

## Fall 2009 Information for Entering Graduate Students

Welcome to the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Colorado! This letter will provide you with some information about TA training, orientation, payroll, establishing Colorado residency, etc, but first here is some important general information. Note that this letter is also being posted on the Department's web site under a link titled "2009 Entering Student General Information".

If you have any questions or urgent issues, please contact me at by e-mail at [edminste@colorado.edu](mailto:edminste@colorado.edu) or by phone at 303-492-8978 or toll free (in the continental U.S.) at 888-203-5682. US mail can be sent to:

Cora Fagan-Edminster  
Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry  
UCB 215  
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0215  
U. S. A.

Please notify us of any changes to your email or mailing address as soon as possible. **If we don't have your email address, this could cause a delay in your first paycheck** (see the section on background check below)!

Second, departmental orientation and training will start on **Monday August 17th**. Orientation will be on Monday and Tuesday, and TA Training will start on Wednesday August 19<sup>th</sup>. **You will need to have your class schedule finalized and be registered for courses on by 8am on the 19<sup>th</sup>** so that we can schedule your TA assignments. I suggest that you arrive and move in the week prior to orientation and training (August 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>). **If the date of TA training poses a problem for you, please contact Dr. Margaret Asirvatham <Asirvath@Colorado.edu>** and let her know. You will get a more detailed schedule later in the summer once we have finalized the training and orientation schedules. Classes begin on Monday, August 24th.

Third, if you are interested finding a roommate among your classmates, please email me by June 30. In early July, I will send the names and contact information to those of you who are interested in finding a roommate among your peers.

### TA Training and Orientation

We will begin your TA orientation and training from Wednesday August 19th to Friday August 21st. All new graduate students in our department will go through training for CHEM 1111. This will include a review of important concepts specific to this course, and you will be quizzed! For this reason, it would be useful to refresh your knowledge over the summer. We will go over expectations of graduate teaching assistants and you will be given a schedule card to help work out teaching assignments.

You will be expected to complete the orientation and University-mandated training, such as Environmental Health and Safety training, Discrimination & Harassment training, etc, and hold more TA training. More information on this and the TA training will be posted on the Departmental web site in early August.

A packet of orientation materials will be in your Chemistry & Biochemistry Department mailboxes a few days before orientation begins. You can collect this at your convenience when you arrive on campus. The Mailroom (Cristol 102) is adjacent to the front office of the Cristol Chemistry building (Cristol 100).

## Language Assessment

The Department does not administer preliminary exams; however, **if you are an international student whose primary language is not English, you must contact Dr. Margaret Asirvatham ([Margaret.Asirvatham@Colorado.edu](mailto:Margaret.Asirvatham@Colorado.edu)) to schedule an assessment of your English language skills. Please contact her to schedule this assessment as soon as you know when you will be arriving in Boulder.**

## Registration for Classes

In May or June, the Office of Admissions will send to you a packet of information and forms to sign including a formal letter of acceptance which you must sign and return. This will likely be mailed to the "permanent address" you indicated on part I of your Application unless you have recently provided us with a new address. They will also request a \$200 deposit. **You cannot be registered until the deposit and formal acceptance is returned. If you do not register on time, 8% of your paycheck will be withheld and placed in a retirement fund (see retirement fund section below)!** Note that over the summer, we will register you for "placeholder" classes, which you will change to the actual courses you will be taking during orientation, but this cannot happen until you have formally accepted and paid your deposit. As such, it is important that you return the formal acceptance and pay the \$200 deposit promptly. If you have any questions or difficulty enrolling in your actual classes, please come see me and I will help you get registered properly. After July 1, you can use "CU Connect" to check your registration status (go to [www.colorado.edu](http://www.colorado.edu), navigate to the "CU students" button and then to the "CU connect" button). **If you have not yet been registered when you log on to "CU Connect", please send an email to me at [edminste@colorado.edu](mailto:edminste@colorado.edu) or call the graduate office at 303-492-8978.** You will need to finalize your course schedule and register for your first semester by August 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Retirement Fund

The University requires domestic employees to contribute to a retirement fund; however, full-time students are exempt from this. You must be enrolled to be a student, so if you are a **domestic student and are not enrolled by the due date, you will have 8% of your salary deducted and placed in a retirement fund! It is, therefore, very important to be enrolled by the due date each semester.** International students are not subject to this as they are not eligible to participate in the University retirement plan. During the summer, students are not typically enrolled, and as such, 8% of domestic students' salary will be deducted and placed in a retirement account. There is no way around this as it is a University requirement.

## Payroll Processing

You will need to fill out an I-9 form when you arrive so that we may place you on the payroll. In this packet you will find an IRS Form I-9, Employment Eligibility

Verification. On the back of this form are 3 lists of Acceptable Documents. You must have either **one form from List A** or **two forms of ID**, **one from List B** and **one from List C**, when you arrive to process your payroll appointment. **These identification documents must be original**, not a photocopy. Most graduate students from the U.S. use either their passport from List A, or a Driver's license and Social Security Card from lists B & C. If you do not have a social security card, or have lost your original card, you should apply for one immediately. International students will need to go to the HR office on East Campus to fill out their I-9 in person.

**Please note that the University will not be able pay you without a valid I-9 that establishes your identity and your eligibility to work in the United States.**

## **Paycheck**

If you received a fellowship, the Bursar's Office will use that money to cover your student fees and insurance (usually, about \$750). Any remaining money will be available to you around mid-September. Your first paycheck for teaching assistantships will be September 30, and the gross amount (i.e., before taxes) will be about \$1,650 (the University sets the exact TA stipend in June, so we don't know it yet, but this figure is a close estimate). Note that your monthly salary in the summer of 2010 will be greater than it is during the academic year in order to provide you with the annual salary stated in your offer letter.

## **Banking / Local Address**

The University processes payroll only by electronic deposit; therefore, we need your banking information once you arrive and have a bank account. We will need a routing slip from the bank you choose to do business with or a voided check in order to set up direct deposit of your paycheck. Of course, you can bank at any of a number of local banks, but note that there is a credit union with a branch on campus, Elevations Credit Union (<http://www.elevationscu.com/>), which many students (as well as faculty and staff) use and find convenient. Also, please let us know your local address as soon as you have rented or purchased a home.

## **Establishing Colorado Residency**

In the summer of 2010, all domestic students (US citizens and permanent residents) must apply for Colorado residency. **If you are a domestic student and do not establish residency, the University will not cover your tuition for the 2010 academic year, and you will be personally responsible for the full cost of out of state tuition!** To become a Colorado resident, you must be able to prove that you have been in this state since mid-August 2008, and to do so, you will need to, among other things:

- a) Save receipts for housing and utility bills
- b) Register to vote in Colorado. **Do not vote absentee in your home state!**
- c) Get a Colorado driver's license.
- d) Register your vehicle in Colorado.

This is a partial list, and more details will be provided at orientation.

## **Criminal Background Check**

All incoming graduate students are subject to a criminal background check. You will receive an email invitation from a company called "HireRite" regarding the background check sometime in early to mid June. **DO NOT IGNORE THIS EMAIL! If you do not respond, you will not be paid on time!** If you have any questions about this, please contact our Departmental payroll liaison, Ms. Maryellen Ancell [maryellen.ancell@colorado.edu](mailto:maryellen.ancell@colorado.edu). While we wish that HireRite would not use email correspondence, we do not have control over their operational method.

## **Housing**

Graduate students may choose to live on or off campus. On-campus housing is available in residence halls or apartments. CU-Boulder also operates apartment complexes for married couples and for families with children. The Family Housing Office provides daycare for children between 15 months and kindergarten age. Information about availability and rates may be obtained from the Family Housing Office or the Residence Halls.

For housing information, both on and off campus, please go to <http://www.colorado.edu/ocss/>. Here you will find a list of rooms, houses, and apartments for rent in the Boulder area, as well as a list of possible roommates. The University of Colorado Student Union (UCSU) Off-Campus Student Services Office also lists off-campus vacancies and offers other services related to off-campus living. As mentioned above, if you'd like the email addresses of other entering Chemistry graduate students who are looking for a roommate, let us know.

## **Information Technology Services**

The University of Colorado enrollment process automatically establishes new e-mail accounts assigned to you on our campus server. Generally, e-mail addresses are of the form [firstname.lastname@colorado.edu](mailto:firstname.lastname@colorado.edu), though for some names, this might not be available. Specific information about setting up your account will arrive with the information from the University. See <http://www.colorado.edu/ITS/students/> for more information.

## **Email List**

There are several email lists which chemistry and biochemistry graduate students belong to. These lists are for Departmental business, will provide information about events occurring within or related to the Chemistry department or Graduate School Program throughout the academic year. We also have a list is for miscellaneous information.

## **University and Departmental Rules**

Students are responsible for being familiar with the University's and the Chemistry Department's graduate rules. A PDF version of the Departmental Graduate Rules can be found by going to the Department Graduate Rules link at [http://www.colorado.edu/chemistry/graduate/Chem\\_Grad\\_Rules.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/chemistry/graduate/Chem_Grad_Rules.pdf). You can read the University Graduate School Rules by going to [http://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/policies/downloads/GSRules\\_REV.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/policies/downloads/GSRules_REV.pdf).

We wish you a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,

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