General Information:
The Office of International Student Services (OISS) is open to assist students all year long except during official University holidays. Please feel free to stop by the office anytime between 2-5 p.m., Monday – Friday, if you have questions regarding any F-1 immigration matters, or the services available to you. Your questions and concerns are important to us because we are here to serve and assist you. Morning meetings between 9 a.m. – noon are available by appointment, so please call the office ahead of time in order to schedule a morning appointment. Thank you for helping us serve you better!

OISS Staff:
Leeanne Johnson, BA, MS, SEVIS PSDO, OISS Director
(757) 352-4130 - ljohnson@regent.edu
Brinda Patel, BS, OISS Graduate Assistant
(757) 352-4951 – brinpat@mail.regent.edu

Office Hours & Location:
Location: 201 Student Center
Walk-in Hours: 2-5 p.m., Monday-Friday
(Morning meetings are available by appointment.)

Three-Fold OISS Mission:
Although the OISS supports international students on many levels, our primary mission is three-fold:
• We provide vital services that support the F-1 immigration and adjustment needs of Regent’s international student community;
• We educate and advise the University faculty, staff, and students on F-1 immigration rules, procedures, and benefits; and
• We maintain University compliance with government regulations and reporting requirements.

OSAL & International Programming:
Starting July 1, 2012, the newly created Office of Student Activities & Leadership (OSAL) now coordinates the International Student Orientations that were originally developed by the OISS. OSAL also handles all other international programming as well. For many exciting activities/events offered by OSAL, please check the weekly Regent Upcoming Events (RUE) on Wednesdays, or visit the OSAL website found here: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_activities_and_leadership/home.cfm

September 2013

General Information

Thank You,
Big-Brothers &Big-Sisters!
The OISS would like to thank our international students who volunteered to serve as Big-Brothers/Sisters to our new international students this fall. Three cheers to the following students who kindly volunteered their precious time and friendship:

Deborah Arnett, Jonatas da Silva, Andrea Francis, Anh Vu “Vince” Le Hoang, Abigail Oduro, and Gabriela Viesca-Chavez

►More Volunteers Needed: If you would like to serve as a Big-Brother/Sister for the international students who are being admitted for Spring 2014, please complete the application found here: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/documents/BBBSVolunteerApp3113_000.pdf

New Fee Reminder:
As a reminder from the spring, the University will now be charging an “International Student Fee” of $45 to all students in the F-1 immigration status for each semester they are enrolled. The International Student Fee is a common thing that has long been in effect at other universities and will help support the costs of the special immigration and adjustment services that are provided to our F-1 students.

The September 2013 newsletter contains Information about the following topics:

General Information:
- General OISS Information
- Three-Fold OISS Mission
- OSAL & International Programming
- OISS Director Away
- Thank You Big Brothers & Sisters
- New Fee Reminder
- International Student Orientation
- OISS Welcomes International Residency Students
- Dean’s List & Perfect GPAs
- Hurricane Preparedness
- Newsletter Contributions

Immigration Information:
- Updated Forms & Handouts
- I-515/30 Day Admission Warning
- OPT Information Session
- Maintaining Lawful F-1 Status
- Other OISS Information Sessions
- Travel Signature Request Deadline
- SEVIS & Address Reporting Reminders
- Major Change with I-94s
- Keep I-94 in Your Possession

Congrats, Students:
- August & September Birthdays
- Student Leaders
- September 2013

Presented by:
Office of International Student Services (OISS)
201 Student Center 757-352-4130 www.regent.edu/oiss
Office Walk-In Hours: 2 - 5 p.m., Monday – Friday

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OSAL Director Away in September:
Please be reminded that OISS Director, Leland Johnson, will be out of the office from Monday, September 9 – Friday, September 20. Thank you for planning accordingly and submitting your immigration requests around these dates!
OSAL’s Fall 2013 International Student Orientation:
The Student Services staff was delighted to welcome twelve new on-campus international students to campus for the Fall 2013 semester! The new students hail from these countries: China, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Philippines, South Korea and Spain. Please offer a warm Regent welcome when you see our new students on campus!

Fall 2013 International Student Orientation Photos:

Quotes from some Orientation participants:
“I was thankful that I participated in this orientation. Thank you very much for your hard work and warm/kind heart for us. May God bless you for good works! Thank you!”

“Well organized. Jamie made us feel at home throughout. I see true concern you have for the students.”

“It was very helpful. It at least brought all of us together. It made us feel welcome and felt like part of a family.”

OISSL Welcomes International Residency Students to Campus:
By the end of the Fall 2013 semester, the OISSL will have welcomed and assisted at least 21 international residency students to campus for the Spring, Summer, and Fall 2013 semesters! These students are enrolled in online degree programs from their home countries but are required to come to campus at least once a year for their studies, so they require I-20s and must be processed and registered in SEVIS for each and every on-campus residency.

Congrats, Students!

August & September Birthdays:
Congratulations and blessings to the following on-campus international students who turned another year older and wiser in August, and to the students who will turn older and wiser in September:

August Birthdays: Deborah Arnett Patricia Alonso Galera Christopher Norgbey

September Birthdays: Anh Vu “Vince” Le Hoang

Congratulations, Student Leaders!
Congratulations to the following students who will serve as Student Leaders this year and were anointed at the University Convocation on Wednesday, August 28:

Andreas Bienert, COGS Senator/Secretary for Sch. of Psych. & Couns.
Jonatas da Silva, Resident Assistant for Residence Life
Raluca Petrut, Campus Ministries Life Group Leadership Team
Alexis Stovell, Campus Ministries Worship Team

“Christian leadership to change the world”!

Dean’s List & Perfect GPAs:
Congratulations to these undergraduate students who were named to the Spring 2013 College of Arts & Science’s “Dean’s List” for their academic excellence:

Jonatas da Silva, 4.0 GPA for Spring 13, Brazil
Jennifer Harris, 4.0 GPA for Spring 13, Ghana

Degree-seeking undergraduate students qualify for the Dean’s List if they completed at least 9 academic credits and achieved a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.85.

Three cheers also to these graduate students who have achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA: David Jimenez Cardenas, Mexico; & Alise Krapane, Latvia!
Hurricane Preparedness:
In order to prepare for and respond to any possible evacuation orders from the local government, all international students are reminded to do the following:

1. **MAKE evacuation PLANS with friends or family.**
The university will take students to a shelter if an evacuation is ordered, but students should first try to make their own arrangements. You will be more comfortable staying with friends or family than at a group shelter. You may also want to evacuate on your own even if the government does not order an evacuation and you will need to make your own arrangements for a voluntary evacuation.

2. **RESPOND to any Hurricane Evacuation Surveys**
that are conducted by the OISS (these surveys are usually conducted by email in August).

3. **SIGN-UP for emergency notifications**
from the university by going to “Regent Alert” once you log into the “MyRegent Portal”.

4. **CHECK your Regent email address—several times a day—and**
**NOTE** that the Regent-coordinated evacuation transportation will leave PROMPTLY at the established time and from the established location noted in the email messages. Remember that it is CRITICAL for all students and their family members to arrive on time. (The Regent Commons will likely be one of the departure locations.) You can also check for any possible voicemail messages/instructions on the OISS Director’s phone: 757-352-4130.

5. **NOTIFY the OISS—as soon as possible—of**
the address and phone number where you will be staying if you and your family will NOT be taking the Regent-coordinated evacuation transportation to a shelter.

6. **ALERT your family members and friends in your**
**home country—ahead of time**—that you may not be able to connect with them for several days (in the event of possible power outages and downed phone lines.)

7. **HAND-CARRY** your immigration documents &
other important items/records with you in a waterproof folder/container. Such items/records would include, but are not limited to, the following: passport, I-20, I-94 card, immunization/medical records, insurance card, medications, and emergency contact information (including the phone number and email address of the OISS Director: 757-352-4130/ ljohnson@regent.edu)

8. **AFTER the storm**, please do not attempt to return to campus until the University announces it is open. Announcements will be posted on www.regent.edu and on the inclement weather hotline, 757-352-4777.

Announcements about re-opening are not always distributed through the “Regent Alert” system.

►Here are some important websites for you and your families to review--NOW--for emergency preparedness:
http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane_default.asp

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**International Student Statistics:**
Here are some interesting statistics from some tentative Fall 2013 enrollment reports:

---There are about 323 online and on-campus foreign nationals (including U.S. Permanent Residents) registered for classes this fall from approximately 66 countries.

---The top 3 countries represented by online and on-campus foreign nationals are: South Africa (#1), Canada (#2), and South Korea (#3).

---There are approximately 78 on-campus foreign nationals (including U.S. Permanent Residents) registered for classes this fall from approximately 44 countries.

---The top 3 countries represented by on-campus foreign nationals are: India (#1), Canada (#2), and Mexico (#3).

**Newsletter Contributions**
**Welcome from Students & Spouses:**
The OISS always welcomes newsletter contributions from our international students and their spouses. If you would like to send us a few paragraphs about how you spent your summer vacations, some interesting observations/experiences you’ve had in the United States, or how you celebrate certain holidays/traditions in your home countries, we would LOVE to hear from you!! We are also very interested in hearing about any honors/awards our international students have received.

►The OISS newsletter submission form can be found here: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/documents/NewsletterAnnouncementSubmissionForm_000.pdf

**Please contribute today!!**
Updated Immigration Handouts & Forms:
The OISS was busy this summer updating a number of important immigration handouts, including:
- Maintaining Lawful F-1 Immigration Status, 7/11/13
- Important Immigration Terms, 7/12/13
- On-Campus Employment, 8/2/13
- Overview of Employment Options for F-1 Students, 8/5/13

We also created this new form:
- Request for Termination of OPT Authorization & F-1 Status, 8/23/13

Continuing F-1 students who returned for classes this fall should review these updated handouts, which are located on this page of the OISS website: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/immigration_info.cfm.

All students in F-1 immigration status should review the handout on “Maintaining Lawful F-1 Immigration Status” each semester and should contact the OISS if you have any questions. Thank you!

I-515 (30 Day Admission) to the United States:
Any F-1 students who did not have proper travel documentation with them and received an I-515 MUST notify the OISS Director IMMEDIATELY so the I-515 can be processed by the government deadline. *An I-515 allows you to remain in the United States for 30 days only*.

Once the I-515 is properly processed by the government your 30 day admission to the United States should change to “D/S” – duration of status, which is the period of time in which you are enrolled as a full-time student with a valid I-20.

Information Session: Optional Practical Training (OPT)
Thursday, September 5, 12 p.m.
252 Student Center:
All F-1 students who are planning to apply for OPT this Fall must attend one of three information sessions where OPT applications will be distributed and the application process will be discussed. All other F-1 students are invited to come learn about OPT as well. For students who are graduating in December, the OPT applications must be received by the USCIS within 60 days of your academic program completion date (the official university Term End date). It takes the USCIS approximately 3 months to process the applications. The sessions will start on time, so please arrive on time. Attendance will be taken. (Details about OPT can be found here: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/employment.cfm)

Information Session: Maintaining Lawful F-1 Immigration Status
Friday, September 27, 12 p.m.
252 Student Center:
This information session will highlight student responsibilities for maintaining lawful F-1 immigration status while in the United States. Benefits of the F-1 status and important travel procedures will also be discussed. All F-1 students are encouraged to attend this session as an important reminder of their student immigration responsibilities. We look forward to seeing you there!

Other OISS Information Sessions:
Other information sessions offered for Fall 2013 can be found here: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/documents/Immig_SessionCa lFall2013FINAL.pdf

DEADLINE to Request an I-20 Travel Signature for Fall Break Travel:
Please be reminded that all requests for an I-20 travel signature must be submitted to the OISS by Friday, September 27, or two weeks before their departure, whichever comes first. For enrolled students, each travel signature on page 3 is valid for 12 months. Check *page 3* of your I-20 to see if you have a hand written travel signature and make sure it will not expire before the date you will return to the U.S. If you don’t have a signature, or you need a new travel signature, the request form can be found here: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/onlineform.cfm

Before you can submit the Travel Signature Request to the OISS you must attach a Certificate of Enrollment from the Registrar’s Office, which can be requested through this form: http://www.regent.edu/admin/registrar/documents/Fo rmStudent-ALL_CertLetterRequestForm_008.pdf

For a complete list of everything you will need for a smooth reentry into the U.S. after a temporary departure (5 months or less), please read this OISS webpage called “Departing & Reentering the U.S.”: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/documents/DepartingtheUnitedStatesWEB102611.pdf. This page should be read at least 1 month prior to your departure. If you have any questions or would like the OISS to check your travel documents, please visit the office several weeks before you go.
SEVIS Reporting Reminder:
This message serves as a reminder about the University’s government reporting responsibilities. All U.S. institutions are required to report the following F-1 student information to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the electronic data reporting system called “SEVIS” (Student & Exchange Visitor Information System):

- When a student enters the United States with an I-20 for initial attendance but fails to register with the school within 30 days;
- Whether the student has enrolled at the school, dropped below a full course of study without prior authorization by the DSO/OISS, or failed to enroll;
- The current address of each enrolled student;
- The start date of the student’s next term or semester;
- A change of the student’s or dependent’s legal name or United States address;
- Any student who fails to maintain lawful immigration status or complete his or her program of study;
- Any student that has graduated early or prior to the program end date listed on the SEVIS I-20;
- Any disciplinary action taken by the school against the student as a result of the student being convicted of a crime; and
- Any other notification request made by SEVIS with respect to the current status of the student (such as CPT, OPT, etc).

► All F-1 students must make sure you have your correct addresses listed in Genisys at all times and that you are enrolled full-time by the first day of classes every semester. Please contact the OISS if you have any questions.

Change of Address Reminder:
To report a change of address, ALL currently enrolled F-1 international students must follow the important instructions included below to maintain lawful F-1 immigration status:

► DURING web-registration periods at the start of each term, all students are required to confirm or enter their correct addresses in Genisys during the web-registration process before they can register for classes. The U.S. address that you enter/confirm in Genisys during web-registration is the address that Regent will report to the government in SEVIS. Your U.S. address should be listed as your “Permanent” address in Genisys. It is each student’s important responsibility to make sure your current U.S. address is listed correctly in Genisys during web-registration periods.

► If your address changes OUTSIDE the web-registration periods/during the middle of the semester or summer, you must report the new address to TWO separate offices WITHIN 5 DAYS of the change: the OISS AND the Registrar’s Office. Students can still use Genisys to report the new address to the Registrar’s Office outside of web-registration periods and should use the “Information Change Form” on the OISS website to report the change to the OISS: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/information_change.cfm

► For questions on how to update your address in Genisys, please contact the Registrar’s Office: 757-352-4038.

MAJOR CHANGE With I-94 Arrival/Departure Records (“I-94 cards”):
As a reminder from the April/May newsletter, starting on April 26, 2013, the U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) will no longer issue paper I-94 Arrival/Departure Records for those arriving in the United States by air and sea ports of entry (except in limited circumstances that do not apply to F-1 students). The I-94 cards will still be issued to those who arrive by land (like by car from Canada/Mexico). CBP will still maintain a record of each visitor’s arrival and departure but the record will be maintained electronically. According to CBP:

“If a traveler needs a copy of their I-94 (record of admission) for verification of alien registration, immigration status or employment authorization, it can be obtained from: www.cbp.gov/I94.”

“Travelers will not need to do anything differently upon exiting the U.S. Travelers issued a paper I-94 should surrender it to the commercial carrier or CBP upon departure. The departure will be recorded electronically with manifest information provided by the carrier or by CBP. If travelers did not receive a paper Form I-94 and the record was created electronically, CBP will record their departure using manifest information obtained from the carrier.”

For more details on this major change, please visit these government websites: www.cbp.gov/I94 or www.cbp.gov.

► ALL F-1 STUDENTS WHO RETURNED TO the UNITED STATES AFTER APRIL 26, 2013 should go to this CBP website and print a copy of your I-94 Arrival Record to keep in your possession: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov. If you have trouble retrieving the I-94, or if it does not list you with F-1 immigration status, please notify the OISS Director immediately so we can help resolve the problem for you.

Keep I-94 on Your Possession at All Times:
Please be reminded that all international students are expected to have their I-94 Arrival-Departure Record with them at all times. Here is the actual regulation regarding the I-94 card (referred to as the “certificate of alien registration”) found at INA § 264(e):

“Every alien, eighteen years of age and over, shall at all times carry with him and have in his personal possession any certificate of alien registration or alien registration receipt card issued to him pursuant to subsection (d). Any alien who fails to comply with the provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall upon conviction for each offense be fined not to exceed $100 or be imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both.”

► The I-94 Records can now be printed from this government/CBP website: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov.