Wednesday, November 21, 2018

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1. Greetings!

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.

2. Important Announcements

Upcoming Office Closures
Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, ISSS will be closed for business of Thursday, November 22nd and Friday, November 23rd. Normal hours resume on Monday, November 26th.

On Thursday, November 29th, walk-in advising will not be available from 11:45am-1:15pm. All other walk-in hours remain unchanged. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

SEVIS Fee Increase
Effective Spring 2019, the University SEVIS fee will be $135 per semester. F-1 and J-1 international students are charged the SEVIS fee each term they are a registered student (fall, spring, and summer terms included).

International Celebration December 6th- Registration Has Closed
The Center for International Education and Global Strategy will host a ceremony for graduating international students, study abroad students who are graduating, departing exchange students, and scholars who are returning to their home.
countries at the end of the semester.

Registration has closed. Please contact ISSS@albany.edu if you have questions.

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**OPT and CPT Workshops**

ISSS offers weekly workshops for off-campus employment—both for OPT and CPT. No reservation
is required. If you are graduating in December, the OPT filing period opens September 20th. Students are encouraged to apply for OPT as early as possible because it can take USCIS 3-5 months (or longer) to process a request for OPT. Please view the schedule here.

CPT and OPT Workshops

**Fall 2018**

**CPT Workshops**
- Tuesday, 9/11, 2:30-3:30pm, SL G05
- Thursday, 10/11, 10:30-11:30am, SL G05
- Friday 11/9, 4:00-5:00pm, SL G05— for Master’s of Computer Science students
- Wednesday, 11/14, 2:00-3:00pm, SL G05
- Monday 11/26, 10:00-11:00am, SL G05
- Monday 12/3, 3:00-4:00pm, SL G05

**OPT Workshops**
- Thursday, 9/6, 3:45-3:50pm, SL G05
- Wednesday, 9/19, 12:00-1:30pm, SL G05
- Monday, 9/24, 10:00-11:30am, SL G05
- Friday 10/5, 4:00-5:30pm, SL G05
- Tuesday, 10/16, 3:00-4:30pm, SL G05
- Friday, 10/26, 10:00-11:30am, SL G05
- Thursday, 11/1, 1:00-2:30pm, SL G05
- Thursday, 11/15, 10:00-11:30am, SL G05
- Tuesday, 11/20, 11:00am-12:30pm, SL G05
- Friday, 11/30, 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Wednesday, 12/5, 2:00-3:30pm, SL G05
- Friday, 12/14, 10:30am-12:00pm, SL G05

**Other Important Dates**
- Wednesday, September 12th: Job and Internship Fair, SEFCU Arena
- Thursday, September 20th: First day USCIS may receive OPT requests from December 2016 graduates
- Tuesday, December 18th: Program end date for December graduates
- Friday, February 15th, 2019: Latest OPT start date for December graduates to request. All OPT applications for December graduates must be received by USCIS before this date.
Winter Weather Safety Tips

Winter weather is upon us, and many of you may have recently experienced your first snow fall! Please remember the following safety tips when it comes to winter weather (snow, sleet, ice, etc...)

- When **road conditions are bad, avoid driving.** This is especially true if you do not have experience driving with winter weather conditions. Roads become slippery, and conditions can worsen with little notice. If you must drive, be sure to drive slow and exercise additional caution. Make sure you have more than enough gas in your tank in case you get stuck on the road (recommended: make sure your car has at least a half tank of gas at all times). Have a cell phone in case of emergency. Please also review the DMV’s guide on driving in winter conditions in New York, here: [https://dmv.ny.gov/about-dmv/chapter-10-special-driving-conditions#win-dry](https://dmv.ny.gov/about-dmv/chapter-10-special-driving-conditions#win-dry)

- If you take the **bus, do not stand in the road when conditions are bad.** It is very easy for a driver to use control, and if you are not a safe distance from passing traffic you could be struck. Pay attention to the conditions around you, do not be looking at your phone.

- Occasionally, we may experience **extreme temperature or wind chill** conditions that can reach as low as -30 degree Celsius. Under these conditions, you should not be outside for extended periods of time. Try to limit outside exposure to 1-2 minutes or less, depending on the severity of temperature. If you must go outside, make sure you are properly dressed (hat, boots, gloves, winter coat).

- **Have fun!** With winter comes skiing, snowboarding, sledding, and building snow forts! Enjoy your time.
3. Other ISSS Updates and Events

Travel Signature Days

Every F-1 and J-1 student must have a valid travel signature on their I-20 or DS-2019 in order to re-enter the United States after travelling outside. These travel signatures are usually valid for 1 year while you are a full-time student, though we recommend getting your I-20 or DS-2019 signed every 6 months.

Usually, travel signature requests take 5-7 business days. On our special travel signature days, however, we will sign the I-20 or DS-2019 on the spot. View the schedule here: https://www.albany.edu/isss/assets/flyer_fall_2018.pdf
Writing Center International Student Peer Tutors

Need help with your writing? Did you know the UAlbany Writing Center has three international students here to help international students on their writing? Their schedules are below. To schedule an appointment with a tutor, please call 518-442-4061 or visit the Writing Center in Humanities 140. Take advantage of this great resource! For a schedule, pick click here: https://www.albany.edu/isss/assets/Writing_Center_Hours.pdf

University No Smoking/Tobacco Free Policy Effective January 2019

The University will become tobacco free in January 2019, which means smoking and other tobacco use will be prohibited on campus. For additional information on this new policy, please click here: https://www.albany.edu/tobaccofree/FAQs.shtml#q12

Cessation Resources (i.e. programs to help students quit smoking) are available through the University and community. A list of resources is available here: https://www.albany.edu/tobaccofree/resources-for-students.shtml. Counseling and Psychological Services will also have a Cessation Group to help students quite smoking/other tobacco usage. For more information, please contact Dr. Brain Freidenberg at bfreidenberg@albany.edu
4. University at Albany Events
Click Here for a full list of upcoming UAlbany events!

**Overcoming Impostor Syndrome**
Tuesday, November 27 6-7pm
Lecture Center 05
Do you sometimes feel like a fraud and question whether you are smart enough for graduate work? You are not alone. Impostor syndrome is a false belief that one's successes are the product of luck or fraud rather than skill.
This workshop will explore ways to manage the self-doubt caused by impostor syndrome. RSVP:
https://admissions.albany.edu/register/ImpostorSyndromeFall18

**Winning Wednesdays - Therapy Dogs**
Wednesday, November 28 11am-1pm
Campus Center's Student Success Center - CC 165A
Take a “PAWS” before finals begin. Come and de-stress with the therapy dogs before final exams begin.
Receive tips on how to prepare for your exams.

**Therapy Dogs**
Friday, November 30 1-3pm
State Quad’s Student Success Center - 2nd floor of Whitman Hall
Take another “PAWS” before finals begin. Come and de-stress with the therapy dogs before final exams begin.
Receive tips on how to prepare for your exams.

**CDO: First 5 Minute Workshop**
Friday, November 30 3-4pm
Massry Center for Business (BB121)
So the past semester we have covered, Firewalls, Linux, Windows, Networking, and routers. So what do you do when you sit in front of a machine? This week we learn what to do.

**Big Apple Takeover**
Saturday, December 1 @ 3:30pm
Hosted by the UAlbany Programming Board
Come spend a day exploring NYC during the commotion and excitement of the upcoming holiday season! You can shop, go ice-skating, see the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center, or other suggestions in the brochure the UAlbany Programming Board will be providing. Students will be provided with breakfast. Students may
purchase 1 ticket, tickets will be sold on albany.edu/eventtickets in November, tickets are non-refundable.

**Well-BeingLunch Series**

Sponsored by CAPS, this lunchtime well-being series is designed to help students manage stress and promote their personal well-being.

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**5. Capital District Events**

**Black Friday Saratoga**

Friday, November 23 Until 8pm

[Downtown Saratoga, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866](#)

This is a Black Friday shopping event centered around the downtown Saratoga area offering 20% discounts from 9am to close.

It has become an annual event that many look forward to and make an event of every year. Coming with groups of friends and relatives, shoppers come to get a jump start on their holiday purchases. Each participating store hands out Black Friday Saratoga Shopping Bags to their early morning shoppers, while supplies last.

**Upper Union Street Tree Lighting**

Saturday, November 24 @4pm

[Trustco, 1620 Union Street Schenectady, NY 12309](#)

Please join the Upper Union Street Business Improvement District for Small Business Saturday and the Holiday Tree Lighting on Saturday, November 24, 2018. Santa Claus will light the tree at 4:00 pm at Trustco (1620 Union Street, Schenectady). Refreshments will be served.

**Bicycle Night at the Lights**

Sunday, November 25 4:45 - 5:30pm

[Washington Park, 399 State St Albany, NY 12203](#)
Come out and ride a bicycle through Washington Park's Christmas Light show. Proceeds from this night help Albany PAL provide free bike helmets to area kids!

**Annual Holiday Greens Show**

Thursday, November 29 - Sunday, December 2 from 12-5pm  
Historic Hart-Cluett House, 57 2nd St Troy, NY 12180

Cost: $10

Every year, The Rensselaer County Historical Society with the expert inspiration and decoration talents of The Van Rensselaer Garden Club together present the Annual Holiday Greens Show in the Hart-Cluett House. The lavish show is a Troy holiday tradition that transforms 12 rooms of the 1827 Federal-style Hart-Cluett House into a green winter wonderland. The Holiday Greens Show has been the community’s signature holiday event since 1956 and inspired Troy’s celebrated Victorian Stroll.

In the tradition of historic holiday celebration, members of the Van Rensselaer Garden Club incorporate fresh evergreen trees, greens and flowers to create an interactive experience that warms hearts, brightens eyes and fills the air with the fresh aromas of winter woods. As you wander through the house, you can sense the grandeur and elegance Troy held as one of America’s most prosperous cities in the 19th and 20th centuries. The Holiday Greens Show offers an enchanting historic atmosphere in which communities and families come together in the traditions of holiday joy and cheer.

Purchase tickets at [www.rchsonline.org](http://www.rchsonline.org).