



What is culture shock?

Culture shock is a common challenge people face when moving into a new environment with different customs, language, food, and/or values.

Symptoms of culture shock may include:

- Boredom
- Intense loyalty to home culture
- Extreme homesickness
- Withdrawing from Americans
- Headaches or upset stomach
- Change of appetite
- Increased need for sleep
- Increased sense of physical pain
- Depression
- Anger over minor inconveniences
- Unexplained crying
- Relationship stress
- Difficulty completing work or study
- Exaggerated cleanliness



CONTACT THE MU COUNSELING CENTER

if you notice that you are having a difficult time adjusting to life at MU. Our staff can help you adapt and be successful.

119 Parker Hall (on South 6th Street between
East Stewart Road and Elm Street)

573-882-6601

well-being.missouri.edu



Follow Mizzou Well-Being on Facebook and Instagram for events, inspirational quotes, articles, and videos offering strategies for coping, relieving stress, maintaining mental health, and just being the person you hope to be.

CROSSING CULTURES



Adjusting to your new community



Counseling Center
University of Missouri

ADJUSTING TO MIZZOU

All students face challenges when adjusting to a new college. International students face even more new experiences and challenges. International students generally report experiencing four phases of adjustment.

1. Honeymoon: Everything is great! You are having a wonderful time.

2. Shock: There are so many differences in this country, and you aren't sure how to deal with them. You didn't think it would be like this.

3. Negotiation: You learn to deal with challenges and try to integrate them with your own beliefs.

4. Acceptance: You are able to live well in your new environment despite the differences you are experiencing.



THINGS TO CONSIDER

GREETINGS Americans often greet each other with a handshake or hug, regardless of gender. Many will ask, "How are you?". This is often another way of saying hello. The most common reply is, "I'm fine, how are you?" Spatial distance is an important aspect of non-verbal communication. Most Americans stand about three feet apart when talking.

FRIENDSHIP Most people at Mizzou will be friendly. However, they will talk about hobbies, politics, sports, or current events rather than personal matters such as finances or family problems.

DRESS Mizzou students usually dress informally except when instructed to wear professional attire. It is not necessary to wear Western style clothing. Please wear clothes you feel comfortable wearing.

SCHEDULES Americans generally place a high priority on being punctual. You will be expected to be on time to events that have a specific starting time such as class, meetings, or social engagements.

TIPS TO HELP YOU ADJUST

BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF

Many international students experience some adjustment concerns while they are here. Recognize the problem, and give yourself time to adjust. Take some of the actions below to make your transition easier.

BE ACTIVE Getting out of your house and spending time with Americans will allow you to watch and learn American customs faster.

MAKE AMERICAN FRIENDS

Spending time with American friends will allow you to learn more and ask questions about customs you don't understand.

READ American newspapers and news websites help you learn more about current events and life in America. Reading will help you understand the culture better and make it easier to join in conversations.

EXERCISE Staying physically active will help lower stress and help prevent depression. Enjoy the many parks and trails around Mizzou or visit MizzouRec.

COMMUNITY Join a campus group getinvolved.missouri.edu or go to an event stufftodo.missouri.edu. Visit gocolumbiamo.com for information about community events and volunteer opportunities. Getting involved will help you feel more connected in Columbia.

PROFESSORS Your instructors are generally happy to help. You will be most likely to receive the support you need from faculty members if you communicate directly and ask specific questions.