This is the Weekly ISSS Newsletter that we send out every Friday. It includes very important immigration updates that you must be aware of, as well as information about events happening on campus and in the area.

Are you a part of a student organization and want to see your event advertised to your fellow students? Please send the details and/or flyer to ISSS@albany.edu. Also follow us on Instagram @ualbanyisss!

Important ISSS Announcements
- Immigration Art (Immigration Attorney) Coming Virtually Next Tuesday! Learn about Green Cards, H1Bs, and more!
- Reminder: Public Comments on Proposed D/S Policy Close October 26th
- Withdrawal and S/U Deadline for Undergraduates is Wednesday, October 28th
- Save the Date: International Celebration December 12th
- Winter Break Travel Reminders and Reminder of Spring Term Start Date (February 1st)

Upcoming Events
- Middle Earth Zoom Hangouts
- Got Group? Check out the Fall 2020 CAPS Groups
- Three Minute Thesis Info Sessions
- Virtual Graduate School Meet Up - General Questions
- Career Services Seeking Undergraduate Peer Career Advisors
- Invitation for International Student to Participate in Study
- Virtual conversations on Mental Health with UAlbany International Students, Participants Needed
- International Students Needed for Research Survey
Immigration Attorney Art Serratelli is back to offer advice on employment and immigration options after F-1 status (H1b, Green Cards and more!)

**Tuesday, October 27th**

**Virtual Webinar:** 5:00pm-7:00pm on Zoom. Message or email ISSS@albany.edu for Zoom meeting details.

**Virtual 30 Minute Consultations (1 on 1):** appointments available 9:30am-12:00pm, 1:00pm-4:00pm. Email immigration.art@gmail.com your name, preferred communication contact (phone, Skype, etc...) and availability to schedule (please use email Subject Line UAlbany Consultation Request, October 27)
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Reminder: Public Comments on Proposed D/S Policy Close October 26th

Many of you may have seen reports regarding the DHS proposed rule to eliminate duration of status (D/S) for F students and J exchange visitors, as well as dependents of both published on Friday, September 25, 2020.

This new rule is a “proposed” rule, meaning it has not yet taken effect. When a rule is proposed, it enters a 30-day public comment period, after which comments must be reviewed by the federal agency (e.g. DHS ICE). Only after that may a final rule be published. This proposed rule does not immediately impact you or your status at this time.

As part of our continued commitment to our international students and their continued well-being, the University at Albany in coordination with the SUNY system is evaluating this new rule and will respond to advocate for the needs of our students. Other advocacy groups across the nation are also preparing a response. We will communicate any updates to students by email.

If you would like to read an overview of this proposed rule, you can find a summary on NAFSA’s website here: https://www.nafsa.org/professional-resources/browse-by-interest/proposal-replace-duration-status

Students are allowed to submit comments to this proposed rule for DHS-ICE to review. This may be a good way for you to advocate for yourself and fellow international students. Comments may be submitted through the Federal Register’s website by clicking the blue “Comment Now” button: https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=ICEB-2019-0006. Comments must be submitted by October 26, 2020.

If you are interested in submitting a comment, below we have compiled some of what we consider the most salient issues for our students and suggested rationale to include in your comments. You may comment on other issues within this proposed rule as well, and you may also comment on how these changes would directly impact you and/or your studies in the U.S.:

1. Admitting F and J students for a fixed time period - 2 or 4 years: The current system of I-20 and DS-2019 extensions, which is managed by P/DSOs and A/ROS in ISSS and sponsor agency offices, is the most efficient and effect method as these professionals are in the best position to determine added or subtracted time necessary to complete a degree in collaboration with academic department advisors and faculty.
2. Requiring students to officially petition to DHS for extension of stay for continued study: This change would cause an undue burden on F and J students including cost, time, travel restrictions and possibility of denial. ISSS staff burdens would include recommending and supporting hundreds of USCIS applications for extension every single year.

3. Shortening the grace period from 60 to 30 days for F-1 students: While some F-1 students may be able to return home prior to the end of a 60 days, many have either applied for and are waiting for OPT approval, a process taking 3-4 months, or are waiting to begin a new academic program at an approved institution, which can take more than 30 days to complete.

Regardless of when, how, and if this proposed rule takes effect the ISSS office will continue to support you and advocate for your needs. If you have any questions please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Withdrawal and S/U Deadline for Undergraduates is Wednesday, October 28th

The deadline for undergraduate students to request S/U grading is October 28th (for a semester length course). Not all courses qualify for S/U grading and a student may only take a certain number of courses S/U during their academic career. Students are limited to receiving S/U opted grades only twice in their undergraduate academic career. Only courses below the 300 level may be S/U opted. If you take a course S/U, it will not count towards your GPA. If you earn a “S,” the course will still count towards fulfilling your graduation requirements. You can read more about the policy here.

If you are considering taking a course S/U, please consult your academic advisor and the professor for the course to find out if you qualify.

October 28th is also the deadline for an undergraduate to withdraw from a semester length course. Remember that F-1 and J-1 international students must be registered full-time (12 credits) so if you are considering withdrawing you must have at least 12 credits remaining (after the withdrawal) unless you have been approved for a reduced course load by ISSS. Reduced course load approval is required before you can withdraw to less than full-time registration. If you have questions about registration requirements for immigration email ISSS@albany.edu

Save the Date: International Celebration December 12th
This virtual event is for summer and fall 2020 graduating students and their families. More information to come.
Winter Break Travel Reminders & Reminder of Spring Term Start Date (February 1st)

The ISSS office does not recommend international travel at this time due to increased risks which could impact a student's return.

- Unfortunately, the global travel situation can change rapidly and with little notice, including travel restrictions, travel bans, and lack of flight availability
- DHS has not yet released guidance for Spring 2021, which could impact a student's return if outside the U.S.
- If you will travel please contact ISSS@albany.edu for further details and to review documentation needed to re-enter the U.S.
- Students travelling over break should check their UAlbany email frequently for any immigration or quarantine requirement updates.

We know this upcoming break may be very difficult, particularly for international students who were unable to travel home last summer. Please know that you have the full support of ISSS during this time. If you are facing any challenges (such as housing, stress, or anxiety) please do not hesitate to reach out to us for resources and support.

Please also remember that the Spring term start date is February 1st, 2021.

Upcoming Events

Middle Earth Zoom Hangouts

Got Group? Check out the Fall 2020 CAPS Groups
Join Middle Earth Students for a casual hangout with a focus on health and well-being. Join to meet new people, play games and learn about how to be a bit healthier!

Read More

In addition to the International Circle, CAPS offers a number of groups, including: Introduction to Mindfulness; LGBTQ+ Empowerment and Support; Come Together: Staying Social Connected while Physically Distanced; Graduate Student Support; Managing Anxiety; Coping During COVID19; and Women of Color Empowerment and Support. Click "Read More" for more information on the groups offered.

Read More

Virtual Graduate School Meet Up
General Questions

Three Minute Thesis Info Sessions
October 27th and October 28th, the Graduate School at the University at Albany is hosting the Three Minute Thesis Competition (3MT®) in Spring 2021. These popular competitions have become a global phenomenon and offer graduate students the opportunity to communicate the significance of their research to a general audience, all in three minutes or less. UAlbany's 3MT event celebrates the research accomplishments of our graduate students while helping students develop their presentation and communication skills. Plan to join us for the 2021 3MT, as a competitor or audience member.

Career Services Seeking Undergraduate Peer Career Advisors

Peer Career Advisors (PCA) are recognizable UAlbany leaders and role models with transferable skills valuable in all industries. During the first semester, PCA Trainees enroll in a 3-credit course where they Train to become a

Invitation for International Students to Participate in Study

My name is Brenna Butler, and I am a doctoral student inviting you to participate in a research study about the writing needs of international doctoral students (IDSs) whose strongest language is not English who are currently enrolled at institutions across the United States. This
student representative/PCA for the Office of Career and Professional Development; and Increase their professional skills including communication, time management, and how to deliver constructive comments.

After successfully completing the training course, students will be fully prepared for their future role as a PCA. Trained PCAs, will conduct resume and cover letter critiques, and provide entry-level career guidance while earning three academic credits.

Undergraduate students can apply on Handshake for the Spring 2021 Peer Career Advisor Trainee position until applications close on November 4, 2020 at 11:59 pm. Click "Read More" below to apply.

Read More

Virtual conversations on Mental Health with UAlbany International Students, Participants Needed

The Suicide Prevention Center of New York and the University at Albany are hosting two virtual conversations with international students to learn about the unique challenges you face, how you seek to address those challenges, availability and

International Students Needed for Research Survey

Hung-Bin Sheu, Xinyun Xu, and Taylor Karnilaw are conducting a study on what would promote better cross-cultural adjustment and well-being among international/IELP students in the U.S. This study is approved by UAlbany (IRB#: 20X222). We would like to invite you to participate in this study by responding to an anonymous
use of on- and off-campus mental health services and resources, and barriers to accessing these services. We are looking to schedule these conversations on days and times that are convenient for you. Click "Read More" to participate and share your availability. You will receive a $10 Starbucks gift card for participation. Any questions can be directed to Brett Harris at bharris@albany.edu.

Online survey, which takes approximately 20-25 minutes to complete. To access the survey, click Read More below. Feel free to contact us at hsheu@albany.edu if you have any questions.

Unsubscribe

1400 Washington Avenue SL G-40 Albany NY 12222

ISSS@albany.edu

https://www.albany.edu/isss

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