Follow us on instagram @ualbanyisss

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.

Important Announcements
- Attention Graduating Students - Fall 2020 International Celebration TOMORROW, Saturday, December 12th at 9:30am
- AccessISSS EForms Have a New Look!
- Fraud Advisory – Scammers Using SEVP Phone Numbers to Target International Students
  - Using 2-Step Login While Traveling!
- Giftcard Raffle for Research Study on UAlbany International Students and Asian/ American Students
- ISSS Wintersession Hours and Closures
- ISSS Seeking Orientation Assistant Applicants for Spring 2021 Orientation
- Planning Ahead for 2021: Check Website and UAlbany Email Often for Updates
- Winter Break Travel Reminders & NYS Quarantine Requirements

Upcoming Events
- UAlbany Mind Studies Talk: Moral Imagination
- Social Justice Action Committee for Racial Equity
Attention Graduating Students - Fall 2020 International Celebration
TOMORROW, Saturday, December 12th at 9:30am

International students planning to graduate in fall 2020 or graduating in summer 2020 are welcome to join our Live Zoom International Celebration taking place on Saturday December 12th from 9:30-10:15am (EST). If you are graduating and did not receive the email with Zoom link please email us at ISSS@albany.edu for assistance. Don't forget to also officially apply to graduate in MyUAlbany, the instructions are available here: https://www.albany.edu/registrar/degree-application.php

Thank you and we look forward to you and your family joining the celebration.
**AccessISSS EForms Have a New Look!**

AccessISSS, the system you use to submit an EForm request to ISSS, has a new look! The functionality and form availability remains the same as before. To see an overview of the changes, click "Read More."

**Fraud Advisory – Scammers Using SEVP Phone Numbers to Target International Students**

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has been made aware of a spoofing scam involving individuals using the SEVP Response Center (SRC) phone numbers (703-603-3400 and 800-892-4829) and claiming to be SRC representatives. The fraudulent callers are inquiring about Form I-94 documents and asking students to provide information regarding monetary transactions.

If you are a victim of this spoof call, you are encouraged to report the incident to ISSS. If you are unsure about the validity of a call from an SEVP official, you can also reach out to ISSS.

Things to remember:
- SEVP officials will NEVER ask stakeholders to provide credit/debit card/gift card numbers, wire transfers, or bank routing numbers, or to make bitcoin deposits for any purpose.
- NEVER divulge personal or financial information to unknown callers.
- Report all suspicious calls to the HSI tip line and if you are unsure about the validity of a call from SEVP officials reach out to your designated SEVP field representative.

As a reminder, federal officials and law enforcement do not call people to demand money. If you ever receive a call like that it is likely a scam, and you should hang up and call ISSS. We encourage all students to take a moment to review our page on Frauds and Scams, please click Read More below.

**Using 2-Step Login While Traveling**

Accessing University resources requires using 2-Step Login for Microsoft, no matter where you are. Even if you are traveling out of the country, or in an area without WiFi or cell service, the security of 2-Step Login is always available to you. Visit the ITS 2-Step Login FAQ for Microsoft for more information on using 2-Step Login while you travel: https://wiki.albany.edu/x/mgJwB
**Giftcard Raffle for Research Study on UAlbany International Students and Asian/ American Students**

UPDATE: Please note that we are including both East Asian and non-East Asian international students in the interviews/Qualtrics surveys. Please disregard any text referencing “East Asians only.”

In search of volunteers for a research study on the impact of COVID-19 on international and East Asian American students at the University at Albany (Principal investigator, Professor Angie Y. Chung). The larger study (UAlbany IRB: 20X251) will involve a 20-30 minute phone or online interview, which will qualify you for two raffle entries for one of three $25 giftcards (Amazon, Korean BBQ Chicken, or Doordash). Or alternatively, you may complete the Qualtrics survey in the link below for one raffle entry. We have interviewers who can speak Mandarin, Korean, and Japanese if you prefer. If you are Korean, you will also have the option to participate in a fully paid 2-hour focus group session (York University IRB: e2020-213).

In order to qualify, you must be an East Asian international or Asian American student 18 years of age or older and currently enrolled at the University at Albany, regardless of student status, citizenship, place of birth, or background.

For more information, please contact Professor Angie Y. Chung (aychung@albany.edu).

Qualtrics Survey: [https://albany.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6s7pE0fotHH0SPz](https://albany.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6s7pE0fotHH0SPz)

**ISSS Wintersession Hours and Closures**

The semester is wrapping up! To help you prepare, please take note of the ISSS office updates and availability below:

- **The ISSS office will have limited availability starting at 12:00pm (noon) on December 24th through January 1st.** Regular hours will resume on January 2nd. Zoom advisement will not be available during those dates.
- **Students who hope to have a request processed prior to January 2nd are advised to submit all documentation and related forms for that request no later than Thursday, December 17th.** Requests include, but are not limited to: requests for an I-20/DS-2019 extension; practical training requests (CPT, OPT, or STEM OPT); travel signature requests; and any requests for a new I-20/DS-2918. If you do not submit all required documents by December 17th we may not be able to process your request before the office closes for the holiday.
- **The ISSS@albany.edu inbox will be monitored on a limited basis between December 25th-January 1st for urgent and unforeseen cases (please see below).**
- **In case of emergency** during our office closure, please contact the University Police Department at 518-442-3131. (For example, if you are delayed at an airport because you did not bring sufficient documentation or the officer has questions about your status).
- **If you have an urgent and unforeseen request** during the closure please email ISSS@albany.edu. Examples of urgent and unforeseen requests may include: lost I-20 while travelling abroad; an urgent need for an I-20 extension that could not be requested prior to the closure due to reasons beyond your control; unforeseen travel emergencies. Because the ISSS@albany.edu inbox will only be monitored on a limited basis during this
time-frame we ask that students make every effort to submit any requests possible prior to December 17th so that requests can be effectively addressed.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding with the above and wish you all a happy and safe holiday season!

ISSS Seeking Orientation Assistant Applicants for Spring 2021 Orientation

ISSS is seeking Orientation Assistants to assist with welcoming our new students by acting as peer mentors, guides, and facilitating events and activities throughout the week. ISSS hosts a New International Student Orientation program every Fall and Spring semester. This program provides a warm and information reception for new international students. A successful applicant must have a friendly, helpful, and understanding attitude toward new students and be able to work with a culturally diverse group of students.

In Spring 2021, the ISSS Orientation will be fully remote. This means that Orientation Assistants would work remotely, primarily over Zoom. However, applicants must be physically present in the U.S. between January 21st-February 1st to qualify for student assistant employment. In order for students to be hired they must also be pre-registered for Spring 2021.

The 8-10 students selected for Orientation Assistant positions for Spring will be paid $11.80 an hour for approximately 10 hours of work. The net amount will be somewhat less after taxes are withheld. All students may request a reference letter from the Director at the conclusion of the Orientation program.

Applications are due by January 2nd, 2021 at 12:00pm (noon) EST. To apply, click here: https://forms.gle/uHgdVq8L3MFIuDZ5LA

Planning Ahead for 2021: Check Website and UAlbany Email Often for Updates

As we look ahead to the Spring 2021 term we want to remind students to please continue checking their Albany email accounts and the University website for updates throughout the break.

DHS has not yet released guidance for Spring 2021. Students should be prepared to make updates to their course schedule or plans should this new guidance require it. ISSS will continue to inform, support and advise students on any new developments. ISSS will email students when any new guidance is released to further explain how that guidance applies to University at Albany students. If you have questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

Students should also keep themselves informed on University quarantining and testing
requirements (these are in addition to any NYS quarantining requirements: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory). Keep yourself informed by checking your Albany email and the University's COVID-19 website for the latest information: https://www.albany.edu/covid-19

In addition, ISSS maintains a COVID-19 FAQ specifically for international students, which you can find on our website here: https://www.albany.edu/isss/93904.php

**Winter Break Travel Reminders & NYS Quarantine Requirements**

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.

Students remaining in the U.S. are cautioned if travelling to any state or country which is on the NYS Governor's high risk list, as they may be required to quarantine for 14 days upon return to New York State. This list includes most countries and states. Please review the NYS website for more information: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory

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**

**UAlbany Mind Studies Talk: Moral Imagination**
In its third and final event of the Fall 2020 Speaker Series, the UAlbany Mind Studies Association (UAMSA) is pleased to announce

**Social Justice Action Committee for Racial Equity**
Are you interested in getting involved with a group on campus that is working to promote racial equity? Join SJAC (the Social Justice
that Brendan Gaesser (Psychology) will be giving a talk entitled "Moral Imagination". All UAlbany students and faculty are invited to attend. The talk will place on Friday, 12/11, at 6 p.m. If interested in attending this talk, please email us at UAMSA@albany.edu for the Zoom link.

Through this speaker series, UAMSA hopes to promote interdisciplinary engagement on all things mind-related throughout the UAlbany community. Future talks will be given by faculty from other departments. If you have any questions or would like more information (such as information on upcoming talks), please email us at UAMSA@albany.edu. To subscribe to our listserv and receive our future communications, email listserv@listserv.albany.edu with a blank subject and the text "subscribe MINDSTUDIES".

Unsubscribe

1400 Washington Avenue SL G-40 Albany NY 12222

ISSS@albany.edu
https://www.albany.edu/iss

The information contained in this email is provided as a service to international students, faculty and staff at the University at Albany. It does not constitute legal advice. We try to provide useful information, but we make no claims, promises or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of the information contained in this email or any associated site or form. Neither the University at Albany nor ISSS is responsible for any errors or omissions contained in this email, or for the results obtained from the use of this information. Nothing provided herein should be used as a substitute for the advice of competent legal counsel; students may wish to consult an immigration attorney on the specifics of their case as needed.