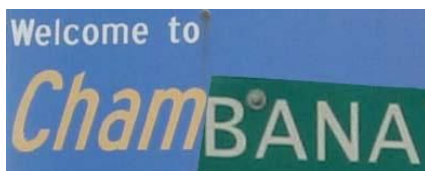


Unofficial Guide to Life in



Chambana

Chambana, aka Champaign-Urbana (hereafter 'C' and 'U'), is a great place to live, work and study once you know the ropes. Fortunately, the Graduate Employees' Organization (GEO), the union for Teaching and Graduate Assistants at the University of Illinois, is here to help. We've compiled this handy introduction to life at the University and all around town. Want to know how to get a study carrel in the library? How to navigate the University's health coverage? Information about housing and landlords and lords? Where to take care of that mountain of dirty clothes? How to get to the airport? Where on earth you can get a decent coffee or a nice, stiff drink? Look inside



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Welcome to Champaign!

Are you new in town? Need a recommendation for a place to grab a bite, wash your clothes, or just hang out – the GEO’s Guide to Champaign is here! The Guide includes information on community happenings, housing, and graduate life here at the University of Illinois and Champaign-Urbana.

The Graduate Employees’ Organization (GEO) is the democratically- run union for Teaching and Graduate Assistants at the University of Illinois. For nearly 20 years the GEO has worked to improve the lives of graduate employees and their families.

In 2009, we struck for two days before signing our third labor agreement with UIUC. This agreement includes secured tuition waivers for graduate employees’ with 25-67% assistantships, an increase in the minimum graduate employee stipend, fee waivers, a health insurance subsidy increasing to 75% by the third year, and many workplace protections for teaching and graduate assistants.

In order to maintain these benefits in the future, your union needs your support. Drop by the GEO office (First floor of the McKinley Foundation) or give us a call (344-8283) and find out how YOU can get involved in your union.

Additionally, you can visit the GEO website for updates on GEO events at www.uigeo.org. You can also join our Facebook group ([Facebook.com/uigeo](https://www.facebook.com/uigeo)), follow us on Twitter (@ui_geo), or contact us via email (geo@uigeo.org).

Schoolness

Campus Groups & Organizations

A complete list of **registered student organizations (RSOs)** is available online at illinois.collegiatelink.net/organizations.

International student organizations can be found at <http://iss.illinois.edu/involved/rso.html>. Specific organizations that may be of interest to union members include:

- Asian Pacific American Graduate Students Organization
- Black Graduate Student Association
- Graduate and Professional Students of Color
- Indian Graduate Student Association
- Progressive Librarians Guild
- Graduate Organization of Latina and Latino Students

GEO Caucuses

Members of the GEO have organized a number of caucuses focused on specific aspects of life as a graduate employee at UIUC. For more information on when the caucuses meet or how to start a new caucus visit www.uigeo.org.

Books

There are two large bookstores that stock all the course texts: the **Illini Union Bookstore** [IUB] (809 S. Wright, C.) and **T.I.S.** (707 S. Sixth, C.). IUB has the advantage of being the university store, which means you can deduct everything you buy there from your taxes! IUB also gives a portion of its proceeds back to the students in the form of cultural programming, while the other store sends its profit to its corporate headquarters. Another option, if you plan ahead, is requesting textbooks from the library or buying used textbooks online--this can save a ton of money. The other bookstore is **T.I.S College Bookstore**.

In addition to the two academic bookstores, there are other, independent booksellers in town. **Jane Addams** (208 N. Neil, C.) and **Priceless Books** (108 W. Main, U.) are two good off-campus new and used bookstores and are great places to browse. Jane

Addams specializes in women's studies and is also particularly good at locating out-of-print materials. If you're into browsing, collecting, or just accumulating used books, both the Urbana Free Library and the Champaign Public Library (see Libraries and Study Carrels, below) hold relatively frequent library book sales.

Student IDs

Your student ID is your passport to everything the university offers. A combination ID, library card, bus pass, and gym membership, the I-Card will be distributed at a student ID center in the Illini Union and at the IUB (see 'Bookstores') during the first week of classes. If you lose your card at any time, go to the permanent ID center in the Illini Union Bookstore office.

Discounts

Discounts are a great benefit to signing your GEO membership. Every GEO member is also a member of our larger unions—the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT)—and are eligible for many discounts. You should receive an AFT card in the mail after you sign your GEO membership card. When you register it online you can get discounts on hotels, rental cars, etc. You can find all of the savings at <http://www.aft.org/benefits>.

IFT members now save 15 percent (previously 10 percent) off the regular monthly rate for individual and family wireless cell phone plans with AT&T, the nation's only unionized wireless company. Members receive additional savings on cell phones and accessories, as well. For more information call 800/8977046 and reference FAN number 3508840 or visit Union Privilege online at <http://www.unionplus.org>.

Computing

Because course registration is available only online, you need to set up your Enterprise account as soon as possible (<https://apps.uillinois.edu/selfservice/>). **Campus Information**

Technologies and Educational Services (CITES) manages email accounts and maintains a helpful web site (www.cites.illinois.edu). At CITES, you can find out more about account services, server space, free or discounted software, wireless on campus, dialing in from off-campus, computing labs, etc. Furthermore, CITES has a help desk in room 1420 of the Digital Computing Lab (1304 W. Springfield, U.).

Grads seem to have widely different experiences finding **unsecured broadband wireless networks** accessible from off campus residences. Union members living in close proximity might consider sharing a subscription to a commercial service provider. If you live in Downtown or West Urbana, the **Champaign-Urbana Wireless Project** (www.cuwireless.net), which is starting a community wireless network, may offer a solution. Additionally, many off-campus cafés, coffee shops, bars, and restaurants offer free wireless connections for their patrons. See Caffeination on page 16 for options.

Library and Study Carrels

Graduate students have access to all libraries and stacks at the university, with borrowing privileges of approximately three months for most books. Overdue fees for most books are usually waived when you return the materials, but check for music, videos, and special items. Information on the university library is available at <http://library.illinois.edu>. The **Urbana and Champaign public libraries** (urbanafreelibrary.org and champaign.org) are also excellent.. The Champaign Public Library has recently been renovated and allows its meeting rooms to be reserved by non-profit orgs.

Grad students are also able to obtain study carrels, located in the stacks of the main library. Register for a carrel in the circulation office, on the 2nd floor of the main library.

Disability Services

DRES (Disability Resources and Educational Services) is the campus office that specifically serves students with physical or learning disabilities. For more information on the services available visit <http://www.disability.uiuc.edu/services/> or call 217-333-1970.

Recreation

If you want to exercise your body instead of your brain, UIUC has multiple options, both indoor and outdoor. A complete list of facilities can be found on the **Campus Recreation** website (www.campusrec.illinois.edu).

The **Activities and Recreation Center (ARC)** is the university's newly renovated complex, housing several gyms, racquetball/handball/volleyball courts, pools, an indoor track, weight rooms, stair-masters, a climbing wall, and more! Another great facility is **Campus Recreation Center East (CRCE)**, which has state of the art equipment, weights, a pool, a hot tub, and a water slide! The **University of Illinois Ice Arena** is open for ice skating and broomball through the academic year. Bowling, billiards, and video games are available, for a fee, in the basement of the **Illini Union**. The local **salsa dancing** scene is especially active; for up-to-date information, keep an eye out for flyers. Champaign is also known for its **Capoeira** Club (<https://illinois.collegiatelink.net/organization/capoeiraclubatuiuc>) and yoga centers. The **Yoga Intitute of Champaign-Urbana** (www.yoga-cu.com) draws teachers from around the world. There is also the **Living Yoga Center** on 1st St in Champaign (livingyogacenter.net). There is also **Amara Yoga** in Urbana (amarayoga.com). If you are interested in climbing, there is also Urbana Boulders, an indoor bouldering gym (<http://www.urbanaboulders.com/>). They have day passes as well as monthly and annual passes, and you can rent shoes and chalk there.

Around Champaign

Transportation

The flat terrain and relatively compact size of Champaign make biking an option most of the year. Combined with the award-winning bus system, doing without a car is a real possibility. As a U of I student, flash your I-Card to ride on any bus in town--a student fee that you pay by default covers your fare, so you might as well take advantage of it. Keep in mind that some buses run more frequently than others and some close down early in the evening, though a night-time **Safe Rides** (344-3184) service is available. Information about the bus service can be found at the **Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District** (CUMTD) web site (www.cumtd.com).

The inconvenience and scarcity of campus parking is another reason to bike or take the bus. For good deals on bicycles and bicycle repair visit Bruce at **Bikeworks** (1103 W. Main St., U., and) or **The Bike Project** (608 E. Pennsylvania Ave., C., and 202 S. Broadway, U.). Check out their website for more information (<http://thebikeproject.org>).

Both campus and local authorities heavily police meters. For an annual fee you purchase the right to park on a large lot at the edge of campus and ride a shuttle bus that runs every five minutes to the quad. Information about the shuttle pass and other options is available from the **Parking Division** (www.parking.illinois.edu).

For a greater fee, you purchase the right to park on a large lot at the edge of campus and ride a shuttle bus that runs every five minutes to the quad. Information about the shuttle pass is available from the **Parking Division** (www.parking.illinois.edu). At the same office you can purchase a cash key, an easy way to pay meters on campus and in both Champaign and Urbana. Both campus and local authorities heavily police meters. Many lots on campus are free after 5pm or on weekends, like the lots in

the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, but others are 24-hrs so read signs carefully.

By car, C-U is about two hours from Indianapolis, two and a half hours from Chicago, three hours from St. Louis, and 6 1/2 hours from Memphis. Transportation options for Chicago include **Amtrak** and **Greyhound**. Reserve early to take advantage of the cheap rates. Commuter airline service is located at Willard Airport though it is sometimes cheaper to fly from Bloomington, IL, Chicago, Indianapolis or St. Louis. To get to Willard, you can take the **AIR BUS** from campus (check the MTD website for schedule information) or call a cab. **Suburban Express (SEX Express)** offers regular shuttle service to and from downtown Chicago, the suburbs, and O'Hare and Midway airports as well as to Indianapolis. Another option is **Peoria Charter**, which includes service to O'Hare.

Auto Repair

We all know that needing to get something repaired on your car sucks, especially if you don't know any reliable mechanics. Fortunately, we can provide a few contacts, which have been passed down by GEO members themselves. For general auto repairs, we recommend **Joe's Automotive Repair**, located on 24 E Marshall St., C. Another great place is **Peter B's Automotive**, located on 509 N Lierman Ave, U.

Newspapers, Radio, and TV

Both the local daily newspaper, the **News-Gazette**, and the free, student paper, the **Daily Illini** offer versions of local and world events. You be the judge of the quality. Champaign-Urbana has a surprisingly thriving local alternative media scene--one mainstay is the **Independent Media Center** (202 S. Broadway, U), which publishes **The Public I**, a free news and analysis monthly, and distributes a number of zines and newsletters for free or a small donation. **The Prairie Flame** is a GLBTQA paper from Springfield that is distributed all around town. **La Prensa** is



the Spanish paper available at many locations. Regional and national newspapers are available in several locations around town. For international newspapers and magazines, try the library.

Radio in Champaign-Urbana is not quite as consolidated as in other parts of the country, and it's still possible to hear locally produced content and real live DJs. **WILL**, the University's public broadcasting empire, offers an NPR affiliate with good local programming on AM580; a classical station at 90.9 FM; and a PBS television station. The **WHHP** 98.3 FM, based in a house in Farmer City, IL, plays bluegrass, old timey music, and alt country, but the real radio gems are **WEFT 90.1 FM** and **WRFU 104.5 FM**. WEFT is a 20+ year old community radio station, meaning that everyone you hear on air is a volunteer. Schedules can be found at www.weft.org. WRFU is a newer low-power community station broadcasting out of the Independent Media Center in Urbana. Check out www.radiofreeurbana.org for a schedule and info on hosting a show. For R&B and Gospel, try **WBCP 1580 AM**. Cookie cutter easy listening, country, top 40, oldies, and talk radio stations round out the dial, with the student-oriented 'modern rock' station at 107.1 FM.

With the exception of **WILL-TV**, which produces and broadcasts interesting documentaries as well as the usual PBS fare, broadcast TV is a wasteland. There is an expanding public access cable station run out of Urbana (**UPTV channel 6**) that will play almost anything you send them, provided it's not 'indecent.' Check out www.ci.urbana.il.us for more information.

Local Websites and Blogs

Champaign Taste, Great foodie blog that updates regularly. <http://champaign-taste.blogspot.com/>

Chambana Moms, Online resource geared towards family but with helpful area info for all! <http://chambanamoms.com>

Eat CU, collection of menus and specials for the majority of Chambana restaurants and online delivery service.

<http://www.eatcu.com>

Smile Politely, independent online magazine that focuses on local music, restaurants and events
<http://www.smilepolitely.com>

The Daily Illini, the student newspaper of the uni dailyillini.com

Community Involvement

While it may feel like you're only passing through Champaign-Urbana as a graduate student, it's likely that you'll live here for several years. Getting involved with the community is a grounding and rewarding experience. The GEO solidarity committee collaborates with community activists in **Champaign-Urbana Citizens for Peace and Justice (CUCPJ)**. This grassroots activist group meets every Saturday at 4pm at the Urbana Independent Media Center. For information on getting involved contact natalie@uigeo.org

For more information about how to get involved with the GEO, contact natalie@uigeo.org

Paychecks and Banking

Payday is but once per month on the 16th. **Your first paycheck won't arrive until September 16th, so plan accordingly**, and your last check will come on May 16th if you work both semesters. Thanks to the hard work of the GEO, university fees are now due after your first payday in September and January. Questions about paychecks can be answered in your main department office. Occasionally, graduate employees have problems with their paychecks. The GEO has effectively dealt with these problems in the past. We're here to help you resolve any wage-related issues-give us a call (344-8283) or stop by our office on the first floor of the McKinley Foundation with questions.

There are numerous banks on and off campus. The **U of I Employees Credit Union** (www.uiecu.org) offers free checking

and savings with no minimum balance. Busey Bank can open bank accounts for international students that do not have a social security number.

Financial Services

If you find yourself in a financial bind, **emergency temporary loans** (of up to \$1,000 for graduate/professional students and \$600 for undergrads) are available from the University. These funds are intended for living expenses, medical costs, and other unexpected emergencies. Visit the financial aid website for more information (www.osfa.uiuc.edu/aid/loans/short_term.html). Champaign county also has several **food banks**. Visit the **Eastern Illinois Foodbank's** website for a list of locations (<http://eifoodbank.org/find-help/where-to-findfood/>). For a detailed listing of social service programs in the area, we recommend that you have a look in the ChampaignUrbana Help Book (<http://helpbook.famservcc.org/>).

Parent Resources

For grads who are also parents, here are some resources that you may find useful. You can purchase dependent healthcare through the UIUC student insurance office. Given the great cost and limited benefits, the child and partner dependent plans need vast improvements. The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (IDHFS) offers health insurance to all children and their parents if they live in Illinois, including non-residents. For information on different childcare services in the area, visit the GEO For Parents page (<http://www.uigeo.org/for-parents/>).

Groceries

There are many grocery stores in Champaign, but the most unique is the **Common Ground Food Co-op** (www.commonground.coop), a member-run natural food store featuring superb produce, located in the Lincoln Square Mall in Urbana. Supermarket chains include **Schnucks** at 200 N. Vine,

U. and 109 N. Mattis, C.; varying greatly in quality from location to location are both **County Market** (1819 Philo, U., 2901 W. Kirby, C.) and **Jerry's IGA** (312 W. Kirby, C., 2110 Round Barn, C.). For a decent big box grocery store, try **Meijer** (2401 N Prospect Ave, C., 2500 S. Philo, U.). Grads with families can look into the WIC food assistance program (www.c-uphd.org/wic.html) to get food coupons. We have a grocery store **on campus**, a **County Market** (331 E. Stoughton, C.) that has cheap dining options as well - you can purchase food in the store or the deli and eat it in their coffee shop. The cheapest grocery option, however, is **Aldi**, with two locations on 701 N Mattis, C. and 3102 E University, U.).

Champaign-Urbana has a number of small, specialty markets, including **Strawberry Fields** (306 W. Springfield, U.) and **Common Ground Co-Op** (300 S Broadway Ave #166, U.) for organic and vegetarian foods; **World Harvest** (519 E. University, C.), and **Euro Mart** (48 E. Springfield, C.) for international foods and cheese tasting on Saturdays; **Art Mart** in the Lincoln Square Mall (300 S. Broadway, U.) for European gourmet specialties; and **Natural Gourmet** (2225 S. Neil, C).

For East and South Asian foods try the large and diverse **AmKo** (101 E. Springfield, C.). For East Asian stores you can also try **Far East Market** (405 E. University, C.), **Lee's Oriental Foods** (303 S. Cedar, C.), and **Chang's Oriental Mart** (505 S. Neil St., C.). There is an Indian grocery called **Annapoorna** (505 S. Neil St, C). Also, a Latin American grocery store, **El Progreso**, located at 1001 W Bloomington Rd, Champaign and 510 N Cunningham Ave, Urbana. Stores specializing in pastries and bread in town are **Mirabelle Fine Pastry** (124 W. Main, U.) and **Pekara** (116 N. Neil St., C.).

Quite a few farms near Champaign-Urbana sell produce, meat, eggs, and cheese directly to consumers. These foods tend to taste better than anything you could buy in a store. From May to November, the city of Urbana hosts an outstanding **Farmer's Market** in the parking lot of Lincoln Square Mall (300 S. Vine, U.) every Saturday from 7 am to noon--go to buy, go to browse, go to soak up the atmosphere. We also recommend that you check

out the Champaign Farmer's Market in downtown Champaign, every Thursday from 3 to 7 p.m. in the north end of the city parking lot next to the police building. **Prairieland Slow Food** publishes a guide (www.illinoisfarmdirect.org) to local produce.

Budget Housekeeping and Laundry

Chambana, like most cities, has the normal crowded suburban stripmalls, stores and restaurants on N. Prospect and a usually crowded and teenager- oriented mall on N. Neil St. However, one need not travel to these busy, often-crowded areas to find affordable household supplies, amenities or entertainment.

Champaign-Urbana has a well-used Craigslist page at **chambana.craigslist.org**. If you're patient, you can get great deals (not mention find a date or a job). For furniture, dishes, and decorating stuffs try the housewares section at the **Salvation Army** (2212 N. Market, C.) or the brand new **Goodwill** location (1102 N. Prospect, C.). **ReStore** by Habitat for Humanity (119 E. University, C.) also stocks furniture and supplies. There are other used furniture and clothing stores on this block. The **University YMCA** (1001 S. Wright, C.) holds its "Dump and Run" sale at the beginning of the semester, reselling mountains of everything from furniture to exercise equipment that people donated rather than dumping the previous spring. Prices are rock-bottom and proceeds go to a good cause. For a more hit or miss approach, yard sale season is April to September--bike or drive around off-campus neighborhoods on Saturday mornings starting around 7:30 or 8 am for the best deals, and be prepared for company.

If you have a little more money and a taste for kitsch, try **Furniture Lounge** (126 W. Main, U.). Other good places for household decorations include **Ten Thousand Villages** (105 N. Walnut, C.), the local franchise of a fair-trade import chain run by the Mennonite Church; **Art Mart** (127 Lincoln Square Mall, U.) for upscale decorations and kitchenware; and **International**

Galleries (114 Lincoln Square Mall, U.) for posters, framing, and knickknacks.

If your home is in need of some basic repair and cleaning, try the locally owned **Do It Best Hardware** (*ask for the student discount!* 107 W. Springfield, C.) or **True Value** (1303 E. Colorado, U.) If you're of an ecological persuasion, less toxic cleaning chemicals are sold at the **Common Ground Food Co Op** (Lincoln Square Mall, U.)--although they don't stock mops, sponges, buckets, etc. Recycled home improvement products (paint, brushes, moldings, and lots more) can be bought at the **ReStore** (119 E. University Ave, C). For more intensive renovations, try the **PACA** warehouse (44 E. Washington, C.), which resells antique doors, sinks, toilets, and other parts scavenged from houses before they are demolished, for very good prices.

When you've started wearing your interview clothes to the gym because everything else is dirty, it's time to make the pilgrimage to the Laundromat, if you're not one of the lucky few with on-site facilities. In Champaign try **Personal Touch** (308 S. First), which features a kick-ass Simpson's pinball machine; **Courtesy Cleaning** at 402 N. Broadway, U. has good people watching on Sunday afternoons.

Renting and Housing in C-U

There are many options for renting apartments and houses in C-U, both with small, family run operations and with larger rental companies. The quality and service of the larger rental companies varies *significantly*, so make sure to try to talk to some current residents first to find out the current scoop on landlady/lords and companies. If you don't have someone to ask, email Natalie Uhl at natalie@uigeo.org.

If you don't want to live in a larger apartment building, or want to rent from a smaller company, there are a lot of quirky and well located apartments in both Champaign and Urbana, many in funky old houses. Craigslist (chambana.craigslist.org) as well as

the DI (Daily Illini) online classifieds are good places to look for apartments.

Co-op Living

If you who want to live frugally, sustainably, and in a friendly and collaborative environment, look no further!

Members of each of Urbana's co-op houses agree to take part in the upkeep and well-being of their respective houses through cooking, cleaning, and regular in-house communication. All particulars are decided on a house-by-house basis.

The six cooperative houses of West Urbana are all administered by the same landlord. More information can be found at co-opurbana.com/. This network is affiliated with but separate from the Community of Urbana Cooperative Housing (COUCH) network (Harvest and Brooks Houses); couchcooperative.org. If you are vegan or vegetarian- nightly dinners at Harvest House are 100 % vegan and all shared food in the house is vegetarian or vegan. Email harvestmembership@gmail.com with any Qs!

No matter where you rent, we ***HIGHLY RECOMMEND that you purchase renter's insurance and discuss with your landlady/ lord their various liability and recovery policies in the event of a fire or other disaster.*** If you do not have renter's insurance, and are depending on the specific wording of your lease, it is likely that your landlady/lord/rental company will attempt to divest themselves of all liability for your losses.

For more information on renting and housing in C-U, you can also check out the C-U Tenant Union (352-6220) and the **University Tenant Union** (217-333-0112), which keeps a record of all complaints against landlady/lords in C-U (<http://www.tenantunion.uiuc.edu/>).

Hair Care

While we could never provide a comprehensive list of places to get your hair done, here are a few suggestions. For African American styles, try **Locks of Glory** (124 N 1st St., C.), **Fanta Hair**

Braiding (1809 Philo Rd, U.) and **The Whip Hair Designs** (904 N 4th St., C). **Ippatsu Salon** (73 E Chester St, C.) and Timothy John (404 W Green St, U) are favorites for upscale cuts, coloring, and styling. For those looking for a cheaper barber, stop by **Glen's** at 602 S. 1st St. in Champaign where haircuts are always \$8.

Massage and Acupuncture

Let's face it, as students, we spend much of our time hunched over our books, work, and/or computers. Well, our poor backs can only take so much, and every now and then, it's nice to pamper ourselves with a therapeutic massage! One location is the **Body Therapy Center**, located on 206 N Randolph St, C. It offers student discounts and an additional first-timer discount, so that your first 60-minute massage is only \$30! They also offer package deals. Check out their website for more information (<http://thebodytherapycenter.com/>).

There are also several amazing independent massage therapists around town that have their own practices. The Wertz Chiropractic Clinic has both talented chiropractors and other massage therapists. James Stewart specializes in deep tissue bodywork and Dr. Hertz gives amazing adjustments (217-352-2265 to schedule an appointment with anyone).

Another amazing resource is Urbana Acupuncture that offers a sliding fee scale of \$15-35 per visit plus \$10 on your first visit for an evaluation. To keep costs affordable they have a community room with many recliners instead of private rooms. They are located in Lincoln Square Mall in Urbana and can be reached at 217-344-9118.

Health Care

Graduate students at UIUC pay for two types of healthcare. The *Health Service Fee* covers the primary medical services at the **McKinley Health Center** on campus (1109 S. Lincoln Ave, U. www.mckinley.illinois.edu) and supplies funding for the University's **Counseling Center** (www.couns.illinois.edu). **DRES** is

the campus unit charged with serving students with disabilities (www.disability.illinois.edu). The *Health Insurance fee* (www.si.ui.edu) covers many healthcare needs not available at the McKinley center, and pays for the health insurance coverage available to graduate employees as a benefit of employment. The GEO has secured a waiver of the *Health Service fee* for graduate employees, as well as an increasing subsidy (80% off) towards the cost of the *Health Insurance fee* (currently \$370/semester). In 2002, the GEO also secured **Dental** and **Eye Insurance** (www.grad.illinois.edu/current/health.htm) at no extra cost for graduate employees.

Health care on campus can be confusing. For now, think of it this way: as with all of the undergraduate students on campus, you can use the campus (McKinley) health center and pharmacy at little or no cost for many basic medical needs and appointments, but you need to be aware that services and the quality of service at McKinley can vary. You ALSO are provided with subsidized health insurance through your employment contract - this is just like any other employer subsidized health insurance and is an ENTIRELY SEPARATE entity from McKinley.

There are some serious shortcomings to our current healthcare. The cost of insuring partners and dependents is excessive. Summer coverage costs extra and our insurance does not cover the cost of some prescriptions. The formulary at McKinley is reasonably good and provides some discounted products, though they now charge a minimum of \$5 for all prescriptions (some drugs were previously distributed free of charge)-many drugs continue to cost substantially more, especially drugs related to women's health.

Planned Parenthood provides useful services, particularly for women's health and transgender healthcare (www.plannedparenthood.org/illinois) while the local activist group **Champaign County HealthCare Consumers** (www.healthcareconsumers.org) can answer many of your questions.

Champaign County Planned Parenthood of Illinois is now offering a program entitled: Transgender Healthcare for Illinois residents that includes hormone therapy. Champaign Planned Parenthood is located on 302 E. Stoughton St., Champaign, IL 61820. Call for an appointment: 1-877-200-7745. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO LIVE IN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY TO RECEIVE SERVICES. Spread the word to anyone who lives downstate. Hormone therapy may include: 1) Feminizing medication. Estrodiol and progestin preparations. 2) Anti-androgen medications, spironolactone, finasteride, and minoxidil. 3) Masculinizing medications: testosterone preparations. Hormone Therapy Plan and Ongoing Care Plan Includes: FIRST VISIT INCLUDES: Examination and lab work plus discussion of treatment goals and expectations, side effects, and risks of therapy with an advanced practice nurse and licensed clinical social worker. SECOND VISIT INCLUDES: Review of lab results, and prescription for hormone therapy. THIRD VISIT INCLUDES: Two to four times per year to monitor health, address goals, review medications and update lab testing as needed. OTHER SERVICES OFFERED AT PP: Well person screenings and exams, treatment for infections, contraception and menstruation management, STI testing and treatment, Licensed clinical social work services, community referrals, screening for reproductive cancers, and PrEP for HIV Prevention.

Access to birth control and emergency contraception, as well as reproductive health services including sonograms, is an ongoing issue in C-U. Thanks to the GEO, the McKinley Health Service's efforts to end their sonogram service have been temporarily halted, but the status of women's health services and affordable birth control on campus continues to be tenuous. If you'd like to join in the GEO's efforts to secure affordable women's and other health care, contact Natalie Nagel at natalie@uigeo.org and she'll put you in touch with the GEO Healthcare Working Group.

Also, please be aware that there are two major hospitals in C-U - Carle Hospital and Presence Covenant. ***If you are seeking access to emergency contraception or contraception of any kind, do NOT go to Presence Covenant, which does not provide***

contraception of any kind to patients except in certain very limited cases.

If you are a citizen and have an emergency or need to visit Carle Hospital (*unfortunately Carle Clinic is not covered*) for in-patient or out-patient care, make sure to apply for **Carle's "Community Care"** coverage (<http://www.carle.com/Hospital/PatientC/PatientAcct/communitycare.shtml>). You may be eligible for significant reduced payments on top of the measly amount our insurance pays.

The Champaign County Regional Planning Commission also offers **rent and utilities assistance** to non-citizens and citizens. Check ccrpc.org/socialservices/socialservices.php to see if you qualify.

Dental and Vision

Thanks to the collective bargaining power of the GEO, graduate students with waiver-generating appointments at UIUC have both dental and vision insurance. Information on both insurance plans can be found on the UIUC graduate college website (<http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/current/dental.htm>, <http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/current/vision.htm>).

You can use the "provider locator" on the insurance company websites (linked from the graduate college sites listed above). The provider locators return results in alphabetical order, so make sure to find reviews of a provider before scheduling an appointment. The best way to find a good provider is to ask other graduate students for a recommendation! We recommend **Illini Eyecare** (Green St.) or Jones Optical (Neil St.)

If you require special or extensive dental care you can opt-in to a more comprehensive plan through UIUC. Contact the student insurance office for more information.

Recreation

Champaign and Urbana both have fantastic park systems, with parks and “parklets” scattered all over the two cities. They also offer fitness and general interest classes; check out the web sites of the **Champaign Park District** (<http://www.champaignparkdistrict.com/>) and the **Urbana Park District** (<http://www.urbanaparks.org/>) for more information.

Both park districts and cities co-sponsor major yearly festivals--the downtown **Urbana Sweetcorn Festival** is usually the last weekend of August, while the **Taste of Champaign Urbana** takes place in late June in Westside Park, along with the Urbana Blues, Brews, and **BBQ Festival**. In the spring, local visual and performing artists strut their stuff during the **Boneyard Arts Festival** in April. The International Beer and Chili Festival in Urbana is a major draw at the end of September, and Roger Ebert’s internationally recognized **Overlooked Film Festival** draws thousands of film buffs to downtown Champaign’s historic **Virginia Theater** every spring.

If you want to get outdoors, try the **U of I Arboretum** on Lincoln Ave., **Busey Woods** (1505 N. Broadway, U.), **Meadowbrook Park** at the corner of Windsor and Race streets in south Urbana, or head over to Mahomet (16 miles west of Champaign) to **Lake of the Woods**. If you want to exercise your green thumb but don’t have a yard, **Meadowbrook Park** features organic garden plots for rent for the growing season for very reasonable prices. If you have a car and some free time, don’t miss **Allerton Park**, located 30 miles SW of Champaign. It offers gardens, sculptures, and wooded walking and biking trails, and concerts during the summer months. Further afield, **Kickapoo State Park** in Danville (30 minutes east by car), **Homer Lake** (20 minutes southeast by car) and **Turkey Run State Park** in Indiana offer more recreation opportunities. Hiking enthusiasts will need to head up to Wisconsin or down to the **Shawnee National Forest** in Southern Illinois.

Dog owners can purchase a membership to Urbana's **Dog Park** (1508 E. Perkins Rd., U.) for \$38/year (<http://www.urbanaparks.org/facilities/55.html>).

Theater, films, and video rental

The University's **Krannert Center for the Performing Arts** (www.krannertcenter.com) presents drama, dance, symphonies, and operas in several theaters. Grads can see internationally renowned performances ranging from the Moscow Ballet to the avant-garde Cronos Quartet. Often the performances happen during mid-week and cost far less for students with ID's. As might be expected, tickets for these performances sell out quickly, so plan ahead. Local troupes play at the **Station Theater** (223 N. Broadway, U), and at the **Armory Free Theater** (in the Armory Building on campus), and the productions at both can be quite remarkable. Larger local productions, such as musicals, and regional touring companies come to the **Virginia Theater** (203 W. Park, C.).

Chambana has two multiplexes (Savoy IMAX and Carmike 13) and several smaller movie houses that play first and second run movies. The **Art Theater** (126 W. Church, www.thecuart.com) features foreign and art films, and serves food and alcohol, plus you get a student discount with your ID. On the weekends check out the Late Night Movies, featuring old classics at a discounted price. The **Virginia Theater** also shows some films, usually for only \$5. There is also the **Harvest Moon Drive-in Theater** in Gibson City (www.harvestmoondrivein.com).

The best place to rent movies in town are from the libraries now that the local movie rental store closed. **The Urbana Free Library** (www.urbanafreelibrary.org; 201 S. Race, U) specializes in foreign and art films, plus it's free, free, free, with a one week rental! **The Champaign Library** (www.champaign.org; 505 S. Randolph St, C) also has a decent selection.

Museums and Art

Chambana also has a few interesting and fun museums to visit on the University of Illinois campus. The **Spurlock Museum** (www.spurlock.illinois.edu) has an impressive and diverse cultural and historical collection that is fun to visit. The **Krannert Art Museum** (www.kam.illinois.edu) has a wide variety of European and American paintings, Incan/Egyptian/Roman/Chinese/African artifacts, and an interesting glassware exhibit. Both of these museums are free to visit although a \$3 donation is suggested. A unique characteristic of Chambana is that many local businesses have rotating art exhibits on their walls. You can spend a whole day checking out locally-produced art in restaurants and coffee shops. In fact, downtown Urbana hosts a coffee shop turned art gallery at the **Cinema Gallery** (120 W. Main, U).

Music

If you like live music, Chambana has a fairly active scene. U of I's **Assembly Hall** and **Foellinger Auditorium** book bigger acts (John Mayer, Ben Folds, The Decemberists, The Red Hot Chili Peppers, Lil' Wayne, T.I., Garth Brooks, the Kiss revival tour, Eminem, etc.). Tickets are sold to students on a lottery system. The **Krannert Center for the Performing Arts** also features symphonies and other musical and theatrical events, including world class performances by such groups and musicians as the English Concert and Buddy Guy (www.krannertcenter.com).

There are also plenty of smaller venues for punk, folk, jazz, etc. The **Canopy Club** (708 S. Goodwin, U.) the **Accord** (51 E. Main, C.) and **Cowboy Monkey** (6 Taylor, C.) often host smaller and not-so-small acts (Sleater-Kinney, The Mountain Goats, Asobi Seksu, Reverend Horton Heat, Los Straitjackets). The Canopy Club in particular is a great place to see big names in a more intimate space (Nas, George Clinton and the P-Funk All Stars, Atmosphere, etc.) There is a good mix of local and touring bands, many of which stop in Champaign-Urbana between gigs

in Chicago and St. Louis. Options for jazz and the blues include **Zorbas** (627 E Green St, C.) and the **Iron Post** (120 S. Race, U.).

C-U is also host to some major music festivals, including the Pygmalion music festival in September (<http://www.thepygmalionfestival.com/>).

For dancing, try the **Chester Street Club** ("C-Street") at 63 E. Chester in downtown Champaign--dance music in a GLBT friendly environment, though virtually every bar has a DJ on the weekend. **The Regent Ballroom** (1406 Regency Dr., S.) also hosts regular dance nights for swing, salsa, and other ballroom dancing styles. Try **Soma**, **Ko-Fusion**, **Radio Maria**, and **Cowboy Monkey** for salsa and hip hop on weeknights.

Caffeination

Cafes are, of course, everywhere. On campus, try the funky, locally-owned **Caffe Paradiso** (corner of Lincoln and Nevada). **Espresso Royale** is the most commonly found cafe, with locations in Illini Union, Champaign, Urbana, and the **Krannert Art Museum**. **Paradiso**, and several **Espresso Royale** locations feature free wireless internet access if you bring your laptop. There are also a couple Caffe Bene cafes around campus on Gregory and Green St.

Off campus, try **Cafe Kopi** (109 N. Walnut, C.), **Aroma Café** (118 N. Neil, C.), and **Pekara** (116 N. Neil, C.). **Panera Bread** on Green St. is close to campus and provides free wireless access. You can also check out the coffee shops in the Schnucks in Urbana and the County Market on 4th and Springfield in Champaign, which offer free wireless as well. These cafes serve coffee, food, specialty alcoholic drinks, and beer as well. Beans are available at a number of locations in the two cities, including a fair selection of organic and fair trade coffees. Urbana residents generally hold **Strawberry Fields'** beans as the best (and the most expensive); organic and fairtrade coffee is available at **Common Ground Food Co-op** as well. **Art Mart's** selection is conventionally grown but notable. You can also check out the **Columbia Roasting Company** in Downtown Champaign. Tea

aficionados will certainly do well to check out the selection of fine loose teas at **Walnut Street Tea Company** (115 S. Walnut Street, C.)

If a more secluded, quiet place is more productive, try **Latte Da** at the Champaign and Urbana public libraries. Both libraries host coffee shops and work areas on the first floor. Check <http://urbanafreelibrary.org/> and <http://www.champaign.org/> for hours.

Wines, Beer, and Spirits

There are several establishments that stock a wide variety of alcoholic beverages. Champaign has a number of **Piccadilly** liquor stores. However, each store has a different inventory of wines, including smaller vintners, so it is possible to find hidden gems. For example, the Piccadilly across the street from the Champaign Public Library has a **fantastic** selection of wine and craft beer, including a 50% off wine rack that has some wonderful wines for affordable prices. Piccadillys are also reliable places to purchase kegs, and some stores offer tastings of some of their products. But in terms of price, the beer and liquor sections of Schnucks and Meijer are more reasonable.

Friar Tuck's is a supermarket of wines, beer, and liquors in Savoy (1333 Savoy Plaza, S.). They also sell home-brewing equipment, and offer tastings every Saturday. Binny's (802 W Town Center Blvd, C.) also offers a wide selection of wine, beer and liquors at all prices. Art Mart (1705 S Prospect Ave, C.) and **Sun Singer Wines and Spirits** (1115 W. Windsor Rd., C) carry higher-end wines; however, their staff is extremely knowledgeable and both host affordable, weekly wine and food tastings. The Corkscrew is also great for offering a **range of prices**; the staff there are very good about locating and offering a wide selection of very tasty wines for under \$10. And now the Corkscrew has an in-house wine bar!

(An incomplete) Guide to Dining

Breakfast

Carmon's French Bistro (415 N. Neil, C) \$\$ Great Brunch on Saturday and Sunday.

Courier Cafe (111. N. Race, U) \$ Amazing pancakes and omelets at great prices with great atmosphere. Go later in the day for great burgers, fries, and shakes.

Le Peep (2209 S. Neil, C) \$-\$\$ One of the best breakfasts in town.

Original House of Pancakes (1909 W. Springfield, C) \$ Enormous portions with loads of cholesterol in tacky decor=great breakfast. Just avoid the hung-over undergrads.

Sammy's Pancake House (1206 N. Mattis Ave, C)\$ Pancakes, diner food, and everything else you need. A grad favorite.

Chinese

Peking Garden (206 N. Randolph, C) \$-\$\$ Large portions and wide selection.

Tang Dynasty (300 S. Broadway, Lincoln Square Mall, U.) \$-\$\$ Great atmosphere and good food.

Mandarin Wok (403 E. Green, C) \$ Best Chinese food in town if you order from the Chinese language menu.

Lai Lai (402 E. Green St., C)\$-\$\$ The best Chinese food on Green St.

Indian

Bombay Indian Grill (403 E. Green, C.) \$ Best Indian food in town. Usually crowded for lunch, but reasonable for dinner.

Basmati Basmati (302 1st St. C) \$\$ Try the spicy chicken.

Sitara (114 S Race St, U.) \$\$ Delicious indian food in downtown Urbana.

Italian

Timpone's (710 S. Goodwin, U) \$\$\$ A good choice for a special occasion. Lunches are more affordable.

Nando's (204 N Neil St, C) \$\$\$

Japanese/Korean/Vietnamese

Woori Jib Woori Jib (710 S. 6th St., C) \$ Best Korean food on campus. Try the barbeque.

A-Ri-Rang (607 S. Wright St. C) \$ Try the Dolsot Bibimbap.

Mirabella Fine Pastry (124 W. Main, U.) \$ Delicious breads, pastries, and pies.

Thai

Basil Thai (701 S. Gregory, U. and 412 E. Green, C) \$-\$\$ Locations on each end of campus but the one in Urbana is more expensive and has extremely slow service.

Bangkok Thai (410 E Green St, C) \$ They have delicious daily specials for less than \$6. Generous servings.

Y Thai Y (1001 S. Wright, C) \$ Owned by the friendliest restaurateur in town located in the YMCA.

Siam Terrace (212 W. Main, U) \$-\$\$ A hike from campus, but worth the walk.

Thara Thai (912 1/2 Bloomington Rd., C) \$\$-\$\$\$ A little further afield but worth the drive.

Mexican

Maize (60 E Green St, Champaign, IL 61820) \$-\$\$\$ A little off campus but worth the trip for authentic Mexican food made from scratch.

Huaraches de Moroleon (805 Philo Rd, Urbana, IL 61801) \$-\$\$\$ Off campus but so worth the drive for good Mexican food.

El Oasis (510 N Cunningham Ave, Urbana, IL 61802) \$-\$\$\$ Excellent place for Mexican ice cream and snacks.

Dos Reales (1407 N Prospect Ave, Champaign, IL 61820) \$-\$\$\$ A sit down Mexican restaurant off campus.

Vegetarian

The **Red Herring Restaurant** (1209 W. Oregon, U) \$ Located right across the street from the Foreign Language Building, serving tasty vegetarian and vegan lunches. Also try the \$8 all-you-can-eat themed dinners on Wednesday nights.

The **Dancing Dog Eatery&Juicery** (126 W. Main St., U) \$ A popular 100% vegan eatery in Urbana's downtown

Other Local Gems....

Chicken Shack (904 N 4th St. , C) \$ It isn't good for you, but it is GOOD.

Skully's Chicken & Fish (805 Philo Rd., U) \$ Another good place for down home food.

Black Dog Smoke & Ale House (201 Broadway Ave., U) Delicious BBQ and tasty ales!

La Gourmandise (119 W. Main St., U) German cafe in the heart of downtown Urbana.

Late Night

Campus Town: A number of eateries near the university stay open past bar closing time (2 AM), including **Qdoba's and Pita Pit**. As with most fast food eaten after last call, caveat emptor.

Perkins (1214 W University, U) \$-\$\$ Family style late night food. Poor late night service and the food is mediocre at best.

Merry-Ann's Diner (1510 S. Neil, C, 1 E Main, C) \$ Standard side of the road diner fare. Some love it, others hate it.

Special Occasions and Hot Dates

The Bread Company (706. S Goodwin, U) \$\$-\$\$\$ Good cheeses, pizzas and pastas in relaxed environment. Good for a romantic date when they get the fireplace roaring. They also carry a great beer selection!

Radio Maria (119 N. Walnut, C) \$\$-\$\$\$ Eclectic fusion cuisine in a beautiful, artistic setting. Great Sunday brunch.

Destihl Restaurant (301 N. Neil St., C) A new gastrobrewery in downtown Champaign.

Milo's (2870 S. Philo, U) \$\$ Great seafood, very friendly owners and staff. Budget conscious gourmands should look for the "early Bird" specials.

Ko-Fusion (1 E. Main C) \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$ Pricey but the sushi is good, and the place provides a unique atmosphere for this area.

Escobar's (6 E. Columbia, C) \$\$-\$\$\$\$ A self-billed "Nuevo Latino" restaurant that recently arrived near downtown C.

Big Grove Tavern (1 E. Main, C)\$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$ Upscale tavern sourcing from local farms and artisans.

Bacaro (113 N. Walnut, C) \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$ Upscale Italian fusion entrees and an extensive wine list.

A Few Good Bars

Blind Pig Brewery (120 N. Neil, C) Best beer selection in town. 19 taps and 2 hand pulls. Cozy, bustling atmosphere.

Blind Pig Co., "The Piglet" (120 N. Walnut, C) The Blind Pig recently opened a separate location, also in downtown Champaign. This location doesn't boast quite as extensive a beer selection, but it offers beer brewed on-site, an excellent beer garden, and Sunday night specials and trivia.

Barrel House (34 E Main St., C) Beautiful bar furnished and built with wood scavenged from old barns in Central IL. Indoor and outdoor seating.

Bunny's Tavern (199 W Water St., U) Primarily catering to bikers, specializes in beer buckets and has a great outdoor patio.

Chester Street (63 Chester St, C) Good dancing, LGBT friendly. Check calendar for theme nights and drag shows.

Cowboy Monkey (6 Taylor, C) Snazzy bar and performance space with a pricey drink menu. Comfortable outdoor seating. Salsa and Tango dancing on Wednesday.

Crane Alley (115 W. Main, U) Best outdoor seating in Urbana, fancy food and extensive beer selection.

Esquire Lounge (106 N. Walnut, C) A favorite among GEO members. Try the deep-fried broccoli, \$4.75 pitchers of PBR beer or the "house special," pineapple margaritas.

Iron Post (120 S. Race St., U) Great live music venue and outdoor seating.

Jupiter's (39 E. Main St, C) Very spacious, nice pool tables, great pizza. Arrive after 8pm on Tuesday for half-priced pizza.

Murphy's Pub (604 E. Green St, C) Best campus bar, decent food, relaxed setting.

Radio Maria Tapas Bar (119 N. Walnut, C) Beer selection rivals the Blind Pig in scope and price, but tapas selections are overpriced. Wine selection is excellent as well, and there are great daily specials most days except Friday.

Rose Bowl (106 N. Race S., U) Live country music in downtown Urbana.

Seven Saints (32 E. Chester St., C) Good atmosphere. Serving sliders and excellent cheese curds.

Soma Ultralounge (320 N. Neil, C) Decent salsa night and discount cover charge before 11pm.

Quality (110 N. Neil, C) will always have a good few beers on tap and good mixed drinks. They have darts, board games, and pinball. Indoor and outdoor seating, no food.

A Few Unique Things to do in Chambana before You Leave...

1) Take the motorcycle-riding course offered by the University. This course is a 20 hour road and classroom course that gives you the "Class M" on your license. They provide the bikes and the helmet. Register early because classes fill up quick. A \$20 deposit will be returned upon completion of the course. <http://www.mrp.uiuc.edu/>

- 2) Buy fresh produce, flowers, meet politicians, and buy local crafts at the farmers market in Urbana. See the Groceries section of the Guide for more info
- 3) Buy farm fresh eggs from University Farms for \$0.50 a dozen. The eggs are sold only at noon on Fridays in the basement of the Animal Science Laboratory at the southern entrance stairwell.
- 4) Carnivores, get any possible slice of meat from the U of I Meat Science Lab. The university has a full time butcher running a full service shop that can fill any order. At the southern entrance to the Meat Science Lab, the store is open Tues/Thur 1-5, Fri 8-12
- 5) Cook your own 3 lbs top sirloin steak at Alexander's steakhouse, and eat it in an hour to become a "BeefMaster". This honor comes with your photo on the wall as well as a \$15 gift certificate.
- 6) Join the Common Ground Co-Op (\$60 a year) located at the Lincoln Square Mall in Urbana. They offer scholarships for those who cannot afford the equity payment. They have fresh vegetables year round, bulk tofu, grains and other health food. See the Groceries section of the Guide for more info.
- 7) Join a picket line! Chances are one of the unions on campus and off campus will be on strike at some point during your stay. Show solidarity by walking the picket line.
- 8) Join YOUR union (GEO) and help protect the rights and improve the working conditions for all grad employees (not to mention, meet grads from departments all over campus and have a good time doing it!)



Graduate Employees' Organization

AFT Local 6300, AFL-CIO

McKinley Foundation Building

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