May 7, 2021

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Email us at ISSS@albany.edu
Schedule a Zoom appointment with us: https://calendly.com/ualbanyisss1/phoneadvisement
Summer Travel Updates

If you are a continuing student currently inside the U.S. our office does not recommend international travel outside the U.S. this summer, if avoidable. As we have seen, travel risks are ongoing and the situation can change with little notice. The U.S. could impose further travel restrictions; flights can be limited or cancelled; and testing requirements can change.

**We understand a student may have personal circumstances which require them to travel this summer. If you must travel, please contact ISSS for case by case advisement. Many factors may need to be considered as part of your travel plans.** We want to remind students who are currently inside the U.S. that it is okay if the F-1 or J-1 visa expires while you’re within the United States; a valid F-1 or J-1 visa is only needed to enter the U.S. as a F-1 or J-1 student. While inside the U.S. students should keep their passport and I-20 or DS-2019 active to maintain status.

We do not recommend international travel at this time, particularly if your visa is expired or will be expiring. Many embassies and consulates still have very limited availability for visa renewals. Therefore, trying to renew a visa at this time is very difficult, and students should avoid travel if possible.

**New students or students currently outside the U.S. who expect to travel to the U.S. for Fall courses** should contact ISSS for case by case advisement and to prepare for travel. More information for students traveling to the U.S. is on our website: [https://www.albany.edu/isss/93904.php#fall%202021](https://www.albany.edu/isss/93904.php#fall%202021)

On April 26th, the U.S. Department of State granted a national interest exception waiver to certain F-1 and J-1 students travelling from China, Iran, Brazil, South Africa, the Schengen Region, United Kingdom and Ireland. U.S. Department of State also added India to this list on April 30, 2021. This waiver exempts certain F-1 and J-1 students from the travel restrictions that restricted some individuals from traveling directly to the U.S. from those countries.

The announcement states that: “Students with valid F-1 and M-1 visas intending to begin or continue an academic program commencing August 1, 2021 or later do not need to contact an embassy or consulate to seek an individual NIE to travel. They may enter the United States no earlier than 30 days before the start of their academic studies.”

**New students** entering the U.S. on an initial I-20 with an August 15, 2021 start date may enter starting on July 16, 2021 (the date listed as the earliest date of admission on the I-20).

Clarification is being sought on whether **continuing students** returning to the U.S. from these countries/regions must wait until 30 days before the start of Fall classes to seek entry (classes start August 23, 2021; 30 days prior is July 24, 2021) or if they may enter before then.

Clarification is also being sought on whether **F-1 students on OPT** qualify for this exemption.
When entering the U.S., students must have a valid I-20/DS-2019 (continuing students must have a travel signature from within the past 1 year of re-entry); a valid F-1/J-1 visa; a valid passport (with 6 months validity remaining); and proof of a negative COVID test or COVID recovery (this is required for vaccinated travelers as well).

ISSS will continue to update students as the situation develops. More information can be found on NAFSA’s website here: https://www.nafsa.org/regulatory-information/covid-19-restrictions-us-visas-and-entry#nieniv

DHS Guidance & International Student Academic Continuity- Fall 2021

It has been determined that the University at Albany will continue to provide academic continuity plans to overseas-based international students (new and continuing) unable to return to the U.S. for the fall 2021 semester. The University will therefore continue the process of working with undergraduate students through CIEGS and Academic Advisement Services while graduate students will need to work with Graduate Education/academic departments for scheduling assistance. As the University transitions back to in-person instruction, fully remote/online schedules will be limited to overseas students unable to return to the U.S. for the upcoming semester due to circumstances beyond their control, such as inability to obtain a visa, impeding timely travel for fall semester classes, or travel ban impositions. Because fully remote/online schedules will be limited, all other international students should expect that their course schedules will include in-person instruction in Albany this Fall. Graduate students may be able to make other arrangements if approved by their academic department.

On April 26th, DHS announced a continuance of its March 2020 guidance. Students who were actively enrolled and in an active F-1 or J-1 SEVIS status as of March 9, 2020 may enroll in a fully online course of study and maintain status during Fall 2021; this includes continuing students enrolled from outside the U.S. who are unable to return in-person in Fall 2021 (full-time registration is still required). Students who do not meet this criteria are required, according to DHS guidance, to enroll in a minimum of one in-person or blended/hybrid course to maintain F-1 or J-1 status during Fall 2021. While DHS has extended flexibility with online course loads, course modality availability may differ depending on a student’s level of study and/or academic program.

Tax Filing + Sprintax Code for 2020 Tax Year- Taxes Due May 17

ISSS has purchased Sprintax tax software to help international students and scholars to file their 2020 federal tax return. Tax returns are now due on May 17, 2021. To obtain a Sprintax tax code, please email isss@albany.edu. Please include the following information in your email: first & last name, student id number, and the name of your employer.

If you were not employed, please go to: https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf to obtain form 8843. All F and J students who were in the U.S. in 2020 must file the 8843, even if they had no income. More information on the 8843 form is available on ISSS's website here: https://www.albany.edu/issss/68229.php#form8843
Sprintax is now also approved by the IRS for E-Filing of Non-Resident Tax Returns with the IRS. For more information, ask Sprintax or view their announcement here: http://blog.sprintax.com/nonresident-federal-tax-efiling-live/

Fraudulent Email Warning from Sprintax

Sprintax has alerted our office to a fraudulent email some students have reported receiving; please see above image. The email claims to be the IRS and requests credit card information to provide a student an additional refund. This is fraudulent and an attempt to steal your credit card information.
The IRS will not email or call students. If you receive an email or phone call claiming to be by the IRS, please treat it as fraudulent and do not provide any personal or financial information.

Click Read More for more information on avoiding frauds/scams.

Virtual International Celebration May 22nd

CIEGS and ISSS will host a virtual International Celebration for Spring 2021 graduates and their families on Saturday, May 22nd at 9:30am EST. A Zoom link will be sent after 5/15 to spring 2021 graduating students.
We look forward to celebrating with you!

This is a post-Commencement event. If you are looking for information on University Commencement, please visit their website for the latest updates: https://www.albany.edu/commencement

ISSS Seeking OA Applicants for Fall 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.

We are planning both in-person and virtual events as a part of our Fall 2021 International Orientation. Applicants must plan to be physically present in Albany between August 15-August 21. If selected for the position you must be enrolled in Fall 2021 to be hired.

Orientation Assistants will be paid $12.50 an hour for approximately 10-12 hours of work.

Applications are due by Monday, May 17 at 12:00pm (noon) EST. To apply, click here: https://forms.gle/9rfVmMP8mZwCzw86
ISSS Buddy Program-- Volunteers Needed to Help New Students in Fall 2021

Want to help welcome new international students to the University, learn about a new culture, and participate in fun events and activities?

ISSS is seeking current students to volunteer as "Buddies" to welcome new international students in Fall 2021. This program pairs current students with new students to promote cultural exchange and help welcome new students to UAlbany.

To volunteer, please register here: https://forms.gle/MUqk7p9afsj3gipN9
Contribute Your Voice- What Does it Mean to be Asian in America?

The Racial Justice Committee is seeking to gather creative expressions — in the form of either written reflections, photos, artwork, or videos — from campus community members that answer this question: What does it mean to be Asian in America?

Submit your creative expression online by May 11, 2021: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=lCHStdUxP0eeHYBP3L2IrBxFGu1pxZ1Gkd2CPZI8gFUQktVRFlVQ0hNVlVRQUU4V1c4MFZVVVIISS4u

All contributions will be compiled and shared with the UAlbany community during Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May.

May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, which affords our greater campus community time to reflect on the rich heritage and significant contributions of those in the greater Asian and Pacific descent communities, often referred to as AAPI.

These communities not only include Asian/Pacific Islander/American individuals who identify as Asian nationals, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders, but also those who do not identify as AAPI community members, but are perceived as such and marginalized as a result. We use AAPI to refer to this broad, diverse population and their various intersectional identities.

Following a year that has regrettably been marked by bias acts levied against our AAPI neighbors, friends and colleagues, let us recognize and support those in our community who may be fearful, anxious, frustrated and confused by the violence and racism targeted at individuals who are perceived as, or identify as, AAPI.

Check out the initiatives and other updates from the Racial Justice Committee: https://www.albany.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/racial-justice-committee
Participants Needed: Research Project Focusing on Chinese Native Speakers

Are you curious about your writing proficiency? We are looking for you.

**ACADEMIC WRITING ACROSS CULTURES!**

Are you curious about how the two languages in your mind (English and Chinese) interact with each other when you write? Do you want to test your language fluency and language articulation when you see a picture? Explore your writing skills in academic writing by doing a vocabulary survey.

Join this study if you are:
- a Chinese native speaker
- currently a university student who is studying or residing in USA and has an upper-intermediate English language proficiency (or satisfy the English language requirement for university entrance)

Please contact the principle researcher via mdinh@albany.edu to schedule a time convenient for you.

Participation Time Required: 50 min for questionnaire completion via Zoom (no video or identity required). You will receive a $15 Amazon gift card after completing the survey.

Are you a Chinese native speakers who are studying in the United States for more than 3 years? Have you ever wondered if the Chinese language affects your English writing and vice versa? Let’s explore how your brain works with two languages in your bilingual mind by joining my research!
My name is Hanh Dinh. I am a PhD student at the Department of Educational Theory and Practice, School of Education at SUNY Albany. I am reaching out to you for my dissertation research because your input can help me to investigate how Chinese undergraduate and graduate students learn vocabulary and use two languages in their academic study. If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me at mdinh@albany.edu to schedule a one-time 50-minute meeting via Zoom at your most convenient time. You will be given a questionnaire to complete within the meeting. Your identity and contact information will always be kept confidential, so a Zoom meeting does not require video or any recording. The compensation for your time is $15 Amazon e-giftcard.

Thank you so much for your consideration. I enclose a recruitment flyer for your reference.

Best wishes,
Hanh Dinh

**ETAP 830 Advanced Seminar in Language in Education**
**Bilingualism and Multilingualism Perspectives**

Format: Online synchronous, 4:30-7:15 MONDAY
SUNY Distinguish Professor Istvan Kecskes

This course will provide an overview of the field of bilingualism and multilingualism from a linguistic, psychological and educational perspective. It will examine how bi-and multilinguals differ from monolinguals in language use, thinking, behavior and social identity. Special attention will be given to the cognitive effects of multilingualism, types of language contacts, code-switching, effect of age and bilingual and multilingual education and policy. Bilingual programs in European and Asian settings will be compared to U.S. and Canadian programs to explain how geopolitics, globalization, and cultural differences affect educational policy, structure, and the effectiveness of educational programs. The course can be helpful for doctoral students in Social Sciences and Humanities department or international doctoral students, who want to know more about the nature and the impact of bi-/multi-lingualism on the science of learning, intercultural communication, equity, and policy-making.

If you want to register for this course, please contact Dr. Kecskes at ikecskes@albany.edu
Upcoming Events

2021 Virtual Albany Tulip Festival

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 in-person Albany Tulip Festival will instead be a Virtual Tulip Festival celebration throughout the month of May. The City of Albany has announced that similar to the 2020 Virtual Tulip Fest, this year's virtual event will feature great musical performances from local talents in unique locations, City of Albany Gardeners taking you on a tour of the tulip beds, fun videos for the kids to enjoy, and a whole lot more! Videos will premiere on the City of Albany's YouTube Page "Albany Events," on their Facebook @AlbanyNYevents, as well as on Public Access Channel Albany 1302! Stay tuned for schedule updates!

Albany YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAVst-gG_wYIdSOQwWIZwmQ
Albany Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/albanyNYevents

UAlbany Dance Council Spring Show 5/7

Friday (5/7) Spring Show 2021! Refer to emails for sign-ups and more important details.
Friday, May 7 2021 at 6:00 PM EDT to 9:00 PM EDT
Location: Performing Arts Center

Read More
Graduate School General Questions
Virtual Meet Up 5/11

Tuesday, May 11th from 2-3 pm, Online,

Join our current graduate students and other prospective students to learn more about graduate programs at UAlbany and get your questions answered about life as a graduate student.

Register for this event at https://admissions.albany.edu/register/MeetUp_May11

Free Final Exams Snacks Next Week

Stop by the Campus Center Small Fountain from 2-4pm next week (May 10-May 14) to grab free snacks! Student ID is required.

Mindful Mondays

Join CAPS every Monday from 4:00-4:30pm for an intentional moment to relieve stress, connect with yourself, and refocus your mind. Join via Zoom with Meeting ID 942 5908 1084 and Passcode UAMindful. The only requirement is to be on time so that we can all enjoy the meditation distraction free together.

Group Fitness Schedule

Bollywood Zumba, Core Blast, HIIT, Group Strength, Pilates and More!
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