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.

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DHS Guidance for Fall 2020 Released, Read ISSS's Latest Policy Guidance

On July 24, 2020 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) updated its policy guidance for international student study for fall 2020. On July 25, 2020 ISSS updated its ISSS Policy Guidance for International Student Study in Fall 2020 which is available by clicking "Read More" below. This document replaces the Preliminary ISSS Guidance Memo-Fall 2020, which was intended for the interim as universities across the U.S. waited for updated policy guidance for fall student from ICE/SEVP. We ask the UAlbany community, including international students, faculty and staff who advise/counsel international students to read the new ISSS Policy Guidance, a summary of the main points of which are below:

- Continuing students who are already in the U.S. or currently overseas with the intention of returning to the U.S. for fall 2020 study may be registered for a fully online schedule in fall 2020. However, ISSS still recommends (although not required) that continuing students intending to return to the U.S. for fall 2020 register for at least one course or one credit that in person or blended/hybrid, which the student could convert to an online course after arriving to campus if preferable. ISSS suggests this action since it still possible. depending on when an international student travels and to what U.S. port of entry they arrive, that a border agent might ask them to verify they do not have a fully online schedule.
- New international students intending to enter the U.S. to study for fall 2020 MUST register for at least one course or one credit that is in person or blended hybrid.
- F-1 students currently active in SEVIS who are now overseas and choose to study full-time outside of the US for fall 2020 may remain active in SEVIS for the fall semester.
- Should the university have to move to an all remote instruction model due to an outbreak, continuing international students may remain in the U.S. and study fully online during fall 2020. However, new international students will have needed to complete an in-person component of their in-person or blended/hybrid course in order to remain in the U.S.

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Quarantine and Testing Requirements for Fall 2020

The University has provided coronavirus related protocol, including quarantine and COVID testing requirements. Please refer to the updated UAlbany COVID-19 website, Health and Safety section.

Students with questions about the quarantine and testing requirements should monitor the University's official website for updates and check their email for additional University communication on this matter. Please also join us Monday for a special webinar (see below).

To see an FAQ for International Students, please click "Read More" below.

READ MORE
Upcoming UAlbany Presentation for Students and Parents: Follow-up Q&A on Fall 2020 Health & Safety: COVID Testing and Quarantining

Monday, August 3rd, 2020

10:00 A.M. EST

https://albany.zoom.us/j/93074699820

After reviewing the recording of the Monday, July 27th webinar style presentation with expert panelists (https://albany.zoom.us/rec/share/xtVwFbzyyl9lIZdKS1AKcc5Z7Q660aaa80Cld_fcOzhkIXjpt2d37yPcsocQ6lAR?startTime=1595896327000), learn more through an overview of the University’s Health and Safety Plan from International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Director Michael Elliott and ask your health and safety related questions.

Know Your Rights During International Travel Webinar
Next Wednesday

Know Your Rights During International Travel Webinar

Time: Aug 5, 2020 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Presenters: Immigration Attorneys Mr. Jim Milstein (PLSNY) and Mr. Seth Leech (Whiteman, Ostermann and Hannah)

About: It is important to know your rights when travelling internationally. This event special will feature feedback from experienced immigration attorneys on what international travellers should know when seeking entry to the U.S.

Join Zoom Meeting https://albany.zoom.us/j/92734553531

Travelling to the U.S. Soon? Please read our recommendations for new and continuing students

Continuing Students:
First, if you have not already done so please review our latest policy guidance for Fall 2020 above.

While this guidance allows continuing students to enroll in a fully online schedule, we are hearing reports
from the field that students are encountering issues at the border if they don’t have an I-20 with an annotation about their course instructional modes for Fall.

As such, if you are planning to try to travel to the U.S. to study this Fall, you have the option to request a new I-20 from our office with an annotation about Fall classes. Please review the details below if this is your plan:

- There are reports that some CBP officers are asking students about how many online classes they’re taking. Based on this, we want to reiterate our prior recommendation that any student travelling to the U.S. for study this Fall register for at least one course (or one credit) or in-person or blended/hybrid study to be able to explain to the border officer why your in-person presence is needed for Fall.
- Please be aware that your return to the U.S. may be more challenging than what you’ve experienced in the past based on the fluctuating guidance. Now more than ever, make sure you have the required documentation (I-20 signed for travel within the past year, valid passport, and valid visa) and recommended documentation (showing that your enrollment is not fully online). This could include a copy of your course schedule showing that the course is being conducted in a classroom, a letter from the instructor or academic advisor, etc… A student’s entry to the U.S. can never be guaranteed because this is up to the discretion of the border officer.
- To request a new I-20 with the annotation, please complete the Request an Update I-20 Eform and select the reason of “I am travelling soon and need a travel signature.” ISSS will then email you a new I-20. The Eform is available here: https://www.albany.edu/isss/91185.php. You can also carry this letter: https://www.albany.edu/isss/assets/Fall_2020_Letter.pdf.
- Keep checking your emails for updates on any DHS guidance changes.

**New Students:**

New international students intending to enter the U.S. to study for fall 2020 MUST register for at least one course or one credit that is in person or blended hybrid.

We are hearing reports from the field that students are encountering issues at the consulate or at the border if they don’t have an I-20 with an annotation about their course instructional modes for Fall.

As such, if you are planning to try to travel to the U.S. to study this Fall, you have the option to request a new I-20 from Admissions with an annotation about Fall classes. Please review the details below if this is your plan:

- There are reports that some CBP officers are asking students about how many online classes they’re taking. Please remember that as a new student you cannot enter the U.S. this Fall if you are taking a fully online schedule.
- Please be aware that your entry to the U.S. may be more challenging than what you’ve experienced in the past based on the fluctuating guidance. Now more than ever, make sure you have the required documentation (I-20, valid passport, and valid F-1 visa) and recommended documentation (showing that your enrollment is not fully online). This could include a copy of your course schedule showing that the course is being conducted in a classroom, a letter from the instructor or academic advisor, etc… You can also carry this letter: https://www.albany.edu/isss/assets/Fall_2020_Letter.pdf. A student’s entry to the U.S. can never be guaranteed because this is up to the discretion of the border officer.
- To request a new I-20 with the annotation, please contact Undergraduate Admissions (UGInternational@albany.edu) or Graduate Admissions (szacosta@albany.edu)
- Keep checking your emails for updates on any DHS guidance changes.

If you are planning to study online from outside the U.S. this Fall no further action is needed at this time.
Fraud/Scam Alert From FBI

Recently, the Albany FBI Field Office has shared a FBI Liaison Information Report which provides information related to “Criminals Posing as Chinese Law Enforcement in Phone Scams to Target Chinese Citizens on Student Visas at U.S.-Based Colleges and Universities for Financial Gain.”

In light of this information, we ask that students please take the time to review our page with information for identifying fraudulent calls and emails, and what you should do to protect yourself. Please click "Read More" below.

READ MORE

ISSS Seeking Graduate Assistant for Academic Year 2020-2021

The International Student and Scholar Services Office is seeking applicants for a graduate student assistant position for the 2020-2021 academic year. The position is expected to start in August 2020.

The work obligation is 20 hours per week during the appointed period. Work during winter and summer break will be discussed with a supervisor. A weekly work schedule will be agreed upon with the supervisor no later than the first week of classes for the semester. Availability during summers to continue work as a student assistant is preferred.

Responsibilities for this position are listed below (Click "Read More"). Specific responsibilities for this Graduate Assistant include: ISSS programs and special projects, designing the ISSS weekly newsletter; assisting ISSS staff with document processing, Orientation programming, and other programs within the office.

To be eligible, the student must be physically present in the United States, though the majority of work will be done remotely from your home. To apply, please complete this Google Form (click "Read More") email your resume and cover letter to ISSS@albany.edu. Please include your full name and UAlbany ID number in the email, and format your subject line “GA Application Materials, Name.” Applications are due by August 11, 2020 to be considered.

Benefits:

$12,500 stipend for the academic year and health insurance coverage for the academic year
No tuition waiver or other benefits available

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IIE Launches Emergency Student Fund
The Institute of International Education’s Emergency Student Fund (ESF) is issuing a second call for IIENetwork Member institutions in the United States to nominate international students who are impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic for an ESF award. The ESF: COVID-19 Response will provide grants of $1,500 to selected students to support their educational, living or health-related expenses.

If you would like to be considered for the award, please email ISSS@albany.edu by Friday, August 7th with the following information: your current U.S. address; field of study; expected graduation date; brief description of your financial situation in Summer 2020, explaining how the crisis directly impacted you financially and expenses you hope the award will help you cover; and any other pertinent information you would like the nominator to know.

This American Life Podcast

This popular podcast from NPR covers a wide range of topics, giving a peak into everyday life for everyday people.

Phantom Menace: Keeping Students and Schools Safe in Cyberspace

Join the School of Education for this event on August 6th. Click "Read More" below.

Binging with Babish

Need a new recipe? Check out this Youtube channel for fun recipes!