The Graduate Commons Program

Welcome to the Graduate Commons Program (GCP). The primary goal of the Graduate Commons Program is to create an interdisciplinary and engaging living environment for community members. By enabling individuals to meet and interact with others outside of their immediate academic departments, the program helps residents form deeper connections to Harvard University.

Throughout the year, GCP hosts programs and events that range from social get-togethers to academic presentations to outings throughout the city of Boston. You are invited to participate in any and all of these events. The GCP staff is here to enhance your Harvard experience—feel free to stop by and chat with your area program manager if you have questions, concerns, or programming ideas.

Connect with GCP

GCP shares information about upcoming events as well as building notifications in weekly newsletters. Additionally, you can follow us on:

- Facebook
- Twitter: @gradcommons; #GCP
- The Graduate Commons Program Blog
- Harvard University Housing Website

The GCP Team

Professional staff members work within each GCP residential area. They oversee GCP programming and enjoy interacting with residents on a daily basis.

Associate Director:
Lisa Valela
Office: Peabody Terrace Common Room

Program Managers:
Tara Bartley (Garden Area)
Offices: 29 Garden Street & Cronkhite Center
Ashley Hopper (Peabody Terrace)
Office: Peabody Terrace Common Room
Andria Mirabal (Riverside Area)
Offices: 10 Akron Street & 5 Cowperthwaite Street

Faculty Directors are Harvard faculty members who reside within GCP properties and serve as the intellectual leaders of the community.

Garden Area:
Dr. Christopher Winship & Nancy Winship
Peabody Terrace:
Dr. James Hogle & Doreen Hogle, J.D.
Riverside Area:
Dr. David Carrasco & Dr. Maria Luisa Parra (Akron)
Dr. Brian Gill & Dr. Jennifer Lerner (Cowperthwaite)

Community Advisors (CAs) are graduate students, post-docs, staff members and spouses/partners selected to assist with GCP event organization and facilitation. There are ~10 CAs in each GCP area. Additionally, there are two sets of Family Programmers that coordinate events for the youngest residents in our communities.

The Graduate Commons Guidebook

The GCP Guidebook is a resource that the GCP Staff put together based on questions we often are asked, especially by new residents. The following pages include details about where you live as well as information about Harvard and the city of Cambridge. As always, the GCP Staff is here to assist you, so if you have any additional inquiries, please contact us.
FAQs
What does Property Management do & where is the office located?

There are three Property Management Offices that are responsible for the physical maintenance of the buildings where you live. Property Operations Assistants and cleaning crews work very hard to make sure your apartment and building are clean and comfortable on a daily basis. The offices are open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. You can call in work orders, or you can submit a work request online at the Harvard University Housing (HUH) website.

Garden Area Property Management Office
Botanic Gardens (29 Fernald Drive)

Mt. Auburn Group Property Management Office
8 Mt. Auburn Street (lower level)

Peabody Terrace Property Management Office
9 Peabody Terrace (courtyard entrance)

Where can I do laundry?

Fees for laundry are $1.75 per machine, which can be paid with quarters, Crimson Cash, or Change Point, depending on your location.

Laundry Rooms for Garden Area:
Botanic Gardens—Located near the Property Management Office & within some larger units. Other properties—Located in basements or within individual units.

Laundry rooms for Mt. Auburn Group:
10 Akron & 5 Cowperthwaite—located on 2nd floor. Other properties—located in basements or within individual units.

Laundry rooms in Peabody Terrace:

Can I Smoke in my Apartment?

All Harvard University Housing units are NON-SMOKING. Smoking is NOT permitted in any of the apartments or common areas, or within 25 feet of residential buildings.

FAQs
What should I know about mail/packages?

Mail is delivered by the United States Postal Service (USPS) to designated mail rooms. Prior to moving into your HUH apartment, be sure to fill out a change of address form (available online). Once you are moved in, be sure to post your name inside your mailbox. Packages are left in the designated mail area as well. Building staff cannot sign for any packages.

Does my apartment have wireless internet, cable, or phone services?

Wireless internet access is available in common areas of most buildings. The password to the “Harvard” network is Veritas.

In most apartments, you can use an ethernet cord to connect your computer to the internet through RESNET free of charge. You may also set up your own wireless network using a personal router.

Cable television is not provided. If you wish to purchase cable services, contact our local Comcast representative (John Weldon, 617.279.1958) for setup, packages, and discounts.

Landline telephone service is not provided. Residents must contact local vendors to arrange service. There is a Verizon store in Harvard Square and an AT&T store in Porter Square for cellphone service contracts.

Where are the Trash/Recycling Centers?

Trash rooms are generally located on every floor (or floors with elevator stops in Peabody Terrace). Please dispose of your trash down the shoot; if you cannot fit garbage in the opening, please discard it in the larger trash receptacles typically found on the first floor of buildings.

Recycling centers are located in all HUH properties. Please contact the Property Management Office if you cannot find your recycling center. Recycling is single stream in Cambridge—all recyclable items (plastic, glass, paper, etc.) can go in the same container.

For more information about recycling and Harvard’s “green” initiatives, visit: http://www.green.harvard.edu.
City of Cambridge: Getting Around Town

There are a number of ways for you to travel in and around Cambridge. The following are popular options and tend to be utilized most frequently by our residents.

**Commuter Choice @ Harvard**

The Harvard Commuter Choice program is dedicated to making your travels easier & more affordable. Some programs from Commuter Choice include:

- Harvard Shuttle & After-Hours Van Service
- Reduced Price MBTA Passes
- Hubway & Zipcar Discounts
- Bike Commuter Reimbursement

Visit [http://www.transportation.harvard.edu/commuterchoice](http://www.transportation.harvard.edu/commuterchoice) for more information.

**The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)**

The MBTA is the mass public transportation system comprised of trains, buses, commuter rail, and boat transport. The MBTA website ([http://www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com)) has a trip planner feature that can help you figure out the best route to get to your destination.

MBTA riders can request a Charlie Card at most stations from MBTA employees & add funds to the reusable card. Using the card can save you 15-50 percent on T fares, depending how you ride. For instance, subway fares are $2.65 per ride without a card & $2.10 with a Charlie Card. Riders can also purchase monthly passes—we recommend this option if you use the public transportation frequently.

Some Harvard Schools provide discounts for Charlie Cards. Check the Harvard Commuter Choice website to see if you qualify.

The MBTA train system, known as the “T”, operates daily from 5am-1am (times vary from station to station). The T system is comprised of the Blue, Orange, Green, Red, & Silver lines of rapid transit. The closest T stop for most HUH residents is the Red Line Harvard Square station.

**City of Cambridge: Getting Around Town**

**Tips:**

- Always double check your train is headed in the right direction (Inbound v. Outbound).
- The Green & Red lines fork after certain stops, so make sure you’re on the right line.
- Keep in mind the area & events that might be taking place when you are traveling. For example, the Fenway area on game night is extremely crowded—best to avoid the Green Line trains if possible.

**Traveling to Logan Airport?**

Take the Red Line train Inbound at Harvard Square. Get off the Red Line at South Station, and transfer to the Silver Line (underground bus service). The Silver Line will drop you off at Logan where you can take a free shuttle bus to your terminal.

**Ride Services**

Traveling to a location that is not near a T stop? Need to get somewhere in a hurry? Cambridge and Boston have numerous cab companies that can get you where you need to go. Additionally, there are ride share services, like Uber and Lyft, which enable individuals to request a ride in a matter of minutes. When using ride services, we encourage residents to exercise caution and be aware of surroundings.

**Biking**

Biking is a popular way to get around town. Bikers often have to share the road with cars, so be sure to wear the appropriate safety gear when riding. Biking safety courses are offered by Harvard Commuter Choice. Also, it is recommended that bicycles be registered with HUPD in case of theft or damage.

Information about bike routes and storage areas: [www.transportation.harvard.edu/commuterchoice/bike/bike-racks-and-routes](http://www.transportation.harvard.edu/commuterchoice/bike/bike-racks-and-routes)

Check out Quad Bikes (located at 51 Shepard Street), a non-profit, full service bike shop with a selection of new and used bikes, useful and practical accessories, lights, locks and helmets for sale.

Hubway ([www.thehubway.com](http://www.thehubway.com)) is a bike sharing system providing bikes throughout Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville. Using Hubway is easy and pricing depends on the frequency of use as well as the duration of your ride.
City of Cambridge: Getting Around Town

Harvard Shuttles & The Evening Van Service

Harvard University provides shuttle bus services for campus affiliates around the Harvard Square area. For information about bus routes and schedules, please visit: www.harvard.transloc.com or download the mobile app to any smartphone device.

The Evening Van Service transports faculty, staff, and students safely around campus as a supplement to the shuttle bus system. The service operates between 7 p.m. and 3 a.m., seven days a week throughout the academic year. No advance arrangements are needed, but the last call for a ride must be received by 2:30 a.m. For more information, or to request a ride, call 617-495-0400.

Driving

If you are bringing a vehicle with you to campus, you must obtain a Massachusetts driver’s license to legally operate it. To do this, you must first establish residence in the state of Massachusetts. Please visit the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) website (http://www.massrmv.com/) for more information.

- Even if you already have a driver’s license from another US state, you must exchange it for a Massachusetts license to legally drive.
- If you are converting a license from a country other than Canada, Mexico, or one of the US Territories, you must take the full written and road tests, plus the eye test.
- Detailed instructions for obtaining an out-of-state license may be found here: http://www.massrmv.com/rmv/license/9oos.htm
- The RMV also supplies Massachusetts identification cards and Liquor ID cards. Visit the ‘License & ID’ section of the RMV website (listed above) for details.

Parking On-Campus

HU Housing residents can park in a number of on-campus garages for a fee. Residents can also acquire day/overnight short term passes to park on campus if necessary. For more information & rates, please contact the Harvard Parking Services Office (8th Floor, Smith Campus Center; 617.496.7827) or by email: http://www.transportation.harvard.edu/parking

City of Cambridge: Getting Around Town

Zipcar

If you don’t own a car & are interested in “having wheels when you want them,” then perhaps a car-sharing membership is for you. Students can sign up for a Zipcar membership at a discounted rate. Visit www.zipcar.com/crimson for details.

Campus Resources

Harvard University Police Department (HUPD)
Safety On Campus

Harvard University Police Emergency Line: 617-495-1212
Local Police & Fire Emergency: 911
Harvard University Campus Escort Program (HUCEP): 617-384-8237

We strongly encourage all residents to program these numbers in their mobile devices as soon as possible.

The HUPD office is located at 1033 Massachusetts Avenue on the sixth floor. The only difference between HUPD and city police forces is jurisdiction. HUPD officers are licensed, special state police officers and deputy sheriffs in both Middlesex and Suffolk Counties. Those powers give them the authority to respond to any crime on our campus and any “breach of the peace” on city streets in Cambridge, Somerville, and Boston. HUPD Officers receive the same academy training as officers from Cambridge.

Safety Checklist:

- Know & store the HUPD urgent number in your phone (617-495-1212)
- Visit HUPD website (www.hupd.harvard.edu) and review “Your Role in Staying Safe”
- Familiarize yourself with designated ‘safe’ pathways (HUPD website) & blue light emergency phones
- Avoid walking alone at night, and if you do, refrain from using your cell phone to reduce distractions
- Have “In Case of Emergency” contacts updated in your phone & with HU Housing records
- Register your laptop and bike with HUPD
- Sign up for MessageMe campus alerts at https://messageme.harvard.edu.
- Be safe about cell phone use, especially on the T
- Always be aware of your general surroundings
- Trust your instincts—if something does not feel right, seek appropriate assistance or contact HUPD
Campus Resources

Harvard University Health Services (HUHS)

Harvard University Health Services provides comprehensive, coordinated health care led by a primary care physician and a primary care team that includes a nurse practitioner, registered nurses, and health assistants. More information is available here: http://huhs.harvard.edu.

Urgent Care is available 24 hours a day year round. Advice and treatment for health problems, both physical and emotional, are provided promptly for non-life threatening emergencies. If a problem seems life-threatening, call 911 immediately. Whenever possible, it is encouraged to call first to schedule an appointment or to obtain advice if unsure whether the medical or mental health need is urgent. The urgent care number is 617.495.5711.

HUHS Service Locations:
- Harvard Square Clinic
  Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center
  75 Mt. Auburn Street
- Business School Clinic
  Cumnock Hall
  33 Harvard Way
- Law School Clinic
  Pound Hall
  1563 Massachusetts Avenue
- Medical Area Clinic
  Vanderbilt Hall
  275 Longwood Avenue

Insurance Information:

All students are automatically enrolled in the Harvard University Student Health Program (HUSHP) but may waive this insurance.

Faculty and staff may choose an employee health plan, created exclusively for the Harvard community, or they may carry their own health insurance independent of the University plans.

All Harvard employees may seek care at HUHS for urgent medical issues that arise while at work, as long as the onset of the illness or injury occurred within the previous 24 hours.

Campus Resources

Mental Health Services:
Appointment Information: 617.495.2042
24-Hour Urgent Care: 617.495.5711

HUHS Mental Health Services provides assessment, treatment, education, & consultation to support the well-being and functioning of Harvard students. Trained and experienced counselors help individuals manage a variety of concerns including: stress, anxiety, depression, mood swings, cultural adjustment, difficulties with focus and concentration, eating concerns, traumatic experience, loneliness and isolation, grief, sexuality, relationship problems, managing a chronic health condition, addictive behaviors, and academic and career planning concerns.

Many people seek counseling for personal growth and/or because they need help managing the challenges in life. Some students worry that seeking help means they are "crazy," "weak," or "incompetent." Seeking help from a licensed professional is a way to work through a difficult time. Counseling is available because Harvard acknowledges that many students go through difficult times while they are here.

Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR)
24 hour line: 617-495-9100
7th Floor, Smith Campus Center

The Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR) promotes the compassionate and just treatment of student survivors, their friends, and significant others. It fosters collaborative relationships between campus and community systems, and affects attitudinal and behavioral changes on campus while working toward the elimination of sexual violence against all people.

If you or someone you know has experienced interpersonal violence including sexual assault, rape, harassment, relationship violence, or stalking: call OSAPR's 24 hour hotline for information and support.

Harvard University Disability Services
Email: disabilityservices@harvard.edu
Phone: 617-495-1859

UDS welcomes students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. UDS provides leadership to University efforts to ensure an accessible, welcoming working and learning environment for individuals with disabilities while ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations.
Recreation & Wellness

Harvard Gym Membership

Harvard gym membership costs vary depending on your affiliation. Check with your school or program for information about membership fees/discounts. Visit recreation.gocrimson.com to learn more about membership benefits and gym offerings such as group fitness classes, personal training, and athletic challenges.

Main Fitness Facilities:

- Hemenway Gymnasium
  1515 Massachusetts Ave.

- Malkin Athletic Center (MAC) & Pool
  39 Holyoke St.

Harvard University Center for Wellness

The Center for Wellness draws upon the wealth of expertise and resources in the Harvard community to offer a wide array of innovative programs and workshops designed to assist you in improving your own well-being. Check out http://cw.uhs.harvard.edu/index.html to learn more about exercise programs, yoga, special offerings, and services by appointment (ie—massage).

Harvard Spouse & Partner Resources

Obtaining a Harvard ID/Library Card

ID Services: Smith Campus Center, 8th Floor
1350 Massachusetts Avenue
617-496-7827

A spouse or partner of a Harvard student/scholar without other University affiliation is ineligible for a regular university ID. However, a spouse/partner can get a Special Borrower Card for the Harvard libraries for a small fee. Learn more about library privileges for non-Harvard affiliates by visiting the Library Privileges Office (Widener Library, Room 130) or at hcl.harvard.edu/info/admittance/#privileges.

Harvard Spouse & Partner Resources

Auditing Classes @ Harvard

As the spouse or partner of a Harvard affiliate, you may be able to audit university courses (attend lectures as a non-degree/non-credit earning community member). Permission of the lecturer is required. Contact the lecturer in advance of the first class, or you may attend the first session and at the end, ask for permission to audit the course. Auditing is at the discretion of the lecturer. Alternatively, non-affiliates can take courses through the Harvard Extension School, which offers over 700 open enrollment courses. Tuition fees apply for these courses.

English as a Second Language Classes

There are a number of universities and private centers in/near Cambridge that offer classes in English as a second language (ESL). The Cambridge Public Library and Teaching House Boston are also low cost options.

Employment Opportunities

Getting a job in the U.S. can be daunting. The Career in Transit blog (http://career4spouses.com/) provides helpful information and resources for spouses looking for work in the Cambridge area. For job-hunting and CV help, visit the Literacy Project offered by the Cambridge Public Library, or attend a career information session run by Harvard: http://hr.harvard.edu/event/career-outreach-session-job-seekers

Volunteering

If you want to get involved in the community by volunteering, visit https://www.volunteermatch.org/.

Harvard Students' Spouses & Partners Association (HSSPA)

HSSPA is a volunteer-run organization and is open to the spouses and partners of all Harvard students, post-docs, visiting fellows and other affiliates. HSSPA provides a way for its members to make friends, find intellectual stimulation, and feel a sense of belonging within the University. Email info@hsspa.harvard.edu for details.

Harvard Neighbors

Harvard Neighbors is a volunteer and membership organization that works to create a sense of community for all University members. For more information, visit http://www.neighbors.harvard.edu/.
Children & Family Resources

Graduate Commons has two sets of Family Programmers—one for the Garden Area and one for the PT/Riverside Areas—who regularly plan and host family-friendly events. Contact your area Program Manager to be put in touch with Family Programmers and get on their mailing lists.

School Registration in Cambridge

To find out more about registering your child for an area public school, please visit: www.cpsd.us/departments/frc

Things to know about Cambridge Public Schools (CPS):
- Current Cambridge residency along with validating documentation (lease) are needed for enrollment
- Required documentation can be found here: www.cpsd.us/departments/frc/welcome_to_cps/general_requirements
- CPS offers three dual immersion programs, each of which provides instruction in both English and a program language (Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese).
- Contact the Cambridge Family Resource Center for assistance: 617-349-6551

Harvard Child Care Scholarships

Child care scholarships, based on need, are available to eligible employees that help defray the cost of child care. Scholarship awards vary from family to family and year to year, and payments are made on a reimbursement basis. Visit the following site for more information about the scholarships, eligibility, and the application process: http://hr.harvard.edu/financial-assistance

Family Centers

Cambridge Center for Families:
Offers families with children birth-8 parenting education and support programs held throughout the city (617-349-6385)

Cambridge Community Center:
Organizes programs for children, including camps and after-school activities (www.cambridgecc.org)

Cambridge Public Library:
Large book collection & many free programs for all ages (http://www.cambridgema.gov/cpl)

Cambridge Parks and Playgrounds:
Map of all play areas
http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/parks

Harvard Child Care Resources

For a full list of Harvard child care resources—such as babysitter networks and after school programs—visit http://hr.harvard.edu/childcare

There are six nonprofit, independent child care centers (listed below) affiliated with Harvard University—five on the Cambridge campus and one in Allston near Harvard Business School. Each center is independent, and makes its own decisions regarding enrollment and curriculum. If you are interested in a place at one of these centers, you should visit those that interest you and apply as early as possible as places are limited.
- Botanic Garden’s Children Center
- Harvard Yard Child Care Center
- Oxford Street Daycare Cooperative
- Peabody Terrace Children’s Care
- Radcliffe Child Care Centers Inc.
- Soldiers Field Park Children’s Center
Household and Daily Needs

Disclaimer: The Graduate Commons Program does not promote or endorse any business or establishment. The following listings are just a small sample of options in the area. Many more exist, and we recommend you go out and explore all that is available throughout Cambridge.

Furniture Shopping

Ikea: 1 Ikea Way, Stoughton MA
Sleepy’s Mattress: 600 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
Crate & Barrel: 1045 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
Heartwood Furniture: 1008 Mass. Ave., Cambridge

Discount furniture retailers: Jordan’s Furniture, Bob’s Discount Furniture, or Bernie & Phyl’s Furniture Store.

Join the Harvard Grad Market Facebook group where you will find members of HU Housing buying, selling, and swapping items.

All Purpose Store

Target (2 Locations):
180 Somerville Ave., Somerville MA
550 Arsenal Street, Watertown MA

Clothing Shopping

Cambridgeside Galleria (Lechmere T Stop)
Downtown Crossing (Downtown Crossing T Stop)
Prudential Center (Prudential T Stop)
Arsenal Mall (70 Bus, across from Target)
Wrentham Village Premium Outlet (Wrentham, MA)

Local Grocery Stores

Whole Foods: Specialty foods, organic, hot food bar, beer and wine available (www.wholefoodsmarket.com)
Trader Joes: Small but unique selection of food items, beer and wine available (www.traderjoes.com)
Star Market: Standard American supermarket (www.shaws.com)
Market Basket: Affordable supermarket with wide selection of ethnic cuisine products (mydemoulas.net)
H-Mart: Korean grocery store, large selection of ethnic cuisine products, fresh fish (www.hmart.com)

Banking in Harvard Square

Harvard Credit Union: 16 Dunster St.
Citizens Banks: 6 JFK Street
Citi Bank: 1 Brattle Square

Banking Tips:
- Shop around to find a bank that fits your needs. For example, some banks offer no-fee accounts or do not require a minimum balance.
- Setting up an account often requires specific forms of identification. Be sure to check with the bank before you go to open an account. Be prepared to show your driver’s license (or passport) or a visa, if you are an international student.
- Getting a credit card is difficult if you’ve never lived in the US before or don’t have a Social Security number. You may qualify for a “bonded” card where you pay a deposit and get a card with the limit of that deposit. After a year of using this card correctly (paying if off on time), you should have enough credit to apply for a credit card. Some post-docs, however, have reported that Bank of America offers a regular credit card without this process.

Things to Do


Outdoor Attractions: Franklin Park Zoo, Arnold Arboretum, Boston Harbor Islands, Boston Hatch Shell, Kayaking on the Charles River

Performing Arts Venues: Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO & POPS), Boston Ballet, Wang Theater, House of Blues, Middle East, American Repertory Theater (A.R.T)

Sporting Events: Boston Red Sox, Boston Bruins, Boston Celtics, New England Patriots, NE Revolution, Harvard Athletics

Free & Discounted Harvard: Outings and Innings, Harvard Museums, Harvard Film Archive, Cambridge Public Library, Cambridge Center for Adult Education
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<th><strong>Cambridge Area Dining</strong></th>
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