



Rev: 2015



Pre-arrival Handbook

J-1 International Students



Manhattanville College

Introduction

We hope this booklet contributes to your ability to understand and appreciate the culture of Manhattanville College. You should read it before you arrive and refer to it periodically as your needs change. When you arrive to begin your studies, you will be adjusting to living in a new community with rules and customs different from your own. Ask questions and seek advice from many people, especially the staff of the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS). Take full advantage of the programs organized for you. No guidebook can replace the personal touch and local connections you will make by participating in Manhattanville's activities.

We also urge you to become familiar with the [Manhattanville Student Code of Conduct](#), which you will receive when you arrive. We are happy to help you with any questions you may have.

We are glad you are coming!

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Preparing for your departure

Congratulations on your decision to attend Manhattanville College! You have made some very important decisions already, but there are still many things to do before you leave home. Your first months in the United States will be much more satisfying if you plan ahead. If you have not already done so, visit the [U.S. educational advising center](#) in your city or region. Most advising centers offer helpful pre-departure orientations for students making preparations to study in the United States. The advising centers are typically more accessible than the U.S. consulate. The following section discusses steps to obtain a J-1 exchange visitor visa.

Obtaining a J-1 Visitor Exchange Visa

International students and exchange visitors will need visas to enter the United States to study. Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest you to find out about the process <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. This process can take up to eight (8) weeks and require a written application, an interview, and fee payment, so plan ahead. Apply for the visa using the Form I-20 or DS-2019 that Manhattanville College sent to you. If several schools have accepted you, do not apply for a visa until you decide which one you will attend and then use ONLY the document for that school. For more info see http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/tempvisitors_wait.php



Read all documents thoroughly, so that you know exactly what you are agreeing to when you enter the United States in J-1 visa status.

For J-1 status you are agreeing to study full-time in an educational program. This means a minimum of 12 credits each semester for undergraduate programs (15 if you are receiving any scholarship/aid from the college). With this responsibility of full-time study, students are also given privileges: the ability to travel in and out of the U.S. (with permission), and the possibility of an on-campus job for up to 20 hours per week (with authorization prior to starting). You will learn more about your J-1 rights and responsibilities at our pre-orientation workshop.

First, you must obtain your visa. Before you apply for your visa, determine exactly what supporting documentation is required. The consulate nearest your home should be able to tell you what they require. Several standard items are required for the application and interview process:

- A current, valid passport
- DS 2019 (for J-1)
- Proof of payment (receipt) of the SEVIS 901 fee \$180 <https://www.fmjfee.com>
- Evidence of financial support for the period of time and amount indicated on the DS 2019
- Proof that you have a permanent residence outside the United States
- One or more passport-type photographs
- Transcripts from previous schooling, especially if it was in the U.S.
- Your acceptance and scholarship letters from Manhattanville College

See tips for getting a visa: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html
Website to explain the process: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/>

Additional application materials may be requested to prove your eligibility for J-1 visas. These may include: evidence of English proficiency, school records, and additional evidence of strong ties to your home country (property deeds, family business documents) or of your ability to pay for your stay and study in the United States. An application fee and a short interview will be required. The consular officer will place a visa in your passport. If you encounter any problems obtaining your visa, contact Manhattanville immediately, via phone or email.

The "Report/Program Start Date"

You are expected to arrive at Manhattanville College on the "report date" indicated on DS 2019 in item #3. (Students may enter the U.S. no earlier than 30 days prior to the report date – however currently some consulates are suggesting only 10 days in advance). Campus arrival time is very important because Manhattanville offers important pre-orientation activities. If you must arrive later than your report date, contact the OISS in advance -- usually Immigration and Customs Enforcement will not allow a late arrival unless it is authorized.



Documents to Bring to the United States

(in your hand luggage, not suitcase)

When you travel, remember to keep your passport, DS 2019, SEVIS 901-fee receipt, and all other identification with you -- **NOT IN YOUR SUITCASE**. Bring with you to the United States any important documents that relate to your academic, medical, and legal history:



- Official transcripts from secondary schools, colleges, or universities
- Copies of your medical and dental records, including certificates of immunizations and vaccinations in the event that the Health Center did not receive copies you sent previously. Also, keep an extra copy at home.
- Information about medical conditions or treatments, prescriptions for medication (including the generic and brand names) and eyeglasses
- Original birth certificate (in original language), often necessary for applying for a Social Security card once you obtain campus employment
- International Driver's Permit – (you can obtain this only in your home country, not the U.S.) this with a valid driver's license from your country allows you to drive in New York. Google it if you want more info.
- Obtain English translations of the academic documents and have the translations certified by a U.S. educational advising center or a U.S. consulate or embassy. Retain photocopies of all original documents for your records.
- National Identity card if it has a photo and a birth date
- Ground Transportation Receipt if you pre-arranged your trip from the airport to the campus

International Transfer Students

International Transfer Credits: Making Them Count

If you are transferring from an overseas college or university and you want your academic credits to transfer too, please complete the following procedure. Please bring two (2) official original (stamped/sealed and signed) transcripts in sealed envelopes from your previous institution. Once here in the U.S. you will need to have your transcript evaluated by World Education Services www.wes.org for a fee. If your transcript is not in English you will also have to pay an additional fee for an authorized translation. University Language Services www.alsintl.com/university.htm can provide that service, also for a fee. There are other evaluation services however WES is the best known.

Health Insurance

Manhattanville requires all J-1 student visa holders to have health insurance to cover the cost of medical treatment not provided by our Health Center. A mandatory comprehensive Health Insurance Plan for J-1 Students is offered by Manhattanville and is built into the fees you will pay.

All J-1 visa holders are required by law to be enrolled in a plan that meets U.S. Department of State requirements. These requirements are as follows:

- Major medical benefits must be at least \$50,000 for each accident or illness.
- Repatriation benefit must be at least \$7500
- Medical evacuation must be covered for at least \$10,000
- The deductible for each accident or illness may not exceed \$500
- The policy may not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent to the activities of the exchange program.

There is an option to waive the process and the type of insurance required is outlined here <https://consolidatedhealthplan.com/group/78/home>

English as a Second Language Instruction/Conditional Admission

Conditional admission is occasionally offered to international students whose academic or professional qualifications are adequate but whose English needs additional improvement. If you have been given a provisional admission you may be required to complete English Language courses or to submit additional scores on standardized language proficiency tests before you are allowed to enroll in a full load of undergraduate courses. To determine the conditions of your admission, carefully read your letter from the Admission office. Our on-campus English Language Institute can provide this support.

What to bring ... and how to get it here

To keep travel simple, bring as little as possible. You are less likely to lose luggage if you follow the baggage limitations of the international airlines. However, bringing certain items from home will help you to feel more comfortable in your new surroundings -- especially photos and room decorations.

Climate and Clothing

Manhattanville is located in Purchase, New York in Westchester County, a suburban area north of New York City. This region has four very distinct seasons. Fall and spring are mild (averaging between 45° - 75° F), and a sweater or jacket will usually keep you warm. Winter can be as warm as fall, as rainy as spring, or it can be snowy and freezing (below 32° F). If you stay during the summer months, it may be pleasantly warm or blazing hot.



If you are from a warm weather climate, it is advisable to buy your winter clothes here. Student dress is casual - however, there are times (Fall/Spring Formals, International Bazaar) where 'dressing up' is

appropriate and FUN! If you have a traditional outfit from your country, it is a good idea to bring it. Many people wear their traditional clothing for the International Bazaar - an annual campus event.



Shipping and Baggage

Most international airlines have strict rules that limit the amount of luggage you can bring with you. It is usually between 60 kilos and 80 lbs. Check with your airline before your trip. If you wish to ship some of your belongings in advance, clearly label all packages to:

- [YOUR NAME]
- c/o Manhattanville College
- 2900 Purchase Street
- Purchase, NY 10577
- USA

You can obtain information about freight and shipping services through local travel agents. Pick a reliable company, since they will be responsible for your things. Be sure to insure any valuable items. Your packages can be picked up at our campus Post Office when you arrive.

Electronics

In the U.S., we use the 110-volt system. Do not bring your hair dryer or other appliances unless it has convertible voltage. It is easier to buy one here; hair dryers usually cost under \$20.

Computers

There are computers in the library and elsewhere on campus with direct access to the Internet and Email. All students are given Email accounts upon admission - this is a major form of communication. Many students also bring their own computers to Manhattanville. For more information about computer support see <http://www.mville.edu/mymville/students/information-technology-for-students.html>

Many students communicate with their parents and friends using one of the many Instant Messaging or VOIP systems via the Internet. Skype and facetime, are very popular - be sure to have a web cam and mike for your computer. Other students send SMS to parent's cell to communicate -- however SMS/texting costs money on all U.S. based cell phones - not like the rest of the world.

Cell Phones

There are many cell phone companies to choose from. Some use the GSM system, we suggest you bring an unlocked GSM phone, you can purchase a SIM card plan for that phone for about \$30 a month. There are also pay-as-you-go- plans available.

Medication

If you have a medical condition that requires daily or regularly scheduled medication, please be advised that health care is ridiculously expensive in the United States. **You may bring three months worth of medication into the U.S. for personal use only.** To be able to bring any kind of medication into the U.S., a doctor's note, or the original prescription, is required. The doctor's note should state the name and quantity of the medicine you are bringing into the U.S. It cannot exceed the quantity needed for a three month stay. The note must also confirm that the medication is only for your personal use. It is also important to keep the medication in the original container.

Personal Hygiene, Household Items and Shopping

Toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, laundry detergent...do not bother using your packing space/weight with these. Bring just enough shampoo, toothpaste, and hygiene products to get you settled.

Many students buy their bed linens (sheets, pillowcases, pillows, blankets) and towels after they get here. It is helpful, however, to bring one set with you in case you arrive when stores are closed. Most students buy Twin X-Long (mattress 39"x 80"), guaranteed to fit any bed. The College does not rent sheets or towels. Students also usually buy reading lamps. Halogen lamps and candles are not allowed on campus. Alarm clocks are essential -- getting to class on time is important.

The bookstore on campus has many essentials -- notebooks, pens, toothpaste, etc. However, Manhattanville is only a short bus ride from White Plains, a medium-sized city. White Plains offers many stores and restaurants.

Money

Bring with you enough money (traveler's checks/cash/debit/credit card) to cover the expenses of your first month, which is likely to be one of the most expensive periods of your stay. Before the term begins you will pay for local transportation, possibly several nights of lodging off campus, and meals. After you arrive on campus, your expenses will include:

- Tuition, room, board and fees for the first term
- Books and supplies
- Housing deposits
- Health-insurance premiums
- Clothing appropriate for the climate
- Household and personal items: computer, phone, bedding, etc.
- Pocket money for movies, meals out, local transportation, activities, etc.

Do not carry large sums of cash. Traveler's checks in \$20 and \$50 denominations are a safer way to carry money. If you have larger traveler's checks, they can be difficult to use for small purchases.

Living Expenses

Monthly expenses will vary depending upon your lifestyle. Whatever your spending habits, as stated earlier, you will need extra money (\$300-500) during the first month for purchasing your school books, furnishings and clothes appropriate to the climate. You may also wish to arrange for cell phone (essential) and cable TV (optional) services.

You will need a big coat (at least \$100) and warm clothes but you can get them once you get here. Just be prepared for this type of expense. Some students may want to purchase a radio, stereo or computer for their rooms, although these items are NOT essential. Some majors require a student to have a computer. Prices can range from \$35 for an inexpensive radio to over \$1,000 for a computer and printer.

Be certain you have enough money to start off comfortably. After you settle in, your living expenses will probably decrease; students who live in the residence halls will just need pocket money as lodging and meals are prepaid with fees.

If you live off-campus sharing expenses with others, you should expect to spend approximately **\$1,100 - \$2,500** per month. This figure is based upon estimates for your rent (**\$750-1400**), food (**\$290**), utilities (**\$100**), and other expenses, such as telephone, entertainment, etc. Your first month will also be more expensive as you will want all the items listed above and additionally you will be asked to pay one to two months extra rent as a 'security' deposit. We recommend that an on-campus student start with a minimum of **\$900 - \$1,100** to settle in while an off-campus student should budget at least **\$1,900 - \$2,100** for the first month.

School Holidays: The College's dining services close between Christmas and the New Year and have limited service for one week during each of the fall and spring terms. If you expect to remain during this time, you must budget for food or meals off-campus. The residence halls are open year-round, however staying over the summer there is an additional fee. During the winter break residence can stay at no additional housing cost.

Typical activities and their cost

- Train to the NYC – One way ticket (PEAK) \$11.25, (Off PEAK) \$8.50
- Chain Restaurant meal - \$10-25
- Fast Food Restaurant meal - \$3-7
- Local Bus Fare – One way \$2.50
- Movie ticket - \$7-15

Wiring Payment

You may choose to send your payment for tuition, fees, and room and board directly from your bank to Manhattanville's bank, Wells Fargo, via wire transfer. <https://www.wellsfargo.com/>

International Banks (including Canada) - International transfers

- Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
- 420 Montgomery Street
- San Francisco, CA 94104
- International Wire: Swift Code: WFBIUS6S
- Beneficiary: Manhattanville College Operating Account
- Account Number: 2000013016584
- Reference: Student Name and ID#

Banking

Depending, during orientation week, Wells Fargo Bank www.wellsfargo.com/ comes to campus to assist students in opening a local bank account. You may choose to open an account with Wells Fargo or go off campus to other banks. Both Citibank and HSBC have locations convenient to campus. Usually the most cost effective system is for the student to get a savings account and an ATM/Debit card. After an account has been established, it is possible for parents to have money wired directly into the student's account.

Wells Fargo has an ATM on campus. Anyone can use this ATM, but if your account is at another bank, you will be charged a fee (\$1-3) every time you insert your card. The ATM is part of -- AMEX Cash, Cirrus, Credit Union 24, Discover NOVUS, Master Card, PLUS, PULSE, and JCB systems.

Students often open just a savings account (for a supply of cash accessed by ATM) and use credit cards and money orders (available for purchase at the campus Post Office) to pay bills. Now with the advent of worldwide banking – if you have an ATM card from a home country bank – you can easily take out dollars from any ATM machine; the only consequence is a \$1-\$3 fee every time you do this. Operating in cash is a good way to control your finances – you can only spend what you have. However, if you find a campus job, you must open a local account to have direct deposit payment of your earnings.

Credit Cards

Bring your foreign credit card to the U.S. even if you are not planning to use it. In order to get a credit card (valid outside your home country) you may have to give the bank a deposit. You will need it if you want to rent something, from cars to DVDs. Generally, if you have a credit card you are more trustworthy in the eyes of various institutions, like banks, department stores etc.

Local Transportation

Manhattanville College is 25 miles outside New York City. A public bus (#12 Beeline) comes directly to the campus on a regular schedule. The bus can take you to a variety of shopping centers and to the White Plains train station. You can be in Manhattan (NYC) in less than one hour. We have the VALIANT EXPRESS, a free bus service that goes to the local shopping/business district at specific times.

Campus Accommodations and Food Service

All residence halls are coed (males and females in the same building). They have twin XL beds, desks, chairs, drawers, closets and sinks. Depending on your seniority as a student and their availability, double and suite rooms are available. Cooking burners are not allowed in the rooms, however small microwaves are. Small microwaves and refrigerators can be rented or bought at the beginning of the academic year. Cash-card operated laundry facilities are in each residence hall. As of 2013 there is limited graduate student housing, it is popular and these go very fast. Married student housing is not available on the Manhattanville campus. J-1 students who are accompanied by dependents and J-1 visiting faculty will find local rental housing; the OISS and sponsoring faculty can assist with local rental information.

Dependants (children and spouse) of J-1 visa holders must reside with the primary J-1.

The Cafeteria and Café (known as the Pub) offer a variety of foods and meal plans. First year Manhattanville students and ELI students must sign up for 19 meals per week. Other options are available to upperclassmen. There is also a plan for commuter students.

Travel Tips and Arrival to the U.S. and Manhattanville

Arrange for your flight as soon as you know your 'report date' printed on your I-20 form or DS 2019, or in your acceptance letter. Manhattanville College can assist you with information about your arrival, including the distance from the airport to the campus and the most reliable form of transportation. In most cases, you should plan to take a van or shared-ride service from the Ground Transportation Desk.

If you are traveling alone, **Go Prime Time Shuttle** goes directly to the Manhattanville campus, but you must make a reservation at least 24 hours before your flight's scheduled arrival. You can make a

reservation for a discounted fare with Prime Time by following this link
<http://2theairport.hudsonltd.net/res?USERIDENTRY=manhattan&LOGON=GO>.

The cost for travel to campus using Prime Time is approximately \$45-50. Do not take a taxi unless the distance is quite short or you have been advised to do so by MVILLE. Ask the cost of the trip before getting into the taxi. The cost of a taxi directly from the airport should not be more than \$300 including tolls.

Keep your passport, travel documents, and money with you at all times. Keep important papers in your carry-on luggage, with photocopies in your other baggage. Label your baggage inside and out with your name and both your home and U.S. addresses and telephone numbers. Use the address and phone number of Manhattanville College if necessary. Keep in your carry-on luggage all of the items you would need for one night's emergency stay in a hotel.

As of May 2013, U.S. Customs no longer issues a paper I-94. All non-immigrants will be responsible for printing out their own I-94 once they arrive at their destination. Once you are on campus you can come to the office to print out yours. <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov> You will need a copy for to open a bank account obtain Social Security and a variety of other events. Each time you travel into the U.S. your I-94 number will change and you will need to print out a new I-94.

Present your passport, visa, DS 2019, SEVIS 901 fee receipt, and evidence of financial support to the U.S. immigration officer at the airport. After questioning you about your plans in the United States, the immigration officer will record your fingerprints and other identification features electronically, review your DS 2019 and stamp it. After this, you will be directed to an area for inspection of your baggage.

After you have claimed your luggage, you will go the Ground Transportation area of the airport. Go Prime Time Shuttle and other van services depart from this area. Your trip to Manhattanville will take approximately one-two hours depending on the type of transportation (taxi, limo/van) and time of day.

Once you have arrived at Manhattanville, unless otherwise instructed: please go to the Residence Life Office (located in Founder's Hall), then visit the Office of International Students & Scholars (in Founder's) or the English Language Institute (Benziger Building/Chapel Corridor - Lower Level) as soon as possible. Offices are open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, and check-in must be conducted only during those hours. Plan ahead, so that you know where to go if you arrive at night or on the weekend. The Office of International Students & Scholars or Admissions can recommend convenient and inexpensive places to stay.

Welcome to Manhattanville!

Other Transportation Options from JFK to Manhattanville

The majority of the students and faculty will arrive via JFK. There are many ways to get from the airport to the campus. The following list is from the Port Authority website check for updates at <http://www.panynj.gov/airports/jfk-taxi-car-van-service.html>

All of the following are available from the GROUND TRANSPORTATION desk at the airport. We highly recommend [Go Prime Time Shuttle](#) or [Shuttle Me NY](#) as their prices are the most competitive for direct transportation to campus. **If you pre-arranged the shuttle, follow the instructions on the receipt.** Remember, you must make an advance reservation for this service at a discounted price. Regular metered taxis are very expensive coming to Westchester from one of the airports - \$300 is not unheard of for a metered taxi.

Arriving from LGA and EWR

Those arriving to LaGuardia Airport (LGA) can also use the Go Prime Time Shuttle Service. However, if you arrive to Newark International Airport (EWR) the transportation options change. See link for options. <http://www.panynj.gov/airports/ewr-taxi-car-van-service.html>

Office of International Students & Scholars

Throughout this booklet you found references to the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS). The office is located in Founders Hall, The Gallery, Rooms E & F. The OISS will be a very important source of information and service to you while you are a student in the United States. You should visit the office as soon as you arrive at Manhattanville and whenever you have questions about living and learning in the United States.

The OISS is your best source of information, advice, and assistance related to your nonimmigrant student or exchange visitor's status. As you read this booklet, you may discover other ways in which the advisors can assist you. Our door is always open.

Many of your questions can be answered by viewing our web page or by emailing us directly at oiss@mvile.edu.



Hotels in the Area

Crowne Plaza

66 Hale Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601
Phone (914) 682-0050
Fax (914) 682-0405
<http://www.crowneplaza.com>

HYATT House

101 Corporate Park Drive
White Plains, NY 10604
Phone (914) 251-9700
<http://whiteplains.house.hyatt.com>

Doral Arrowwood

975 Anderson Hill Rd
Rye Brook, NY 10573
Phone (914) 939 – 5500
<http://www.doralarrowwood.com/>

Courtyard Marriott

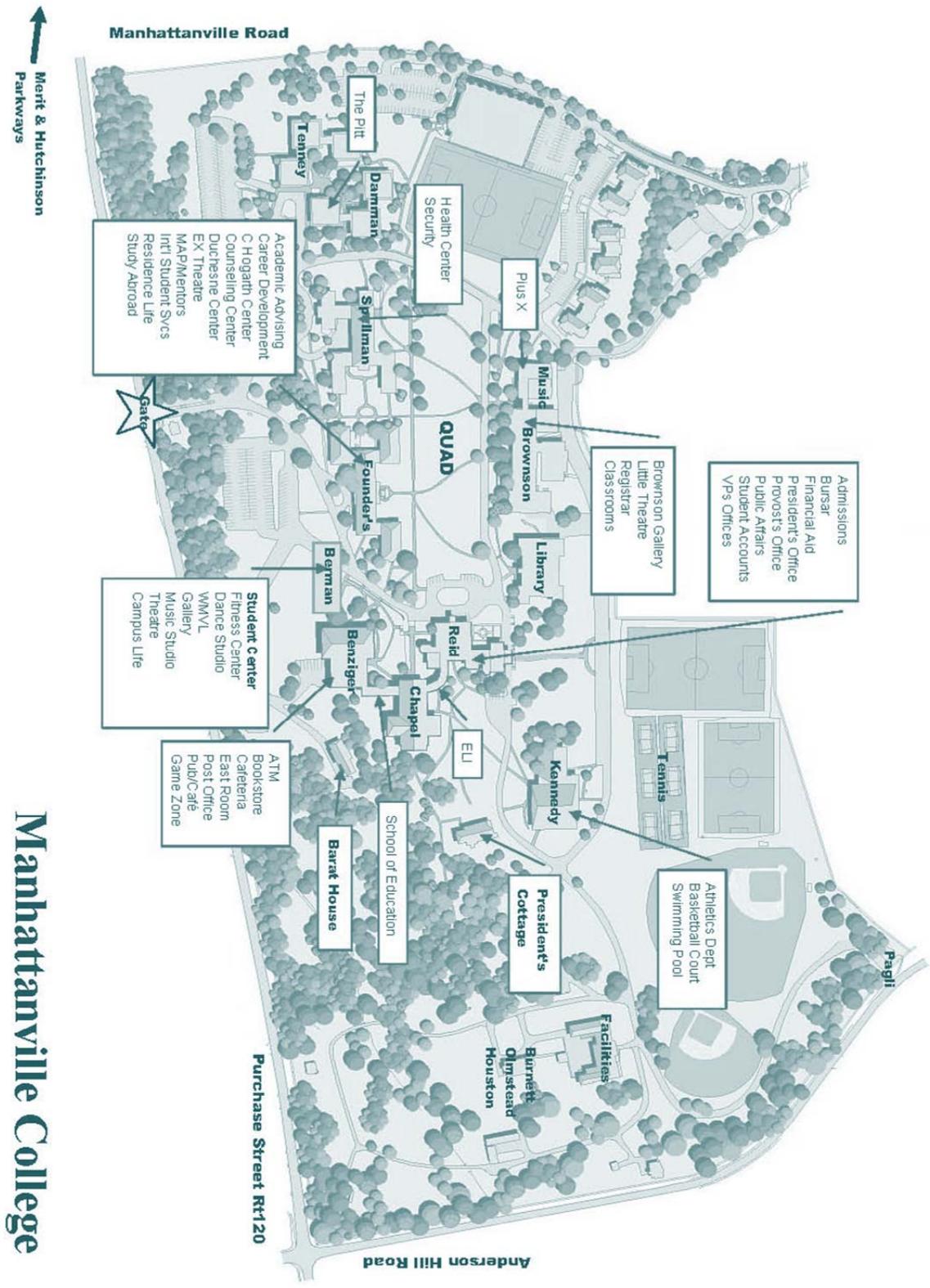
631 Midland Avenue
Rye, NY 10580
Phone (914)-921-1110
Fax (914) 921-2446
<http://www.marriott.com>

LaQuinta Inn

94 Business Park Drive
Armonk, NY 10504
Phone (800) 527-1498
Fax (914) 273-4105
<http://lq.com>

Renaissance Westchester Hotel

80 West Red Oak Lane
West Harrison, NY 10604
Phone (914) 694-5400
Fax (914) 694-5616
<http://www.marriott.com>



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