

Orientations for International Students from the State University of Maringá (UEM)

1. Name and CPF: reputation value in Brazil

There's a common saying in Brazil: **"The only asset you have is your name. Keep it clean."** It means that reputation is something very important and we should protect it.

The CPF (Physical Person Registry) is an essential document in Brazil and it works as an identification for several transactions, such as opening a bank account, renting an apartment or hiring services. Never lend your CPF to third parties, because you can be charged for any debt or financial problem associated with it.

In Brazil, we don't like to lend our name to anyone – and it includes our CPF. When somebody lends their CPF, they are lending their name and taking a risk.

In addition, it is important to beware of scams, especially phone calls or text messages that ask for bank details, passwords or CPFs by messages or calls. This data is personal and should be shared only in safe contexts and with appropriate guidance.



Important: That said, no ECI member can provide their CPF to rent housing or hire services to international students. We can help you with information and safe alternatives to these matters.



2. Mental Health and Well-Being

To be in a new country, away from home and family, can be an **emotional challenge**. That's why UEM provides psychological support. If you need help, get in touch with UEM's social assistance by phone: (44) 3022-4038 or with the ECI to get necessary support.

Physical health

Brazil has some specific health challenges that you must know:

- Dengue and other diseases transmitted by mosquitoes: Use insect repellent, avoid stagnant water and look for medical assistance if you feel fever and body aches.
- Respiratory infections in winter: Dry weather and closed environments make it easier to transmit viruses. Stay hydrated and sanitize your hands.
- Acute gastroenteritis (GECA): Avoid food of dubious origin and prioritize hygienic places.
- STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections): Use condoms correctly and regularly in all sexual relations. The city's health centers and the UEM Psychiatry Outpatient Clinic offer male and female condoms free of charge.

Where to look for medical assistance?

- **UEM outpatient clinic:** Basic assistance for the academic community.
- **UBS Zona 07 and UBS Vila Esperança:** Assistance through SUS.
- **UPA Zona Norte and UPA Zona Sul:** Emergency care.
- **HUM (University Hospital of Maringá):** More complex cases.
- **SAMU 192:** Medical emergency

3. Personal and collective hygiene

In Brazil, personal hygiene is highly valued, especially due to the warm weather. The culture of bathing has its roots in the native peoples, who have always valued this habit and contact with water as part of their well-being.

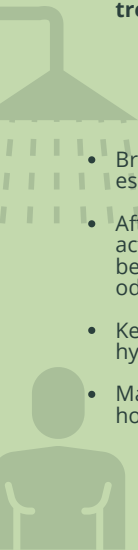
There are three basic ingredients for a healthy life and good social coexistence:

- **Daily bathing (or more than one) is common and expected.**
- **Use of deodorant is essential to avoid body odour.**
- **Regular change of clothes, including underwear and t-shirts.**
- **Oral hygiene: Brushing your teeth after every meal is a common habit among Brazilians. This way, in addition to keeping your oral health, additional costs with dental treatment will be avoided.**



Curiosities about hygiene in Brazil:

- Brazilians usually take 2 to 4 baths a day, considering it essential for hygiene, well-being and freshness.
- After gym, walks under the sun or any other physical activity, Brazilians always take a bath – and sometimes before going too! It means that it is very rare to feel bad odors in these spaces.
- Keeping nails clean and trimmed is part of Brazilians' hygiene routine.
- Many Brazilians wash their hair frequently, especially in the hot weather, helping to avoid a build-up of sweat and oil.



Hygiene of environment:

At home, keeping spaces organized and sanitized contributes to a healthy environment. At university, it is essential to respect the collective space:

- Do not throw trash on the floor, discard it correctly and do not leave objects or leftovers under tables and chairs – no one will be responsible to clean it for you.

Keeping your hygiene in every aspect of your day to day life shows respect for others and facilitates coexistence and cultural integration.



4. Suitable clothes for the weather

Brazil has warm weather most of the year. Give preference (if possible) to light and comfortable cotton clothes. Synthetic material can cause discomfort.

In Brazil, dressing well is usually associated with special occasions such as parties, formal events or professional appointments. In everyday life, especially when going to classes, the most important thing is to prioritize comfort.

5. Alcohol and Drugs

You're free to enjoy your time in Brazil, but your actions outside university are your responsibility. We, the ECI team, believe that whoever is capable of creating a problem is also capable of solving it. **Do not count on us to get you out of trouble.**

Besides that, remember that you are in another country. Failure to comply with the law can have serious consequences, including prison and deportation. Brazil has laws and not just stereotypes. Act responsibly, avoid excesses – especially with alcohol and other drugs – and respect local norms.

Safety tip: Never accept drinks from strangers and stay alert to potential risks.

6. Brazilian women and respect

Brazilian culture values sympathy and receptivity, but this should not be confused with romantic interest. When a woman says **"no," it means "no,"** and her right to refuse should be respected. It is also important to understand that, in Brazil, it is common for women to dress in a more particular, feminine and sensual way and this is part of their culture and individuality. However, this should not be interpreted as a sign of sexual interest.

Don't ask questions like, "Are you married?" and "Do you have children?" because they are very intimate questions. In addition, respect should be guaranteed to all people regardless of appearance, gender identity or sexual orientation. Discrimination such as fatphobia or fat-shaming and LGBTQIA+phobia is unacceptable and can result in legal consequences, including imprisonment. Harassment, sexual harassment and hate crimes are punishable by law in Brazil, making it essential to act with respect and responsibility.

UEM has important anti-harassment policies (more information and guidelines for reporting can be found at:



7. Academic punctuality

Punctuality is key. **Always arrive on time and be ready to start class without delay.** Respecting the schedule demonstrates commitment to learning, consideration for colleagues and respect for teachers. Frequent delays can impair your performance. If, for any reason, there is an unforeseen event that prevents you from arriving on time, notify in advance whenever possible.

In addition to classes, punctuality must be maintained in all other proposed activities.

8. Housing

UEM does not offer student housing, and finding accommodation can be a challenge, especially for international students. To help, the ECI has sought, through dialogues, alternative accommodation, such as boarding houses. However, it is essential that everyone respects the rules established in these places, especially with regard to schedules, cleanliness and coexistence.

The students' behavior influences the continuity of these partnerships, and irresponsible attitudes can damage future opportunities.

It is forbidden to give, lend, sublet the property or receive visitors for overnight stay without consent of the lessor, at the risk of termination of the contract.



Acting with responsibility and respect is fundamental.

9. Work and Responsibility

If you decide to work, be professional and inform in advance if you need to leave your job. This helps to maintain good relations and avoids negative generalizations about international students.

If you suffer discrimination outside the university, seek support from the **Conselho Municipal de Migrantes, Refugiados e Apátridas (CORMA - Municipal Council of Migrants, Refugees and Stateless Persons)** by calling (44) 3221-7752.



10. Racial Issues in Brazil

Brazil is a country marked by structural racism, that is, racial discrimination is rooted in institutions, culture and the day-to-day life of society. Although the country has a large black and indigenous population, these communities face inequalities in several areas such as education, labor market and security.

For international students, especially racialized ones, it is important to be aware that racism can manifest itself in different ways, from subtle looks and comments to explicit discrimination. If you face a situation of prejudice, seek support from academic networks, human rights groups and institutions that combat discrimination. **It is worth remembering that racism is a crime in Brazil, subject to punishment and must be denounced.**



In addition, it is necessary to inform oneself about the subject and to know your rights in order to protect and strengthen the struggle for a more fair society.

11. Academic Difficulties

If you are having difficulty learning or following the course content, contact your degree coordinator. He will be able to guide and assist you in finding solutions to these challenges.

The **PROPÆ** supports scholars with disabilities and Special Educational Needs (SEN), ensuring accessibility, permanence and completion of studies. It offers features such as braille printing, accessible digitized texts, follow-up in evaluations and removal of physical and attitude barriers. International students with specific conditions, with a medical certificate, can also request assistance. The program advises UEM on inclusive policies and integrates the CMDDPD and the State Special Education Forum.

Location: Block 4 - Room 2

Contact: (44) 3011-4448 | sec-propae@uem.br



We hope that these guidelines will help you in your academic and cultural journey in Brazil!

Welcome to UEM!

