GREEN RIVER BASICS FOR STUDENTS AND PARTNERS

Green River College in Auburn, WA currently hosts 1,714 international students from nearly 64 countries (Fall 2014). It currently ranks 8th among the almost 1,200 US community colleges in international student enrollment (there is no US News quality-based ranking system for community colleges). Most international students come to Green River for its nationally recognized “2+2” transfer program to top US universities and its High School Completion Plus program for good students who wish to finish high school and college at the same time.

As a community college, Green River is not selective in admission, but accepts students from a wide variety of backgrounds and circumstances. The college provides comprehensive services for its international students, including English training, on- and off-campus housing, community involvement opportunities and individual advising for academic, personal and university transfer matters. As a result of these services, the college’s close ties to transfer universities and the students’ hard work, Green River international students are admitted to top universities all over the US including University of Washington, UCLA, Michigan, Ohio State, Rutgers, Texas, UC Berkeley, Cornell, USC, North Carolina and many other excellent schools (see following page). The college’s University Transfer Pathway provides conditional guaranteed or preferential admission to over 30 universities, including University of California Santa Barbara, UC Irvine and UC Davis.

The 2+2 university transfer system exists only in the United States and Canada, and is not well known abroad. Accordingly, Green River relies heavily on word of mouth from students and parents, alumni connections, pipeline programs with cooperating high schools and universities, and high quality educational advisory services to carry its message.

Green River has found that working with reputable educational advisory agencies with extensive knowledge of the college has been particularly beneficial to students, their parents, the agencies themselves and to Green River. Green River staff visit its top agencies and agency officials visit the college on a regular basis, so the best agents are intimately familiar with Green River. The college works through its agents to involve parents in their students’ experience in the US, increasing support and accountability to make their children more successful.

The college also closely works with partner schools, including high schools, universities and language schools. College officials frequently present to prospective students and their parents at partner schools with an alumnus, parents, a partner school official and the agent all speaking and interacting. Green River has found that this depth of relationships, generally of long standing and focusing on the actual experience of the students themselves, to be the key ingredients of the college’s overseas recruitment success.
Green River College International Students
University Admissions since 2003

International students from all over the world take Green River College’s 2+2 Program (2 years plus English, if needed, at GRC and 2 years at a university). Our students have reported admission to the universities indicated below (as well as many others not listed). **Universities in bold represent top 100 world universities** (ARWU). **Underlined universities represent top 100 American universities** (US News).

[Last update: 8/2015]

American University
Arizona State University
Baylor University
Binghamton University (SUNY)
**Boston University**
Brigham Young University
**Brown University**
Case Western Reserve University
Columbia University
**Cornell University**
Drexel University
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Emory University
Fordham University
George Washington University
Georgia Tech
**Indiana University**
Johns Hopkins University
Marquette University
Miami University of Ohio
**Michigan State University**
New York University
Northeastern University
**Ohio State University**
Pennsylvania State University
Pepperdine University
**Purdue University**
Rice University
**Rutgers University**
San Francisco State University
Seattle University
Southern Methodist University
Stony Brook University (SUNY)
Syracuse University
Texas A&M
Texas Christian University
Tufts University
Tulane University
**University of Arizona**
University of British Columbia (Canada)
University of California Berkeley
University of California Davis
University of California Irvine
University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)
University of California San Diego
University of California Santa Barbara
University of Colorado
University of Denver
**University of Florida**
University of Georgia
**University of Illinois**
University of Iowa
University of Maryland
University of Massachusetts
University of Miami
**University of Michigan**
University of Minnesota
University of Missouri
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
University of North Carolina
University of Oregon
**University of Pennsylvania**
University of Pittsburgh
**University of Rochester**
University of San Diego
**University of Southern California**
University of Texas
University of Utah
University of Virginia
**University of Washington**
**University of Wisconsin**
Virginia Tech
Washington State University
**Washington University (St. Louis)**
Wellesley College
William & Mary
GREEN RIVER INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM DETAILS

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GREEN RIVER COLLEGE

Green River is a two-year community college with two basic types of programs: 2+2 college transfer and job training programs. In the 2+2 transfer program, students take the first two years of a university bachelor’s degree at a community college, and then transfer to a university to complete the degree in an additional two years. The 2+2 transfer system is very well accepted in the US. Almost all US universities gladly accept transfer students.

- Location: Auburn, WA, USA, a suburb of Seattle in the Pacific Northwest
- Total students (Fall 2015): 9,000
- International students: 1,714
- Year founded: 1965
- Description: Suburban campus in forest on plateau above Green River
- Most popular majors: Business, Engineering, IT, Sciences, Humanities, Aviation
- Most popular programs:
  - 2+2 University Transfer: Third year admission to top US universities after 2 years at GRC
  - High School Completion Plus: US high school diploma and transfer degree in 2 years at GRC
  - Intensive ESL: College prep English for students without TOEFL or IELTS
  - Job Training Programs: Specialized training for jobs (Air Traffic Control, for example)
  - Gap Year: All at GRC or partly at GRC, then in California or Hawaii
  - Special Programs: Summer and other short programs for special groups & schools

ADMISSION

Green River tries to make admission fast and easy. It is a college best suited for hard working students. At the same time, it takes pride on giving students with a wide range of backgrounds a chance for success.

- Intakes: 4 per year (September, January, April, June)
- Application deadline: Rolling (best to apply at least 6 weeks before start of term)
- Application fee: $50
- Response time: 3 working days after receipt of completed application
Qualifications

- Requirements No specific grade point average or test scores required
- Minimum age 16
- College academic TOEFL 61/500, IELTS 5.5 (all bands 5.0), or completion of IESL
- Intensive ESL No TOEFL/IELTS required

Documents – Application package must include (mail, fax or scan ok):

- Application
- $50 application fee (waived for elite educational partners)
- Financial statement
- High school transcript required if student did NOT finish high school. Otherwise, recommended.
- College or university transcript recommended, if student attended either
- TOEFL or IELTS, if available (not required for IESL)
- $300 housing placement fee highly recommended; refundable if student cancels application

HOUSING

The college offers two types of housing for students, on-campus and host families in the community. New students can almost always get college housing, although they may not get their first choice.

Types of college housing available

- Campus Corner Apartments (on campus)
  - Rent (9 month contract) $700/month
    - How to pay One payment of $6,297 due upon move-in
  - Rent (3 month contract) $766/month
    - How to pay One payment of $2,299 due upon move-in
  - Minimum stay 3 or 9 months, depending on contract
  - Includes Single room, utilities, TV cable, internet hookup; meals extra
  - Minimum age 17 years old

- Host families
  - Rent $675/month
    - How to pay First month $575, other payments $675 due monthly
  - Minimum stay 1 month
  - Includes Single room, 3 meals; does not include bus fare
  - Choice of host families Green River chooses; change possible after 1 month

Placement fee $300 (refundable if student cancels 2 weeks before quarter)

Airport pickup Included in Green River housing reservation

Choice of housing Depends on availability; will try to honor first choice

When will students be notified on details? One month before arrival

Countries with visa issues Students from countries where US visas may be difficult are assigned college housing only after their visas are confirmed. These countries currently include China, India and Vietnam, among others.

Housing website: https://www.greenriver.edu/international/housing/index.shtml
NEW STUDENT ADJUSTMENT

It is very important that students arrive in time for Orientation. Orientation is the time to register for classes, learn about the college and make new friends. Experience shows that students who miss orientation have a very difficult first quarter. New students cannot arrive after the quarter starts.

- Arrival at Green River 7-10 days before quarter begins for Orientation
- Orientation Students get classes and make new friends
- Foundation for Success Big brother/big sister mentor program for younger students
- College Experience Academic success strategies for new academic students
- Orientation website: http://grcc.greenriver.edu/international/orientation/index.aspx

ADVISING

Green River provides comprehensive advising for all of its international students in class selection, university transfer, personal concerns and immigration matters.

- Advising model Every international student has an assigned advisor
- Class planning The advisor helps students make a two-year class plan
- Transfer help The advisor assists students with transfer applications
- Living and personal concerns Counselors and advisors are available to help
- “New Student Appointment” (NSA) All international students in their first academic quarter meet with their advisor to plan classes and university transfer
- Advising website: https://www.greenriver.edu/international/advising/index.shtm

CLASS REGISTRATION

College academic classes

Advisors will help international students take the required “Compass” English and Mathematics placement test and register for classes during their first quarter, mostly during Orientation Week before the start of the quarter. For every subsequent quarter, students register 6 weeks before the next quarter starts. Advisors give Green River international students a great deal of assistance in choosing the right classes for their majors.

- Quarterly load 12-20 credits per quarter (3 to 4 full time classes)
- Prerequisites English and math prerequisites for many classes
- First quarter Advisors pre-register new students; changes ok
- “General university requirements” Some non-major classes required for all majors

Intensive ESL classes

Students without college-level English proficiency, measured primarily by TOEFL 61 or IELTS 5.5 (all bands 5 or higher) will be assigned to study in the college’s college prep Intensive ESL (IESL) program. New students will take the IESL Placement Test during Orientation Week, and will be placed in one of five IESL levels (or in the college academic program) according to English ability.
- **Quarterly load**: 4 hours per day/11 weeks per quarter (7 hours/8 weeks in summer quarter)
- **IESL Levels**: Level 1 (basic) through Level 5 (pre-college, including one college-level class in the Bridge program)
- **Subjects taught**: Reading, Writing, Speaking/Listening, Grammar, pre-college TOEFL and Note-taking
- **IESL Levels passing marks**: 80 or higher in all three classes
- **Requirement for promotion to college**: Passing IESL Level 5 (no TOEFL/IELTS required for IESL Students)

**Placement testing** – ALL students new to the college take a placement test, unless they are transferring from another college and have already taken college-level classes including English 101 before. This is how it works:

- **College academic students: COMPASS Test** – All first quarter college-level students, American and international, take this test to determine their level of English reading, writing and mathematics. Strong English and math skills are required for success in college level classes. Students with high COMPASS scores start are eligible to take college-level English classes (English 101) and math classes (several choices). Those with weaker skills must take one or more Developmental Education (DevEd) classes first, which address weaknesses in English writing, reading and/or math. Moreover, there is no correlation between TOEFL or IELTS scores and COMPASS test scores.

- **Prerequisites** – Many Green River classes have English or math level prerequisites, which means that students with lower COMPASS scores cannot take them until their English or math improves. Accordingly, the need to take DevEd classes may add one or two quarters to degree completion at Green River. This also makes it impossible to predict what an academic-level student’s first quarter courses will be until the student comes to college and takes the COMPASS Test.

- **Intensive ESL Placement Test** – Students without proof of college English proficiency (usually TOEFL 61 or IELTS 5.5 (all bands 5.0) take the IESL Placement Test to determine their English ability. The test measures grammar, reading, writing and speaking (with an interview). Placement can be in any of the five levels of IESL, or college academic level. Students not satisfied with their placement are usually given the chance to take the test again before classes start. As with COMPASS, there is no correlation between TOEFL or IELTS scores and IESL Placement Test scores.

**GRADES**

Green River uses number grades on the 4.0 scale. Equivalents to letter grades are 4.0 = A, 3.0 = B, 2.0 = C, 1.0 = D. Grades are posted one week after the end of each quarter. They are issued to students by email.

In the US, students have the right to keep their grades private and not let anyone see them, even parents, if they wish. Green River international students confirm this right, or waive it, when they apply. There is a box to check on the application for this purpose. Most parents naturally want to get the grades of their children while they are at Green River. The easiest way is to ask the kids themselves for a copy. If the parents ask Green River for their children’s grades, we can give them only if the students have allowed it. If not, the students can change their minds and allow the college to send the grades to their parents, but must come to the International Programs office and sign a form. Parents can also get their children’s grades directly from the college by clicking on this link: [https://grcc.greenriver.edu/Register/waci002.html](https://grcc.greenriver.edu/Register/waci002.html). To get the grades, they will need the students’ ID number and PIN. They will need to get those from their children; the college cannot give them to the parents.
ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Most Green River international students perform very well. Like all colleges and universities, however, Green River students must meet certain academic standards.

- International student median gpa 3.5 out of 4.00 maximum (Fall 2013)
- Causes for dismissal from college
  1) Too many absences, especially in IESL (9 or more)
  2) Grade point average below 2.0
  3) Three failing quarters
  4) Very bad or illegal behavior, or cheating

LIFE AT GREEN RIVER

Harvard studies have shown that students who volunteer, work or pursue regular activities for 20 hours a week or less are happier, get better jobs, and perform as well academically as those who do not. Accordingly, Green River strongly recommends that international students get involved in activities outside class.

- Class hours
  College  7am-10pm; most classes between 8am and 2pm
  IESL 12-5pm (Auburn, 1-2 lunch), 12-4pm (Kent)
- Activities
  Clubs, activities, trips, sports, student government
- Jobs
  Some paid student jobs, many volunteer opportunities
- Health
  Clinic nearby; student health insurance mandatory
- Student Life website: https://www.greenriver.edu/international/activities/index.shtm

TRANSPORTATION AND DRIVING

- Transportation
  o First quarter airport pickup – All new international students who have confirmed GRC housing (host families or Campus Corner Apartments) will be picked up at the airport by GRC staff.
  o Buses – Green River is served by two buses, 181 (to Auburn and Federal Way) and 164 (to Kent, including the Green River Kent Campus). Connecting buses go to Seattle and other points. Here is the link: http://tripplanner.kingcounty.gov/.
  o Trains – Auburn and Kent have stations on the Seattle – Tacoma commuter train line. The train runs mostly during commuting hours.
  o Airport transportation – Light rail (metro), buses, shuttles and taxis are available at the airport. Most students or parents coming to Auburn take a taxi. The fare is about $52, with a customary tip of $8 to round up to $60 total. Taxis are expensive in the US.
  o Taxis – Taxis are available on call. They do not cruise (drive around looking for customers) as they do in many countries. The link: https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=south+king+county+taxis.
  o Safety ride – College vans will pick up and deliver students living within about 3 km from the college from dusk to about midnight. It is free and can be ordered on 253 797 4868.

- Driving
  o Driver’s license – It is very difficult, almost impossible, for international students under 18 to get a Washington State driver’s license. It is illegal to drive without a driver’s license.
  o Driver training – The college now provides a driver’s training school on campus for students 18 years old or older, or who are at least 16 years old and their parents live in the local area (real parents, not host parents). The driver’s training school can also issue driver’s licenses.
Buying a car – It is best to buy a car from a licensed dealer, because they can help with licensing and transfer of title. Good used cars cost between $5,000 and $10,000, and new cars start at about $13,000. The car purchase tax in Auburn and Kent is 12.5%.

Insurance – Car insurance is required in Washington State. It is also expensive for young drivers with no driving record. Young men should expect to pay at least $400 per month in car insurance.

Safe Driving – Driving a car is a big responsibility. Parents must insist that their sons or daughters wanting to drive first take a driver’s training class and get a driver’s license before they let their children buy a car. They must also insist that their children buy car insurance at the same time they buy a car. This is for their children’s safety, as well as that of others.

2+2 UNIVERSITY TRANSFER

Green River international students transfer to top universities all over the US. The 2+2 transfer system is well established in the US. Green River advisors and officials work closely with many universities to ensure transfer success for their students. The college’s University Transfer Pathway program guarantees conditional or preferential admission to over 20 universities, including UC Davis, Irvine and Santa Barbara.

- University Transfer Pathway program 22 universities, including UC Davis, Irvine and Santa Barbara
  Website: https://www.greenriver.edu/international/university-transfer-pathway/index.shtm
- Transfer to top universities
  1) Advisors help students in the application process
  2) Much information on requirements and classes
  3) Up to 100 universities visit GRCC twice a year
  4) Very strong record of university transfer success
  5) Advisors have excellent ties with universities
  Website: https://www.greenriver.edu/international/programs/index.shtm

ANNUAL EXPENSES AND TUITION (2015/2016)

Total expenses at US universities are between two and three times higher than community college expenses for the same first two years of classes. This is because many university professors pursue expensive research, whereas community college teachers only teach. The savings are reaped by the students and parents.

Total annual expenses at Green River (Fall 2015 – Summer 2016) $19,965
- Tuition $9,900
- Books, fees and living expenses $10,065

- Total annual expenses at top US universities (2015/2016)
  Cornell $61,600 Ohio State $41,200 UC Berkeley $51,700 Illinois $48,900
  Texas $53,500 Michigan $56,300 Southern Cal $62,200 Washington $49,400

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

Green River is able to offer only very limited scholarships to international students. The scholarships are primarily merit-based, not need-based. The true financial impact of Green River is not scholarships, but the substantial savings our students receive in taking two years of the four year bachelor’s degree at a community college and two at a university, rather than all four at a university. The cost savings are outlined in more detail in the paragraph above. Having said that, the following types of scholarships are available to Green River international students:

1. New (incoming) students
• Achievement, merit and leadership scholarships – These scholarships, generally between $200 and $500 but occasionally higher, are determined by the college recruiters in consultation with educational partners to both recognize the unique qualifications of extraordinary well qualified incoming students, and to assist in the marketing efforts of our educational partners.

• High School Completion Plus scholarships – These are similar in nature and amount to the scholarships listed above, but are issued specifically to students in the college’s High School Completion Plus program.

• International Student Ambassador Apprentice Leadership Work Grants – Four awards per year are made to students with particularly high experience and/or aptitude in student leadership. The awards are typically approximately $1,000.

2. Old (continuing) students

• Achievement scholarships – Approximately ten scholarships per quarter are awarded to continuing (not new) students for scholastic achievement and leadership. Awards range from $250 to $500 per quarter.

• International Student Ambassador Leadership Work Grants – Four awards per year are offered to students to work within student programs in various leadership positions. The annual value of these scholarships is approximately $5,000.

• Campus work grants – Approximately 45 student worker positions per year are awarded to international students in various areas, including office assistants, marketing assistants, tutors and the like.

• Peer volunteers – A large number of international students are hired to serve as peer volunteers during orientation and as part of the Foundation for Success mentoring program for new international students.

COLLEGE AND HOUSING FEES

The fee structure at Green River is somewhat complicated, as are the GRC fee statements. Tuition is charged for academic classes only. Class fees are charged for three different things: 1) fixed fees for non-academic classes such as IESL, Foundation for Success and College Experience, 2) variable fees for study materials issued for academic classes, which differ from class to class, and 3) variable fees for facilities, technology and student center improvements imposed by the GRC student government on all students. International students are also required to purchase health insurance. Here are two typical tuition and fee structures for one quarter:

When are fees due?

- Application fee ($50 + $300 housing) At time of application
- Tuition and fees
  - First quarter (new students) First day of class; prepayment of tuition not required
  - Subsequent quarters (old students) At time of class registration for upcoming quarter, usually 1 ½ months before upcoming quarter starts
- Housing payments
  - Host family payments Monthly (students establish payment date with family)
  - Campus Corner Apartments Quarterly (once every three months)

Sample fee receipt – Academic program

- Tuition for 12-18 credits $3,300
- Student government-imposed fees $177 (at 15 credits, a little more for over 15 credits)
  - Technology fee $60
  - Student Center fee $54
Facilities fee $63

- Academic class fees
- Health insurance $270
- Foundation for Success $100 (student mentoring program for under 18 years old)
- International College Experience $100 (orientation course for new academic students)
- Average total (will vary) $3,947
- Each additional credit over 18 credits $275

Sample fee receipt – IESL program $3,300 (“INESL” and “INESL Class Fee” on statement)

- Intensive ESL class fees $100 (student mentoring program for all new IESL)
- Foundation for Success $177 for IESL
- Student government-imposed fees $270
- Health insurance $3,847
- Average total (may vary slightly) $3,947

Variable cost programs

- Accelerated Reading & Writing Program Developmental English for new international college
- IESL Bridge (Level 5 IESL only) students Level 5 IESL and a 5-credit academic class

CONTACT INFORMATION

GRC International Programs general information international@greenriver.edu
GRC international student admission international@greenriver.edu
GRC international housing housing@greenriver.edu
GRC International Programs main telephone (1) 253 288 3300
GRC address 12401 SE 320th Street
Auburn, WA 98092-3622, USA

Websites & social media

GRC International Programs website www.greenriver.edu/international
E-brochures in 10 languages www.greenriver.edu/international
GRC on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/grcciis
GRC on YouTube http://www.youtube.com/user/greenriverintlprgms
GRC photo tour on Flickr http://www.flickr.com/photos/grcc_cpm/sets/72157623549791509
GRC Instagram http://instagram.com/ipgreenriver/

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