



International Student Services Newsletter

Office of International Programs

Block5, Volume V
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Spring 2017 Reminders for International Students

Happy New Year and welcome back to campus! As we begin a new semester please remember these important tips below:

⇒ **Please complete your “term check in” in Self-Service Banner**
As you know, in order to maintain your F-1 student status, you are required to keep a current residential address on record at all times. The Self-Service Banner (SSB) address used for reporting your U.S. address to SEVIS is the address type of “Residence Hall” for students living on-campus and the address type of “Temporary/Local” for students living off-campus, not any of the other address types available in Banner (such as Mailing/Home, etc.) Note: Your Temporary/Local address cannot be a post office box, foreign address, or Worner box campus address. No other check-in is required at the Office of International Programs (OIP).



⇒ **Check your documents!**
Anytime you travel, it is recommended that you print out your newest I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) website at www.cbp.gov/i94. Ensure that you were admitted in the correct status (F-1/J-1). Please be sure to review your documents regularly. Is all the information correct? Have you changed your name, country of citizenship, major, source of funding, or program end date? Is your passport valid at least six months in the future? Is your visa stamp expired? If any information has changed, please visit the OIP office during our drop-in advising hours for assistance. Also, if you obtained a new passport or a new F-1/J-1 visa stamp in your passport during Winter Break, please bring your new document to the OIP office so that we can make a photocopy of it for our records.

⇒ **Reminder to maintain full-time enrollment status**
Students holding F-1/J-1 status are required to be registered full-time (at least 3.0 credits/12 semester hours, not including any waiting lists) each semester. You must be fully enrolled (not including any waitlisted classes) by **Wednesday, February 22nd**. A reduced course load can be authorized by the OIP office only in limited circumstances. Approval must be obtained prior to dropping below a full-time course load. Contact the OIP office for more information.

⇒ **Spring Semester Tuition payment due February 1, 2017**
Review your student account charges through your online billing account and prepare to pay your billing invoice by the required deadline. If you have questions or concerns about your invoice, or if you would like to

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Beware of Tuition Payment Scams

As an international student, there are many unique challenges to overcome as you prepare for your education abroad. Unfortunately, this can include being the target of scammers who attempt to steal your tuition and educational payments for themselves—in indirect and subtle ways. Schools have reported an increase in unauthorized, non-school approved tuition payment companies (or individuals) stealing entire tuition payments from their students in the recent weeks. These scammers may even claim to have an affiliation with your school. They might offer you a tuition discount, currency exchange discounts, or make other promises in an attempt to confuse you before you are fully aware of your school’s official payment process.

To avoid the risk of fraud, follow these best practices when making your tuition payment:

- **Take online security precautions**
If you’re paying your school online, make sure the website is secure. The address of any site you may use to share personal or financial information should begin with https (for example, <https://www.flywire.com>), which

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Finishing Your Program of Study at CC in May 2017?

F-1 students who have maintained lawful status have a 60-day “grace period” following their program end date at CC to:

- **Depart the U.S.;**
- **Request a transfer of their SEVIS record to another school to begin a new program of study; or**
- **Apply for a change of nonimmigrant status**



Beware of Tuition Payment Scams (continued)

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ensures the data you provide is protected through encryption. Additionally, avoid using public or unsecured Wi-Fi when sharing sensitive information. If you get an email from a suspected scammer, NEVER click on any hyperlinks.

- **Always verify who you're speaking to**

Scammers may pose as a government agent and threaten to revoke your visa unless you send a payment to them immediately. They may also request your personal information—which you should never disclose until you have verified that the requestor is an actual government agent authorized to do so. If you receive any

communications from a person posing as an IRS or government agent, your first step is to research whether their requests are valid.

- **Don't share your information**

Credit card information, personal information (i.e., name, date of birth), and banking details should never be handed out to anyone without a contract or relationship with your university, and payment enablers that aren't verified as authorized by your university should be ignored. These scammers may claim to have relationships with universities and colleges that don't exist, show "official" documents with artificial co-branded school logos, etc. Be careful of anyone that is asking you to provide sensitive information, as university officials should already know most of your details. This person may be fishing for your information to use fraudulently. As a best practice, always confirm with your university whether or not a payment processor is affiliated with them. It may help to check the school payment website (e.g., by reviewing the payment portal and reviewing the "how to pay" section) to verify as an initial step.

- **Be wary of aggressive, suspicious characters**

Is someone promising you a discount on your payment or volunteering to pay on your behalf? Be careful! If the offer seems too good to be true, then it probably is. If you take them up on their offer and share your personal, banking, or financial information, entrusting them to pay on your behalf, you run the risk of losing your payment in full and set yourself up for further fraud risks later on. Fraudsters are very calculating in selecting their methods of introduction to international students—you could be approached on-campus, in a student visa application queue, or at an event for admitted students and their families in your home country.

- **Report suspicious activity**

If you suspect you are being targeted for fraud, you should note the information the scammer is attempting to get from you, stop communicating with them immediately, and report this to your university as well as the police. Remember that your university's trusted website and administrators can help you verify the approved payment process or the identity of someone requesting money or information from you. Don't start your university experience off on the wrong foot—be smart and be safe!

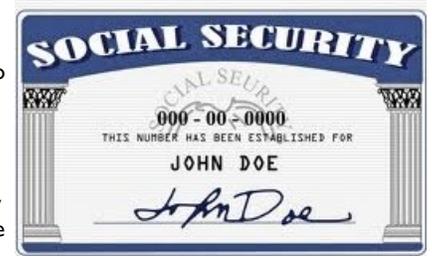
Read the full article on the Flywire blog: [How International Students Can Avoid Tuition Payment Scams](#)

Responding to SSN/ITIN Requests from Health Insurance Providers

Have you recently received a letter from the CC-sponsored student health insurance plan, United Healthcare (UHC), asking for you to provide your U.S. Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)? As of 2015, health insurance providers in the U.S. are required to collect this information from their members in order to comply with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) reporting requirements related to the "individual shared responsibility provision" of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Since health insurance providers don't know whether their members are resident aliens or nonresident aliens for U.S. tax purposes, and since, under the Affordable Care Act, health insurance providers must report on the minimum essential coverage they provide for all covered individuals, that is why health insurers now contact their members to collect the insured person's tax identification number, if the health insurer doesn't already have this information on file. These insurers must then confirm—during every tax season—that the coverage provided to the member satisfied the individual mandate requirements for any or all months during the preceding calendar year or reportable tax year.

The IRS requires that the tax identification number, which is usually the Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), be used to identify individuals on IRS reports. Since, as noted earlier, insurers may not always have this information, the rules require that insurers make reasonable efforts to obtain the SSN or ITIN. The rules further state that the reasonable efforts mean asking for SSNs/ITINs up to three times before any annual filings. Therefore, if you do not respond to the initial request from UHC or another health insurance provider for your SSN/ITIN, expect that you will receive up to two more requests for this information.

So, if you already have an SSN or ITIN, the easiest thing to do is to report it to your health insurance provider when first asked. If you do not have a Social Security Number and are not currently eligible to apply for one because you do not have an on-campus employment offer or you do not have off-campus employment authorization, then you may be able to apply to the IRS for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)—please see the Office of International Programs for further information and assistance.





Spring 2017 Reminders (continued)

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pay by cash, check, or money order, please visit the Student Accounts office on the 1st floor the Spencer Center. [Flywire](#) is an easy and secure method of sending international payments to the college in order to pay your student account charges. If paying by Flywire, please always be on the lookout for scams that target international students by other unauthorized payment companies (see information below).

⇒ Update your Glacier Tax Record

With tax season upon us, please take a moment to login to your [Glacier](#) account to review your individual record and ensure the information is up to date and accurate. Contact information, employment information, and social security information must all be updated if your employment status has changed since you created your Glacier account.

Optional Practical Training Workshops for Seniors



Mark your calendars! Graduating in May and planning to apply for OPT? Post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) is employment authorization approved by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for eligible F-1 students interested in engaging in employment in the U.S. directly related to their field of study after their degree completion. Come learn more about this important immigration benefit, including the eligibility requirements, application process, types of employment allowed, reporting requirements, and limits on unemployment.

Friday, January 27th, 2017, 3:30—5:00pm: WES Room (Worner Campus Center)

Friday, February 3rd, 2017, 3:30—5:00pm: WES Room (Worner Campus Center)

Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day in the U.S.

Valentine's Day is celebrated in the U.S. on February 14th of each year. This holiday celebrates love and friendship and it is common for people to give greeting cards, known as "valentines", to each other on this day, and to buy chocolate and/or flowers for a special loved one.

Monday, February 20th, is Presidents' Day. Presidents' Day is a national holiday that is always celebrated on the third Monday of each January. Since it is a federal holiday, all banks, post offices, and other federal, state, and local government offices will be closed.

For more information about Valentine's Day traditions in the U.S. and the history behind the celebration of the Presidents' Day holiday, check out the links below:

http://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/valentinesday.pdf

http://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/presidentsday.pdf



Make sure you carry the proper immigration documents with you when you travel, both within the U.S. and internationally!

Documents Needed for F-1 Travel

- Valid passport
- Valid U.S. visa stamp (Canadians are exempt)
- Valid Form I-20, signed for travel on Page 2 within the last 6 months
- Evidence of financial funding (bring a copy of whatever funding is mentioned on your Form I-20: bank statement(s)/ sponsorship letter(s), CC Financial Aid letter, etc.)
- Proof of enrollment (print out of course schedule or transcript.)

Spring Tax Workshops: Mark Your Calendars Now!

The Office of International Programs and Sarah Hintz, Tax and Compliance Manager, will be offering four Tax Workshops this spring to assist international students & scholars in preparing their required U.S. federal form(s) using the GLACIER Tax Prep software system. The workshops will also provide instructions on how to complete a Colorado state income tax form, if applicable. [Register now](#) for one of the upcoming Tax Workshops:

- **Friday, March 3rd: 1:00—3:00 PM**
- **Wednesday, March 8th: 3:30—5:00 PM**
- **Tuesday, March 28th: 1:30—3:30 PM**
- **Tuesday, April 11th: 3:30—5:30 PM**

All tax workshops will be held in Keck Computer Lab (Armstrong 308)



Office of International Programs

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The Office of International Programs (OIP) serves students who study off-campus (domestically and internationally), incoming international students, faculty who lead students on off-campus programs, and international faculty who require immigration services.

OIP provides comprehensive services for degree-seeking international students and exchange students, including individualized immigration advising, specialized workshops, and orientation programs.

For more information, contact Lisa Kosiewicz Doran, International Student Specialist at ISS@ColoradoCollege.edu.

We're on the Web!

<http://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/international/international-students/>

January & February Birthdays

The Office of International Programs would like to wish a very happy birthday to all the international students who celebrated a birthday in January, or who will be celebrating their birthday in February!

January Birthdays

Lykke Bonde
Lulin (Echo) Cao
Aiqiao Chen
Sayorn Chin
Mishig Davaadorj
Nelson Ding
Joao Freitas
Pranit Garg
Jia Kang
Alex Leclerc
Yifei Ma
Jun Miyama
Awais Syed
Kehan Zhao

February Birthdays

Kristian Blumenschein
Salome Jardinet
Alpcan Karamanoglu
Leandro Montes Ruiz
Genia Niemeyer
Hoang Pham
Jiawen Qi
Marie Rivet
Hanbo Shao
Quang Vu
Yizheng Wang
Michal Wisniewski
Yixuan Yang
Fangyu Zhang
Bingqing (Zoey) Zhou

