



New Student and Family Orientation FAQs

New Students

Registration

Is Orientation Mandatory?

Yes! New Student Orientation is a required experience that prepares you to enter the GW community with the information needed to get started. Should you fail to attend a New Student Orientation session, an Academic Hold will be placed on your account, impacting your ability to register for Spring 2026 classes.

What happens if I don't go through Orientation?

Orientation is required, and failure to attend will result in an academic hold. This hold will keep you from registering for classes going into the following semester. Attendance will be tracked and shared to make sure that sessions are completed.

What if I can't attend a June session of Orientation?

If you're unable to attend a June Orientation session, please reach out to us at orientation@gwu.edu as soon as possible. New first-year students should plan to attend one of the four June sessions unless you are studying on a J-1 or F-1 visa, or you have an extenuating circumstance. Requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

If unable to attend August final session: You will be asked to attend Make Up Orientation in September, should you not attend any of New Student Orientation you will receive a hold on your account which will prevent you from registering for Spring Classes.

Is the August Orientation session just for International Students?

The August first-year Orientation session is for International Students studying on an F-1 or J-1 visa or for students with extenuating circumstances whose situations will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Is there only one Transfer Student Orientation session?

There is a session for all incoming transfer students joining us in the Fall semester happening on **August 20, 2025**. This will be a modified version of our schedule, making all the programming happen in one day. The day will answer questions, provide opportunities to meet other students, and get students acquainted with GWU.

How do I indicate any accommodations (dietary restrictions, mobility accommodations, etc.) that my students or I will need?



Orientation, Class Year & Families Programs

While registering through the Orientation portal, there will be fields to indicate the need for any/all accommodations.

Does Orientation cost anything?

No, there is no registration fee for students and families.

[Arriving Early?](#)

How do I sign up for an Early Arrival time slot? (& What if registration is full?)

Early Arrival slots are limited. Following registering for your New Student Orientation session, you will be prompted to register for early arrival accommodations should you need them. You will only be able to register for an early arrival slot after you've registered for Orientation and only as long as slots are available. You will not be able to register for a slot if the session is full.

What is Early Arrival?

Early Arrival accommodations are provided to those who need to arrive on campus the evening before their orientation session. Following registering for your session, you'll be prompted to register for an early arrival slot, if there is space available. Spots are limited, so we recommend registering for New Student Orientation as soon as you're able.

[When and Where is Orientation?](#)

Summer 2025 Orientation Dates

June 16-17 (early arrival option: June 15)

June 20-21 (*no early arrival*)

June 23-24 (early arrival option: June 22)

Students participating in Summer Academy Ignite should register for this session

June 30-July 1 (early arrival option: June 29)

Final first-year session in August**** (*no early arrival*)

This session is for International Students studying on an F-1 or J-1 visa, for students with extenuating circumstances and/or experiencing financial hardship. All these students should reach out to us ASAP.

Where does New Student Orientation take place?

New Student Orientation will take place on the Foggy Bottom campus in the University Student Center. Early arrivals should check in at Thurston Hall (1900 F St NW, Washington, DC 20052) - you will receive an email with more information regarding early arrival accommodations following registering for Orientation.

If you are joining us the morning of the program you will check-in starting at 8:00 AM at the University Student Center 1st Floor (800 21st St NW Washington DC, 20009). The Resource Fair will begin at 8:30 AM with Orientation Welcome kicking off at 9:30 AM.



Orientation, Class Year & Families Programs

What time do I need to be on campus for the first day of Orientation?

Check-in for Orientation starts at 8:00 AM at the University Student Center 1st Floor (800 21st St NW Washington DC, 20009) and is followed by a resource fair, optional campus tours, and the Orientation Welcome. Students and their guests must check-in for Orientation prior to attending sessions for the day. The Resource Fair will begin at 8:30 AM with Orientation Welcome kicking off at 9:30 AM. You must check-in for the program in order for your attendance to count.

How can I access the Orientation Schedule?

Check-in for Orientation begins at 8:00 AM and is followed by a resource fair, optional campus tours, and the Orientation Welcome. You will have access to view your full Orientation schedule when you arrive for Orientation through the guidebook app.

[Overnight Accommodations](#)

Do I have to stay in the residence hall during Orientation?

As a part of your registration for Orientation, you will be assigned a room in Thurston Hall for overnight stay. This will ensure you're on time for your session, you'll have easy access to events, resources, and your peers throughout the session.

What residence hall will I be staying in?

Students will stay in Thurston Hall over their Orientation session. All students will be rooming with randomly assigned roommates upon checking into Thurston Hall.

Can my family members stay in the residence hall with me?

Thurston Residence hall rooms are only for our incoming undergraduate students. We encourage your family and supporters to consider booking a discounted stay with one of our local Summer Orientation [hotel partners here](#). Many are within easy walking distance to campus.

What do I need for my overnight stay in Thurston Hall?

Linens and towels are not provided, so you will need to pack for an overnight stay in the building. We also have an included packing list [here](#)!

- For your stay in Thurston Hall
 - Bedding: Twin XL sheets (or a sleeping bag), a blanket, and a pillow
 - Personal care: towel, shower shoes (for community bathroom), items needed for overnight stay.
- For your Orientation session:
 - We recommend you bring a laptop and charger
 - Ask Questions & Engage!
 - You'll meet the people who facilitate important resources, your Orientation Leader (current student), and other new students over the course of your session



Orientation, Class Year & Families Programs

- Summer weather in Washington, D.C. can be hot, humid, and quickly changes. We recommend packing clothes you will be comfortable in all day, close-toed shoes for evening programming, an umbrella, and a light layer for indoor programming!

Parking

Where should I park?

Parking is available in the University Student Center Garage (Access on H Street between 21st and 22nd streets, NW).

Will I get my parking validated?

We are not able to validate parking. You can [view the on-campus parking rates here](#).

Prior to Attending Orientation

Do I have to complete the “Ready, Rev, GO!” and the “Perspectives” Modules before I attend Orientation?

The Ready, Rev, GO! and “Perspectives” Modules will need to be completed prior to coming to your registered Orientation. The information that will be presented in the modules will be supplementary to the information given at the session, allowing you to get some answers prior to joining us on campus.

Family, Parents and Supporters

Registration

I am a parent/family member/supporter, why should I register to attend Family Orientation?

We encourage parents and families to attend Orientation when possible because you will learn more about the GW community, resources, and information that will be helpful to support your student and helpful to you as a GW family member, too!

How do I register to attend Orientation as a family member?

Your student will register themselves and up to two guests through the registration link located on the orientation website.

Do families and students attend the same Orientation?

Yes; however, the programming is different! Students will go through their own series of sessions and the Parent, Family and Support Orientation will run concurrently.

Orientation Schedule



Orientation, Class Year & Families Programs

What time does Family Orientation begin?

Family programming will coincide with student programming. Check-in for the day will begin at 8:00 AM, and the family day will last through around 4:00 PM for Day 1 programming. Day 2 will start at the same time, but will wrap-up earlier, ending between 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM.

How can I access the Orientation Schedule?

Check-in for Orientation begins at 8:00 AM and is followed by a resource fair, optional campus tours, and the Orientation Welcome. You will have access to view your full Orientation schedule when you arrive for Orientation through the guidebook app. Printed copies will also be available for families.

[Overnight Accommodations](#)

Can I stay overnight in the residence hall with my student during Orientation?

Thurston Residence hall rooms are only for our incoming undergraduate students. We encourage family members and supporters to consider booking a discounted stay with one of our local [hotel partners here](#). Many are within easy walking distance to campus.

Are hotel blocks reserved for families?

Yes! Families can book their discounted stay **with** one of our local [hotel partners here](#).

[Parking](#)

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