

MOVING TO BOSTON

*A GUIDE TO HELP STUDENTS MOVE TO BOSTON
WRITTEN BY STUDENTS WHO MOVED TO BOSTON*

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SPRING 2021 DEAN'S FELLOWS



GENDER & CULTURAL STUDIES
SIMMONS UNIVERSITY

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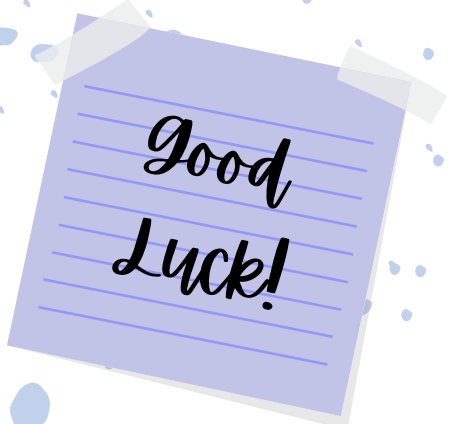
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Good
Luck!

SECTION ONE

BASICS OF RENTING IN BOSTON



What is a broker's fee?

A broker's fee is basically what it sounds like: a one-time fee you pay as a renter to a broker (real estate agent) for the paperwork involved in renting a place to live. The fee is usually equal to one month of rent for the place you're getting, but sometimes it's a percentage. Some landlords will pay part or all of the fee for you, but not always.



Where do I look for a place to live?

Rental websites like [Trulia](#), [Apartments.com](#), [Spot Easy](#), and [Split Spot](#) can help you find different rentals available by searching through multiple neighborhoods in or around Boston at the price range you want. Simmons has an [Off-Campus resource](#) with curated lists of housing lists. We highly recommend using very good judgment for places that you find on Craigslist, etc. to avoid scams. Never pay money for something that you have not seen.

What is the average cost of rent?

The answer to this question is pretty difficult as the cost of rent really depends on where you are. Different neighborhoods have different price points, so the best thing to do would be to just hop on a rental website and familiarize yourself with the different ranges. But, you're probably looking at around \$2,200 for a 1-2 bedroom apartment on the outskirts of the city and perhaps twice that the closer you get to the center of the city.



How do I find roommates?

Looking online may be the way to go! Facebook has [public groups](#) for students searching/listing available apartments or rooms for rent. Simmons also has a [roommate finder](#) online where you can connect with other Simmons students looking for a roommate. You can choose to filter out undergrads if you prefer living with other graduate students.



SECTION ONE



BASICS OF RENTING IN BOSTON



What about moving with pets?

It's totally possible to find places to rent with pets in Boston, but if you've got a dog you'll want to prepare to look a little harder. Cats are usually fine and even if the listing says "no pets" don't be afraid to ask because a lot of landlords operate on a case by case basis. As far as dogs go, Jamaica Plain is a pretty pet friendly neighborhood and you're more likely to have luck there, but most places are still pretty strict on breed and weight.



One thing of note is that landlords cannot charge a pet fee or deposit in Massachusetts like you'll see in most other states. Always question the fees associated with the place you're renting and do some research if anything seems sketchy.



Misc. Renting Advice



If you're not able to move into your rental yet once you're in Boston due to the lease agreement, you may need to rent an Airbnb or arrange to stay with friends/family if you know any in the area. We really don't think we can emphasize enough that it's very important to be comfortable with what you're renting - make sure the neighborhood feels safe and if your instincts are telling you something seems off, *listen!* Also, make sure you vet your roommates well - you wouldn't want to live with people who create toxic environments for you.

What to look for in an apartment?



This totally changes and we can't really give you a straight answer, because everyone has different needs and preferences. The most important thing to remember is that you shouldn't compromise on the things you need. Do you have a car? Make sure you have an easily accessible place to park (street parking or a driveway) otherwise parking in Boston can be a huge struggle. Don't want to shovel snow? Look for listings where the snow is taken care of by the landlord - or make an arrangement with your landlord ahead of time.

Also, get *everything* in writing. You don't want to make a verbal agreement with your landlord and not have any record of it - better to be safe than sorry!

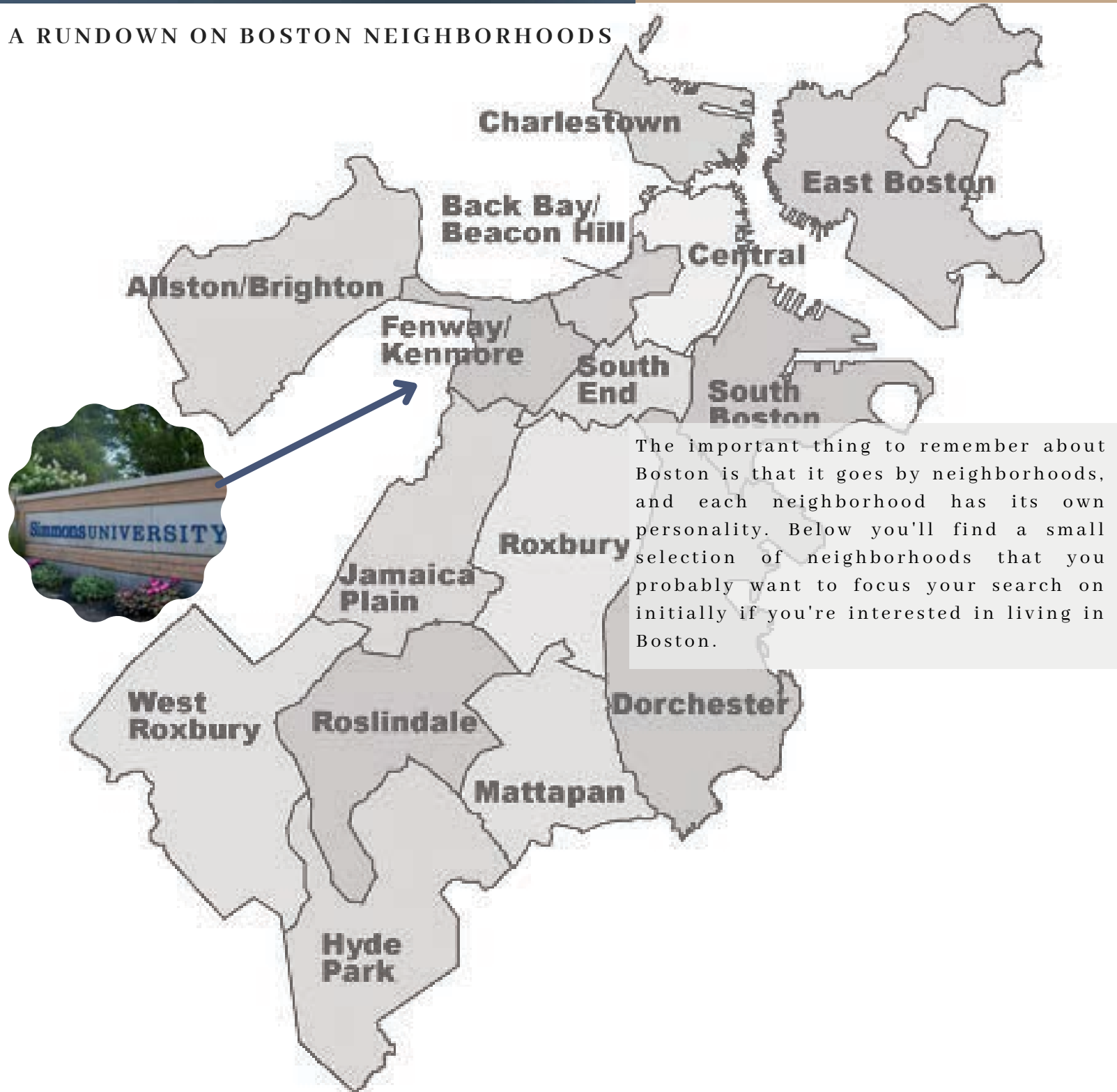




SECTION ONE

BASICS OF RENTING IN BOSTON

A RUNDOWN ON BOSTON NEIGHBORHOODS



BOSTON NEIGHBORHOODS



Allston

A neighborhood mostly made up of college students known as the "student village" that has a diverse selection of restaurants, nightlife, and hangout spots. Here you'll find grocery stores like Star Market, Stop & Shop, Allston Market, and Mayfair Foods.



Brighton

Sitting on the shores of the Charles River, Brighton's multi-family homes and condos give it a welcoming vibe. Washington Street runs through the center and is home to many small businesses. Grocery stores like Stop & Shop, Whole Foods, Star Market, and Trader Joe's are close to this area!

Brookline

Coolidge Corner is the major spot to go. Here you'll find the Brookline Booksmith bookstore, the Coolidge Corner Theater, and the JFK National Historic Site. There are also small businesses and grocery stores like Trader Joes, Whole Foods, and Star Market.

Cambridge

Home to two major universities, Harvard and MIT. Many young professionals reside here. Harvard Square, the epicenter of Cambridge, has many dining areas, bookstores, and quirky boutiques. You can find grocery stores such as Star Market, Market Basket, and Trader Joe's here.

Dorchester

One of the largest and most diverse areas in Boston where you can find a variety of global cuisines. There are plenty of outdoor activities to explore such as the Franklin Zoo, Neponset Greenway, and the Pope John Paul II Park. There's also the Boston Winery! Grocery stores around include Star Market, Stop & Shop, and Brother's Supermarket.

Fenway-Kenmore

The sprawling, academic and cultural hub is home to the iconic baseball stadium Fenway Park! Student hangouts, restaurants, sports bars, and night clubs are concentrated in this area. Stores like Target, Star Market, Whole Foods, and Stop & Shop are also located here.

Jamaica Plain

One of the city's largest neighborhoods with creative and artistic expression with many restaurants, coffee shops, and parks to hang out at. Grocery stores such as Stop & Shop and Whole Foods available. Home of the Arnold Arboretum!

Roslindale

A residential area occupied by families, young professionals, and retirees. Roslindale neighbors close to Jamaica Plain and West Roxbury. Roslindale has some great little restaurants like Sophia's Grotto and 753 South.

Roxbury

Roxbury, known as the "heart of Black culture," is one of Boston's oldest communities, diverse in history and culture. Grocery stores such as Stop & Shop, Tropical Foods, and various ethnic grocery stores and mini-marts can be found here.

West Roxbury

A neighborhood near Jamaica Plain and bordered by Roslindale. Today, people know the neighborhood for its civic activism and youth programs. West Roxbury has a suburban vibe with its tree-lined streets and single-family homes.

A background image of the Boston skyline, featuring several tall skyscrapers and a harbor with many sailboats in the foreground. The sky is blue with some white clouds.

SECTION TWO

WORKING IN BOSTON AS A STUDENT

WHERE DO I LOOK FOR JOBS?

Finding a job in Boston is both easy and hard depending on what exactly you're looking for. There are a plethora of part-time jobs available to students, but full-time jobs are a little harder to come by as a student.

Here's some advice on where to look for both kinds of jobs:

Simmons University - Simmons has a number of jobs available to students that are available throughout the year. These positions can be found on Workday. No student working for Simmons can work more than 20 hours a week. Some positions are available through your program, like Dean's Fellow or teaching assistant, but there is usually only one or two positions open each semester and priority is given to those who have not held the position before.

Indeed, Monster, etc. - As would be expected, job-posting websites are a good way to find out what jobs are open near you. You can search by keywords like "non profit" to find jobs applicable to your experience and/or interests. Remember: companies can get hundreds, if not thousands, of applications - make sure yours stands out enough to get called in for an interview.

Hireculture - Hireculture.org is a jobs website for Massachusetts that can be broken up by region. You'll find quite a few internships, part-time jobs, full-time jobs, and volunteer opportunities here geared towards people interested in the arts or humanities.

SECTION TWO

WORKING IN BOSTON AS A STUDENT

RD: You can always ask what the dress code is when you're scheduling the interview instead of guessing! You don't really have to be dressed to the nines, but also don't go into an interview wearing clothes with stains and holding takeout bags. If this is unavoidable (things happen!), you need to address it and don't just hope your interviewer won't notice - odds are, they did!

WHERE DO I LOOK FOR JOBS? CONT.-

Company websites - Is there a non-profit you've taken an interest in? Or another university you want to work for? Want to work for the city or a politician? Look on their websites directly for open positions or volunteer opportunities, etc. Also keep in mind that Boston is a big city with a lot of people; most companies will not look favorably upon people who call or visit to see if they're hiring so for large businesses it's best just to wait until you hear back. For small businesses, it's best to use your good judgement because sometimes it helps your chances to reach out once via email or phone (unless the job ad says don't call!).

GCWS Newsletter - If you're interested in GCS-related jobs and/or other related opportunities, then sign up for the GCWS newsletter. While most positions that are advertised in the newsletter are for professors or post-doctorates, you'll see some for scholarships or fellowships that you could be qualified for, as well.

INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE

The old saying of "dress for the job you want, not the job you have" is a good one for Boston. While for the most part you should use your good judgement, always air on the side of business or business casual. Maybe don't show up to a Starbucks interview in a three-piece business suit (or do it, you do you), but you'll definitely want to make sure you have a nice (thrifty is fine) suit on hand.

Always confirm the time and place of your interview and, if you're not sure about how to get there, ask for transit or driving directions. Look up in advance the best way to get there as traffic can be unpredictable at the best of times.

Show up a *maximum* of ten minutes early!

SECTION THREE

GETTING TO KNOW TRANSIT IN BOSTON



What is the T?

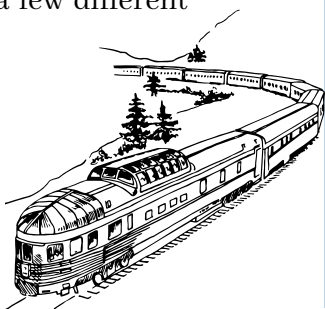


The subway, the train, the T, etc. The T is the underground transit system that runs across the Greater Boston area. According to Wikipedia, there are 149 stops making up the **Green**, **Blue**, **Red**, **Orange**, and **Silver** lines. The Green line is further divided into the B, C, D, and E lines. You'll come to learn that each line has its ups and downs - and, they all do around Red Sox games, so watch out for those!

What about the bus system?

The MBTA operates 170 bus routes in the Greater Boston area. The MBTA operates a five-route bus rapid transit service branded as the **Silver Line**, as well as two crosstown routes (CT2 & CT3).

The buses operate frequently and, depending on where you live, you'll probably have a few different bus options to get where you're going.



Notes from the authors:

RD: Most Bostonians will tell you that you will one day soon hate the T-system. When I moved up here, I heard it every day and from almost everyone. I think it's a Boston initiation. I grew up without any kind of transit system and I love the T, but admit that it has its faults. The Orange line breaks down a lot, the Red line can be super dirty, the Green Line is clean, but don't take Line B if you're on a time crunch. As far as buses go, I can take 4 or 5 different buses to get to my house from the Forest Hills T Station which is super nice.

KS: Before moving to Boston, I thought I would only ever ride the T. However, once I had to travel around the city for school and shopping, I realized I would need to take the bus sometimes instead of the T. When I took a GCWS Consortium class my first semester, I took the CT2 bus after working at Simmons to the class at MIT. I had to make sure I was at the bus stop at a certain time since these don't arrive so frequently like a regular bus route or T stop. It was super convenient though because the bus stopped right in front of the MIT building my class was at! If you live in Jamaica Plain, the 39 bus is also convenient if you need to go shopping or want to ride the bus into the city rather than the T!

CharlieCard



SECTION THREE

GETTING TO KNOW TRANSIT IN BOSTON

Download the "[Boston T](#)" app to navigate the T-System! You can also use Google Maps!


What T-station is closest to Simmons?

Longwood, Fenway, Longwood Medical, and the MFA T-stops on the Green Line are the closest in walking distance to Simmons - approximately 15 minutes of walking

Did you know Simmons offers Charlie Card passes at a discounted rate?

Having a Charlie Card Pass purchased through Simmons is convenient if you plan on commuting to campus and you can use it anytime through out the semester to get unlimited train/bus rides! If you lose it, Simmons will replace it for free!

Learn more about Simmons MBTA passes [here!](#)

 The MBTA schedule has a weekday, weekend, and holiday schedule so be aware when planning your commute. Also, the T system may be slower during snowy weather.

617-222-5148 TTY
Website
www.mbta.com

617-222-1266 TTY
Elevator, wheelchair and
800-392-6108

SECTION THREE

GETTING TO KNOW TRANSIT IN BOSTON



What about biking?



Boston is very bike friendly, but not always the safest when it comes to bikes. Make sure you're fully versed in biking etiquette and safety before you venture out onto the streets. But, as far as transit goes, it's probably one of the best - just be prepared for hills!

However, if you don't already have a bike, either get one before you move to Boston or budget for it. Bikes are expensive and you're looking at the \$500 range for cheap bikes, which are basically sold out everywhere because of the pandemic. Boston also has a city bike program with a variety of membership options with a ton of locations scattered around the city and easy maps to let you know which racks are full or nearby.

Is having a car feasible?



Yes and no. Honestly, it really depends on where you're living and what kind of lifestyle you have. If you're living downtown or within the city itself and your commute seems pretty reasonable through public transit, then you can probably do without a car. It's expensive to have a car (and there's an excise tax!) in Boston and parking can be atrocious, but sometimes it's unavoidable.

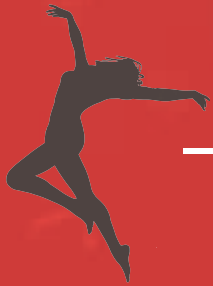
Really take a look at things like getting to the grocery store and back and going to a decent Target when deciding if you need a car. If you're an outdoorsy person and want to frequently hike or camp, you'll probably need a car. You can also look into things like Zipcar or taking Ubers where you want to go, but if you're frequently looking to get out of the city or don't want the long commute, you probably want a car.

Also, yes, there is parking on campus with slightly discounted rates for students.

RD: I managed to get a hybrid bike for about \$300 on Amazon, but the pandemic has caused a lot of shortages. Make sure you know what kind of bike you want as there are lots of different types and sizes!!



Learn about the city
Blue Bike program
at: bluebikes.com



SECTION FOUR

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THINGS TO DO IN BOSTON

Be sure to check out the Boston Public Library. There are various BPL branches around the city. The Main Branch in Copley has an old reading room where students and scholars go to study!

As COVID restrictions ease, there may be more opportunities to attend in-person academic events such as speaker panels, book talks, and conferences in the Boston area.

Not sure where to start?
Check out Airbnb experiences for some unique tours & events!

Gourmet Dumpling House in Chinatown is a popular place to find authentic Chinese food and dumplings!

WHAT IS THERE TO DO IN BOSTON?

Whether you are a history lover, explorer, art nerd, or social person, there is always something to do and see. Boston is the home of various museums, historical landmarks, restaurants, and nightclubs.

Boston does not seem to run out of museums! Some of the popular museums are the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Tea Party Ship Museum, John F. Kennedy Presidential Museum & Library, the Museum of Science, and the Isabella Stewart Gardener Museum. Find more about different museums in Boston [here](#)! Also, as a student, you get free or heavily discounted entry into almost every museum in Boston.

Boston is a city rich full of history. Some historical sites to visit are the Freedom Trail, Boston Commons, Irish Heritage Trail, and the Historic Burial Grounds. Fun fact: the Malcolm X—Ella Little-Collins House is located in Roxbury!

There are so many bars and restaurants in Boston to enjoy that the list would be too long to write here. Check out restaurants in Kenmore Square near Fenway, Chinatown, Downtown Crossing, Haymarket, and Little Italy in North End! Depending on which neighborhood in Boston you live in, you might find some good dining places there as well.



SECTION FOUR

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THINGS TO DO IN BOSTON

RD: I'm a huge fan of the outdoors and love hiking and kayaking. There's great little gems for hiking trails all around Boston, but don't be afraid to take an adventure a little further away to really get to know New England! Also, if you're not a fan of massive crowds, don't do Salem in October. Really, don't.

WHAT ABOUT OUTDOORSY THINGS?



Good news! When you move to Boston, you'll be in New England which has some of the prettiest and best hikes and camping year-round. There's so many adventures to be had outside of the city, but you'll probably want to have access to a vehicle to get there.

You probably already know about the gorgeous seaside and scenic towns (i.e. Salem, of course) that are scattered across New England. There's Cape Cod, there's Portland, Providence, and a whole manner of other gorgeous places to be adventured through. And, of course, we're not too far from Canada - whenever the border opens, go forth and (safely!) adventure!

The White Mountains aren't too far from Boston - about two hours - and offer great opportunities for year-round camping. There are a series of parks and reservations in the immediate Boston area, too, like the Blue Hills Reservation in Milton or Stony Brook Reservation in Hyde Park & West Roxbury. You also have the Emerald Necklace which features 1,100-acres of connected parks in Boston and Brookline.

Looking over at Western Mass you'll have beautiful waterfalls, historic trails, conservation parks, great little farms with fruit-picking, and more!



KS: If you want to stay local, the Arnold Arboretum in Jamaica Plain is a great walking location to enjoy the outdoors, escape reality for a while, and get some exercise in!

SECTION FIVE

COMMUTING TO BOSTON

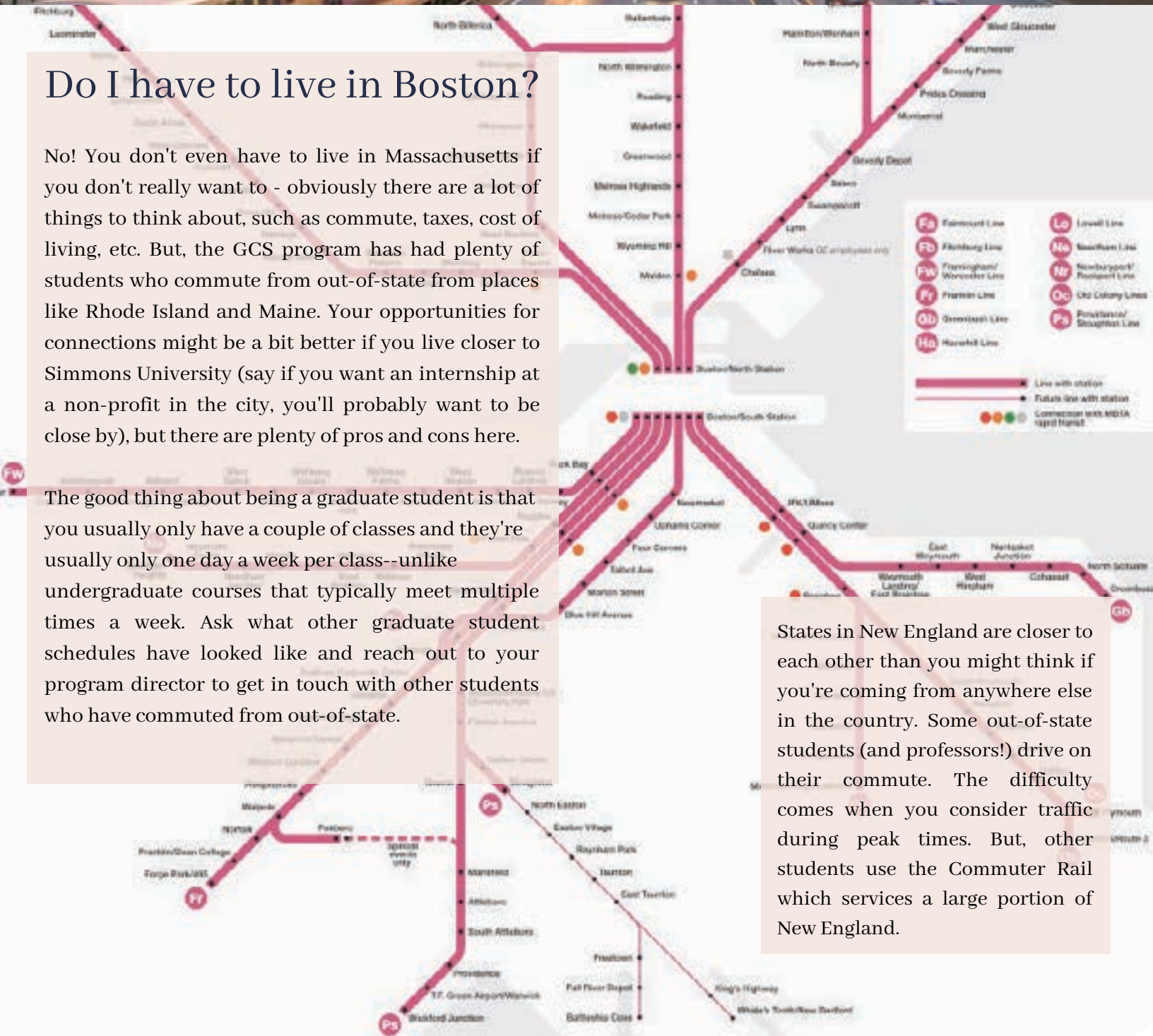


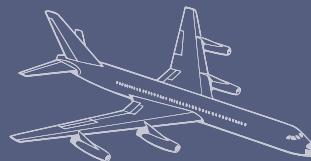
Do I have to live in Boston?

No! You don't even have to live in Massachusetts if you don't really want to - obviously there are a lot of things to think about, such as commute, taxes, cost of living, etc. But, the GCS program has had plenty of students who commute from out-of-state from places like Rhode Island and Maine. Your opportunities for connections might be a bit better if you live closer to Simmons University (say if you want an internship at a non-profit in the city, you'll probably want to be close by), but there are plenty of pros and cons here.

The good thing about being a graduate student is that you usually only have a couple of classes and they're usually only one day a week per class--unlike undergraduate courses that typically meet multiple times a week. Ask what other graduate student schedules have looked like and reach out to your program director to get in touch with other students who have commuted from out-of-state.

States in New England are closer to each other than you might think if you're coming from anywhere else in the country. Some out-of-state students (and professors!) drive on their commute. The difficulty comes when you consider traffic during peak times. But, other students use the Commuter Rail which services a large portion of New England.





SECTION SIX

MOVING FROM OUT OF STATE

Purchasing an Airplane Ticket

Once you've decided to attend Simmons, book your airplane ticket ASAP or at least 1-2 months before you plan on moving down to Boston. Websites like Expedia, TripAdvisor, or JustFly can help with finding flights at a reasonable price. Additionally, groups like "Flight Deals" and "Scott's Cheap Flights" often send great deals coming to Boston - or just track flights on Google Flights to get notified when the price changes!

If you have miles, definitely look into using those if you can!

Driving Cross Country



Driving instead of flying? Road trip! Be sure to give yourself a good amount of days driving from your original location to Boston. Make sure your car is fit for a long road trip by checking the tire quality, engine, and changing your oil if need be. Make sure to take rest breaks and stop by hotels to sleep overnight.



Whether you are flying or driving, be sure to stay up to date with the latest COVID travel measures regarding testing, quarantining, masks, and vaccines



Quick tips from Karina S. who moved from California!

- Moving away for grad school costs money so be sure to save as much as you can before you have to move!
- Check if your bank is available in the Boston area. If it's not, no worries! You just need to decide if you'll have to open an account with a bank available in the Boston area or if you can still find ways to purchase things, pay rent, etc. with your current bank. Online banking and Paypal, Venmo, or CashApp are helpful in these situations.
 - RD: Agreed! I did not do this for my bank and I have no accessible locations anywhere in New England. It doesn't bother me that much because of online banking, but there have been a couple times where it was definitely an inconvenience.
- Be sure to research certain laws, policies, and measures within the state of Massachusetts and the Boston area in advance.
- If you have never been to Boston before, try to visit the area before moving away if that is possible for you. Familiarize yourself with the campus, the MBTA, and visit any potential neighborhoods you might be interested in living in. If you can't visit the area before moving, familiarize yourself with the map of Boston through Google Maps. Reach out to your program director to be put in contact with other students in the area who might be able to help and give more advice.
- If you're not used to snowy weather, prepare to acclimate to New England winters and invest in some winter coats and winter shoes for the snow! Be prepared to shovel snow as well unless there is a different arrangement with your housing agreement.





SECTION SEVEN

LIST OF OFF CAMPUS OPTIONS

Various hotels and rental properties offer some short term or long term renting options depending on the season. There may be accommodations for students! You also have Airbnbs as an option - the cheapest ones tend to be around Allston, Newton, Hyde Park, and Quincy!

Name	Phone Number	Website
ANTHONY'S TOWN HOUSE	(617) 566-3972	ANTHONYSTOWNHOUSE.COM
BEACON INN	(617) 566-0088 (888)-575-0088	BEACONINN.COM
BOSTON HOME STAY, INC.	(617) 922-6326	BOSTONHOMESTAY.COM
BROOKLINE COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT	(617) 734-1393	<u>BOOK RESERVATIONS HERE!</u>
BUCKINGHAM APARTMENTS	(617) 536-5510	BUCKINGHAMBOSTONAPARTMENTS.COM
CHOICE HOTELS	1-800-4CHOICE	CHOICEHOTELS.COM
FARRINGTON INN HOTEL	(617) 787-1860	FARRINGTONINN.COM
FOUND HOTELS - BOSTON	617-426-6220	FOUNDHOTELS.COM/CITIES/BOSTON/
FOUND STUDY BOSTON FENWAY	(347) 410-8419 (866) 341-2818	FOUNDSTUDY.COM/BOSTON
HI BOSTON HOSTEL	(617) 536-9455	BOSTONHOSTEL.ORG/
OUR HOME BOSTON	(857) 302-0151	OURHOMEBOSTON.COM

