

Cultural Adjustment

Cultural adjustment is a process that many international scholars and students experience. It is a lifelong process. Living in a new culture with different social norms and attitudes can be both exciting and challenging. Understanding the adjustment process and getting support when you or your students need it will help you succeed at UGA.

The U Curve

Adapting to a new environment takes time and the pace of transition varies from person to person. The typical pattern of cultural adjustment often consists of distinct phases: Honeymoon, Crisis, Recovery, and Adjustment. The effect these phases have on one's mood is illustrated in this "U-curve" figure.



Suggestions for Easing the Transition:

Stay Open-Minded and Curious: Embrace new experiences and be open to learning about American culture and customs.

Build a Support Network: Connect with other international students who are experiencing similar adjustments. The International Coffee Hour and Orientation are great opportunities to make friends!

Communicate and Ask for Help: Don't hesitate to ask for help or clarification if you don't understand something. Use campus resources like the writing center and peer tutoring.

Stay Connected to Home: Maintain regular contact with family and friends back home to feel connected and supported.

Understand Cultural Differences: Research and learn about American cultural norms, values, and etiquette to better understand social interactions

Manage Stress and Take Care of Yourself: Practice self-care and manage stress through healthy activities such as exercise, meditation, or hobbies. Utilize campus health services for physical and mental health support.