PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

This information sheet is designed to answer some questions you may have as you prepare for your arrival in Claremont, California. We know that you may have questions or concerns not addressed below. Please do not hesitate to contact the Admissions Office if you need further information.

**Academic Planning**
We recommend that you bring with you any syllabi, catalogs, course description or other relevant materials issued by the college or university you previously attended. These materials can be helpful to faculty should questions arise concerning your placement in courses at KGI.

**Getting an I-20 or DS-2019**
Before issuing you an I-20 or DS-2019 form, KGI is required to verify that you have adequate financial resources to support your studies. Please refer to the *Financial Certification* form for detailed instructions.

**Obtaining a Visa**
The first thing you must do to arrange for your entry into the United States is to obtain an F-1 student visa from a U.S. embassy or consulate near you. Visa procedures vary somewhat from one embassy/consulate to another. Before applying for a visa, check with the embassy/consulate for current procedures and required documents. At minimum, you will be required to submit the following:

- Visa application and fee
- One (possibly more) passport-style photo
- Pay your $200 SEVIS fee at https://www.fmjfee.com/index.html
- Valid passport
- I-20/DS-2019
- Proof of financial support

It is not recommended that you enter the U.S. on a B-2 tourist visa, unless it is marked “prospective student” by the visa officer. **Note:** Canadian citizens are not required to obtain a student visa. Instead, Canadians present an I-20 and proof of financial support at the point of entry.

**Transfer Students.** If you have been attending another institution in the United States as an F-1 student, we will send you an F-1 Student *Transfer In* form. This form must be completed and returned to the International Student Counselor before an I-20/DS-2019 can be issued to you.

**Finances**
It is very important that you estimate your educational and living expenses carefully to make certain that you will have sufficient funds available to meet all your needs while studying at KGI. Institutional financial aid is very limited, so that, unless you have already been notified of an award in your admission letter, you should not expect to receive an award after you have registered for classes.

**KGI Student Loan.** If you have received the International Student Loan, it will be disbursed in two equal payments. The fall payment will be disbursed during the first week of new student orientation. The spring payment will be disbursed during the first week of classes in the spring semester.

**Employment** F-1 students are allowed to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week during the academic year and up to 40 hours per week during vacation periods. Permission to accept employment off-campus is strictly regulated by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). You should not plan on working to support yourself during your studies, except during the required summer internship. F-2 spouses (husband or wife of an F-1 student) may not be employed at any time under any circumstances.
Arrival in the US

Before packing, check with your airline to find out how much baggage you will be allowed to take with you. Please do not send any baggage in advance of your arrival to KGI because the Institute does not have storage facilities for luggage or packages. International Place staff will assist you in shipping your personal belongings to Claremont after your arrival.

Money. Do not carry a large amount of cash. Instead, purchase traveler’s checks or use a major credit card such as Visa or American Express. Do not place your cash, credit cards, or traveler’s checks in your checked luggage.

Health & Medicine. Bring a small supply of familiar medicine, such as pain relievers, that you are used to. If you have prescription medicines, bring a larger supply. You may not be able to immediately renew your prescription in the US. You are required to provide proof of a negative Tuberculosis (“TB”) test prior to registration. The Student Health Services on campus will administer the test for a small fee, or you can present a letter from your physician certifying that you have had a TB test or chest x-ray. You should also bring a record of your immunizations for Tetanus, Measles, Rubella (German Measles), and Mumps.

Arrival in Claremont. Most international flights land at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). An International Place staff member will meet you at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) if notified in advance of your arrival. To make arrangements, contact International Place at the address below. There are also several shuttle services operating between Claremont and LAX airport.

Weather. Claremont is 30 miles east of the city of Los Angeles, at the base of the San Gabriel mountains in Los Angeles County. Situated at an elevation of 1,150 feet, the weather is almost always warm and sunny with an annual average rainfall of approximately 17 inches. The temperature may drop to near freezing (0 C) some nights in December and January, but will often climb to 25 C or higher in the daytime. The rainy season is in the winter, and summer is usually very warm and dry (temperatures can reach 30 C/40 C).

City Website. Further information about the city of Claremont is available on-line at http://ci.claremont.ca.us/.

Host Family. Students arriving alone can stay with a host family for a few days, during which time they can adjust to the Claremont community and look for more permanent housing. To arrange for a host family, please contact International Place (at the address or website below) at least 3 weeks in advance of your arrival so that arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

International Place
390 East Ninth St.
Claremont, CA 91711-6420, U.S.A.
Phone: (909) 621-8344 or (909) 607-7868
Fax: (909) 621-8549
Website: http://iplace.claremont.edu
Email: ipoffice@cmc.edu

Check-In
Within 10 days of your arrival in Claremont, you must check-in with the International Student Counselor. Please bring your passport and I-20.

Before You Register
Health care in the U.S. is very expensive. Therefore, all international students are required to take out a health insurance policy and to maintain it during their entire stay at KGI. Proof of insurance coverage for the entire semester is required at registration. Students who do not have health insurance are required to purchase The Claremont Colleges student health insurance plan.