

Life On and Off Campus

The process of starting medical school can seem a little overwhelming, but knowing where to look for the right information goes a long way to setting your mind at ease. We've tried to compile the most critical information here, but for more detailed info, check out <http://www.uchsc.edu/studentassistance/handbook> which is a comprehensive, useful listing of services on and off campus, predominantly non-academic support.

Student Assistance Office

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www.uchsc.edu/studentassistance

Cheryl is the person to know on campus if you need to know what's going on. Her office coordinates housing referrals and information, childcare resources, intramural sports, learning assistance/tutoring, and provides a notary public service, campus classified ads, campus scheduling, student government support and many other services as well. The Student Assistance Office website has links to most of the available services. You will also receive lots of emails from her throughout the year about activities scheduled through her office, so take a glance before you delete them.

Housing

While you get to enjoy the splendor of a brand new campus with facilities Watson and Crick couldn't imagine in their wildest dreams, keep in mind that the area around it hasn't yet caught up. The neighborhoods around east Colfax are undergoing major renovation and renewal, so what you see as vacant lots and abandoned motels now will, by the time you graduate, be funky bars, artsy restaurants, and world-class hotels. In the meantime, the existing apartment complexes in the area know

you are on your way and will likely want you as a tenant. If you'd rather live further away, the bus system has stops all over campus. Info about transportation options is described later in this guide, and it might help shape your housing decisions.

The Student Assistance Office keeps current listings of housing online (sorry, no hard copies are available). Generally, listings are current within the year, but not everything is updated by the rental agencies and apartment buildings. There are also links to online housing search engines, as well as other locator services in the Denver Metro area. You may also register online as a roommate WITHOUT housing, or as a Roommate WITH housing. By submitting either form, you will receive the appropriate e-mailed list of roommates WITH housing, or roommates WITHOUT housing. Be sure to provide an e-mail address that you will check within a few days of submitting your roommate form.

Other popular options for finding housing are through Craig's List (denver.craigslist.org), the Denver Post (denverpost.com) or the alternative weekly paper Westword (westword.com) which all have classified ads online. Depending on where you're looking, you might be able to just drive or ride around, and call or walk in to places with "For Rent" signs. A map of neighborhood names for reference can be helpful to get a sense of the distances from campus.

Due to the aforementioned status of Anschutz's surroundings, ask around before you sign a lease. There won't be any problems if you're smart about it, but crime is more of an issue here than in other parts of the city. Also, if you're sensitive to noise, the area right next to the med school can be very loud with ambulance sirens and traffic noise. Watch out for construction sites, which get noisy early in the morning! A few blocks away, noise is

much less of an issue.

If you're considering buying a place, you should know a few things. First, there are a lot of houses and condos on the market, and they're taking a while to sell. While this is appealing when moving here, when you leave you might have to resort to renting if it hasn't sold. Second, many of the houses around Anchutz are bank owned (read: foreclosure) and might need a little (read: a lot) of fixing up. Third, you're almost certainly going to be moving around in third and fourth years for your rotations, so you may only live in your place for the first two years of med school. Don't assume that buying is a good investment; be sure to do the math first.

Transportation

During your first and second year, you won't necessarily need a car. Getting around by bike and bus is relatively easy, and can save you a lot of money. However, there are a couple of reasons that you might want to have one; it gives you a lot more flexibility in matching with a Foundations preceptor, and you'll almost certainly need a car for your third- and fourth-year rotations, since you can be assigned to sites in rural Colorado.

If you're buying a car and you're new to Denver, you should know that winters here aren't as cold and snowy as you might imagine! Even after a big storm, snow melts pretty quickly. You do not need a four-wheel drive for getting around, nor a block heater for freezing cold nights. A good set of snow tires will give you plenty of traction.

Also, remember that Denver can get high winds, which will set off your car alarm much more often than will any thieves. A car alarm, just as in most other cities, is more likely to annoy your neighbors than to alert them that your car is being broken into.

Parking

If you want to park on campus, you need to apply for a parking permit at the Parking Office, located on the ground floor of Building 500. The phone number is (303) 315-5704; more information about lots and rates is available at <http://www.uchsc.edu/facilities/parking>. Seeing

as how this is the first fall semester at Anchutz, no-one really knows of the secret free places to park... you can try leaving your wheels in the neighborhoods surrounding the campus, but we don't really know how accepting local businesses and residents of unidentified vehicles. You might return to find your car on blocks, sans-stereo, or even missing altogether. Some free advice: don't chance it. Either pay for a parking permit, pay for a bus pass, or hoof it.

Commuting

Some students commute from as far away as Highlands Ranch, Castle Rock, Longmont, and Boulder. The happiest commuters are people who enjoy driving or riding the bus, and who like to get up at 5 a.m., even when it's pitch-black outside. If this is you, get an MP3 player so you can listen to exciting lecture recordings during the commute time. If you prefer to get up later and hate driving, then don't plan a long commute.

RTD – Bus Tickets and Passes

RTD is the Front Range public transit service. The #20 bus stops right in front of Building 500, and other routes reach out all throughout the city. You can get discounted monthly passes and 10-ride ticket books at the Parking Office. You'll need UCHSC photo ID to get the discounts. The "Local" tickets are for Denver; "Regional" tickets will take you to Boulder. Denver also just spent a gajillion dollars installing a light-rail system that follows I-25...if you live far away, that could also be an option. As of press time, monthly passes for students were \$54 (local), \$99 (express) and \$135 (regional). Check out <http://www.rtd-denver.com> for more on rates and routes.

Biking

You can ride your bike to school most days of the year, given the abundant sunshine, but consider buying fenders and some lightweight rain gear for afternoon thunderstorms. It's pretty unlikely that your bike will be stolen or vandalized as long as you lock it up on campus, but to be on the safe side, don't bring your \$3,000 full-

suspension carbon-fiber mountain bike with disc brakes and lock it with a wimpy cable. If you're worried, buy a cheap cruiser on Craig's List.

Bike racks live in front of every building on campus,

I dug out my old mountain bike from my parent's garage, spray painted the tires, and wrapped the frame with plastic grocery bags and duct tape. So far my ruse has worked... I've left it unlocked and nobody's stolen it yet.

-Dave Tarullo

either alone or in groups.

Computers and Electronics

The School of Medicine has instituted requirements for laptop computers. Later on you'll have to invest in a PDA, but don't worry about that right now if you don't have one. The requirements for both of these devices are listed on the post-acceptance website which you should already be checking (<http://som.uchsc.edu/admissions/accepted>). If you have any questions about hardware, your go-to man is Vaquero: contact him at (303)742-1937 or vaquero.cooper@uchsc.edu. There is printing available on campus, but it's ever so much nicer to have your own, so get a printer, too.

Minimum Tech Specs for Laptops

1 GHz Core Duo, or 1.4 GHz Pentium M processor

Windows XP sp2 or Windows Vista

80 GB Hard Drive

1.0 GB RAM

DVD/ CDRW optical drive

High-end graphics card

Network Interface Card

802.11 g (or better) wireless connection

56 K Modem (*really?*)

Recommend: 3-4 Year warranty and Accidental Damage protection, additional batteries

The Great Mac vs PC Debate

While the IT people here can only help (sometimes....) with PC troubles, Macs will work just as well with the WiFi and everything else. As long as you have Powerpoint and Word, or something compatible like OpenOffice.org, or Pages and Keynote, you should have no trouble opening up the lecture outlines or whatever else you

If you like apple computers and are versed in their basics buy one-despite the IT recommendation against-I'm very happy I did.

-Bryan Wert

need.

The school will provide information on discounts with several vendors to purchase your laptop and PDA, but if you are already a student or work at a large business, you may find that you have a better discount on a different model of computer. You'll be using your laptop a lot, so make sure it fits what you'll be using it for; pay special consideration to weight, size, battery life, screen size and brightness.