



**Plant Molecular
and Cellular Biology**
PROGRAM

PMCB Student Guide

(revised January 2020)

<http://pmcb.ifas.ufl.edu>

WELCOME

Welcome to the Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology (PMCB) Program at the University of Florida (UF)! This is a quick guide to assist our PMCB graduate students in making the most of their graduate life at UF and Gainesville. There is a wealth of information available online and through social media about what UF and Gainesville offer. We hope that this guide will serve as a starting point on some of the most important services that UF offers. Go Gators!

HOUSING

Gainesville offers many more housing facilities than there are people, meaning there are plenty of options to choose from. New students should consider location, budget, preferences, habits, safety, and transportation when choosing living accommodations.

Off-Campus Housing

- **University of Florida Off-Campus Life**

<http://www.offcampus.ufl.edu>

This website was developed by UF's Off-Campus Life and it offers students a [Housing Locator](#) to search for housing and find roommates. There is also an off-campus life staff that is available to answer your questions.

- **ApartmentList.com**

<https://www.apartmentlist.com>

- **Gainesville Apartment Guide Online**

<http://www.gainesville-rent.com>

- **College Rentals**

<http://www.collegerentals.com>

- **Apartment Hunters**

<http://www.apartmenthunters.com>

UF On-Campus Student Family Housing

<http://www.housing.ufl.edu>

On-Campus housing is available to single or married graduate students (with or without children). On-campus housing is in high demand, and there is usually a waiting list. If interested, it is recommended that you sign up for on-campus housing as soon as possible. To contact the UF Housing Office, check their website (above) or call (352) 392-2161. You can only select an apartment if you meet all the eligibility requirements. Submitting a UF housing application is not a guarantee of campus housing. In addition to the application, UF housing apartment selection and contracting process are also done online. To learn more, click on <http://www.housing.ufl.edu/gfh/choices/> and How to Apply - <http://www.housing.ufl.edu/gfh/apply/howto/>

General Housing Tips:

- You are not obligated to rent an apartment if you look at it.

- Get everything in writing before you sign the lease, read the lease carefully before you sign, and keep a copy of the lease and any other documents about your apartment.
- Security deposits and first and last month's rent are supposed to guarantee that the tenant will care for the dwelling. If the tenant does not care for the property or clean it before leaving, the landlord has a legal right to keep the security deposit. Otherwise, the landlord must return the security deposit within a month after the tenant leaves. You should have the agreement about the security deposit in writing included in the lease. You should also complete a move-in checklist and give this to your landlord. On this list, you should indicate any existing damages to the apartment in full detail.
- Student Legal Services (<http://www.sg.ufl.edu/Services/StudentLegalServices>) offers free legal advice service and confidential counseling to UF students, and can assist if you have issues such as repairs, security deposits, eviction, and termination of leases.

TRANSIT AND COMMUTING

<http://www.parking.ufl.edu/>

- **Parking a Car**

<http://parking.ufl.edu/parking-at-uf/>

All vehicles parked on campus weekdays, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm (unless signage indicates otherwise) must display a valid UF parking decal (unless parked in a metered space). A decal is not required to park in most restricted areas after 4:30 pm, but be sure to check signage and never park in a service drive, reserved space, or disabled person parking space without the proper decal or permit.

Student decal eligibility is based on whether the student lives on or off-campus and the number of credit hours earned. As a graduate student and if you live off-campus, you are eligible for a Green commuter decal. It allows the holder to park in the commuter parking areas and All Decal parking areas.

Check a map of parking lots on campus at <http://parking.ufl.edu/parking-at-uf/parking-map>. During the decal renewal season, eligible students must order parking decals online. Decals will not be available for purchase at the customer relations office.

PLEASE NOTE:

The speed limit on campus is 20 mph. Parking and speeding are strictly enforced, and you will be ticketed if speeding or parked illegally.

- **Bicycling**

It is easy to park a bike on campus. Have a good lock to secure it ("U-lock" is probably the best option). You should register your bike with the University Police Department. Registration is free of charge, and can be done by the University Police Department's Community Services Division (392-1409) between 8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. Many major roads have bike lanes, but a helmet is a very good idea. The on-campus speed limit is 20 miles per hour, and this does apply to bikes; people have been ticketed for speeding on their bikes. Tickets are also given for bicycling the wrong way on one-way

streets, and for failure to use hand signals or come to complete stops at stop signs. For more information visit <http://bikes.ufl.edu>.

- **Motorcycles and Scooters (mopeds)**

Motor scooters and motorcycles also provide a good option, since they have their own parking areas on campus. Check <http://parking.ufl.edu/parking-at-uf/campus-parking-restrictions/> and for safety regulations http://www.ehs.ufl.edu/programs/hazard_ergo/motorcycle/

- **The Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol (SNAP)**

<http://www.police.ufl.edu/community-services/student-nighttime-auxiliary-patrol-snap>

Implemented in 1976 to provide safe, nighttime transportation on the University of Florida campus. The “buddy system” has long been recognized as a means of enhancing personal safety and security. SNAP provides an on-call “buddy” ready to escort university students, staff, and visitors.

- **Regional Transit System (RTS)**

<http://www.go-rts.com>

This is Gainesville's bus system, and it's a solution to the traffic congestion problems around town. It is free to students with a valid GatorOne card (UF picture ID). Check their website for hours of operation, city routes, and Campus routes. There is a bus stop at practically every apartment complex in town, downtown, the Oak's Mall, and the community college. If you drive to UF's campus with a commuter sticker, the bus brings students from the commuter lots to the center of campus. Also, if you would like to take the bus to campus and then bike elsewhere, RTS allows you to bring your bike; each bus is equipped with bike racks to accommodate passengers with bikes. To track your bus online with the RTS Gator Locator, click [here](#).

- **ZipCar**

<http://www.zipcar.com/universities/university-of-florida>

Zipcars are available by the hour or by the day, and gas, insurance, and 180 free miles are included with every reservation. Zipcars are available to students, faculty, and staff – as long as you are 18 years of age or older.

COMPUTERS

<http://www.it.ufl.edu/policies/student-computing-requirements>

The University of Florida expects that each student new to the university will acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to their new degree program. Check the [Office of Information Technology](#) for more information. The [UF Computing Help Desk](#) provides phone, email and walk-in computer consulting services to faculty, staff, and students and communications with campus IT support as needed to resolve an individual's computing issues.

LIBRARIES

<http://web.uflib.ufl.edu>

The libraries of the University of Florida form the largest information resource system in the state of Florida and serve every college and center in the university, including the Institute of Food and

Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and the Health Science Center. UF's libraries consist of seven libraries; six of which comprise the George A. Smathers Libraries. Many of these resources are made available to you from your home computers via the library homepage. Your Gator 1 Card serves also as your library card for borrowing and is also required for using the computerized catalog or databases in any of the libraries on campus.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The University of Florida knows that the well-being of its students plays a major role in their academic, professional, and personal success. With this in mind, UF provides its graduate students with many services that aid in maintaining a safe, healthy lifestyle and enriching personal life. A few of them are listed below:

- **Counseling & Wellness Center**

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>

Their mission is to facilitate the total development of students by reducing psychological problems and distress and by enhancing mental health, well-being, quality of life, and optimal functioning, through the delivery of high-quality, culturally sensitive services to UF students and the larger campus community. Their primary focus is on providing brief, confidential counseling aimed at helping students succeed academically and interpersonally.

- **U Matter We Care**

<http://www.umatter.ufl.edu>

U Matter, We Care is an umbrella for care-related programs and resources for students and employees. It includes a program to train people to recognize the signs of distress and to provide help. It also includes a website of care-related resources, as well as a centralized phone number (294-CARE) and email address for those seeking help or wanting to help others.

- **GatorWell**

<http://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu>

GatorWell Health Promotion Services educates, empowers, and coaches students to make healthy decisions, and provides leadership and advocacy for health-enhancing policy.

- **Student Health Care Center**

<http://shcc.ufl.edu/>

The Student Health Care Center is staffed with physicians, physician assistants, nurses, psychologists, and counselors who assist students in various areas, including allergy injection clinic, kidney clinic, blood pressure clinic, wart clinic, orthopedic clinic, dermatology clinic, plastic surgery clinic, allergy clinic, and a women's clinic, among other services.

- **Dean of Students Office**

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/>

The Division of Student Affairs creates a culture of care for students, their families, faculty, and staff by providing exemplary programs and services designed to enhance students' academic and personal success.

UF RECSPORTS

<http://recsports.ufl.edu/>

The University of Florida is recognized for its recreation and wellness activities. The Department of Recreational Sports offers fitness classes (cardio, cycling, mind/body, outdoor, dance, and strength), outdoor & adventure trips, sports, swimming, and more in several locations around campus. The Southwest Recreation Center (SWCR) is a state-of-the-art facility, very close to Fifield Hall and Genetics Institute.

ARTS & CULTURE

Gainesville is a small college town but it offers a fair amount of cultural activities:

- **UF Performing Arts Center** (<http://www.performingarts.ufl.edu>) offers a range of world-class performances including symphony orchestras, Broadway plays, opera, and large-scale ballet.
- **The Harn Museum of Art** (<http://www.harn.ufl.edu/>) houses a variety of paintings, sculptures, prints, ceramics, photographs, and cultural objects. The museum also features a variety of changing exhibitions and a full range of educational programs.
- **Museum of Natural History** (<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/>) offers permanent and traveling exhibitions and a butterfly garden.
- **Hippodrome State Theater** (<http://www.thehipp.org>), located downtown, offers plays and independent films. Prices are often discounted for students.

UF STUDENT GOVERNMENT

<http://www.sg.ufl.edu>

When registering for classes at the University of Florida, a fraction of the tuition goes to the Activity and Service Fee Budget. The funds are used by student government to provide services for all students. These are open to the entire student body and cater to overall enrichment in safety, entertainment, health, professional skills, and personal development. Click [here](#) to check the services offered.

UF GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

<http://gsc.sg.ufl.edu/>

It serves as a liaison between University of Florida graduate students, UF administration, and UF Student Government. Funded by UF Student Government and, in part, by the UF Graduate School, GSC is a voice for graduate student needs, concerns, and ideas, and provides several services to graduate students. For example, students can apply to Graduate Student Council travel grants when presenting a talk or poster at a conference. PMCB needs to have an active representative in the SG Council to be eligible to apply for travel grants.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AT UF

<https://www.studentinvolvement.ufl.edu>

UF has one of the largest student-life programs in the country, with more than 950 student organizations. GatorConnect <https://ufl.collegiatelink.net> lists all UF-affiliated Organizations and their sponsored events.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

<http://www.ufic.ufl.edu/ISS/handbook.html>

The UF International Center – International Student Services division offers this handbook, designed with international students in mind. It has useful information on academics & student life, housing, immigration, money management, adjusting to life in the US, among other topics.

ATLETHICS

<http://floridagators.com>

This is the source for everything you want to know about all UF's athletics programs. Athletic competitions are popular events in Gainesville where students and the community turn up in the thousands to watch sports such as football, basketball, baseball, softball, gymnastics, soccer, and others.

CAMPUS SAFETY

<http://www.police.ufl.edu>

The University of Florida Police Department provides service 24 hours a day and is an integral part of the university's dedication to developing and maintaining a safe and secure campus.

FLORIDA ALTERNATIVE BREAKS

http://www.leadershipandservice.ufl.edu/programs/florida_alternative_breaks/

Offered by the UF Center for Leadership & Service, this is a student-led organization that sends out service-learning trips based on specific social issues during academic breaks.

CAMPUS LIFE

<http://www.admissions.ufl.edu/campuslife.html>

Links to information on arts, athletics, campus safety, dining on campus, disability resources, multicultural and diversity affairs, groups and organizations, health and wellness, recreation, and more.

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

<http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu>

Offers a wide variety of activities for students, faculty & staff, parents & family, and alumni.

REITZ UNION DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

<https://www.union.ufl.edu/Home>

Offers Leisure Courses (pottery, dance, languages, music, etc.), movies, game room, GatorNights, the Union Hotel, and event services.

INCOME TAXES RESOURCES

For assistance with income tax and filing reports with the IRS (Internal Revenue Service), please visit these websites:

- **University Payroll and Tax Services**

<http://www.fa.ufl.edu/departments/payroll-tax-services/>

University Payroll and Tax Services provides support for UF staff navigating the payroll process and tax laws while ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal agencies' laws and regulations.

- **Tax Almanac**

<http://www.taxalmanac.org>

This is a free online tax research resource for tax, financial, and accounting professionals. Even though this is not a consumer tax question site, they provide helpful information. Visit their page on W-4 allowances, students, excess FICA, and withholding (2004 IRS FAQ).

- **U.S. Tax Information for Nonresident Aliens**

<http://ufic.ufl.edu/ISS/Taxes.html>

This site from the UF International Center provides an extensive FAQ section, glossary, forms, and links for nonresident aliens.

- **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**

<https://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-Preparation-for-You-by-Volunteers>

This volunteer program by UF's Levin College of Law assists UF and non-UF employees in filling out income tax forms and answering questions. The Association for Tax Law students offers the VITA sessions. For more information check <http://www.unitedwayncfl.org/vita>.

The most important document that students need to bring is their Social Security Card or ITIN. Bank account and routing numbers are also needed for people who want to receive their rebate electronically. Documentation of income, interest, adjustments (especially for students, tuition, and school-related expenses), deductions (if you want to make an itemized deduction), and taxes already paid (if any) are necessary. Last year's tax return is helpful. Students should also be aware that there is an intake form to fill out before they begin their return.