



GEORGIAN AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY

International Student Guide

Pre-arrival and orientation information



Welcome

This pre-arrival and orientation guide has been produced for students who are coming to study at Georgian American University (GAU) from outside Georgia. It provides practical guidance on coming to live in Tbilisi and study at GAU from an international student perspective and information on some of the University's central support services. Its intention is to complement other sources of guidance you are likely to receive as part of your induction from your college and other bodies such as the international relations office, academic managers or student services office.

Contents

Introduction to Georgia	2
Introduction to Tbilisi.....	5
About GAU	6
Program Catalogue	9
Student Services.....	12
Study Programs held in English.....	12
How to apply?	13
Visa, residence permit and right of residence	15
Contact.....	16
International accreditation	16
Accommodation.....	16
Traveling around GAU.....	17
Traveling in Tbilisi.....	17
Public transport fares.....	17
Traveling in Georgia	17
Healthcare.....	20
Living in Tbilisi	20
Bank account.....	23
Emergency info	23
Mobile operators	23
Pre-arrival checklist.....	24

Introduction to Georgia

Brief History

Georgia, Georgian Sakartvelo, is located at the eastern end of the Black Sea on the southern flanks of the main crest of the Greater Caucasus Mountains. It is bounded on the north and northeast by Russia, on the east and southeast by Azerbaijan, on the south by Armenia and Turkey, and on the west by the Black Sea. The capital of Georgia is Tbilisi (Tiflis).

The roots of the Georgian people extend deep in history; their cultural heritage is equally ancient and rich. During the medieval period a powerful Georgian kingdom existed, reaching its height between the 10th and 13th centuries. After a long period of Turkish and Persian domination, Georgia was annexed by the Russian Empire in the 19th century. An independent Georgian state existed from 1918 to 1921, when it was incorporated into the Soviet Union. In 1936 Georgia became a constituent (union) republic and continued as such until the collapse of the Soviet Union. During the Soviet period the Georgian economy was modernized and diversified. One of the most independence-minded republics, Georgia declared sovereignty on November 19, 1989, and independence on April 9, 1991. The 1990s were a period of instability and civil unrest in Georgia, as the first post-independence government was overthrown, and separatist movements emerged in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.



Language and alphabet

The Georgian language is a member of the Kartvelian (South Caucasian) family of languages. It has its own alphabet, which is thought to have evolved about the 5th century, and proudly stands between 13 other existing alphabets around the world. A few other Caucasian languages are spoken by minority groups, most of them are dialects, but many are unwritten.



Hello - Gamarjoba

Where is ...? – Sad aris ...?

Goodbye - Nakhvamdis

How much? What's the price? – Ra ghirs?

Thank you - Madloba

Georgian Cuisine

Georgian food is arguably one of the world's most underrated cuisines, featuring flavors from Greece and the Mediterranean, as well as influences from Turkey and Persia. This Georgian food guide is drawn from experiences traveling across the country — visits to local markets, meals in family homes and restaurants, and even an impromptu cooking course. Georgian food is quite appropriately an expression of the culture. Warm, gooey comfort food like khachapuri (cheese-stuffed bread) finds balance with matsoni (yogurt). Herbs like tarragon, flat parsley, dill and coriander combine with walnuts and garlic for rich fillings and sauces. Some of the most popular Georgia dishes are: Khinkali; Khachapuri; Mtsvadi; Kubdari; Lobiani and etc.

Georgian Cuisine



Spicy

With Nuts

Meat of all kinds

Cradle of wine

Mineral Waters

Also, you can enjoy cuisines from all around the world!

Delivery Services

menu.ge

Wolt

Glovo



Introduction to Tbilisi

Tbilisi, formerly Tiflis, capital of the republic of Georgia, on the Mtkvari (Kura) River at its dissection of the Trialeti and Kartli ranges. Founded in 458 (in some sources, 455), when the capital of the Georgian kingdom was transferred there from Mtskheta, the city had a strategic position, controlling the route between western and eastern Transcaucasia. It was often captured and sacked and knew many masters: the Persians in the 6th century, the Byzantine Empire and the Arabs in the 7th. In 1122 David IV (the Builder) of Georgia

captured Tbilisi and restored it as a capital, but in 1234 it fell to the Mongols, and in 1386 it was sacked by Timur. The Turks captured the city on several occasions, and in 1795 it was burned to the ground by the Persians. In 1801 Tbilisi was captured by the Russians, who improved its communications by building the Georgian Military Highway across the Greater Caucasus from Vladikavkaz to Tbilisi. In 1872 it was linked by rail to Poti on the Black Sea and in 1883 to Baku on the Caspian Sea. In 1921 it was made capital of the Georgian republic.

Modern Tbilisi is an attractive city: the Mtkvari, bordered on the right bank by a boulevard, lies partly in a steep gorge. Beside the river, the old town, with narrow, winding streets, is dominated by the ruins of the old fortress and the huge, symbolic figure of Georgia on a ridge above it. In the old town are the Sioni Cathedral, dating from the 5th century and often reconstructed, the Metekhi Palace of the Georgian kings, and the 6th-century Anchikhati Church. Newer parts of the city lie beneath Mount Mtatsminda, accessible by a funicular rail line. North of the city is a large reservoir fed by irrigation canals.



Tbilisi is a major cultural and educational center as well as a principal industrial center of the region. Its engineering services are important in the production of electric locomotives, machine tools, agricultural machinery, and electrical equipment and in the repair of locomotives and rolling stock. Other industries make textiles; leather goods and footwear; furniture; beer, wine, and spirits; and a range of foodstuffs. In 1966 an underground railway was opened in Tbilisi.

About GAU

President greeting

„It is my great honor and pleasure, on behalf of the owners, administration and staff to introduce Georgian American University, better known as GAU!

With faculties of Business; Law, Social Sciences & Diplomacy; Informatics & Engineering; Humanities & Liberal Arts; and Medicine - we strive to remain at the forefront of theoretical and practical knowledge, thereby bringing a unique educational experience to each and every student.

We commit to working together to help you reach your potential and do all we can to prepare you for a successful and rewarding professional career.

Thank you for your interest in GAU and know we are always available to discuss the opportunities and advantages of studying at our esteemed University.“



GAU Mission, Vision, Values, History

GAU's Mission

Providing education based on advanced scientific-research and practical-teaching models, leading research and innovative activities. By providing equal opportunities - by strengthening knowledge, skills and universal values and recognizing social responsibility, promoting the development of society and the global integration of the country through the creation, accumulation and sharing of knowledge.

GAU's Vision

In its long-term perspective, GAU takes on the responsibility of creating a tolerant, collaborative and innovative environment where students and faculty can help:

- Contribute to the intellectual, cultural and socio-economic development of our society;
- Creating, storing and transferring knowledge using the main advantages of the University in the educational space;
- Transformation of acquired knowledge into practice and application of skills developed in accordance with the qualifications at all necessary levels;

- Development of professionals with high social and moral responsibility;
- Strengthening universal and national values through and within the framework of expert and research activities, thus encouraging civic cooperation and accountability;
- Ensuring the principles of academic freedom and lifelong learning.

Values

Both the mission statement of the Georgian American University and its activities are generally based on the fundamental values recognized in the Western democratic space. The University deeply believes in the inherent goodness of these values, uses them in its day-to-day activities and cares relentlessly for their protection.

- Fairness and Equality - GAU strives to create a non-discriminatory, equal opportunity environment for students, academics and staff to achieve their goals and use their full potential to fulfill the University mission and their own personal well-being. Decisions made by the University are procedurally and in terms of ensuring rights based on the legitimate interests of the parties.
- Academic Freedom - Academic freedom as a value is considered by GAU to be the most important and necessary condition for learning, research and erudition. Unwavering protection of this value ensures the right of the academic, scientific and invited staff and students of the University to the opportunity of independent teaching and research.
- Involvement - The University ensures maximum involvement of the University community in making appropriate decisions. This creates more opportunities for us to better understand the possibilities of striving for common good and success.
- Diversity and Respect - Diversity creates an environment for a university community that is acceptable and comfortable to all, regardless of their individuality. Adhering to these values guarantees diverse and constructive discourse in the University space, which ultimately helps everyone to respect and realize their ideas and perspectives. Beyond diversity, on the other hand, collegial treatment, mutual respect, civilized, open and professional attitude in the process of activity, cooperation and decision-making are important in the activities of the University.
- Responsibility and Accountability - Personal and professional responsibility is extremely important in operating the University in response to our actions, powers and responsibilities. The principle of responsibility in the University is based on the existence of an environment of fairness, mutual respect and high organizational culture. The value of accountability in the University is perceived as one of the principles of strengthening academic integrity and good governance. Accountability contributes to the smooth functioning of the institution in terms of both dignity and its mechanisms. Accordingly, the implementation of this principle in university life is accompanied by fair mechanisms

of information, monitoring, evaluation and a strong University community of active, active civil and professional members.

- Transformability - The University, based on the existing realities of the development of our society and state, expresses its constant readiness to take transformational approaches to teaching, learning, research and innovative activities. The methods used in this area will be based on best practices and flexible, mixed approaches to fulfilling the University's mission and objectives.



Establishment of the Georgian American University

The demand in Tbilisi for a truly western University was so pronounced that even though at that time there were already two international business schools in operation, the interest in a program offering joint programs in Business and Law was substantial enough to move forward with the opening of a Business School and Law School at the Georgian American University in 2005.

In February 2005, a joint limited liability company of American and Georgian investors was formed. This dedicated group and its Board of Directors established financial and operational management standards which aligned with the strict international, ethical and educational standards necessary. This group of investors possessed a wide array of knowledge and experience such as:

- Experience with the United States, Georgian and International Law;
- Experience with the United States, Georgian and International Business, Banking, Finance and Management sectors;
- Public relations in Georgia and Internationally;
- Experience with the United States, Georgian and International education systems; and
- Experience with the United States government.
- Development of the University

From its origin, GAU has experienced many changes, challenges and successes. Where the market so demands, new programs have been introduced, further developing and improving existing programs. The drive for perfection of the educational process as well as the management of the University is instilled in each Founder, Board Member, Faculty and Staff member.

GAU has one of, if not the highest placement rates of its students and graduates in Georgia due in part to the exceptional professional and practical skills developed as well as the concentration of professional English.

In the 2011/2012 academic year, GAU added the International Relations and Diplomacy Program to its Law School, resulting in the name change to the Law and Social Sciences School. In the 2012/2013 academic year, due to the successful performances of both its Business and Law Schools and considering state priorities and market demand, GAU opened the Natural Sciences and Engineering School. In the 2013-14 academic year, GAU added the Liberal Education and Humanitarian Sciences School.

On a regular basis, GAU students are given unique opportunities through internships to work with local organizations. GAU students are also able to participate in foreign university exchange programs.

For the 2012/2013 academic year, GAU moved to a new campus location (10 Merab Aleksidze St.) which was more in line with its high university standards. The 6,000 sq.m. building contains large classrooms, a modern library/computer laboratory, a café, gym and auditoriums. This, together with expansive grounds creates a pleasant and productive academic environment.



Program Catalogue

Business School Programs:

- Business Administration BA Program
- Business Administration BA Program (English)
- Business Administration MA Program
- Business Administration PhD Program

Law, Social Sciences & Diplomacy School Programs:

- Law BA Program
- Law MA Program
- Law PhD Program
- Diplomacy BA Program
- Diplomacy MA Program
- Diplomacy PhD Program
- European Integration and Employment Relations Joint Master's Degree Program (EIGER)

Humanities & Liberal Arts School Programs:

- English Philology BA Program
- Georgian Philology BA Program
- History BA Program

Informatics and Engineering School Programs:

- Information Technology BA Program
- Information Technology MA Program
- Construction Engineering BA Program

Medical School Programs:

- Undergraduate Medical Doctor (MD) Program (English)

Code of ethics

GAU Code of Ethics and Conduct is the phrasing of ethical principles, values and behavior of the Georgian American University staff (lecturers among them) and the students.

The objective of the code is to render help to the staff and the students in solving and setting the ethical issues, which may arise in the period of work and studies. The Code is also directed at the regulation of relations among colleagues, students, university and national and international groupings.

With the help of the Code, GAU, along with academic tuition, guides the teaching of issues of transparency and straightforwardness, honesty and respect values, moral and social responsibility.

Why GAU?

HIGHEST STANDARDS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Since 2005, the Georgian American University (GAU) serves to establish international standards of education, develop competitive professionals and successful individuals.

GAU's team consists of highly qualified Georgian and foreign specialists. Experienced lecturers create a friendly atmosphere for students. Professors of GAU belong to the small number of Georgian scientists whose scientific articles are published by international peer-reviewed impact-factor journals. Among GAU's foreign professors are scientists of the leading universities in the United States and Europe. Along with the lecturers, the students are also conducting research in GAU's research centers.

The core values of GAU's academic philosophy are small classes and ideology-free environment. "Student-per-Teacher Ratio" is 8, establishing a high standard in the region and exceeding European university quality indicators.

There is an Ombudsman Office in GAU, which guarantees full protection of students' rights and freedoms.

GAU's location, modern infrastructure, green park and large parking areas make a comfortable environment for university life. GAU continuously improves and modernizes its facilities and equipment.

GAU is distinguished with innovations, such as QUANTS (Quantitative Finance), the first legal clinic in Georgia, the ultra-modern IT laboratory- GeoLab, professional English language programs; and the Spanish Language and Culture Center.

The employment rate of GAU students and graduates increases annually. GAU has a Career Center that constantly provides students with information about internship programs and vacancies in the market and manages trainings and employment forums together with partner organizations. GAU offers flexible schedules for the 3rd and 4th-year students. In addition to this, students are given the possibility of internships and employment in different structures at GAU.





Student Services

GAU offers to the students' exchange programs with different universities around the world. The number of European and US leading universities, as well as the number of international organizations with which GAU cooperates, continuously increase. As a result, students have the opportunity to participate in exchange programs, obtain a scholarship and share not only the experience of international education and global competitiveness but also diverse cultural and social relationships.

GAU students plan and implement educational, sports, entertainment and charitable projects. Considering the interests of the students, GAU chooses speakers for public lectures and the guests of the university are opinion leaders of different spheres, experts and people which are interesting for the youth. The GAUBand and the GAUTheatre are integral parts of diverse student life.



Study Programs held in English

GAU's English Programs are designed to provide the best practices and latest methodologies that fully correspond to international standards. These programs are:

Undergraduate Business Administration Program (BBA) (2021-2022)

Duration: 4 Academic Years (240 ECTS)

The annual tuition fee for the 1st year is USD 3,800

The annual tuition fee for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th years is USD 3,500

Undergraduate Medical Doctor (MD) Program (2021-2022)

The cost of 1 credit is 83 USD, for completion 360 credits must be collected

How to apply?

Before You Become GAU Student

The following is a step-by-step guide to all the things you need to do before you arrive in Georgia.

Applying to Georgian American University (GAU) is a quick and easy process. We intend to respond to all applications with an initial decision within one week, although this can take longer at certain times of the year.

When to Apply

For most of GAU's programs, you can apply at any time during the application period. However, because the number of places may be limited, we strongly recommend that you complete your application as early as possible. The earlier you complete your application, the earlier you will receive a decision on your admission.

English Language Requirements

In order to be eligible for university studies at GAU, applicants must demonstrate that they meet the English requirements for the program at B2 level. Applicants can demonstrate that they meet the English language requirement through:

- Internationally approved English test;
- Video Interview (ask International Student Admission Office for details).

How to Apply

Please fill out the [GAU Application Form](#), which contains detailed step-by-step instructions on how to fill it in, and guides you through the process. Applications should be completed and sent as soon as possible to ensure full and timely consideration of admission.

Once you have submitted the application documents, you will be required to pay the application fee. Please note that this fee is non-refundable and the application cannot be reviewed until the application fee has been processed. The application fee for all degree applicants is USD 100.

Bank details for International Students

Bank Name	Bank of Georgia
Name of Beneficiary	"Georgian-American University" LLC I/C 206169304
Address	10 Merab Aleksidze Str., 0160, Tbilisi, Georgia
SWIFT Code	BAGAGE22
IBAN	GE15BG000000161809635
Telephone	(+995 32) 220 65 20
Additional Information:	(NAME and SURNAME, Passport #) Registration Fee for 2021-2022 Academic Year. Georgian American University

The Registration Fee of 100 USD must be transferred to the bank account of the GAU. Please, consider that your bank and intermediary bank will charge you an initial processing fee and don't forget to check details in advance and make payment accordingly.

Please, note that payment must be made prior to or on the date on which the online application is filed and a SWIFT Confirmation Document should be attached.

International applicants should apply electronically for GAU programs. The application process involves:

- Selecting study program;
- Submitting completed application form;
- Paying the application fee;
- Uploading required documents;
- Receiving selection results;
- Replying to the offer of admission.

Attach Required Documents

- Copies of your academic record from your current or recent studies (or University if you are a transfer student) and its supplement (official transcript of grades) ([see the minimum requirements according to countries](#));
- A copy of your passport;
- A recent passport-sized photo;
- English language certificate or video Interview results (ask International Student Admission Office for details);
- Application fee payment receipt.

All documents that the Admissions department requires must be in English or translated into English. For any questions, please do not hesitate to email us at admissions@gau.edu.ge.

When We Receive Your Application Documents

We will send an acknowledgment of receipt within one week of receiving the application. During this stage, the Admissions Committee reviews your application and evaluates your documents. The admissions team will send Conditional Offer Letters to all successful candidates. An applicant should sign the offer letter and send it back to International Student Admission Office.

Based on the signed GAU Conditional Offer Letter, International Student Admission Office will start enrollment procedures, which includes translation, notarization, and recognition of foreign education at the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement of Georgia (the Center verifies the authenticity of an educational document, issued by a foreign institution and establishes the compatibility of the qualification, contained in this document or the learning outcomes, attained during the period of study with the qualifications, existing in Georgia). Enrollment procedures take approximately 1 month.

You need to consider the fact that although you have been admitted to GAU, it does not mean you are guaranteed a place in the program until your documents are verified and recognized by the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement and you have paid the tuition fee. At that time GAU will then send the Unconditional Offer Letter.

Visa, residence permit and right of residence

Visa Procedures (4-6 weeks)

It is extremely important that you understand Georgia's immigration processes and how they may affect you. If you prepare all the necessary documentation in good time, you are less likely to experience problems. You can visit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia webpage (<https://www.geoconsul.gov.ge/en/visaInformation>) for verifying visa requirements for foreigners traveling to Georgia

Students who are not citizens of Georgia must have a residence permit, for study after they travel to Georgia. Public Service Development Agency is the authority responsible for issuing residence permits. Students from outside Georgia must apply for a residence permit for studies (you can find information [here](#)). Applications for residence permits may under no circumstances be submitted after the deadlines.

Resident permit

A residence card is a main document that proves citizenship and identity of a person. Any foreigner who has been granted a residence permit, also, a refugee and a holder of humanitarian status shall obtain a residence card regardless of their age.

A new residence card may be obtained at a corresponding branch of the Public Service Development Agency or Public Service Hall.

If along with obtaining a permanent residence card, an applicant gets registered at his/her living address, he/she must apply to that office of the Public Service Development Agency or Public Service Hall, which serves the corresponding territory.

There are two types of residence cards: permanent and temporary. Students are granted a permanent residence card.

The first-time applicant for a permanent residence card must submit:

- The Agency's conclusion on granting a permanent residence permit or/and status of a stateless person;
- Two photos (photos may be taken in branches of the Public Service Development Agency or Public Service Hall for 3 GEL per set);

- Ground of registration (a minor aged under 16 years is registered at living address of parents, guardian or other legal representative and therefore, the ground of registration is not required);
- Identity document (ID card of foreign citizens, birth certificate and etc.)
- Receipt certifying the payment service fee

Contact

The International Student Admission Office is the first stop for all newly enrolled international students. Our staff is responsible for providing support to every registered international applicant and fulfill the needs of students from different countries and educational systems. We're here to answer your questions and guide you through specific processes.

International Student Admission Office

- Working hours: Monday through Friday, 9am – 6pm
- Address: 10 Merab Aleksidze Str., 0160, Tbilisi, Georgia
- E-mail: admissions@gau.edu.ge
- (+995 32) 220 65 20 (210)

International accreditation

NMC (India)

National Medical Commission (NMC) is an Indian regulatory body of 33 members which regulates medical education and medical professionals. It replaced the Medical Council of India on 25 September 2020. The Commission grants recognition of medical qualifications gives accreditation to medical schools, grants registration to medical practitioners, and monitors medical practice and assesses the medical infrastructure in India.

GAU received an official accreditation from 2017 and is listed among the foreign universities recognized by the National Medical Commission of India.

Accommodation

GAU does not provide accommodation, but the admission team can recommend numbers of websites to find corresponding apartments. We would recommend following platforms

<https://www.myhome.ge/en/> OR https://ss.ge/en/real-estate?utm_source=sagme.ge&utm_medium=redirect

Depending on a district, size of the flat and number of the residents, the rent can vary between 200-1000\$.

Traveling around GAU

GAU is located in one of the central districts of Tbilisi (Saburtalo), 10 Merab Aleksidze Str. The location is near a “Technical University” metro station and there are several bus stops nearby.

Traveling in Tbilisi

Public transportation in Tbilisi consists of three main options: metro, buses, and minibuses. At specific points in the city, one can also ride the funicular and several cable cars. Public transportation works from 6AM until 1AM. Several Taxi companies(Bolt; Maxim; Yandex), also function in the city.

Public transport fares

- For a one-time trip, a passenger will have to pay 1 GEL, with which they can use bus, minibus, subway or the Bagebi-Maglivi ropeway for 90 minutes.
- Passengers will choose between an unlimited 90-minute card, unlimited one-day card, unlimited one-week card or unlimited one-month card.
- An unlimited one-day card will cost 3 GEL. Card holders will be able to travel by any type of public transport throughout the day.
- An unlimited one-week card will cost 20 GEL. Card holders will be able to travel by any type of public transport throughout the week.
- An unlimited one-month card will cost 40 GEL, which will enable passengers to travel by any type of public transport during the whole month.
- An unlimited three-month card will cost 100 GEL.
- An unlimited sixth-month card will cost 150 GEL.
- An unlimited one-year card will cost 250 GEL.

Season tickets will be sold at express branches of the Bank of Georgia (BOG) and at machines in Tbilisi Metro.

Traveling in Georgia

Georgia offers everything a traveler could want - affordable prices, welcoming culture, excellent and cheap transportation options, incredible mountains, seaside resorts, vibrant city life, and delicious food and drink.



There are so many destinations in Georgia choose from, so this list will help you narrow it down to the 5 top places to visit in Georgia:

1. Kazbegi



Perhaps the most recognizable icon of Georgia, the Gergeti Trinity Church stands guard over the Kazbegi region from its perch on a hillside just under Mount Kazbegi. You can access Kazbegi as part of a day trip from Tbilisi (here is the best tour to book if doing that). Alternatively, you can opt to drive the route from Tbilisi along the Military Highway yourself and stay overnight in Stepantsminda town, allowing you get up early to beat the crowds and catch the morning sun glistening off Trinity Church. You're sure to work up a hunger during the climb, so be sure to stop over in Stepantsminda on your way back for some delicious Georgian khachapuri to fill you up.

2. Telavi

Telavi is located in the heart of Kakheti, the historical area of eastern Georgia, in the valleys of the rivers Iori and Alazani. A trip to Telavi is an excursion around a surprisingly beautiful region to the world of ancient temples and monasteries, picturesque rivers and valleys where amber grapes grow under the warm sun rays. Telavi is not only the region center. It is the center of Georgian winemaking which is a cult there.



Telavi is located in the most beautiful Alazani valley on the slope of Tsvi-Gombor ridge. The landscapes of Telavi and its vicinities are very impressive. You will enjoy the green river valleys, the slopes of the mountains of the Major Caucasus with its peaks and wood-grown slopes and Alpine meadows.



3. Batumi

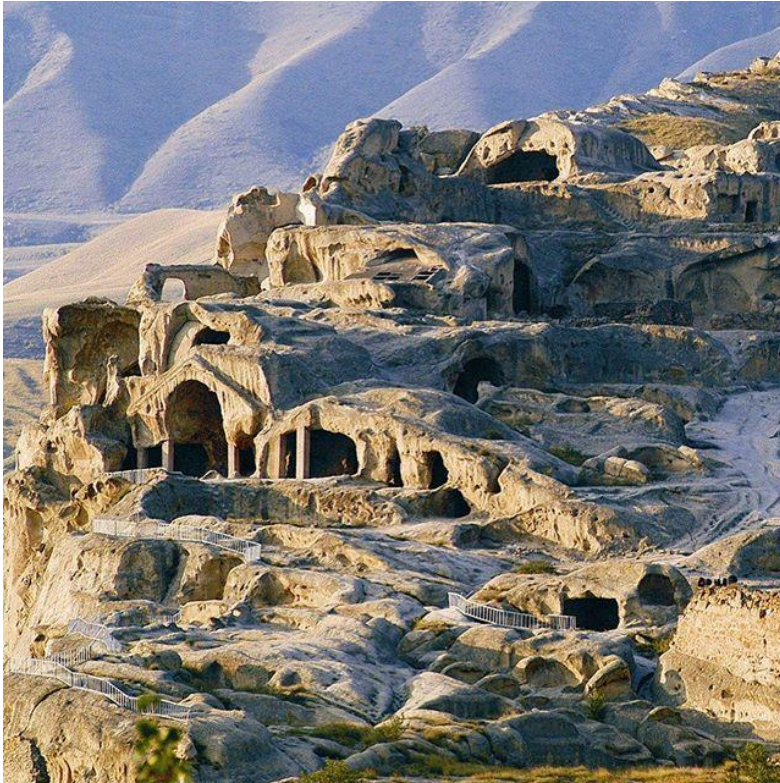
Batumi offers incredible modern architecture – Donald Trump once even had plans to build a skyscraper here before he was elected President. It also has an enormous and gorgeous botanical garden, and a bunch of black pebble beaches (note for Western travelers: you can't really compare these to sand beaches). In summer international visitors descend on the city, with its beaches crowded by day and its nightclubs throbbing at night.

4. Kutaisi

Kutaisi is charming and offers enough to do – monasteries, churches, and restaurants – to warrant a visit for a night or two. Plus, Kutaisi is a great base for day trips to nearby wonders like Martvili Canyon.

Kutaisi also may fit into your Georgia itinerary if you arrive or depart on one of the increasing number of flights available from mainland Europe.





5. Uplistsikhe Ancient Cave City

Just an hour away from Tbilisi, and a few kilometers outside of Gori, you'll find another important Georgia point of interest: the incredible cave dwellings of Uplistsikhe. One of the oldest settlements in Georgia, the "cave city" of Uplistsikhe was the capital of the ancient kingdom of Kartli, and fascinating for the fact that it was later a place where Christians and pagans co-lived together.





If you're traveling to the western part of Georgia, Uplistsikhe makes a great attraction to break up the drive. Or make a Georgia history day trip from Tbilisi by combining Uplistsikhe with a stop in Gori to visit the fortress and the birthplace of Joseph Stalin.

Healthcare

All GAU students have health insurance. There's universal, government funded and private healthcare options for foreigners. The prices vary between 50-100\$ depending on the healthcare providers and their packages. GAU is cooperating with Euroins Insurance Company.

Living in Tbilisi

There are several unique places to visit or things to do in Tbilisi, including some of very famous night clubs, parks and recreation areas as well as cafes and bars and shopping centers.

Entertainment		Public Holidays																																				
<p>Night Clubs: Bassiani, Mtkvarze, Khidi...</p> 	<p>Parks: Lisi lake, Vake park, Turtle Lake...</p> 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Name</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 Jan</td> <td>New Year's Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Jan</td> <td>New Year's (Day 2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 Jan</td> <td>Orthodox Christmas Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19 Jan</td> <td>Orthodox Epiphany</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Mar</td> <td>Mothers' Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8 Mar</td> <td>International Women's Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9 Apr</td> <td>Independence Restoration Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26 Apr</td> <td>Orthodox Good Friday</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27 Apr</td> <td>Orthodox Holy Saturday</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28 Apr</td> <td>Orthodox Easter Sunday</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29 Apr</td> <td>Orthodox Easter Monday</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9 May</td> <td>Victory Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12 May</td> <td>St Andrew's Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26 May</td> <td>Independence Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28 Aug</td> <td>Day of the Assumption of Mary</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14 Oct</td> <td>Svetitskhovloba</td> </tr> <tr> <td>23 Nov</td> <td>St George's Day</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Name	1 Jan	New Year's Day	2 Jan	New Year's (Day 2)	7 Jan	Orthodox Christmas Day	19 Jan	Orthodox Epiphany	3 Mar	Mothers' Day	8 Mar	International Women's Day	9 Apr	Independence Restoration Day	26 Apr	Orthodox Good Friday	27 Apr	Orthodox Holy Saturday	28 Apr	Orthodox Easter Sunday	29 Apr	Orthodox Easter Monday	9 May	Victory Day	12 May	St Andrew's Day	26 May	Independence Day	28 Aug	Day of the Assumption of Mary	14 Oct	Svetitskhovloba	23 Nov	St George's Day
Date	Name																																					
1 Jan	New Year's Day																																					
2 Jan	New Year's (Day 2)																																					
7 Jan	Orthodox Christmas Day																																					
19 Jan	Orthodox Epiphany																																					
3 Mar	Mothers' Day																																					
8 Mar	International Women's Day																																					
9 Apr	Independence Restoration Day																																					
26 Apr	Orthodox Good Friday																																					
27 Apr	Orthodox Holy Saturday																																					
28 Apr	Orthodox Easter Sunday																																					
29 Apr	Orthodox Easter Monday																																					
9 May	Victory Day																																					
12 May	St Andrew's Day																																					
26 May	Independence Day																																					
28 Aug	Day of the Assumption of Mary																																					
14 Oct	Svetitskhovloba																																					
23 Nov	St George's Day																																					
<p>Cafes: Fabrika, Leselidze street, Shardeni</p> 	<p>Shopping: Galleria, Tbilisi Mall, East Point</p> 																																					



- **Mtatsminda Park**

Mtatsminda Park was once the third-most-visited entertainment center in the 1990s. Today, the family-friendly landscaped park—with its carousels, waterslides, roller coaster, and Ferris wheel—remains a popular destination for travelers and locals looking for a day of fun and leisure.

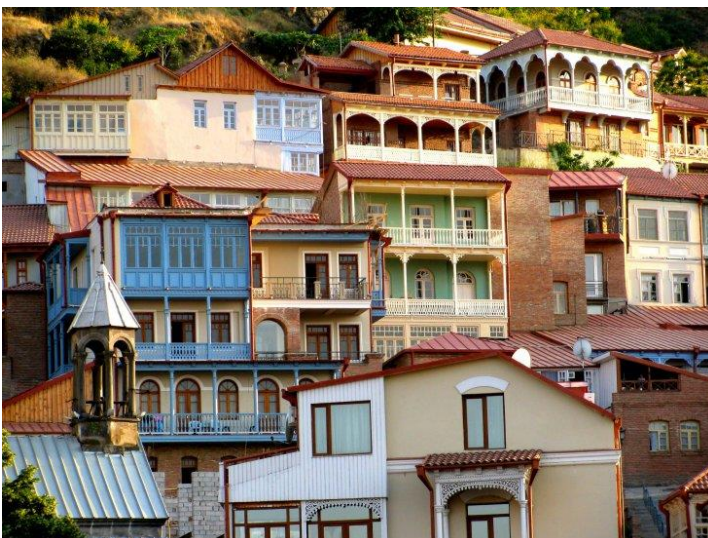
- **Tbilisi Old Town**

Despite having undergone countless reconstructions over the centuries, Tbilisi's Old Town has somehow retained its picturesque charm. With a colorful blend of Eastern and Western styles, the district's cobblestone streets, ancient landmarks, and beautiful balconies draw architecture, history, and culture enthusiasts from around the world.



- **Narikala Fortress**

Once a Persian citadel, the ancient Narikala Fortress dominates the Tbilisi skyline. Established in the fourth century, it was expanded in the seventh, 16th, and 17th centuries, before much of it was destroyed in an explosion in 1827. The view from the fortress is one of the best in the Georgian capital.



- **Tbilisi Funicular**

The famous Tbilisi Funicular railroad opened in 1905. Built atop the Mtatsminda Plateau, the main station overlooks Tbilisi and offers up spectacular views of this capital city. Though the initial operation was met with trepidation, since residents feared traversing the steep mountain in transportation that was deemed somewhat precarious, it later became a trusted and true mode of transit—particularly after a theme park,

Mtatsminda Park, was opened at the top of the plateau. Today, the Tbilisi Funicular is a far cry from its former self, with modern, sleek carriages and newly laid rails. Travelers say the ride offers spectacular views and a traditional Georgian restaurant at the top of Mtatsminda serves some of the best local cuisine around, and historic photos in the funicular station provide insight into this Tbilisi highlight's early years.



- **Tbilisi Holy Trinity Cathedral**

The tallest church in Tbilisi, the Holy Trinity Cathedral (Tsminda Sameba) is an unmissable feature of the Tbilisi skyline: its golden dome rises out from Elia Hill and is visible from almost any point in the city. The stunning structure is part of a complex that includes a monastery, theology school, and nine chapels (including five underground).

Bank account

You can get Georgian credit card at any of the following banks: Bank of Georgia; TBC Bank; Liberty Bank.

Communication



Social networks popular in Georgia



line and mobile networks even if the number is disconnected from both sides or there is no SIM-card in the mobile phone.

112 unifies three different services in Georgia. These services are patrol police, fire/rescue and medical services. 112 Emergency Response Center ensures processing of received calls and transferring them to the relevant services.

Mobile operators

Mobile operators offer very low prices in Georgia, so it's always better to buy local number while staying here. In some countries it's really hard to get a new sim card, but in Georgia it's very cheap and easy. You need your passport and about 5 Georgian Lari (2\$) to buy a new sim card.

There are three main companies offering GSM sim cards in Georgia: Magti GSM, Geocell, Beeline. They offer very reasonable prices. You can buy a sim-card in the offices of mobile operators or in the shops nearby the metro stations.

Emergency info

112 is a Legal Entity of Public Law of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, which ensures operative response on the emergency situations.

112 is the Emergency Response Center that receives emergency calls from all over Georgia via unified emergency number - 1-1-2 during 24-hours. 112 service is free of charge from all fixed

EMERGENCY

112

Pre-arrival checklist

1. Health - If you receive on-going medical treatment and / or medication, obtain a letter from the doctor in your home country (in English) with the details as it may be useful for your new doctor. Check whether you can take your medication on your flight and through customs;
2. Finances - Consider how much money to bring to Georgia (and whether your home country restricts the amount of cash that can be taken out of the country). Ensure you have sufficient money in cash / credit card to cover your expenses until you have opened a bank account. Establish whether your current bankcard, if applicable, can be used in the Georgia and whether your bank can provide any advice about transferring money here.
3. Transportation - Plan your onward journey to Georgia. Consider baggage restrictions on your flight. Check any restrictions on goods that can be brought into Georgia. Consider travel insurance. Check current covid19 requirements for entering Georgia :
<https://www.geoconsul.gov.ge/HtmlPage/Html/View?id=2131&lang=Eng>
4. Preparing to study - Review course handbooks and curriculum;
5. Living in the Georgia - Consider whether you need an adaptor for any electrical equipment you intend on bringing to Georgia. Consider Georgian climate:
<https://www.climatestotravel.com/climate/georgia>
6. Bring passport photos – you might need them for various things in the first weeks.