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ISSO Weekly Newsletter, July 23, 2020

University of Northern Iowa. International Students and Scholars Office.

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ISSO Weekly Newsletter

Thursday, July 23, 2020

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Important Announcement: Reduced Operations in ISSO

ISSO staff are currently working on a reduced schedule. We want you to know that it will most likely take us longer to respond to your messages and to provide the high-quality services that you have come to expect from us. Despite the reductions, ISSO will remain open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. We care about you immensely and we will certainly do our best.

International Students and Scholars Office Online Services

Due to the public health and social distancing practices that have been instituted at UNI and in the state of Iowa, scheduled and walk-in appointments, and services with ISSO advisors will now be conducted online. Office hours will remain Monday-Friday, 8:00 am-4:30 pm. For information contact international.services@uni.edu or Julie.Hill@uni.edu, Immigration & Advising – Ross.Schupbach@uni.edu, Director – Isabela.Varela@uni.edu

Student Emergency Fund

The [Student Emergency Fund](#) assists University of Northern Iowa students by providing limited emergency financial assistance to currently enrolled students who are unable to meet immediate, essential expenses due to an unexpected emergency. Examples of unexpected emergency situations include accidents, illness, death of a family member, fire damage, or the need for temporary housing. Priority will be given to students whose tenure at the university may be at risk because of said expenses.

Rowe Scholarship Fund

As part of the efforts of the Secretariat for Integral Development of the OAS to help mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [Rowe Fund](#) is offering **\$2,000 scholarships** to international students from Latin American and Caribbean countries currently completing their studies in the United States. Learn more [here](#) and share.

The Learning Center at Rod Library

The Learning Center REMOTE (TLCRemote) is NOW OPEN. As long as The Learning Center@Rod Library remains closed to the public, TLCRemote will be available 24/7. UNI Students who need academic support can explore their options by going to <https://tlc.uni.edu/>. The alert homepage message instructs students to select “COVID 19 TLCRemote” to review current academic support options. Option #1 encourages students to take advantage of Smarthinking, a 24/7 online tutoring service. Option #2 directs students to our newly developed Zoom tutoring center where we offer half-hour tutoring for math/stats, science, writing, and academic coaching/specialty tutoring. Questions can be directed to TheLearningCenter@uni.edu

IMMIGRATION

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

If you hold F-1 status and you graduated in May 2020, 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. It takes USCIS approximately 3 months to process these applications. See our web site for more information about [OPT](#).

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

UNI Student Health Clinic Telehealth

The Student Health Clinic is moving to telehealth appointments only beginning Monday, March 23. The clinic will no longer provide face-to-face office visits, but will support students via telephone and Zoom telehealth visits. Students must call 319-273-2009 opt#1 to be assessed over the phone. Clinic staff will remain available 8-4:30 Monday through Friday. The Counseling Center will also provide mental health services via telehealth (through Zoom). Please call 319-273-2676 to schedule an appointment.

Student Health Insurance

The Student Health Clinic needs to know if you are planning to leave the US during summer break. You must email Connie Potter (connie.potter@uni.edu). You will need to provide the date that you are leaving and the date you are returning to the US. The Student Health Clinic will suspend your insurance coverage during that time. If you're not enrolled for the summer session and the Student Health Clinic does not hear from you, your coverage will automatically continue. It is important for you to tell the Health Clinic before you leave the US as they cannot remove the coverage when you return to UNI in the fall.

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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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