culture in the early 1600s. As a result, early American culture evolved out of a commitment to individual desire and rebellion against authority. This commitment to individual religious and political beliefs was so powerful that it resulted in the colonization of a continent that was already inhabited by Native Americans. American colonizers who believed they were culturally superior to their home countries and to Native American culture felt justified in leaving home and country and colonizing the “New World.”

## Individualism and the American Family

America’s early history established a commitment to individualism, aggressive capitalist development, and rebellion against authority and remnants of this cultural philosophy remain today. Americans’ commitment to individualism results in less family cohesiveness than you may be accustomed to in your own life. Many U.S. households only include the “nuclear family,” the parents and children. When children become adults, the cultural expectation is that they will move out and establish their own nuclear family.

In the U.S., elderly parents seldom live with their grown children and often live in senior citizen communities or, if they require medical attention, in nursing homes. This cultural difference can seem quite strange to international students whose cultures assert the importance of caring for elderly family members. Regardless of this fractured family structure, many Americans are devoted to their nuclear and extended families even though they may not reside together.

Many U.S. families are “blended families” with stepparents and stepsiblings and so a cultural tradition has evolved of welcoming family and non-family members equally, especially around American holidays. Most Americans families who live separate daily lives regard holidays as important family gatherings. For this reason, you will find that your American friends will probably become concerned if they discover you have no plans to “go home” for the holidays and will likely extend invitations for you to join their family celebrations. Holiday celebrations are a great insight to cultural traditions so take advantage of the invitations!

## Individualism and the American University Environment

Dedicated American students tend to be competitive and driven. American students, especially at Framingham, tend to take on a lot of work and tend to be involved with many different academic, extra-curricular, and social activities. You may find this frenetic pace a bit overwhelming (so do many Americans!). The focus on individual achievement results in the culturally conditioned drive to achieve as much as possible, in as many areas as possible, with the hope of enhancing personal growth and occupational prospects. The drive to earn money is powerful, and as a result you will see that many students do what they can to make themselves more marketable in the American workforce.

American students’ strong sense of individualism is also apparent in the classroom. Students assert their opinions and question professors easily and vigorously. This is the result of both the American commitment to the sovereignty of individual opinion and a tradition of challenging authority. International students may find this behavior aggressive and disrespectful, which at times it may be, but it is important to understand the underlying cultural drive to be heard. Questioning authority and trusting individual perceptions of reality are particular points of pride in American society and

when employed wisely enhance the classroom environment with the free and respectful exchange of ideas.

Another aspect of the classroom that some international students may find jarring is informality. Students and professors alike tend to dress and behave casually with one another; for example, they wear baseball caps or put their feet up on chairs. In classrooms, it is not unusual for people to speak without raising their hands, to address the professor by his or her first name, to debate with classmates or the professor, or to eat and drink in class. Professors tend to make it clear by example or by explicit statement, the level of formality they expect in a classroom. If you are uncertain, ask your professor what classroom behavior he or she expects.

## Greetings and Conversation

Meeting new people can be exciting and at times stressful, particularly in a new environment where many others already have established friendships. Of course the best way to start a friendship is to say “hello” to a stranger. In America, people tend to greet each other by saying “Hi,” “Hello,” “What’s up” or “How are you?” “How are you?” is an expression used as a greeting and not usually used as a question. If someone keeps moving past you as they say “How are you?” they mean it as “Hello.” If an acquaintance stops walking to chat with you and then asks “How are you?”, they usually expect a short, positive answer. The typical response is, “Fine.” This may seem impersonal, but it has become a part of the American cultural greetings practice between strangers and acquaintances. Americans usually shake hands when they meet someone for the first time. Unlike many countries, it is uncommon for Americans to hug or kiss each other when they greet one another, especially when first meeting.

When Americans speak to each other, they tend to maintain a conversational distance of about three feet from one another. Americans often feel uncomfortable with someone who stands too close to them, even if the person is a close friend. Despite this seemingly distant behavior, you may find that Americans you have just met may ask you intimate questions. The questions Americans might ask of you usually come out of a genuine curiosity about you and your culture, with which they may be totally unfamiliar. Trust your instincts about whether a person is being curious or intrusive and remember you can politely refuse to answer anything that makes you uncomfortable without compromising a new friendship.

## Tips for Adjusting to a New Cultural Environment

1. Be open-minded
2. Have a sense of humor
3. Communicate your feelings and thoughts with others
4. Be curious about your new environment
5. Be tolerant of other cultural beliefs; be positive
6. Maintain a strong sense of self
7. Don’t compare American culture/people with your own

## Climate

Climate varies from season to season in Framingham. Below is a chart that provides average temperatures by season to give you an idea of what to expect. Keep in mind, however, that Massachusetts weather is notoriously changeable, so be sure to have a variety of clothes at hand for unexpected heat, cold, rain or snow.

Season	Fahrenheit	Celsius
<b>Autumn</b> (September -November)	Low 46° to High 60°	Low 8° to High 15°
<b>Winter</b> (December – February)	Low 0° to High 37°	Low -17° to High -3°
<b>Spring</b> (March – May)	Low 38° to High 60°	Low 3° to High 15°
<b>Summer</b> (June – August)	Low 60° to High 90°	Low 15° to High 35°

## Fall (Autumn)

Fall in Massachusetts is typically breezy and mild, with a frequent tendency for temperatures to rise to summer temperatures after a period of cooler weather. In Autumn, it is helpful to keep light jackets, sweaters, and rain gear handy. Being in New England, this is the time to see the world-famous foliage of fall trees in the region.

## Winter

Winter in Massachusetts can either be mild or snowy. You can expect everything from mild, Fall-like days to sleep storms. For the winter, be sure to have warm sweaters, winter coats, hats, gloves, sturdy boots, and thick socks.

## Spring

Spring in Massachusetts is often quite rainy though temperatures are mild. Keep some of your warm clothes handy, but you can begin to break out some warm weather clothes as well. This may be a good time to give in and buy an umbrella or raincoat.

## Summer

If you stay in Framingham for the summer, expect pleasant weather in the early part of the season and be prepared for hot, humid days through July and August. It is always hotter in the city than in the countryside, so if you are in Massachusetts during the summer, you can cool off by taking a road trip to the mountains or to the shore!

*Regardless of the temperature outside, the dormitories are notoriously cold before the heat kicks in around late fall and notoriously hot for the rest of the year. With this in mind, you may want to keep some warmer clothes handy in the fall, and some cooler clothes handy the rest of the year so you can be comfortable in your dorm room.*

## Money and Banking

American paper currency (dollars) comes in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100. American dollars are all the same size and color. Coins or “change” make up the smaller units of money called cents. They come in the amounts of 1 cent (a penny), 5 cents (a nickel), 10 cents (a dime), 25 cents (a quarter), and 50 cents (a half-dollar – this is rarely used).

You should open a bank account in Framingham to have easy access to your money and to avoid keeping large amounts of money on you or in your apartment or dorm room. To open a bank account, bring your passport, I-20 and another form of identification like your student ID. Basic banking services for most Americans include a checking account, a savings account, an ATM card, and sometimes a debit card.

### Checking Account

You open a checking account by depositing money into the account that allows withdrawals and deposits by a debit card or checks. Checks are paper documents issued by your bank that have your name, address, phone number (if desired) printed on them and function as money when you write one for a purchase, though commonly not used in stores. Most Americans will use debit cards or cash for purchases. If you use a check, be sure to present some form of ID that includes your address and picture.

## Savings Account

A savings account is less active than a checking account. If you want to save money and gain interest on it, opening a savings account is your best option. The more money you deposit; the more interest you earn on it. This is ideal for money that you do not touch unless you really need it.

## ATM (Automatic Teller Machine)

When you open a checking or a savings account with a bank, you can also get an ATM card attached to that account. An ATM card allows 24-hour access to your money. There is an ATM on campus in the McCarthy Center and Dwight Hall Athletic Center that you can use by inserting your ATM card, PIN and entering the amount you want to withdraw. The money is then deducted from your account and the cash is produced from the machine. Please visit [this website](#) to see samples of U.S. currency.

## Debit Cards

Debit cards function like an ATM card and a credit card combined. They can be used like credit cards for most purchases, but unlike a credit card, for which you receive a bill with interest, the debit purchase comes directly out of your bank account. This is a nice option especially if you are concerned about getting into credit trouble or would rather not pay interest to the credit card company for your purchases.

## Depositing Checks

If you work on campus, you will get paid every other week on Friday. You can take the check to your bank in person to deposit it. In order to deposit your check, you have to sign (=endorse) the check on the back with your full name. This way the bank will know from your signature that you are the one to whom the check really belongs.

## Area Banks

There are many banks to choose from; below is a list of banks within a short walking distance for Framingham students.

- Citizens Bank (508) 875-1333 - 35 Edgell Rd, Framingham, MA
- Santander Bank (508) 620-3041 - 39 Edgell Rd, Framingham, MA
- Bank of America (508) 879-3605 – 1270 Worcester Rd, Framingham, MA

## Holidays

Please find the dates of holidays celebrated in the U.S. at [this website](#).

Depending on an American's religious beliefs, there may be additional holidays they celebrate, or holidays they do not celebrate listed on the website provided. Be sure to reference Framingham State University's [academic calendar](#) so you are aware when the university is closed due to a holiday observance:

## Traveling in the U.S.

You probably want to take advantage of your time in the U.S. to travel. Thanksgiving break, winter break and spring break or after the school year has ended are the perfect times to explore.

### Accommodations

Finding a place to stay is easy and cheap if you chose to stay at a hostel instead of a hotel. Hotels can be over \$100 a night, whereas you can stay for \$18 a night, for example, in a Las Vegas hostel. Hostels are aimed at the traveler with little money but lots of sense of adventure. [Hostels.com](http://Hostels.com) allows you to search by location and has great detailed information on hostels throughout the world and the U.S. You can read reviews of places and reserve your accommodation on line. [Airbnb](http://Airbnb) has become a popular alternative for accommodations while traveling.

### Clothing Size Conversion

Clothing and shoe sizes vary country to country. Please visit this helpful [website](#) to familiar yourself with U.S. clothing and shoe sizes in comparison to your home country.

### Getting Familiar with Framingham, Massachusetts, USA

The City of Framingham is located in eastern Massachusetts, 20 miles (32 km) west of Boston, mid- way between Boston and Worcester. At nearly 67,000 inhabitants, Framingham is the the hub of the Metrowest region. It is bordered by Southborough and Marlborough on the west; Sherborn and Ashland on the south; Natick on the east; Wayland on the northeast; and Sudbury on the north. Framingham is 197 miles (317 km) from New York City.

The town of Framingham is divided by Route 9, which passes east-to-west through the middle of the town. South Framingham includes Downtown Framingham (the town government seat), and the villages of Coburnville, Lokerville and Salem End Road. North Framingham includes the villages of Nobscot, Pinefield, Ridgefield and Saxonville plus Framingham Center (the physical center of town, featuring the town commons).

Framingham is known for the Framingham Heart Study, as well as for the Dennison Manufacturing Company, which was founded in 1844 as a jewelry and watch box manufacturing company by Aaron Lufkin Dennison, who became the pioneer of the American System of Watch Manufacturing at the nearby Waltham Watch Company. His brother, Eliphalet Whorf Dennison, developed the company into a sizable industrial complex, which merged in 1990 into the Avery Dennison, with headquarters in Pasadena, California, and active corporate offices in the town.

The business section on the West Side of Framingham runs primarily along Route 9, starting at Temple St.; it is dominated by two large office/industrial parks: the Framingham Industrial Park on the north side of Route 9 and the Framingham Technology Park on the south side, both on the Ashland/Southborough border. Bose and Staples both have their world headquarters in these parks.

In the year 2000, Framingham celebrated its Tercentennial.

### Accommodations near Framingham State University

There are many hotels in the Framingham area. Rates vary according to the time of the week, availability, and time of year. Call ahead of time to check the rates of each hotel.

Sheraton-Framingham  
 (2.3 miles west of campus)  
 1657 Worcester Rd. Framingham  
 508-879-7200  
[Sheraton website](#)

Residence Inn by Marriott  
 (2.6 miles west of campus)  
 400 Staples Dr. Framingham  
 508-370-0001  
[Residence Inn website](#)

The Verve Boston – Natick, MA  
 (2.7 miles east of campus)  
 1360 Worcester Rd. Natick  
 508-653-8800  
[Verve Hotel website](#)

The Hampton Inn  
 (3 miles east from campus)  
 319 Speen St. Natick  
 508-653-5000  
[Hampton Inn website](#)

## Storage

Since your dorm room may not be able to accommodate all of your clothing for every season, or if you plan to leave certain items in America when you return home for a summer vacation, you may want to purchase a storage space. You may want to call other facilities on your own to get the best possible deal. Framingham does not provide any on-campus storage for students. Below are some of the closest storage facilities in the area. Be sure to make your reservation for a space as early as possible since they fill up quickly.

[E/Z Storage](#)  
 501 Cochituate Rd.  
 Framingham (508) 270-4500

[All American Self-Storage](#)  
 160 Fountain St.  
 Framingham (508) 875-5599

[Extra Space Storage](#)  
 89 Waverly St.  
 Ashland (508) 881-3400

## Shopping

If you enjoy **shopping**, Framingham is definitely the place in eastern Massachusetts to visit. There is every major

retail chain from Wal-Mart to Best Buy and more. The shopping district, nicknamed "The Golden Triangle", is located along Route 9 (Worcester Rd) in the eastern part of town and extends into neighboring Natick. The shopping district includes **Shoppers World** (on the border with Natick), a vast outdoor mall featuring 795,308 square feet of retail space and **The Natick Mall**, with almost 300 stores it is the biggest Boston shopping mall and also the largest mall in New England!

Absolutely do not miss **Jordan's Furniture Store**. It may sound strange that a furniture store is considered an attraction, except that this particular furniture store has a Mardi Gras celebration nearly every hour, intensely themed rooms, an IMAX theatre (strange as that may seem), virtual reality arcades, and more. Even the roast beef stand is worth seeing just for the giant aquarium in it.

## Pharmacies

In the United States, most pharmacies are also convenience stores with everything from school supplies to extension cords. The closest pharmacy to FSU is CVS.

CVS Pharmacy  
1280 Worcester Rd.  
Framingham MA (508)-872-7463  
Accessible on foot!

## Entertainment

### Theaters, Concerts, Museums, Recreation

You are in the midst of an area overflowing with things to do and see! Boston and its surrounding areas are rich in history, culture, shopping, restaurants, museums, the list is endless. A great place to start your search to explore the area is [Bostonusa.com](http://Bostonusa.com). This website is sponsored by the Greater Boston Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Downtown Boston is easily accessible through public transportation from Framingham. Please see the sections on the MetroWest bus service and MBTA service into downtown Boston in this booklet for transportation information.

### Culture

Amazing Things Arts Center  
Framingham Community Theater  
Framingham Historical Society and Museum  
The Danforth Museum  
Performing Arts Center of Metrowest

### Parks

Callahan State Park  
Cochituate State Park  
Ashland State Park  
Hopkinton State Park  
Framingham Common  
Cushing Memorial Park

## Recreation

Garden in the Woods – botanical garden in Framingham

Framingham Country Club – private golf course

Millwood Farms Golf Course

Nobscot Mountain Reservation

Loring Skating Arena – ice skating rink open to public and the FSU hockey team plays here!

Movie Theater – AMC Framingham Premium Cinema

## Restaurants

There are many restaurants serving American and International cuisine in the Framingham area that are easily reached by foot. Below is a list of restaurants nearby campus, but be sure to Google more in the area!

Volturno

Jack's Abby

University Pizza

Aoi Japanese Restaurant

Samba Steak & Sushi

Pho Dakao

Andaman Thai Cuisine

IHOP

Kugel's Deli

*...AND MORE!*

## Local Transportation

[Framingham State University Campus Shuttle](#) - The Student Transportation Center (STC) offers RAM TRAM shuttle bus service to select, popular Rt. 9 destinations, as well as the Framingham Commuter Rail station. Please see [RAM TRAM schedules](#) for the most current schedule and pick up/drop off locations:

The [MetroWest Regional Transit Authority \(MWRTA\)](#) operates a regional bus service which provides service to other local routes connecting the various regions of town and fixed route public bus lines servicing multiple communities in the MetroWest region, including the towns of Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton, Milford, Marlborough, Sudbury, Sherborn, Natick and Weston. Please find most up to date information on the [MWRTA website](#).



[Logan Express](#) – Take the Logan Express bus service seven days a week to Logan Airport. The bus terminal and paid parking facility are located on the Shoppers' World Mall property, off the Massachusetts Turnpike Exit 13, between Route 9 and Route 30, at the intersections of East Road and the Burr Street connector. Find rates and schedules on the [Logan Express website](#).

[Greyhound](#) – The bus company with which can get you to cities and states in the north east. Check out the [Greyhound website](#).

#### RAIL

MBTA(Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority) commuter rail - Service is available to South Station and Back Bay Station, Boston via the MBTA Framingham- Worcester Commuter Rail Line which connects South Station in Boston and Union Station in Worcester. Travel time to BBS is 42-45 minutes. From the train station you can easily connect with public transportation throughout the city. Visit the [MBTA website](#) for up to date information and schedules.

#### Massachusetts Driver's License

To drive while residing at Framingham, you must get a Massachusetts State Driver's License. You can apply for a driver's license at the **Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles** (DMV) in Framingham.

A non-US citizen who does not have a SSN and who is not eligible for a SSN under current federal regulations or policies may still be issued a learner's permit, driver's license or ID Card. The person must provide acceptable identification documents, acceptable evidence that he or she has applied for a SSN but has been denied by the Social Security Administration, and must otherwise qualify for the permit, license or ID Card being sought.

You can register your new or used car at the Department of Motor Vehicles. The process differs depending on whether or not the car is new.

For more information about obtaining a driver's license or registering a car, go to the [RMV Webpage](#).

Car Insurance: Massachusetts State law requires that all registered vehicles be insured. Even if you do not own the car you plan to be driving, you must be insured on the owner's insurance policy. There are many companies that provide car insurance and it is worth it to shop around for the best deal. The American Automobile Association (AAA) may help you find the best insurance rates for your car. Many other websites are available to compare costs for insuring a car. To get insurance quotes from AAA, call (800) JOIN-AAA

### Important to Know...

#### Administrative Offices & Campus Services

<u>Office</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
Office of International Education	Dwight Hall 302	<a href="mailto:jdecatur@framingham.edu">jdecatur@framingham.edu</a>
Information Technology Services	Library, Lower Mezzanine	<a href="mailto:it@framigham.edu">it@framigham.edu</a>
Financial Aid Office	SSC, McCarthy Center, 5 <sup>th</sup> floor	<a href="mailto:financialaid@framingham.edu">financialaid@framingham.edu</a>
Student Accounts	SSC, McCarthy Center, 5 <sup>th</sup> floor	<a href="mailto:studentaccounts@framingham.edu">studentaccounts@framingham.edu</a>
Registrar's Office	SSC, McCarthy Center, 5 <sup>th</sup> floor	<a href="mailto:registrarsoffice@framingham.edu">registrarsoffice@framingham.edu</a>
Center for Inclusive Excellence	O'Connor Hall, 120	<a href="mailto:inclusivex@framingham.edu">inclusivex@framingham.edu</a>

<b>Office</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
University Police & Campus Safety	McCarthy Center, ground floor	508-626-4911
Counseling Center	Foster Hall	<a href="mailto:counselingcenter@framingham.edu">counselingcenter@framingham.edu</a>
Dean of Students	McCarthy, 504	<a href="mailto:deanofstudents@framingham.edu">deanofstudents@framingham.edu</a>
New Student & Family Programs	O'Connor Hall, 106	<a href="mailto:btrapanick@framingham.edu">btrapanick@framingham.edu</a>
Health Center	Foster Hall	<a href="mailto:healthcenter@framingham.edu">healthcenter@framingham.edu</a>
Student Involvement and Leadership Development	McCarthy Center, 510	<a href="mailto:sild@framingham.edu">sild@framingham.edu</a>
Residence Life	Corrinne Hall Towers, lower level	<a href="mailto:residencelife@framingham.edu">residencelife@framingham.edu</a>
CASA (Center for Academic Success & Achievement)	CASA	<a href="mailto:lbridges@framingham.edu">lbridges@framingham.edu</a>
Career Services	McCarthy Center, 412	<a href="mailto:careerservices@framingham.edu">careerservices@framingham.edu</a>
The Advising Center	O'Connor Hall, 1 <sup>st</sup> floor	<a href="mailto:advising@framingham.edu">advising@framingham.edu</a>

## Information Technology and Computer Services

An important component of the University's mission is the infusion of information technology throughout the curriculum. Our technology goal is for all graduates to be fluent in information technology as it applies to their majors and future professions. Everyone who works within Information Technology Services (ITS) continually strives to provide you with the best possible technology and support services available as part of this institutional goal. Please review [ITS website](#) for support services (i.e. Technology Resource Center Service Desk hours) and resources available to you as an FSU student:. The Technology Resource Center Service Desk provides you with a first level of support for all computer related issues.

As you make the most of your college experience here at Framingham State, also keep in mind that computer and network services constitute a shared resource that is used by all of us. The use of this shared resource is a privilege, and we all need to use it responsibly.

Finally, Information Technology often looks for student workers who are eager to learn even more about information technology to assist in delivering services to the community. If you are interested in a job on campus with them, please apply.

## Network Access on Campus

Framingham State University offers both wireless and hardwired access to its network. The advantage of wireless is mobility.

Wireless access to the FSU network and the Internet exists in most areas where laptop computers are commonly used. The best places to get good wireless connections outside of the classroom are the:

- McCarthy Center
- Juice bar in the Athletic Center
- Library
- Patio outside of the Arthur M. Doyle Technology Center

These locations offer you a comfortable social atmosphere where students meet, work or socialize, and surf the net. If you are outdoors and experience a connection problem, try moving closer to a campus building.

## FSUGo App

FSUGo provides a mobile experience for the students, faculty, staff, visitors and community to interact with campus. Free download on your cellphone.

### *FSUGo features:*

- Campus Map
- News
- Events
- Athletics
- Social Media
- Library
- Emergency Information
- Campus Dining
- Campus Directory
- RAM TRAM

## Backing Up Files

Good computing practice calls for backing up files on a routine basis. Accidental deletion or hardware failure could result in the loss of hours of hard work unless files are backed up. In order to back up your files, you should save copies of your files to an additional media storage device (other than your local hard drive).

## Registration

All class and registration information is completed online and your gateway into this area is through [myFramingham](#), where you will need your userID and password. You will also want to utilize the resources found on the [Registrar's website](#).

## ESL Program

The ESL programs at Framingham State University offer courses designed for international students seeking to increase their English proficiency for academic study or to improve their general English skills to prepare for and enhance their careers.

Our Intensive English program is offered during the day and our Community ESL classes are offered in the evenings. This is NOT a degree seeking program and special immigration rules related to your F1 status apply to students participating in this program.

## Course Books

Books are very expensive in the United States. Expect to spend about \$400 per semester. You can purchase your books for classes at the campus bookstore. There are also a limited number of used books on the shelves, which cost the fraction of a new book. Get your books as soon as they are available at the bookstore, because used books run out fast. At the end of each semester, you will also have the chance to sell back your books to the bookstore. For advice about how to find the books you need for courses, turn to the helpful staff!

Another way of getting hold of cheap books is going online. [Amazon](#), [E-Bay](#), and [Chegg](#) all have used books, so

check out their websites before you make your purchase.

Your cheapest (basically free) way to get your course books is the library. See if they have any copies of what you need. If they do, you can borrow the books for the entire semester!

### The Framingham State University ID Card

All students are required to obtain Framingham State University Identification Cards. ID Cards are the property of Framingham State University, are non-transferable, and must be returned to the Office of the Registrar upon withdrawal from Framingham State.

Day and evening students will have the initial ID photo taken at orientation. ID Cards are distributed at the end of the student's orientation or can be picked up at the ID Office up to 15 business days following orientation. There is no charge for the initial ID card. Resident, commuter, faculty, staff, contractors, and replacement identification cards are produced at the Framingham State University Police Department's ID Office located in the McCarthy Center (CC100A), adjacent to the University Police Station.

To obtain an ID card, please fill out the [New Student ID Application Form](#). The form is also available at the ID Office on the ground floor of the McCarthy Center (CC100A). The form should be returned to the ID Office during business hours.

#### Contact Information

Framingham State University Police Department  
McCarthy Center (Access off Church Street)  
ID Office Contact Number: 508-626-4015

#### RAM Cash

RAM CASH is a pre-paid debit account that allows students, faculty, and staff with a valid student ID to make purchases at any one of our Dining Services locations and at the FSU Bookstore. Your RAM CASH funds is also used for Laundry in the Residence Halls and snack purchases from select vending machines throughout campus. Access Blackboard to access RAM CASH account.

#### On Campus

- The Dining Commons: McCarthy Center
- The Ram's Den Grille: McCarthy Center
- The Snack Bar: McCarthy Center
- Dunkin': McCarthy Center
- Sandella's Flatbread Café: Miles Bibb Hall
- The Juice Bar: Athletic Center
- Red Barn Café: Whittemore Library
- FSU Bookstore: Athletic Center
- Residence Hall Laundries
- Snack Vending Machines

#### Off Campus

- CVS® Pharmacy, 1280 Worcester Road, Framingham
- University Pizza, 961 Worcester Road, Framingham
- Whole Foods Market, 575 Worcester Rd, Framingham, MA 01701
- Volturno, 1 Edgell Rd, Framingham, MA 01701

## Safety

Framingham State University employs its own security force to help preserve the safety of Framingham community members. Being safe, however, is not just a matter of having a security force. You can avoid precarious situations by following a few recommended precautions. Below are safety tips recommended by Campus Safety and important emergency numbers. *Remember the ultimate responsibility for a crime rests with the perpetrator, not the victim.*

### General Safety Precaution Tips

1. Be aware of your surroundings and avoid dark, secluded areas.
2. If you think you are being followed, walk quickly to a lighted area or group of people.
3. Don't walk alone at night. You can call for an escort from Campus Safety or take the on-campus shuttle if you need to go out at night.
4. Keep your door locked when you are in or out of your room. Always ask who is at your door before you open it.

### Emergency Services

Emergency Phone Number	508-626-4911*
Campus Safety	508-626-4911
Framingham Police Department	911**
Framingham Police (non-emergency)	508-872-1212
Framingham Fire Department	911
Health Center	508-626-4900
Ambulance	4911 or 911
Title IX Coordinator, Kim Dexter	508-215-5859

## Cell Phones

When moving to the U.S. international students must adjust to different cell phone plan offerings. Many modern phones do work internationally. However, it does vary. If you live in Europe, Africa or parts of Asia, it's probable that your phone uses GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications). Although this is not the most common system used in the US, some providers such as AT&T and T-Mobile do use it.

**Willmyphonework.net** is a useful website to use if you're wondering whether or not your phone will work in the US. However, keep in mind, if your phone does work it most likely will not be practical to use as it will be expensive. You also may want to have a local number.

It may be easiest to get an American **SIM card** and sign up for a cell phone plan in the U.S. if you will be studying here for years. If you would like to use your current phone, it's important to ensure that it's 'unlocked' when joining a US plan. We will cover cell phones more in Orientation. Visit this [website](#) for more helpful information while navigating cell phones in the U.S. as an international student.

## Student Life at Framingham State University

Framingham State University offers small, personalized classes to undergraduate and graduate students on a traditional New England campus. The public University prides itself on its friendly, family-style community.

Student success is central to the mission of the University. Many options are available for student support, including programs to help freshmen transition to college. The University also has a well-developed honors program for exceptional students.

When students are asked why they chose to attend Framingham State University, they mention its outstanding academic reputation, interesting course offerings, exciting location, sense of community spirit, and, of course, its affordable cost.

The breadth of programs offered by Framingham State University reflects diverse faculty expertise. Its many undergraduate programs range from Art to Biology to Communication Arts, while graduate offerings include the MBA, MEd, and MS. The University also has undergraduate degree evening programs along with online courses.

### Location

Located just 20 miles west of Boston, the University offers all the cultural and social benefits of the city without the pressures and inconveniences of living there. The University is located on a beautiful, 73 acre, traditional New England campus in Framingham, the largest town in Massachusetts. Whether you choose to participate in an internship, take a part-time job, or attend a concert or visit a museum, our location provides an exciting environment with countless opportunities.

### Academic Support: The Center for Academic Success and Achievement

The staff at CASA encourages you to check out our services designed to help you be successful in your academic pursuits. We look forward to your visits to CASA. We are located in the annex at Peirce Hall, directly behind Horace Mann residence hall. All services at CASA are free for current students. CASA has something for every FSC student, from A and B students wishing to maintain their good grades to those students in academic difficulty:

- Tutoring in math, writing and a host of academic subjects
- Seminar room for study groups who need a meeting place
- Workshops: MTEL preparation for education majors, grammar review, reading and Academic Success
- A networked computer lab with printer
- Individual study carrels for quiet study--excellent for students studying between classes

**Hint:** Don't wait until you are overwhelmed to get help. The best students are the ones who ask questions and find new ways to learn and perform better

### Classroom Format

In American classrooms, students are encouraged to share their opinions, ask questions and challenge professors and classmates. It is not considered rude to disagree or debate in class at the appropriate times. While it would be rude to debate a point with a friend in whispered tones while a professor lectures, it would not be rude to present your opinion to the class when the professor pauses or stops lecturing. Class participation is often an essential part

of your grade at Framingham.

### First Year Experience Program (FEP)

Each fall, 60 First Year students share a floor in Larned Residence Hall, forming a community of learners who support each other in adjusting to the academic, intellectual, emotional, and social demands of life in a college setting. Entering First Year students who are interested in the FEP program secure their place on the floor through the Office of Residence Life.

### First Year Academic Honor Society

Framingham State University has established a chapter of *Alpha Lambda Delta*, a national academic honor society for First Year students who achieve a 3.50 QPA in either their first semester or cumulatively over the first year. New members are initiated in March each year.

## Health Issues

### Immunizations Requirements

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires by law a Certificate of Immunizations for all fulltime students (any day/night combination of three or more classes) and all full time and part time Health Science students (all Nursing students and those in the Coordinated Program in Dietetics) in order to register for classes. You must present documentation of having received:

1. Tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis (Tdap) 1 dose within the last 10 years
2. Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccines – 2 doses MMR or Positive Titer (copy of blood work showing immunity)
3. Hepatitis B vaccine – 3 doses (you must have received at least the first dose to enroll in classes) or Positive Titer (copy of blood work showing immunity)
4. Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine – 2 doses or Positive Titer (copy of blood work showing immunity) or documented history of chicken pox signed by a health care provider
5. Meningococcal vaccine – 1 dose at age 16 or older (Menactra, MCV4, Menveo or Menomune). Required up to age 22.

Please read the information from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on the Patient Portal about meningitis and the vaccine. It includes a waiver that students may sign declining the vaccine after they have read the information. Waiver, if signed, should be submitted with the Immunization Record. We encourage all students to receive the vaccine.

Visit Framingham State University's [Health Center website](#) to access Medicat, the portal you can enter all necessary health forms before arriving to FSU: Videos are provided to assist with the process.

### Health Insurance Requirement

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that all full-time students (any day/night combination of three or

more courses) participate in a health insurance plan. To fulfill this requirement, you may either:

- enroll in the Massachusetts State System Plan which was designed for state college students or
- show evidence of a comparable or better health insurance plan of your choice.

You will receive information with your bill in July about enrolling in the school-sponsored health insurance plan or waiving it with your own insurance. To enroll in the school-sponsored health insurance plan or to waive the school plan with your own health insurance plan, go to [University Health Plans website](#).

Annual coverage starts August 1st and ends July 31st. If you have your own insurance, that company may require verification of your status as a full-time student. Please forward any forms regarding your student status to the Registrar's office. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Health Center at [healthcenter@framingham.edu](mailto:healthcenter@framingham.edu). The staff at the Health Center looks forward to assisting you with your health care needs while you are a student at Framingham State University.

## Residential Living

### What will be in your room when you arrive

Framingham provides each student with a bed frame, standard-length twin mattress, desk, desk chair, shelf, chest of drawers, mirror and wardrobe. You will need to purchase or bring sheets, towels and blankets. Making an empty room feel like home will be your job!

### What you need to bring

Personal items (such as clothing, pictures of the family...etc) are really all you need to bring from home. A rule to go by is don't pack anything you can buy here. Pack lightly, as by the time you go home, you will have more stuff than you could ever take home.

You can purchase the items you need for yourself (e.g. toiletries), for school (e.g. stationery), for your room (bedding, small rugs, decoration, hangers, waste basket) and electrical appliances (hair dryer, alarms clock, iron, lamp, phone) here. Remember that appliances you bring from home will not usually work in the U.S. because of voltage and plug differences. Bring a voltage transformer and/or plug adapter purchased in your home country as ones purchased here do not work with foreign appliances/laptops. Note that consumer goods (like groceries, clothing, and electrical appliances) are rather inexpensive in the United States if you go shopping in the right place. So you may want to delay purchasing some items and buy them here (e.g. winter coat, hat, boots) and not bring them all the way from home.

The bookstore also has items you need every day, but their prices may be more expensive than what you can find off-campus. Remember: lots of places to shop in Framingham and Natick!

### What you shouldn't bring

Many items are forbidden in residence halls for safety reasons. Candles, incense, cooking appliances, halogen lamps, dart boards, among other items, are not permitted. Reference the Residence Life website for more information.



## RAs

RAs (Residential Assistants) are students themselves living in every dorm. They are there to help you with any problems or issues you may have (both academic and personal) and organize programs for the people on their floor. They also post information on the bulletin boards about the shuttles and on-campus activities.

## Campus Dining

All students that live on-campus are required by the University to choose a meal plan. Meal plans are unique to the U.S. university life, as dormitories are not equipped with kitchens and cooking facilities.

Commuter students are eligible to purchase meal plans as well. Please find all meal plan options and rates on the [university website](#).

## Receiving mail

Residence Hall Mailbox Service:

Mailboxes are located near the lobby in each residence hall. Mail is delivered Monday - Friday with the exception of holidays. Students are assigned box numbers within the first two weeks of the academic year. All mail addressed to residents should include the following information:

Name

Residence Hall - Room #

Mailbox #

Framingham State University 100

State St., P.O. Box 9101

Framingham, MA 01701-9101

Package slips are used to inform students about mail too large for their mailboxes. To retrieve this material, students must turn in package slip, show their Framingham State University identification card and sign for the package with the Resident Assistant on duty because all residence halls do not have staffed and secure package areas. Residents should use caution when having packages of value shipped to the residence halls. If students choose to have packages (defined as any item which will not fit into the mailbox) shipped to the residence halls, the staff will do its best to receive and maintain packages, but it will not be responsible for loss of and/or damage to any such packages.

Students can mail packages or letters at the Framingham Post Office in Trolley Square (across Route 9). In addition, a mailbox is located in front of O'Connor Hall.

## Laundry

Washers and dryers are available in each dormitory. You will use your RAM CASH on your ID to operate the machines. You need to have your own detergent and fabric softener. You can leave your laundry unattended while it is being washed and pick it up at the end of the cycle to then transfer it to

a dryer.

## Drinking Age and Framingham's Alcohol Policy

In the United States, you must be 21 years old to drink alcohol. The sale or service of alcohol to anyone who has not reached the age of 21 is prohibited. Bars and clubs also require over 21 IDs to enter. The following residence hall policies regarding alcohol and other drugs are in effect at Framingham State University:

Framingham State University adheres to the principles of the Drug-Free Workplace Act and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. Students who are employed on campus are expected to comply with expectations for University employees in this area (for more information, please visit the [FSU Human Resources site](#), in addition to student alcohol and drug policies.

Drug and/or alcohol abuse is an impediment to individual success, and is harmful to the overall Framingham State community, as well. The unlawful possession, consumption, and distribution of drugs and/or alcohol by students, faculty, or staff on University property or sponsored events is prohibited, including Residence Halls

It is the responsibility of each FSU community member to become familiar with the Alcohol and Drug policies that are included in the [RAM Handbook](#).

## FSU Student Activities

The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Development (SILD) encourage all Framingham State University students to get “involved” in campus life. Being “involved” means making a connection to the campus community. Through attending a campus event or joining a club, students can meet new friends and faculty, experience new ideas, or learn new skills.

Connection to campus can make all the difference in a student's experience and investment in his/her education. The office is located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Campus Center, room 510. Check out [SILD's website!](#)

They regularly offer students the opportunity to buy tickets for local events, movies, etc.

### How to Get Involved

Involvement comes in many ways, shapes, and forms. From campus employment to student organizations, there are a variety of potential involvement opportunities awaiting Framingham State students. The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Development offer several chances for involvement on campus.

**Attend Engagement Day: Career, Community, Connection Fair** at the beginning of the fall semester - Registered clubs will have tables to recruit new members ... just like you!

**Visit RamLink** – You can find a list of all events happening on campus at RamLink!

**Stop by a club's meeting.** Find club meeting times and how to reach out to members at RamLink!

**Meet with a SILD staff member** to discuss your interests.

**Attend an event** on campus. You'll meet new people, and find out more about what a club does on campus.

Check out RamLink for a monthly calendar.

**Start a new club!** You may have a talent or interest that fills a need on campus. Stop by SILD for more information.

**Apply for a campus job.** Many departments need student assistants, and it's a great way to meet staff, faculty, and other students.

**Understand** that it may take some investigation to find the right opportunity for you.

## Religious Organizations in the Local Area

Please visit [this website](#) for a complete listing of local religious organizations and churches.

If you are interested in exploring local organizations from the American Red Cross to United Way to the Special Olympics, please see [this site](#). You will find a myriad of opportunities for involvement off-campus within the greater Framingham community.

Whether on or off campus, Framingham offers a wealth of opportunities to get more involved in activities. As you become more involved in local activities, you will quickly feel much more a part of everyday life in the United States and you will become comfortable with the various nuances of daily life both on and off campus.

Questions? Just Ask!

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