Dear Student:

Welcome to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

We are pleased that you have chosen UNC Charlotte as the school where you will continue your education. We hope that your experiences here will be rewarding.

During your first days at the University you will be:
• getting settled in your new “home”
• registering for classes
• learning where things are located
• making friends

We want you to know that there are numerous people here at UNC Charlotte to assist you with your questions.

This booklet has been prepared especially to help international students in the adjustment process. It contains information about the various services, policies, and programs of UNC Charlotte. Please read it carefully and then ask questions if you need further assistance.

We look forward to working with you and extend you a warm welcome.

Sincerely,

Tarek Elshayeb, Director
Denise Medeiros, Associate Director
Monte Green, International Student & Scholar Advisor
Amy Mabery, International Student & Scholar Advisor
Kadija Alkusaimi, Administrative Assistant
Chau Tran, SEVIS Coordinator
Maddy Baer, International Scholar Advisor
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I. **International Student and Scholar Office**  
Location, telephone, website & email  
Health and Human Services Building, Room 202  
704-687-7781 - www.isso.uncc.edu - intlsso@uncc.edu  
Office Hours  
8:00am—5:00pm, Monday—Friday  
If you have questions or need advising, you are encouraged to visit the ISSO during walk-in advising times. The walk-in advising hours are:  
Monday/Friday - 10:00AM - 12:00PM  
Tuesday/Thursday - 2:00PM - 4:00PM  

**Services available**  
- Personal, financial, and immigration assistance.  
- Information on all aspects of international student life at UNC Charlotte.  
- Email updates and reminders.  
- Processing of immigration and other documents — 10 business days advance notice.  
- Response time for all emails and phone calls is 48hrs

II. **Academic Information**  
**Advising**  
Advisors are assigned to you by your college or department. Log on to connect.uncc.edu to make appointments with your advisor. Please note that you are responsible for registration.  

**University Regulations of Student Conduct**  
- **UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity**  
  - Explains standards of academic honesty  
  - Describes faculty responsibilities  
  - Defines student behavior which violates the standards  
  - Lists penalties of violations  
- **UNC Charlotte Code of Student Responsibility**  
  UNC Charlotte has certain rules and regulations to guide student behavior. It is important that you are familiar with these rules. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these Codes.
Consequences of breaking them are severe. If you have questions, it is important that you consult with your teaching faculty. The codes can be found at: http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html

III. On-campus Services / Programs

Student Identification (ID) Number
Is issued to all students, begins with 801-xxx-xxx
- is used on campus for record and identification purposes
- is not the same as the social security number

How to login to My UNC Charlotte:
- go to http://www.my.uncc.edu
- Click “NinerNET Login”.
- Enter username & password, click submit.
- To activate your account click on “Forgot your password?” and follow the instructions.
- Click the “Need Help?” button if needed.

Banner Self Service is an online service that allows you to:
- Register for classes
- Change personal information
- Check student records (grades, transfer credit, transcript, tuition payments, etc.)

How to access Banner Self Service:
- Once you have successfully logged in to my.uncc.edu click on the Banner Self Service link and you will reach the main menu of Banner Self Service.

Registration for classes:
- Click on the Banner Self Service link.
- Go to “Student Services/ Student Accounts”
- Click on “Registration”, Look– Up Classes to Add
- Submit

Updating local/mailing & permanent address in My UNC Charlotte:
- Click on the link for Banner Self Service.
• Click “Personal Information”.
• Under Personal Information, click on “Update Address(es) & Phone(s)”.
• If “Local/Mailing” does not appear, then select the address type from the pull down list at the bottom of the page and click Insert.
• Do the same for permanent address in order for bills, etc. to be mailed to you in Charlotte.

Additional notes
• Registration begins in November for Spring semester and April for Fall semester
• Tuition Payment—be sure to pay your tuition fee by the deadline because late payment will cause your registered classes to be cancelled!
• You must apply for graduation according to the established deadline on the university calendar.

Academic Resource Offices
⇒ Writing Resource Center
   http://wrc.uncc.edu/
   Types of assistance include: tutoring, writing workshops, having papers proofread.

⇒ University Center for Academic Excellence www.ucae.uncc.edu
   Provides individual and group help in developing study skills & time management. Also, the center provides tutors for specific academic courses.

⇒ Center for Graduate Life
   http://gradlife.uncc.edu/
   Provides academic support for graduate students and opportunities for social interaction.

⇒ Office of Disability Services
   http://ds.uncc.edu/
   Ensures access to academic programs and campus facilities for students with disabilities, either physical or learning-based.
Health care (Student Health Center)

- Immunizations—you must verify that you have had the required immunizations within 30 days of enrollment or your registration will be cancelled. (Immunizations are available from the Health Center for a small fee.)

- Health insurance— is required for all students. Without it, hospitalization or health care can be extremely expensive. UNC Charlotte has a health insurance plan, or if you already have a plan from another company which provides comparable services in the U.S., you may file a waiver of the university health insurance plan. Visit www.studenthealth.uncc.edu to file a waiver by the deadline stated. Otherwise, you will be billed for the university’s health insurance plan.

- Emergency facilities— If you have an emergency and the Student Health Center is not open, you should go to Carolina’s Medical Center University, located just behind UNC Charlotte, on the corner of W.T. Harris Blvd. West and N. Tryon St.

Safety Tips
UNC Charlotte is a safe campus, however, it is always a good idea to be aware of your surroundings and walk with another person, especially at night. You can also use Next Ride, a transportation service that runs till 2 A.M. and has various pick up locations: http://nextride.uncc.edu/

The UNC Charlotte Police are always available to assist students, and can be seen around campus, in their office, or if there is an emergency, you can pick up one of the emergency phones located all over campus (they have a blue-light on top), and someone will assist you. Call 704-687-2200 or visit them in the Police and Facilities Building.

Alcoholic Beverages
According to North Carolina law, you must be 21 years old to
purchase OR consume alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, or liquor). You cannot purchase alcoholic beverages for another person who is under 21. These laws are very strict and must be followed closely.

**Restaurants and cafeterias:**
UNC Charlotte offers a variety of dining options and meal plans. Go to [http://aux.uncc.edu/dining](http://aux.uncc.edu/dining) for more information. These dining options include:

- South Village Dining—near Hunt Hall & the High-rises
- Prospector Cafeteria: Chick-Fil-A, Feisty’s Franks & Fries, Salsarita’s, Mondo Subs
- Cone Center Market Place: Panda Express, Panda Sushi, Subway
- Student Union: Crown Commons, The Bistro 49, Outtakes, Wendy’s, Starbucks, Einstein Bros, Bojangles’,
- Library Cafe

**Facilities & Activities**
- [Student Union](http://studentunion.uncc.edu/)
  1. Barnes and Noble bookstore
  2. Movie Theatre
  3. Niner Tech Computer Store
  4. Art Gallery
  5. The campus salon
  6. ID Office
  7. Union Station (Post Office)
  8. Student Activities/Student Organizations

- [Student Activity Center (SAC)](http://sac.uncc.edu/)
  1. Basketball Arena (1st floor)
  2. Fitness Center (Basement)
  3. Indoor track
  4. Climbing wall

- Belk Gym
  1. Indoor swimming pool
2. Basketball / Badminton courts
3. Intramural & Recreational Services
   These are team sports made up of students with a common interest, such as indoor soccer and badminton. Recreational services include fitness programs, club sports, aquatics and much more. It’s a great way to relieve stress!

- Outdoor Adventures Program (Venture)
  The Venture program provides a variety of enriching outdoor leadership experiences via Adventure Trips, Low & High Challenge Courses (aka ropes courses), and the Indoor Climbing Wall. For more information and a schedule of events, visit [http://venture.uncc.edu/](http://venture.uncc.edu/).

**Atkins Library** ([http://library.uncc.edu/](http://library.uncc.edu/))
The library functions as the center for academic purposes. In addition to major collections of electronic journals, books and databases, it also offers scanning services and you can also borrow laptops. It has wireless access on all floors and is open 24 hours Sunday through Thursday night.

**Copies**
Photocopies and printing are available in most buildings around campus including the library. In addition, a full-service copy center can be found in the Prospector building, bottom floor. A complete list of services and pricing information can be found at [https://aux.uncc.edu/copyprint](https://aux.uncc.edu/copyprint)

**Post Office (mail) on-campus** ([https://aux.uncc.edu/mail-package](https://aux.uncc.edu/mail-package))
Full mailing services are offered at the Post Office in the Prospector Building and shipping services are offered at Union Station in the Student Union. Residence Hall students receive mail in their residence halls boxes. Off-campus students should use their apartment as the mailing address although mailboxes can be rented through Union Station.

**Computer Labs** ([www.labs.uncc.edu](www.labs.uncc.edu))
There are several computer labs on campus which are available
for students to use. To name a few: Barnard Building, entire 1st floor, Fretwell Building rooms 321 and Friday Building rooms 216. Hours and other locations will be posted at these locations or you may check online.

Student parking
You must buy a parking permit to legally park on campus in designated parking lots. A permit can costs $465 for the year (beginning in Fall semester) and $290 for a Partial year (beginning Spring semester). These can be purchased during registration, from the Parking and Transportation Services Office or at http://pats.uncc.edu/permit-purchase-info

IV. Off-campus Services / Programs
Driver’s License
If you expect to drive a car while in Charlotte, it is required that you obtain a North Carolina Driver’s License. To obtain a driver’s license in North Carolina, you must present the following personal identification documents having the exact same spelling of your name. You will also need to pass a written test and a driving test.

Acceptable documents are:
- Valid passport,
- Valid I-20 or DS-2019
- Visa (can be expired – Canadians exempt)
- Proof of residency (either a utility bill or letter from the Registrar’s Office with your address on it)
- Proof of car insurance

North Carolina Identification Card
Issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to individuals who:
- Do not have a driver’s license
- Want another form of identification
You must present the following documents having the exact same spelling of your name: valid passport, valid I-20 or DS-2019, visa (can be expired), and proof of residency.

Website: http://www.ncdot.org/dmv/
Driver’s License examining locations are located at:
8446 Hwy 29 (North Tryon):  704-399-8306
6016 Brookshire Blvd:  704-535-2525

Transportation
There is a regular service 7 days a week to and from UNC Charlotte as well as within the Charlotte area. Bus schedules are available in the ISSO or at www.charmeck.org/Departments/CATS/Home.htm

Banks
Several banks are located in the University area, such as Wells Fargo and Bank of America. Documents needed to open an account include passport, I-94 and I-20 or DS-2019.

ATMs on campus are located at the Prospector (both inside and outside), Student Union (under the stairwell) and in the Cone Center. For a complete list of ATMs on campus visit http://aux.uncc.edu/vending/atm-locations

Social Security Number (SSN)
Students on F1 or J1 visas who will be employed are required to obtain a social security number and must apply through the Social Security Administration. Students with on-campus jobs offers must report to the ISSO for I-9 processi...
giving permission to travel outside the country. It is renewed through your embassy.

- **Visa**—A multi-colored stamp or designated page in the passport which is issued by a U.S. consulate abroad, allowing a visa holder to enter the U.S. for the time designated on the visa. It only needs to be valid on the day you enter the U.S. and can expire while a visitor is in the U.S. (Note: Canadians are exempt).

  **If your visa expires or you change your status and you travel outside the U.S. you will need to obtain a new visa at a U.S. consulate abroad, as it is not possible to obtain or revalidate the visa in the U.S.**

- **I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record)** - May be printed from www.cbp.gov/I94. It indicates the date of entry, class (F1/J1), and authorized period of stay in the U.S. which should be “D/S” (duration of status). Important—if there is anything other than “D/S” marked on your I-94 or any errors, please see the ISSO immediately.

- **I-20 / DS-2019**—The I-20 is the immigration document for F1 students, the DS-2019 for J1 exchange visitors. The document should reflect your current academic program and personal information and should be kept with your passport. When signed by a Designated School Official in the ISSO, they serve as valid travel documents.

**Types of Visas**

- **F1 student**: Permits an individual to enter the U.S. for full-time study at a designated institution. The **I-20** is used to obtain an F1 visa at an embassy outside the U.S.
- **J1 exchange visitor**: Permits an individual to enter the U.S. for study, teaching, research, and training. Form **DS-2019** is used to obtain a J1 visa.

**Maintaining Your Immigration Status**

- Keep a **valid passport** for six months beyond
expiration date.

- Maintain full-time academic student status, which is a minimum of 12 hours for undergraduate students; 9 hours for graduate students; online enrollment limited to 3 hours per semester toward full-time enrollment.
- Obtain appropriate **employment authorization** for any off-campus work.
- Apply for **program extension** if more time is needed PRIOR to expiration of I-20 or DS-2019.
- Keep mailing address up-to-date on My UNC Charlotte.

**Transferring or changing to another U.S. institution**

You must notify the ISSO of your intent to transfer prior to the end of the current semester and make a decision of which school you intend to transfer to within 60 days of the last date of being registered. The ISSO will then “release” your SEVIS record to the new school and they will issue you a new I-20 / DS-2019.

*See the ISSO for more information.*

**Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)**

SEVIS is the tracking system used by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. universities to keep up-to-date information on all F1 and J1 students.

The ISSO is required to send regular reports on the following information:

- Arrival at the university and enrollment of all international students, including full-time or less than full-time enrollment
- Information on I-20 or DS-2019
- Academic program data (level of study, program start and end dates, program extensions, school transfer, employment authorization)
- Current address

**Travel**

- **Inside the U.S.**— Carry your passport, I-94, and I-20 or DS-2019 or photocopies of these documents
• **Re-entry to the U.S.**
  Documents required:
  ⇒ I-20 or DS-2019 with signature from ISSO staff within the last year
  ⇒ Valid passport (at least 6 months into the future)
  ⇒ Valid U.S. visa (unless traveling to Canada and Mexico, in which case the visa is automatically revalidated)
  ⇒ Current proof of financial support
  ⇒ Unofficial transcript

VI. **Employment**
• 20 hours per week during the academic year
• Full-time (40 hours) during vacations and holidays
• Social security number is required for payroll and tax withholding.

**On-Campus Employment**
• Immigration authorization is not required
• I-9 and tax withholding forms must be completed
• See Student Employment Office website or individual department for available positions [https://jobs.uncc.edu/](https://jobs.uncc.edu/)
• International students are eligible for 'student temporary wage' and 'graduate assistant' positions, not 'work study'.

**Off-Campus Employment**
• F1 students must be in student status for one academic year
• J1 students’ eligibility is determined by type of exchange
• Must apply in the ISSO

**Practical Training**
• Curricular Practical Training (CPT) - Work authorization approved by ISSO for internships during program of study. Bachelor’s and Master’s students should apply through the University Career Center or in some cases through his/her Graduate Coordinator, then receive new I-20 from ISSO. PhD students must apply through his/her Graduate Coordinator. Employment is employer and date specific.
• Optional Practical Training (OPT) - Work authorization
approved by Dept. of Homeland Security for work in your field of study either during or after completion of program. 12 months total per degree program with extensions possible for STEM majors.

- Academic Training (J1 only) - Work authorization in your field of study either during or after completion of program. Employer and date specific.

OPT workshops & CPT workshops:
The ISSO conducts information sessions each semester on employment which are announced via email and posted on www.isso.uncc.edu. Students must attend an information session if they plan to participate in OPT or CPT.

Taxes
- Social Security & Medicare — Students with F1 or J1 visas are exempt from withholding Social Security and Medicare taxes if they have been in the U.S. in that status for 5 years or less.
- Income tax — All students who work are required to file federal and state income tax forms in the spring of each year. The ISSO offers access to a database which assists international students in filing their taxes.
- Property Tax – Anyone residing in Charlotte or Mecklenburg County and owning property (car, house, etc.) is required to pay annual property tax. Students are responsible for registering cars and other major property and paying assessed taxes.

VII. Housing (on-campus & off-campus)

On-Campus
The University has a variety of on-campus housing available. Contact the Housing & Residence Life Office (Phone: 704-687-7501) or http://housing.uncc.edu/ about procedures and availability.

*Once you receive the information or receive a housing assignment, it is very important that you pay attention to deadlines for canceling or renewing your contract, etc. Information about
regulations will be available upon receiving a housing assignment.

- **Role of Resident Advisor**—Resident Advisors (RAs) are student staff members who live in the residence halls. They provide assistance, information, and support to residential students. RAs are your primary resource for campus information and assistance.

- **International House**—The second floor of Witherspoon Hall houses both international and U.S. students who wish to experience, appreciate, and learn about new and different cultures. Each apartment or suite houses two U.S. and two international students. There is no language requirement and admission is open to all on a first-come, first-serve basis.

- **Global Gateways**—The Global Gateways Program is a residential-based programming model designed to increase students’ self and cultural awareness with an international emphasis. The Gateways House offers a central location where female students curious about different cultures, global issues, and our world can gather in a comfortable, inclusive, welcoming space.

**Off-Campus Housing**
A list of apartments and information about students who wish to have or share room is available from the ISSO or at https://offcampushousing.uncc.edu/

- **Important points in renting an apartment**
  - Read the lease agreement before you sign it. A lease is a legally binding contract.
  - Learn to operate the dishwasher and other appliances. If you don’t know, be sure to ask the apartment manager.
  - Pay your rent on time. If you are unable to do so, talk to management to request permission for an extension.
  - Keep your apartment clean.
  - Notify the manager one month in advance if you are moving. You lose your deposit if you break your lease before it is complete or if you leave the apartment dirty or broken.
→ Courtesy to neighbors includes noise control and cleanliness.

Furniture Rental Agencies
Cort Furniture Rentals, 4744 South Blvd., 704-527-0300
Off-Campus Housing Listing Service (housing, furniture, roommates) http://offcampushousing.uncc.edu/

Utilities
Electric Service: Duke Power, ……………….1-800-777-9898
Gas Service: Piedmont Natural Gas Co.…….. 704-525-5585
Telephone Service: AT&T…………………..1-800-288-2020
AT&T offers either local or long distance service. Prices vary.
Telephones may be purchased from many local stores.

Trash Collection
The city collects trash on a weekly basis. Ask your neighbor about the pick up schedule. Trash should be put in plastic bags and a barrel for collection.

Recycling Collection
You’ll need to ask about recycling services at your apartment. The city picks-up paper, glass, plastic, aluminum items and offers various drop-off locations.

VIII. Ways to get Involved
International Club—Welcomes both international and U.S. students and provides an opportunity to meet students from other countries and participate in social activities, trips, and other events. Visit https://orgsync.com/74885/chapter for more information.

International Student Organizations—UNC Charlotte has an increasing number of registered international student organizations. Check the listing at http://studentorgs.uncc.edu.

Friendship & Culture Exchange—This program provides the opportunity for U.S and international students to spend an hour together each week for informal conversation. Registration and
additional information is available at isso.uncc.edu/programs-workshops

**International Coffee Hour**— This event is an informal gathering of UNC Charlotte students, staff, and faculty who wish to meet people from around the world, share ideas, and relax with coffee and refreshments. This event is held every first and third Thursday of the month from 4-6 p.m. in the Faculty and Staff Dining Room of the Prospector Cafeteria.

**Cultural Ambassadors Program**— The program provides international students with an opportunity to educate UNC Charlotte students, faculty and staff about their culture and experience as international students.

**Other clubs & organizations** (music, sports, drama, etc.) Check the listing at studentorgs.uncc.edu or individual departments.

**Host Family Program**— The community offers this opportunity for international students to develop a friendship with a U.S American family. It is an opportunity for people from different cultures to share some common experiences and learn more about each other. It is not a live-in situation. Applications are available at the ISSO if you are interested.

**The International Festival (Ifest)** — A 40-year tradition, this festival celebrates the music, dance, and food of UNC Charlotte international students and members of Charlotte’s international community. Over 50 countries from around the world are represented and attendance in previous years has been estimated at 20,000. The event is free and takes place last at the Student Activity Center (SAC). ([http://ifest.uncc.edu/](http://ifest.uncc.edu/))

If you are interested in representing your country, please contact International@uncc.edu.
1X. Cultural Adjustment

Adjustment to any new situation or culture is not accomplished in just a few days but is rather an ongoing process. **Four stages** of cultural adjustment are listed below for your consideration:

1. **Honeymoon Stage**
   This stage is characterized by your happiness, anticipation, and excitement. Everything is new. The “dream” to study in the U.S. is coming true. This is an exciting time and in all the enthusiasm you frequently nod or smile to indicate understanding when in fact you have not understood. As your misunderstandings mount up, you are likely to experience the second stage of cultural adjustment.

2. **Hostility Stage**
   During this time you have periods of great frustration, anger, anxiety, and sometimes depression. Following the initial excitement has come frustration with the college bureaucracy and the weariness of speaking in and listening to English everyday. Sleep patterns may be disrupted. You may suffer from indigestion and be unable to eat. Often your reaction is to reject the new environment in which you feel discomfort. You may think, “If I feel bad and it’s because of them.” At this point, you may display ‘hostility’ toward the new culture. There may be anger over minor frustration, fear and mistrust of Americans, frequent absenteeism, lack of interest, and lack of motivation. Many academic problems begin during this stage. The hostility stage can be a difficult and painful stage. Realizing this can be very beneficial in moving on to the third stage of cultural adjustment.

3. **Humor Stage**
   This stage follows when you begin to relax in a new situation and to laugh at minor mistakes and misunderstandings, which previously would have caused major headaches. This more relaxed state of being occurs after you have made some friends, learned to manage the size and...
complexity of the University, understand your studies, and you begin to pass your tests.

4 Home Stage
You find yourself here as you are able to retain an allegiance to your home culture, but also “feel at home” in your newly acquired culture. You have successfully adjusted to the norms and standards of the University and the U.S., and should be commended for the ability to live successfully in two cultures.

Customs, Values, Beliefs
It is good to conform to the customs of the country but don’t lose your own personal values and beliefs.

Daylight Saving Time Adjustment
An adjustment in clocks to allow for more daylight hours during the spring and summer months.

- Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on the first Sunday in April. All clocks are moved forward one hour. 2:00 a.m. becomes 3:00 a.m.
- Daylight Saving Time ends at 2:00 a.m. on the last Sunday in October. All clocks are moved backward one hour - 2:00 a.m. becomes 1:00 a.m.
Note: it is suggested that you change the time before going to sleep Saturday night.
X. Well known US Holidays

- **New Year’s Day** (January 1) a time to make new resolutions
- **Martin Luther King Jr.** (3rd Monday in January) special remembrance for his leadership in the area of civil rights
- **George Washington’s Birthday** (February 22) First President of United States, celebrated on the Monday before his birthday
- **St. Patrick’s Day** (March 17) an Irish holiday when people traditionally wear green
- **Easter** (end of March / sometime in April) a religious holiday; remembrance of death and resurrection of Jesus
- **Memorial Day** (last Monday in May) remembrance of those who died in military service
- **Mother’s Day** (2nd Sunday in May) special remembrance to all Mothers
- **Father’s Day** (2nd Sunday in June) special remembrance to all Fathers
- **Independence Day** (July 4) remembrance of the U.S. independence from Great Britain
- **Labor Day** (1st Monday in September) government holiday in honor of laborers
- **Columbus Day** (October 11) remembrance of the man who we traditionally say “discovered America”
- **Halloween** (October 31) originally a religious holiday. It is now typically celebrated with costumes, masks, “trick-or-treat” at people’s doors and having parties
- **Thanksgiving** (4th Thursday in November) remembrance of the Pilgrim’s (the first Europeans) first successful harvest shared with Native Americans. It is a time for families to gather and enjoy big dinners usually with turkey and all the trimmings
- **Christmas** (December 25) a Christian holiday remembering the birth of Jesus
XI. Important On-Campus Office / Service Numbers
Use prefix (704)-687 + 4-digits, ex: 704-687-7781 when calling from off-campus. Use 7 + 4-digits when calling from on campus.

- International Student and Scholar Office.....704-687-7781
- Registrar’s Office ................................. 704-687-5505
- International Graduate Admissions ...........704-687-5503
- International Undergraduate Admissions ....704-687-5507
- Housing and Residence Life .....................704-687-7501
- Transportation & Parking .......................704-687-0161
- Counseling Center .................................704-687-0311
- ID Office ........................................... 704-687-7040
- Post Office ..........................................704-687-0383
- Lost & Found .......................................704-687-8300

XII. Emergency Numbers
- Police, Fire, Rescue (Ambulance) ............ 911
- Campus Security ....................................704-687-2200
- Student Health Center .............................704-687-7400
- Hospital (Carolinas Medical Center) .........704-863-6000