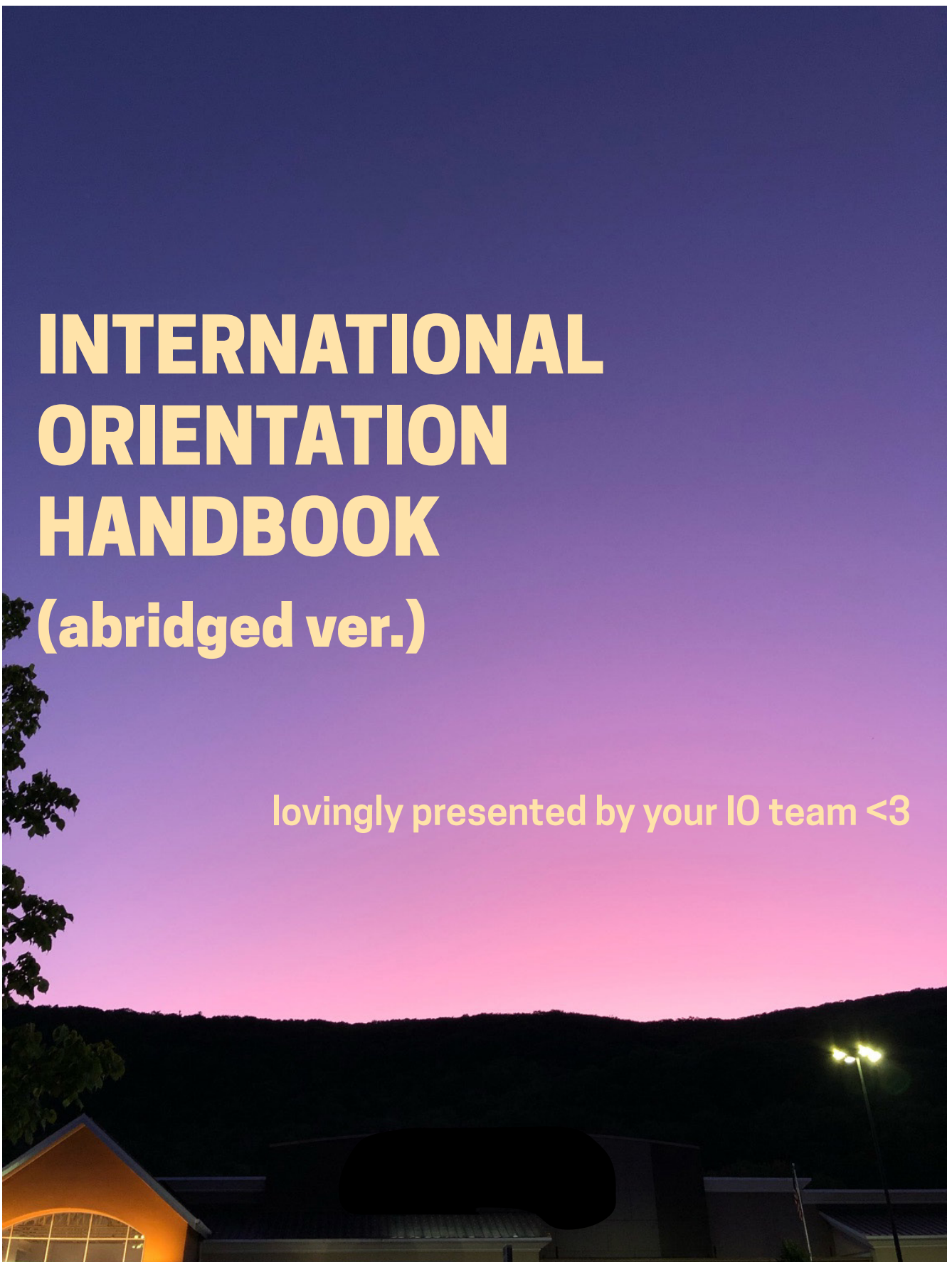


# **INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION HANDBOOK**

**(abridged ver.)**

lovingly presented by your IO team <3



# DISCLAIMER:

Due to the challenges presented by the current coronavirus pandemic, a lot of the usual information found in the IO handbooks are no longer accurate and/or viable. Thus, they did not make the cut this time. However! We thought that a lot of them would still be useful a couple of months down the line, so please keep the following in mind even if they might not necessarily apply to your ventures right now.



**First of all,** again, congratulations on making it this far! We are all so happy that you chose to join us.

**Before you begin your journey** into your first year of college, know that us international orientation leaders are here to support you through your explorations of Williams, especially in these ~unprecedented~ and very much terrifying times. This booklet is meant to clear up any common confusions, but it is by no means extensive. Each of us is an international student who has been in your shoes at some point, so if you have any burning questions about anything in particular (including clarifications on anything included in the handbook), shoot any of us a message and we would be more than happy to help.

**So, Welcome!** We can't wait to show you around. You make a wonderful eph.

Warmly,  
The International Orientation team

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(yes there r many tips & tricks apparently)	
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# TRANSPORTATION TIPS & TRICKS

## “I’m bored & I want to explore the Berkshire County but I can’t drive!!”

To move around the Berkshire County, you can use the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) and go to places like North Adams or Pittsfield. As Williams students, we can use that for free by showing the driver our Williams ID, service which you will get during International Orientation. Note: Please do **NOT** leave campus during Coronavirus lockdown!!

## “I miss big cities and malls! Where can I go & how can I get there??”

The college offers Motorcoach shuttles to most major cities near Williamstown on breaks, which you can book on [sarah.williams.edu](http://sarah.williams.edu) (**book it in advance for a discount!**). However, PeterPan and Greyhound are two other bus services that you can use.

**ALBANY:** 1-hour drive away. Accessible by college shuttles or Peter Pan. Has an airport.

**BOSTON & NYC:** 3.5-hour drive away. Accessible by college shuttles (on holidays), Peter Pan, or Peter Pan + Greyhound combo.

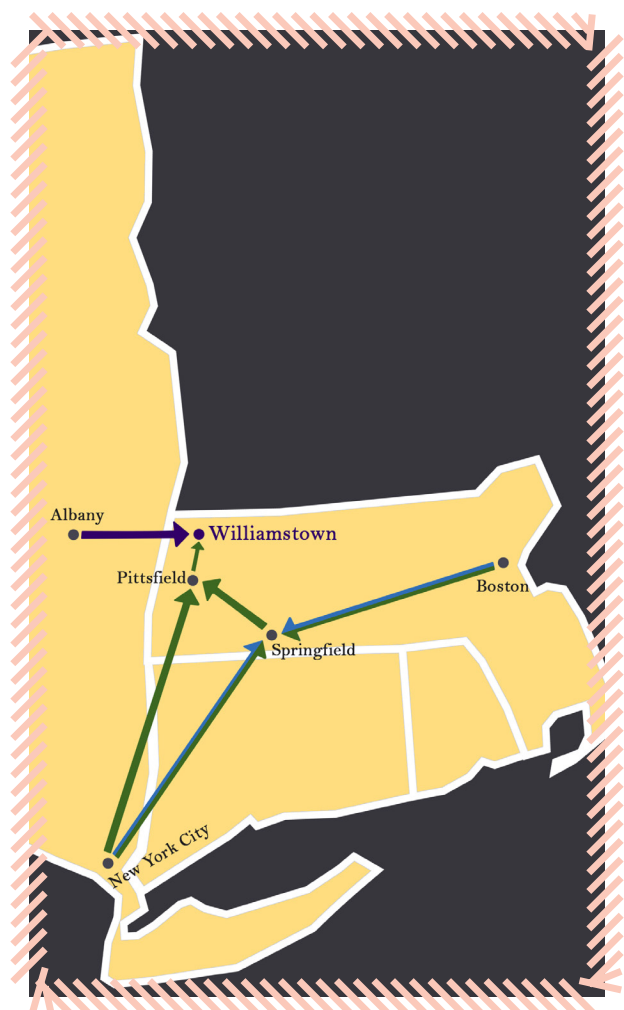
\***Greyhound** unfortunately does not have a station in Williamstown (even though it is usually much faster with wider seats and cheaper tickets). Springfield, MA is a good location to switch buses when you book the tickets. **Peter Pan**, on the other hand, has a station at 1090 Main Street (in front of the Williams Inn).

## “Where can I buy daily necessities like toothpaste or pain meds & how can I get there??”

The college manages weekly Sunday shuttles\* to a couple of nearby shops (such as Walmart) and back. The Williams Apothecary on Spring Street also sells basic medicine and IS available during the lockdown.

\*Service **NOT** available during Coronavirus lockdown

## MAP:



# GENERAL TIPS & TRICKS

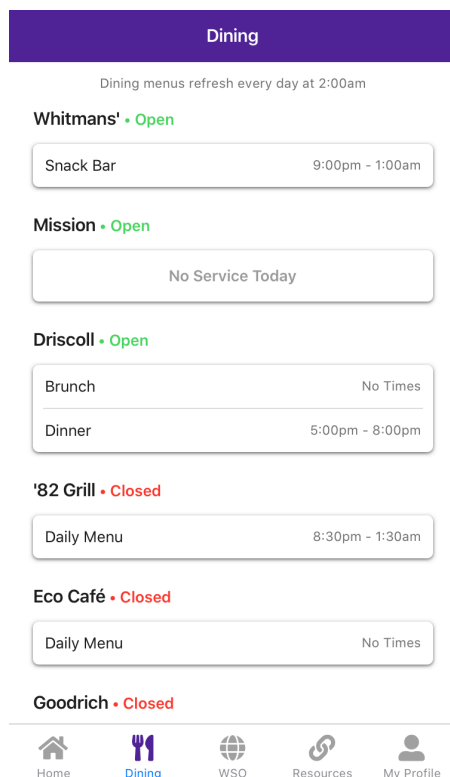
**“What are some helpful apps I should get? How do most Williams students text??”**

**GROUPME:** Messaging app used by almost all student groups on campus. Hit us up to be added to the Internationals '24 chat as well as the Ephternationals chat.

**CANVAS STUDENT:** Where most of your professors will post course materials (the syllabus, problem sets, & assignments).

**GET:** Add money to your student account (accessed by your student card) for laundry, Goodrich (student run coffee bar - currently closed), and vending machines.

**Williams Mobile:** essentially WSO for your phone. Find daily meal menus at each dining hall, student profiles, professor ratings, etc. on the go! (pictured below)



**“I’m BROKE! How can I save \$\$ as a student??”**

**CHEAPER RIDES:** You can request a ride or carpool via WSO or Williams Switchboard (<https://williams.switchboardhq.com/>). You can also rent ZipCars on the app.

**CHEAPER ONLINE SERVICES:** As students, use your college email address for a free six-month trial of Amazon Prime as well as Spotify Premium + Hulu (only \$4.99 per month)!

**CAMPUS TRANSPORT:** You can apply to rent a bike from the Purple Bike Coalition, which can save you a lot of time. Give them a google!

**TD ACCOUNT VOUCHER:** If you create a TD-Bank account with a voucher provided by your IOL, you can both get \$50. (The logistics for this might be more complicated this year, though.)

**TAG + ABC SALE:** Big ol sales for purchasing common used items such as winter coats, clothes, hangers, mirrors, lights, fans, etc. **These will not be open this year**, but come September 2021, keep an eye out for them.

**BOOK SELLBACK:** Sell your books back to the Williams Bookstore early for the best price.

All Williams students/faculty get free access to the New York Times. (<https://library.williams.edu/computing/nyt/>)

**“I don’t want to fail my classes but they all seem so HARD!! What do I do!!”**

**COMMUNICATE** with your profs! Go to their office hours, ask for extensions, shoot them emails when times get rough, etc. While Williams courses can get pretty tough, it’s really quite hard to fail a course so long as you make the effort to keep your profs in the loop.

Take advantage of **peer tutoring** via TutorTrac as well as the **Writing Workshop** (give them both a google!). Both are really convenient, and really useful if you ever feel you’re struggling with some classes/writing assignments.

# FINANCIAL AID

## TIPS & TRICKS

**“I wanna exploit the ~massive~ endowment! What are some academic discounts available to me??”**

**BOOK GRANT:** As long as you are on financial aid, the college will cover all your textbooks-even if you switch courses. Just bring your card when shopping for your textbooks! (Also applicable on the online store)

**PRICE-MATCHING:** When purchasing your textbooks (even if you're under the book grant), check if there is a cheaper price for said textbook online (i.e. on Amazon). By showing that online price to the cashier, they'll give you a voucher useable for anything in the bookstore, even AirPods!

**LAPTOPS:** You can borrow laptops for free from the library (that must be returned within two weeks, though you can just borrow again). Alternatively, there's a loan to buy your own laptop up to \$2500 - this applies to non-financial aid students as well.

**JOB:** Jobs will be much harder to come by this year, but because of that, the college will forgive the work-study loan. (In a normal year, they expect you to make \$2700 in a year, and pay that back to the college). However, international students are considered “priority” job applicants, so if you regularly check the daily messages and Handshake (williams.joinhandshake.com), you might be able to get a job. Talk to your IOL's/JA's on what jobs to go for - some allow you to do homework for most of the shift, some pay slightly better, etc.

**GRANTS GRANTS GRANTS:** there are grants for summer internships, replacing broken glasses, storage while off-campus, “career” resources (professional clothes or travel expenses), off-campus summer programs, even food vouchers if you spend winter break on-campus. However, as we don't want to bombard you all at once, we won't post them here. Just ask your IOL's/check the Williams website for more details!

**“What about other expenses?? Will the college cover them as well?”**

**WINTER CLOTHES:** Besides the annual tag sale that will be closed this year, you can email Dean Pretto to get \$150 dollars to purchase a coat and some winter boots. These two items will be very essential for winter!

**MEDICAL & DENTAL EXPENSES:** All covered by the college's comprehensive health insurance. We heard it even allows you to apply for free yoga classes, though we've never tried.

**GOING HOME:** The college will pay for one round-trip flight to your home each year. Email Bob Baker to book these flights: [bbaker@gltttravel.com](mailto:bbaker@gltttravel.com)

**EMERGENCIES:** In case of emergencies, the financial aid office accepts requests that they will review on a case-by-case basis, such as unexpected health costs or travel.

**For more information on financial aid for the 20-21 academic year, visit**

<https://finaid.williams.edu/>

<https://finaid.williams.edu/cost-financing/current-student-faqs/>



# MOBILE SERVICES SHOW DOWN!!

Although we can't help you decide the plan that is right for you, here is a comprehensive-ish list of phone service providers according to our experiences:

**AT&T:** good connection, a tad expensive.

**MINT MOBILE:** good connection, affordable.  
Ask an IOL for the referral code!!!

**RED POCKET:** decent connection, affordable

**US MOBILE:** decent connection, affordable

**TELLO:** ok connection, affordable, most customisable

**T-MOBILE:** sketchy connection??

once again, check the websites of each service provider for more information!  
Below are some example prepaid prices & plans for your information:



You can build your plans! Example plans:

\$11/month, 2GB + 100 mins talk + unlimited texts

\$17/month, 4GB + 300 mins talk + unlimited texts

\$10/month, 1GB + unlimited talk and text

\$14/month, 2GB + unlimited talk and text



\$25/month (have to pay \$300 upfront for 12 months), 8GB + unlimited talk and text

\$35/month, 2GB + unlimited talk and text



**Mint Mobile**

\$15/month, 3GB + unlimited talk and text

\$20/month, 8GB + unlimited talk and text



\$10/month, 500MB + 500 mins talk + 500 texts

\$15/month, 1GB + 1000 mins talk + unlimited texts



**US  
MOBILE**

You can build your plans! Example plan:

\$16/month, 1.5GB + 300 mins talk + 100 texts



# BANKING????

Don't yet have a debit bank account?  
Fret not! Here are your two options  
(both within walking distance from  
campus):



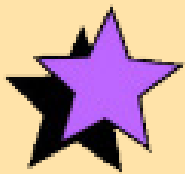
- Located right on Spring street, 5-minute walk from Paresky (central campus), classic choice
- ask you IOL for a referral slip, make 15+ transactions within 60 days & you both get \$50!



- Local bank that's a bit farther from campus
- Great for if you are under the age of 18!  
(since you cannot create accounts with TD)

for more information on banking (chequing account? savings account? wtf are those?),  
check out this comprehensive document compiled by our wonderful IOL's:

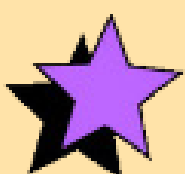
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ORuh7InSo5z1E0yau3uAtKc9qly7rSCjrvroPfhfiEc/edit?usp=sharing>



yep that's it we are all out of content  
so just appreciate the stars!!



get it? cus u a star? :)



# MEET YOUR IO TEAM!!



Orientation Director  
**Maysa Shaer**  
UAE



Orientation Director\*  
**Bálint Szöllősi**  
Hungary



Orientation Director\*  
**Niko Karamanis**  
Canada



Orientation Leader  
**Angela Chen**  
Taiwan



Orientation Leader  
**Harun Curak**  
Bosnia and Herzegovina



Orientation Leader  
**Desel Pek Dorji**  
Bhutan



Orientation Leader  
**Caitlin Han**  
Canada



Orientation Leader  
**Daniel Kam**  
Malaysia



Orientation Leader  
**Onder Kilinc**  
UK & Turkey

\*currently out of commission, pls contact  
Maysa (unix: ms35) if you must reach an IOD

# MEET YOUR IO TEAM!!

(CONT.)



Orientation Leader

**Jihong Lee**

South Korea



Orientation Leader

**Weiwei Lu**

Canada & China (kinda)



Orientation Leader

**Ken Morotomi**

Japan & Thai



Orientation Leader

**Sharon Mutoni**

Rwanda



Orientation Leader

**Yunjin Park**

Phillippines & South Korea



Orientation Leader

**Gabriela Rotta**

Brazil

# ***CREDITS***

Transportation chart + info:

Ken Morotomi '23

Spiritual guidance of Yousef Alamassi, Alicia Smith, and Michelle Laker '22

General & FinAid FAQ:

Daniel Kam '23

Mobile Services:

Desel Dorji (?) '23

Banking:

Desel Dorji, Chan Woo Kim '23

Spiritual guidance of Yousef Alamassi '22

Compilation & everything else:

Weiwei Lu, Yunjin Park '23

Emotional Support & constructive criticism provider:

Rito Tanaka '23 <3