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ISSO Weekly Newsletter, December 5, 2019

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ISSO Weekly Newsletter

Thursday, December 5, 2019

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

International Coffee Hour

International Coffee Hour today in the International Students and Scholars Office, 113 Maucker Union has been cancelled. Please join us on December 12 from 3-4 pm for our last coffee hour of the semester!

Winter Clothing Drive

The International Student and Scholars Office winter clothing drive has been very successful. Coats, scarves, gloves, etc. are available to international students who are not prepared for the Iowa winter. Please come to 113 Maucker Union to pick up some items!

Casino Night December 5

The Campus Activities Board presents Casino Night Thursday, December 5 from 7-10 pm in the Maucker Union Central Ballroom. A fun night of casino games, great prizes and free snacks!

De-Stress Days December 9-11

Join Student Wellness Services and the Student Health Advisory Committee for De-Stress Days in the Maucker Union Ballroom on December 9-11 from 11 am to 2 pm each day. Activities will include puppies, coloring, bracelet making, walk the labyrinth, puzzles, hot tea/hot chocolate, inspirational rock painting and notes of gratitude.

Maucker Movies and De-Stress Event December 12

The movie Good Boys will be showing on Thursday, December 12 in the Maucker Union Ballroom at 8 pm. At 7 pm there will be crafts. Bring your own pillows and blankets.

New International Payment Features

International students now have the ability to pay with Flywire using the Make a Payment link in Student Center. After logging in and choosing "Go to My Student Center", click on the Make a Payment link. You will have the option to pay by electronic check (US bank account) or International Payment via Flywire. The process to make a payment through Flywire will not change. If you have questions on making international payments via Flywire, visit our [International Bank Payments](#) website, or contact student.accounts@uni.edu.

Winter Break ISSO Hours

We also want to remind you that The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) **will be closed from December 23 – 27 (Monday to Friday) and on January 1 (Wednesday)** for the winter break. The Office **will reopen on Thursday, January 2. Please make sure to complete any immigration or advising business with ISSO before December 17.** Otherwise, it will have to wait until Wednesday, January 2, 2020.

Now is the perfect time to **check your immigration documents (I-20 or DS-2019) for expiration so that there is time to extend** your status before December 17. For those who will **travel outside the U.S. over the winter break, please don't forget to check your I-20 or DS-2019** for a valid travel endorsement before you depart. In case of emergency, please call UNI Public Safety at 319-273-2712 or 911.

The Learning Center at Rod Library

All students are encouraged to use The Learning Center @ Rod Library for assistance with writing, math, science, and college reading and learning strategies. Beginning week two, The Learning Center (TLC) operates on a walk-in basis and is open 10:00 am to 10:00 pm Monday through Thursday. For more information, go to <https://tlc.uni.edu/tutoring>, email TheLearningCenter@uni.edu, call 319-273-6023, or visit the TLC desk located on the main floor of Rod Library. If you are unable to come in during normal tutoring hours, online tutoring is available through Smarthinking. You will need your CATID and passphrase to gain access. To access the Smarthinking platform go to <https://tlc.uni.edu/schedule>.

IMMIGRATION

Optional Practical Training (OPT) for Eligible F-1 Students

If you hold F-1 status and you are planning to graduate in December 2019, now is the perfect time to think about applying for Optional Practical Training as you are probably eligible for this 12 month period of employment authorization within the U.S. See our web site for more information about [OPT](#).

Travel Endorsement

If you plan to travel outside of the U.S. over the breaks and return to UNI to resume your studies, you must make sure that you have a valid **travel endorsement** on page 2 of your I-20 form or page 1 of your DS-2019 form. Travel endorsements are valid for one year, so new endorsements are only needed if your previous endorsement will expire before you plan to re-enter the U.S. If you are not sure if you need a travel endorsement, please check with us and we will be happy to review your documents.

Maintaining US Immigration Status

International students are responsible for **maintaining their U.S. immigration statuses**, and an important part of this is **always having a valid, unexpired I-20 or DS-2019 form**. We recommend that F-1 students check the "Program of Study" section near the center of their I-20 forms once per month to make sure they do not study past the program end date indicated in that section. J-1 students should always be aware of their DS-2019 form validity dates in section 3. Page 3 of all I-20 forms specifies that "If you cannot complete the educational program by the program end date on page 1 of your Form I-20, you should contact your DSO at least 15 days before program end date to request an extension." Ross Schupbach is your Principal DSO, and he is always happy to help when students need extensions.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

International Student Support Group

International Student Support Group starts on September 16 and will meet every Monday from 3:30-5:00 pm in the Student Health Center, 2nd floor. The International Student Support Group allows international students to share their experiences with others who can understand and relate to their concerns. To learn more about the group, you can consult a counselor by calling or walking into the counseling center from 8 am-4 pm, no appointment required. Contact 319-273-2676, Student Health Center, 2nd floor.

WANTED ADS

Babysitter Wanted

Looking for help babysitting/playing with two kids - a 4.5 year old boy and a 2.5 year old girl – at our house within walking distance from campus. Pay starting at \$11 an hour. Hours and schedule negotiable. If interested, contact Oksana at oksana.grybovych@uni.edu or 319-830-0212.

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Office hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m

The University of Northern Iowa provides transformative learning experiences that inspire students to embrace challenge, engage in critical inquiry and creative thought, and contribute to society.



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