December 2015

Published monthly by International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS), a division of Enrollment Services, the ISSS Newsletter provides reminders about immigration rules and regulations, services, programs, and opportunities for campus and community involvement.

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1. You are Invited - 2 Events @ 12pm and 7pm
2. Important Travel Reminders

Are you departing the U.S. over winter break? It’s your responsibility to update your travel signature if needed. It must be **less than** 6 months old on the date you re-enter the U.S.

**To Request an Updated Travel Signature:**
- Log into iStart & Select Student Services > Travel Signature Request, and complete the e-form.
- You will receive an email when your request is approved. Then visit the ISSS front desk for your signature.

**Be Aware:**
- Allow 3-4 days for processing your request, and plan ahead. Get this done now, if needed.
- You may experience additional wait times during the afternoon. Come in before lunch if possible.
- Last minute requests could result in no travel signature update and then problems at the border at re-entry. "A failure to plan ahead on your part does not represent an emergency on our part."

**When Re-entering the U.S, be sure to have the following with you:**
- Your I-20 or DS-2019 with valid travel signature (no older than 6 months)
- Unexpired passport (valid for at least 6 months into the future)
- Valid F-1 or J-1 visa
- Copy of your GSU enrollment verification for Spring 2016
- Copies of your financial documentation
- EAD card and employment letter if you are on approved OPT or AT.

3. Staying in the US over Break?

Would you like to connect with a local family, or do you need a place to stay over Winter Break? Consider this invitation for a unique, cross-cultural, international opportunity that you’ll never forget with the AMIS Christmas International House, Dec. 18, 2015 – Jan. 2, 2016. It’s open to everyone, regardless of religion. For all the info, click >> [here](#)

4. Your GSU Rec Center!
5. **Deadline: Spring 2016 Health Insurance Waiver Request**

If you have adequate health and accident insurance from your country or another qualified provider, and you wish to waive the GSU insurance for Spring + Summer semester 2016, the waiver request period is open December 7, 2015 - January 29, 2016. Coverage begins January 1, 2016 and ends July 31, 2016.

- **Note:** Waivers are not granted automatically, and you must renew your waiver each semester.
- If you’d like to keep your GSU insurance, there is nothing you need to do.
- For more info: [http://sfs.gsu.edu/tuition-fees/student-health-insurance/waiving-ship/](http://sfs.gsu.edu/tuition-fees/student-health-insurance/waiving-ship/)

6. **2015 Tax Information: Coming Up**

ISSS will provide more info about filing your U.S. Federal and State of Georgia Tax Returns in February 2016. The tax filing deadline is April 15. What you need to know now is:

- **DON’T PURCHASE** Tax Prep Software: like TurboTax, H&R Block or any others!
- Those products were NOT designed for “Non-Resident Alien” Tax forms.
- ISSS will provide free access to special software called “Sprintax” in February for your Federal Return.

7. **Preview: 3 Spring Semester Off Campus Opportunities**

   A. **Georgia International Leadership Conference (GiLC)**
What: GILC happens each Spring. It’s a weekend college student conference for international students and study abroad students from across Georgia. Participants share ideas, network and above all, develop their leadership qualities and have fun!

Registration Deadline: February 5th, 2016
Conference Dates: February 19th - 21st, 2016
Location: Rock Eagle, 4-H Center (Eatonton, GA)
Registration Cost: FREE (funded by ISAC). However, a $90 deposit is required and refunded upon completion.
Application: To apply, submit your application here
For more details: Please visit http://gilc.weebly.com

B: Spring Break with ISAC

What: Join ISAC for an amazing service project and beach trip to Florida! Participants will work with Habitat for Humanity organization to build a house side with its future occupant! Know that you have directly helped change someone’s life. No construction experience required. Bring passion, an open heart and mind. It’s a great opportunity to see a new state, develop friendships, and make a difference! We’ll also explore Tampa and its famous beaches!
When: March 13-19, 2016
Where: Tampa, FL (on the beach!)
Application: Submit your application here
For more information: Email Mike Townsend at: ctownsend@gsu.edu

C. Visit Washington, D.C.
**What:** ISSS sponsors an exciting 5 day trip to Washington, D.C. each Spring. It's a great opportunity for low-cost hotel and travel, and fun with other GSU international students. Visit all the major sites of the U.S. Capitol with free time to explore on your own too.

**When:** May 3-7, 2016. Departure after Spring semester finals and return in time for Maymester classes.

**Estimated Cost:** $225. Includes round trip transportation by chartered coach (nice bus), 3 hotel nights, and entry to Monticello (home of US President Thomas Jefferson). Early bird sign up will start in March 2015.

**For more info:** Contact Mike Townsend at: ctownsend@gsu.edu

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8. **Campus Closing Dates**

- GSU will be closed: Friday, December 18th, 5:15pm – Monday, January 4th, 8:30am (16 days)
- There will be no access to campus facilities, offices, or services during these times.

9. **ISSS Facebook Likes = 1606**

Just click the Facebook icon above to get helpful reminders about deadlines, workshops, events and campus jobs right on our Facebook page.

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For questions about any of the information mentioned above, contact:

**International Student & Scholar Services**

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252 Sparks Hall
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*On behalf of all of us here in ISSS, we sincerely wish you a safe and joyous break however you celebrate, safe travels, rest, and prosperity in 2016!*