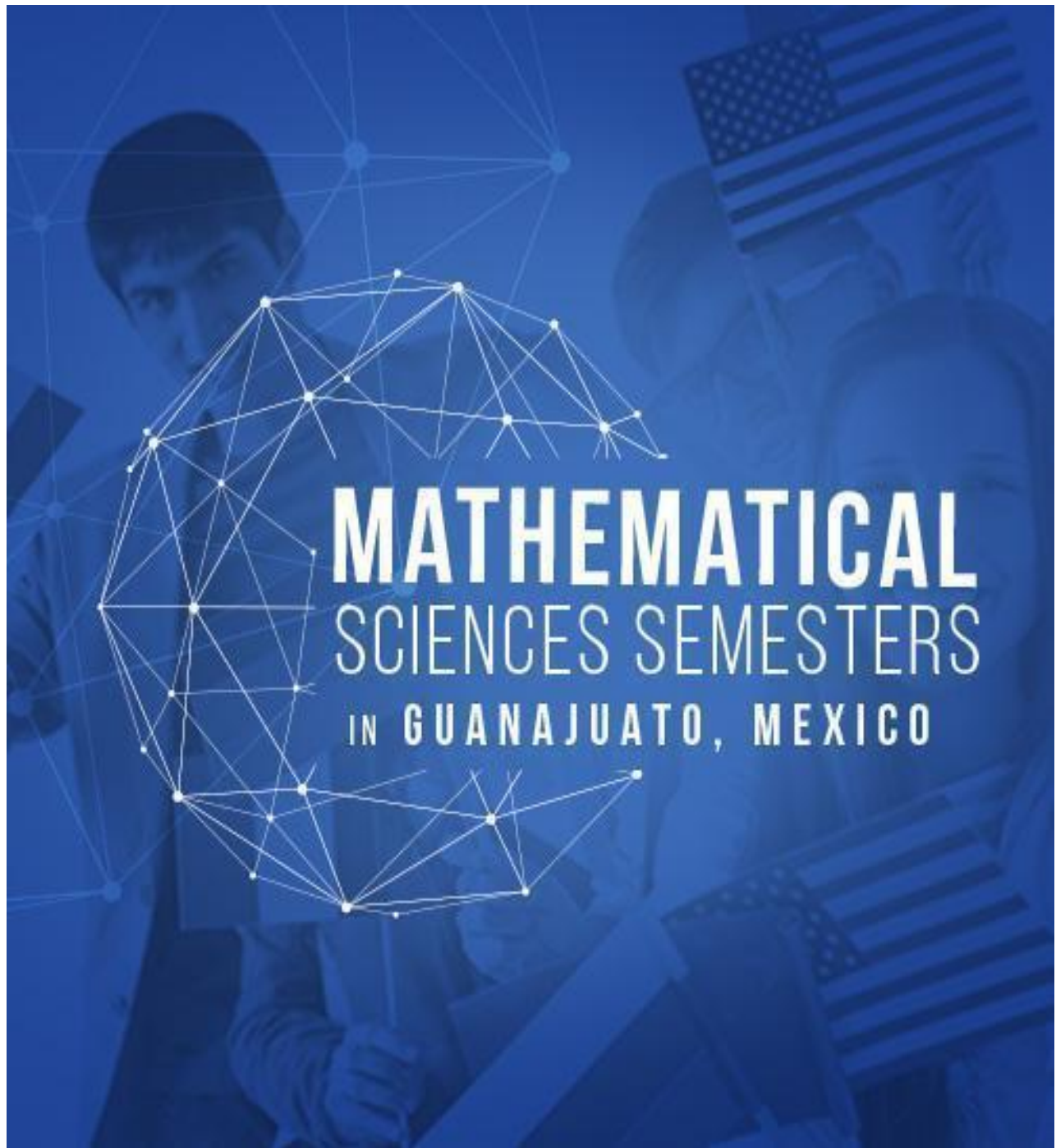


CIMAT INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Student Handbook



Dear student,

Congratulations on your admission to the program! It is a rigorous program aimed at students who want to increase their knowledge of data science, modeling and partial differential equations from a comprehensive, forward-looking, and cutting-edge perspective while acquiring a solid theoretical foundation.

We are committed to creating a diverse, welcoming and capable support network for incoming students. The following pages will give you an overview of what to expect, who will help you, how to contact them and what is expected of you.

If you have any questions after reading this, please contact the Program Administrator or General Coordinator.

Welcome aboard!

Best,

CIMAT International Program TEAM



Preparing & Packing Checklist

We suggest you consider the following list of preparations and items to pack.

Basic:

- ☐ Verify that your travel and study is approved and all of your paperwork is filed correctly with your university.
- ☐ Complete and send all forms of the [Essential Paperwork Before you Come](#).
- ☐ Verify that your insurance policy complies with the program requirements.
- ☐ Print insurance card and policy. Have in your email the insurance policy & medical information.

Check with Cell phone provider to purchase an international (US, Mexico & Canada) plan. Be sure to communicate that you will be located in Mexico.

- ☐ Alert your bank and credit card company of your travel to Mexico.
- ☐ Create a folder for all paperwork regarding your travel
- ☐ Check your country's consular website for travel advice and possible support provisions while traveling in Mexico. (US citizens should enroll in the STEP program.)
- ☐ Send your itinerary to the program administrator.

Suggestions and tips:

- ☐ If your doctor agrees, consider taking probiotics for a month or more before travel. Boosting your immune system is a good way to prepare your body for eating a new diet.
- ☐ If possible, establish a routine for walking or running for a few weeks to a month prior to departure. Guanajuato is a walking city and it is nestled in the mountains, so be prepared for lots of stairs and hills.
- ☐ If language is one of your goals, start practicing before your trip. Create a daily habit with Babbel, Duolingo or ask us about working with a language teacher prior to your arrival.
- ☐ Download and set up payment options for Uber.

Packing list:

- ☐ Comfortable shoes
- ☐ A sturdy, comfortable backpack
- ☐ Reusable water bottle
- ☐ Carry on (on your person):
 - ☐ Petty cash - \$100 at least for the Health & Wellness agency payment (this is not a health insurance payment)
 - ☐ Your admission letter.
 - ☐ Your address and your passport.
 - ☐ A set of clothing in case of misplaced luggage.
 - ☐ Your laptop and your cell phone.

Health Insurance & Medications

It is mandatory to have comprehensive international health insurance that is valid in Mexico for at least the duration of your stay. We strongly advise you to contact your insurance provider make sure of the costs and exactly what the insurance covers. CIMAT requires this international insurance policy to meet the following requirements:

1. Coverage of a minimum of \$100,000 USD in medical expenses
2. Emergency medical evacuation and repatriation benefits
3. Legal assistance
4. Transportation costs for one family member in the event of hospitalization

You will be asked to provide proof of your medical insurance upon admission. Buying additional travel insurance is also highly recommended. If you require medical attention, there are several hospitals in the area that have agreements with different insurance companies.

In case of a chronic condition, please verify with your insurance company that all your healthcare expenses will be covered.

Medications

If you require any type of prescription medication, be sure to bring enough to cover the duration of your stay in Mexico. Do not remove them from their original packaging and keep your doctor's prescription handy in case you are asked to provide it.

If you are a US citizen keep in mind it is forbidden by the law to bring some American over-the-counter medicines containing pseudoephedrine or codeine into Mexico. We advise that you follow the instructions if the [US Embassy in Mexico](#) and if you take any kind of medication that you are not allowed to bring with you ask your doctor about their equivalent in Mexico.

Please remember that is illegal mail prescription medicines to Mexico without a permit from the Mexico Health Department.

Health & Safety Guidelines and Support

Due to the increased risks involved with the presence of COVID 19, we have decided to partner with a local healthcare consultancy. As a student of the international program we require that you subscribe to their membership program for foreigners living in Guanajuato. This agency will provide the following support:

1. Health & Wellness Workshop: Healthy living in Guanajuato
2. 24/7 support for health and mental health emergencies.
3. One consultation with a GP
4. A network of highly qualified healthcare professionals
5. English speaking providers or translation support when needed
6. Support with navigating the healthcare system and insurance policies.

Traveling to Mexico

Paperwork & Documentation Required for travel

All US citizens are required to present **a valid US Passport** when entering Mexico (whether by air, land or sea).

No visa is required for tourists (people visiting Mexico for unpaid activities and for a stay of less than 180 days).

You will need to present the **original letter of admission from** CIMAT to the immigration officer at passport control if it's asking.

No foreign nationals, regardless of nationality, are required to obtain a Mexican visa if they already possess a current, **valid US visa** and they plan to study in Mexico for less than 180 days. However, if the USA visa stamped in your passport has expired, even if you have an official document or form proving your legal status in the US, you will have to apply for a Mexican visa.

If traveling to Mexico on a US visa, it must expire **AFTER** your return flight to the USA.

You can find the list of nationalities that are required to obtain a Mexican visa to enter the country as a [tourist here](#).

If you are a US citizen we recommend that you enroll in the STEP program:

<https://step.state.gov/step/>

Guanajuato city

Transportation

The downtown area of Guanajuato is fairly compact and most of the places where you are likely to find accommodation will be within a twenty-minute walk of the main square, Guanajuato University and all the main social hubs.

For longer distances within the city limits, there is an extensive and cheap bus service, but timing can be unreliable, and some routes are less well-served than others.

Nevertheless, if your bus does not show up on time, Guanajuato has many taxis. However, these are not metered. The common local practice is to tell the driver where you are going before you get in and ask what the charge would be, and—once you know the city a little better—understand whether the fare is reasonable.

Alternatively, if you would prefer not to haggle with drivers, Guanajuato also has Uber.



Climate

Guanajuato lies 6,558 feet above sea level in Mexico's central highlands. Therefore, the city has a mostly warm and mild climate, May being the hottest month of the year and December and January the coldest months.

During June, July, August and September it is Guanajuato's rainy season, and the summer temperatures are cooled by the rain. Note that the rain can be very heavy, so you should definitely bring some kind of protection, though nothing too bulky, as it is also summer time.

Note that, due to these climate conditions, most houses don't have heating or air conditioning systems.

Communication

Whatsapp and Facebook are commonly used among young people in Mexico. It is important that you download Whatsapp before you arrive. Most of your communication with your support team and peers will be through this platform. We suggest students consider joining Facebook during their visit as there are several useful groups that are dedicated to either students or the foreign born visitors and residents of Guanajuato.

Independent Travel Protocol:

- Independent travel must be presented to the Program Administrator for review and approval.
- Travel to zones that are a level three or four according to the State Department is prohibited unless there are extenuating circumstances that require student travel to this area or there is local information that deem the specific site and situation safe.
- We permit travel via bus or plane.
- Travel outside the city of Guanajuato in independent vehicles is prohibited.
- Travel inside the state of Guanajuato is only allowed on a case-by-case basis. All plans must be submitted in writing to the PA for review and approval.

Local resources and tips: Living in Guanajuato

MSSG Student collaborative Map:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/2/edit?mid=1bDpYx6kSGj3TrPi5rGxyi6R3dlx0zaGu&usp=sharing>

Directory of goods & services:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17PwiN1g0ZpKs5bNuCqf7bwcmOxVtaFQP/edit?usp=sharing&oid=114752706105118365108&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Orientation Activities: What to expect

During your first days on site, we will provide you with a series of orientation workshops and guided tours to familiarize you with your neighborhood, the city center and campus. During your pre-departure orientation you will be given a detailed orientation schedule for your first week on-site.

You will be introduced to the people here who you can look to for support (local health professionals, academic advisor and social/cultural assistance). You will participate in workshops that address the important aspects of safety, health and cultural adjustment that will prepare you to make the most of your course.

You will also be informed about what is expected of you as a participant of the program and as a visitor in this city. Understanding how to respectfully and responsibly engage in your academic and social life is key for your success and relies on your willingness to adapt in ways that you might not expect. We understand that transitioning into a new culture and living in a new place without the native language is challenging and can be tiresome. We hope to give you tips and tools from the beginning of your journey to help you along the way.

