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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

Advisement Ending at 12:30pm next Friday, May 3rd

In preparation for the International Celebration, ISSS Walk-in Advisement (including phone advisement) will end early next Friday, May 3rd. All advisement will end at 12:30pm that day. Thank you for your cooperation as we celebrate our graduates.

Friday ISSS Workshop - OPT Workshop Today at 3:30 in SL G-05

OPT Workshop TODAY April 26th at 3:30pm in SL G-05. A full schedule is available here.

Travel Signature Day on Thursday 5/2, 3:00-4:30pm

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 traveling 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. Download the schedule here. Please also note that the signature day
originally scheduled for May 3rd has been moved to **May 2nd.**

**General Registration Information**

USCIS requires that F-1 and J-1 students maintain full-time enrollment each semester. At the University at Albany, **full time enrollment is defined** as:

- Undergraduate students- registration for **12 credits or more**
- Graduate students- registration for **9 credits or more**
Additionally, there is a limit on the number of fully on-line credits you can take each semester. You can count only ONE fully on-line class (or 3 credits) toward the minimum number of credits you need for full-time enrollment each semester. If you only need one course to complete your program of study, that course must be taken and UAlbany and cannot be a fully on-line class.

If you plan to complete all of your required course work over winter or summer sessions, you must talk with ISSS before registering for classes.

There are limited exceptions to the full-time enrollment rule. These may be found on the Reduced Course Load Authorization form. If believe are eligible for a Reduced Course Load (RCL) and have not already turned in the form, please have your academic advisor fill out and sign the form. You must submit the form to ISSS before September 9, 2019. If you do not submit this form, you may be in violation of your visa status.

A student who does not follow the regulations of their visa category will have ‘failed to maintain lawful student immigration status’. Failure to maintain lawful student immigration status is a serious violation of the law which can result in the following: loss of legal immigration status; accrual of unlawful presence and a potential bar on reentering the US; the need to depart the US; and/or the loss of eligibility for future benefits and statuses.

If you are graduating this May and plan to apply for Post Completion OPT, please begin this process as soon as possible. If you do not plan to return and continue your studies at Albany for Fall 2019, please complete the Departure form and return it to the ISSS office. You will also need to withdraw from the university by contacting your academic advisor.

If you have any questions, please e-mail isss@albany.edu or come to talk with us during Walk-in Advising hours.
**Summer Graduation Information**

NOTE: This is important general information about summer. It is not an evaluation of your summer registration or specific plans.

Please read this information carefully and use it to evaluate your summer plans.

You can also refer to our website for additional information:

[https://www.albany.edu/iss/85532.php](https://www.albany.edu/iss/85532.php).

For students who will be registered in Fall 2019, summer is a vacation term. A student does not have to register for any classes at all, or can register for whichever classes they want.

However, if a student plans to graduate at the end of Summer Session then summer is considered a regular semester and there are registration rules to follow. To maintain F1/J1 status and stay in the US (including applying for OPT) a student who is graduating in summer must follow the same registration requirements as during the fall and spring semesters. These requirements include, but at not limited to:

- Master’s and bachelor’s degree students must be registered full time at the University at Albany. During the summer, full time enrollment is 6 credits. These credits must be taken during the same or overlapping summer sessions. Registration at another school does not fulfill the UAlbany registration requirements, although cross registration may be possible.
- If a student needs less than 6 credits in order to graduate, then a Reduced Course Load form must be authorized by the ISSS office.
- Registration in fully on-line classes are limited. Students must take at least one in-person or hybrid class. Additional classes can be fully on-line. If a student will be registered for only one course, it cannot be fully online.
- For PhD candidates there is no summer section for 899, so a PhD student who has been admitted to candidacy does not need to register for the summer term, even if he or she is graduating in August or using summer CPT. The student must have been registered in that spring.
As the rules for Summer graduation for international students can sometimes be confusing, it is strongly recommended that any student considering graduation after Summer Session speak with an ISSS advisor prior to registering for summer classes here at UAlbany or at another school.

Please visit the ISSS office during Walk-in Advising if you have any questions.

3. Other ISSS Updates and Events

OPT/CPT Workshop Schedule

ISSS has weekly employment workshops, either for CPT authorization or OPT authorization. Students must attend one of these workshops before applying for OPT. If you are graduating in May, you can begin applying for OPT. Remember that USCIS estimates up to 3-5 months for processing of an OPT application. An OPT workshop is TODAY, April 26th at 3pm in SL G-05. To view a full schedule, click here.

CPT and OPT Workshops

Spring 2019

CPT Workshops
- Tuesday 2/5 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Wednesday 3/13 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Friday 4/19 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05

Other Important Dates
- February 16th, 2019: First day USCIS may receive OPT requests from December 2018 graduates
- May 16th, 2019: Program end date for May graduates
- July 14th, 2019: Latest OPT start date for May graduates to request. All OPT applications for May graduates must be received by USCIS before this date.

OPT Workshops
- Friday, 1/25 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Tuesday, 1/29 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Monday, 2/4 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Friday 2/15 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Tuesday 2/19 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Friday 3/1 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Thursday 3/7 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Friday 3/29 – 3:30-5:00pm, SL G05
- Tuesday, 4/2 – 3:30pm-5:00pm, SL G05
- Monday, 4/8 – 3:30pm-5:00pm, SL G05
- Friday 4/12 – 3:30pm-5:00pm, SL G05
- Tuesday 4/30 – 3:30pm-5:00pm, SL G05
- Monday, 5/13 – 3:30pm-5:00pm, SL G05
Cultural Connections Eboard Application

Cultural Connections is looking for candidates for Eboard members. Please apply through this link: https://forms.gle/BdERQ7qE6geBf5Z77

You can apply for the following positions:

Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary
Event Coordinator (2)
Language Chatting Room Coordinator (2)
Social Media Representative (2)

Application Deadline: April 16th, 2019
Interviews April 17 -19th, 2019

Please use the link below to apply and send your RESUME to
culturalconnectionsifpp@gmail.com
https://forms.gle/BdERQ7qE6geBf5Z77
Sign Up to be an International Buddy, Fall 2019!

Do you want to be a buddy for new coming international students during the Summer and Fall 2019? Did you miss the opportunity last semester? Click here (https://goo.gl/forms/veeDLtLnUIfc0KVD2) to sign up.

The International Buddy Program is designed to provide an opportunity for newly admitted international students to know current UAlbany students, and the ultimate goal of the Buddies Program is to promote understanding and friendship among different culture groups and to utilize the culturally dynamic environment on the UAlbany campus.
4. University at Albany Events

Click Here for a full list of upcoming UAlbany events!

Great Dane Drive - NYS DMV 5 Hour Class
Saturday, April 27
Campus Center Room 165A
Looking to get your NYS Driver's License? Join Orientation & Transition Programs for the required NYS DMV 5 Hour Class exclusive to members of the UAlbany community and courtesy of Albany Driving School. No sign up is required, however seats are limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. Be sure to bring your learner's permit and $45 in the form of cash or check. Noon-5 p.m. in the Campus Center's Student Success Center, Room 165A.

Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition
Friday, May 3, 2019 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
University Art Museum Fine Arts Bldg.
For more info, click here.
The Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition features work produced by candidates for the University at Albany Art Department’s three-year, 60 credit hour program of intensive training and study in traditional and contemporary fine art practices. Museum Hours: Tuesday, 10 am – 7 pm; Wednesday - Friday, 10 am – 5 pm; Saturday, noon - 4 pm. Closed May 9 all day and May 10 until 3 pm for MFA oral examinations. Expanded Commencement Hours: Saturday, May 18 and Sunday, May 19, 11:30 am – 4 pm.

The Writing Center - Free 1 hour, one-on-one writing tutorials
Monday through Friday
The Writing Center, Humanities Bldg 140
For more info, click here.
The Writing Center, located in the Humanities Building Room 140, offers free, 1-hour writing tutorials for all students. At the Writing Center, you can have a conversation about your writing project with a writing tutor of your choice. Our goal is to help you become better writers, and help you think through your writing process, rather than simply "fixing" your writing for you. Our tutors are diverse, with wide ranging professional and academic
interests. Some of our tutors speak Mandarin, Korean, Spanish and German. In order to make an appointment, you can call directly at 518-442-4061 or fill out the form here.

Qingyang Liu Running for Vice President of GSA

Qingyang Liu, one of the UAlbany’s international students, is asking for your vote and support for becoming Vice President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and representing our international student body. Please remember to vote on Myinvolvement.org from April 24 – April 28, 2019. Qingyang promises to be the voice of international students’ pursuits and believes together, she and international students on campus can create a stronger and better future of University at Albany!!
5. Capital District Events

The 71st Annual Albany Tulip Festival
Saturday - Sunday, May 11 - 12
Washington Park, Albany
For more info, click here.

The Tulip Festival is Albany’s signature spring event. Featuring annual traditions rooted in the city’s rich Dutch heritage, nearly one hundred artisans selling their handmade crafts, a fine arts show, delicious food, the KidZone family fun destination, two stages of world-class live entertainment and more than 140,000 tulips in 150 different varieties, the Tulip Festival is a sparkling showcase of local culture and business. It all takes place in historic Washington Park, the 81-acre “crown jewel” of the City.
**Pilobolus Dance Theatre**
Saturday, April 27, 8 - 10 PM
The Egg Empire State Plaza, Albany
To purchase tickets, click [here](#).

One of America’s most innovative and entertaining companies performs **Come to Your Senses** - a multisensory experience featuring live on stage performances alongside transmedia digital creations exploring the connection between the human body and the analog world around us.

**Shakespeare in Love**
Tuesday, April 16 - Sunday, May 12
[Capital Repertory Theatre](111 N. Pearl St.)
For tickets and more info, click [here](#).

Young Will Shakespeare has writer’s block... the deadline for his new play is fast approaching
but he desperately needs some inspiration. That is, until he finds his muse — Viola. This beautiful young woman is Will’s greatest admirer and will stop at nothing (including donning a mustache) to appear in his next play. As love blossoms, so does the comedy, great romance and playwriting. Join the Theatre for this immersive and sumptuous adaptation of the Academy Award-winning screenplay, complete with sword fights, secret trysts, backstage disasters, and a dog.

**People of New York Exhibition**

Daily until December 31, 2019 @ 7 AM - 7 PM

New York State Capitol

For more info, click [here](#).

Free admission

Through images, objects, and stories, this exhibition features the people of New York - past and present — and our firsthand accounts of perseverance and migration. It showcases our individual fights for inclusive freedom to establish a future state built on liberty and opportunity. The five sections of this exhibition explore specific themes that have contributed to shaping New York State’s population and illustrate how a legacy of diversity began, spread, and continues to form our New York identity.