I would like to take this opportunity to welcome both our returning and new international students to Purdue this semester. For our returning students, I hope you had a relaxing summer vacation and are ready for all that the fall semester will offer you. As for our new students, I believe you will find Purdue to be a first-rate institution situated within a small city atmosphere.

This semester we have welcomed more than 1,700 new international students. This number consists of approximately 1,000 undergraduate students and 700 graduate students. Our total international student enrollment is now 5,990 students which represents 15% of the Purdue student body.

The Office of International Students and Scholars (ISS) remains committed to assisting each and every one of you. If you ever have any questions or concerns about your non-immigrant status, adjusting to American customs, or whatever the issue might be, please feel free to visit our office. We have walk-in hours Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm (except for Thursday mornings). You can also call the ISS Office between the hours of 8:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm to speak directly with an Immigration Counselor. If you would prefer an appointment, times are available throughout the week and can be scheduled by calling our front desk at 765-494-5770. We will assist you to the best of our ability.

I hope you have an enjoyable fall semester.

Sincerely,
Michael A. Brzezinski, Ed.D.
Interim Vice Provost for Global Affairs and Dean of International Programs
Director, International Students and Scholars

The ISS Office is going paperless! This adventure began back in April 2009 with our International Undergraduate Admissions area. The process has since expanded to our Immigration area and more changes are expected in the future (see “Immigration Update: SEVIS II” on page two). With students’ former paper files now existing electronically, documents have greater data security, plus we are doing our part to help protect the environment. Currently, all paper forms that are submitted to the ISS Office are being scanned and kept in students’ electronic files. In the future, the paper forms will cease to exist entirely, with all forms being completed and submitted electronically. So the forms on the wall in the ISS lobby will soon be a thing of the past. Since these developments are part of an ongoing process, additional changes are likely and will be communicated when appropriate.

How can you help? Instead of bringing copies of your immigration documents, such as a new passport or visa, or your EAD card to the ISS Office, you can scan them and submit them via email attachment to iss@purdue.edu. However, due to the lack of security with email, please do NOT submit financial documents via email.
The Department of Homeland Security and SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program) have announced a major upgrade to the SEVIS System, which has been titled SEVIS II. SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) is the web-based application used by offices like ISS to interface with various organizations within the U.S. government. This is also the system that generates I-20s/DS-2019s and where required information for each student and scholar is maintained. The implementation date for SEVIS II is set for October 2010, though it may be pushed back if necessary.

What does the implementation of SEVIS II mean for an international student or scholar? The most exciting part is that your I-20/DS-2019 will become paperless! However, this will not take place until October 2010, at the earliest. Following the launch of SEVIS II, your F1/J1 status will continue to be monitored by the ISS Office and all reportable information will be provided to the U.S. Government. However, you will be required to create your own SEVIS account and will become responsible for keeping your information updated, including both your home country and local addresses, for example.

So how will you create your account? Information describing this transitional phase will be sent to your purdue.edu email account either later this semester or at the beginning of the spring semester. It is extremely important that you follow the directions given to you and comply with these new reporting requirements. In the meantime, the ISS Office will keep you updated as information becomes available.

Immigration Update: SEVIS II

The Department of Homeland Security and SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program) have announced a major upgrade to the SEVIS System, which has been titled SEVIS II. SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) is the web-based application used by offices like ISS to interface with various organizations within the U.S. government. This is also the system that generates I-20s/DS-2019s and where required information for each student and scholar is maintained. The implementation date for SEVIS II is set for October 2010, though it may be pushed back if necessary.

What does the implementation of SEVIS II mean for an international student or scholar? The most exciting part is that your I-20/DS-2019 will become paperless! However, this will not take place until October 2010, at the earliest. Following the launch of SEVIS II, your F1/J1 status will continue to be monitored by the ISS Office and all reportable information will be provided to the U.S. Government. However, you will be required to create your own SEVIS account and will become responsible for keeping your information updated, including both your home country and local addresses, for example.

So how will you create your account? Information describing this transitional phase will be sent to your purdue.edu email account either later this semester or at the beginning of the spring semester. It is extremely important that you follow the directions given to you and comply with these new reporting requirements. In the meantime, the ISS Office will keep you updated as information becomes available.

ISS Services Clarified

Q: Can the ISS Office help me change my status?
A: The ISS Office is happy to share our experienced-based knowledge with you for a change of status or reinstatement, but this should not be considered “legal advice”. While we may provide advice on F and J visa regulations, if there is a violation of your status or if you have an unusual case that you are in doubt of, you should consult a knowledgeable immigration attorney.

Q: Does the ISS Office provide assistance with filing taxes?
A: The ISS Office is not able to provide advice or assistance with filing taxes, but we can point you in the right direction by providing the various resources that are available for assistance. The United States tax code is very long and confusing. Additionally, each country has its own tax treaty with the United States. Tax consultants spend countless hours learning and keeping their knowledge current with regard to tax law.

Q: Can the ISS Office help me change my status?
A: The ISS Office is happy to share our experienced-based knowledge with you for a change of status or reinstatement, but this should not be considered “legal advice”. While we may provide advice on F and J visa regulations, if there is a violation of your status or if you have an unusual case that you are in doubt of, you should consult a knowledgeable immigration attorney.

Q: Can the ISS Office advise me on an H1-B visa?
A: The ISS Office cannot provide any advice with regard to H-1B status unless you are being sponsored by Purdue for your H-1B. If Purdue is your H-1B sponsor, please work directly with your Department Liaison. Our F-1 and J-1 counselors are not allowed to advise on H-1B matters under any circumstances.

Q: Is it better to go to the ISS Office or to hire an immigration attorney?
A: That depends on the question or issue. Call us first; if we can help, we will be more than happy to do so. If we are unable to provide assistance, we will refer you to a list of attorneys who should be able to assist you.

Q: Where can I find out about my employment options?
A: Employment options for our F-1, J-1 and J-2 students and visitors is our specialty! Visit our website, stop by during walk-in hours or call; we’ll be happy to assist you. Always contact the ISS Office to confirm your employment eligibility BEFORE beginning any employment, whether it is on-campus or off-campus.

Q: Can the ISS Office sign a letter for my home government to prove that I’m enrolled?
A: Only the Office of the Registrar can confirm your enrollment.

Q: Can my friend, who is not a Purdue student, call the ISS Office for immigration advice?
A: Our office is happy to provide advice to the students we support; however, due to differences in programs and sponsor requirements, we are not able to provide advice for non-Purdue students or visitors.
The Office of International Students and Scholars (ISS) is happy to introduce a new program starting this fall. The Boiler Out! Volunteer Program provides international students with opportunities to engage in meaningful community service projects that reflect the program’s three core values of Outreach, Understanding, and Teamwork. Boiler Out! participants do a variety of volunteer work alongside both American students and local community members. The number of hours spent volunteering are recorded with qualifying students being honored at a reception where they will be presented with certificates of appreciation.

During this past spring semester and over the summer, the ISS Office piloted projects to make sure that the fall’s activities would be a success. Past events included: deconstruction at a Habitat for Humanity site, helping at Food Finders Food Bank, planting trees on Arbor Day with TreeLafayette, helping at the local YWCA, and volunteering at the Dancing in the Streets Festival.

Would you like to take part in a Boiler Out! event? If so, watch your purdue.edu email account. You will receive emails about two weeks prior to each event with details on how to sign up. Since the ISS Office provides transportation to and from the volunteer sites, space is limited and is available on a first-come first-serve basis. But be warned: past events have filled up within as little as 24 hours! If you have any questions about the Boiler Out! Volunteer Program or would like more information, please contact: BoilerOut@purdue.edu

### Why do students Boiler Out?

“I make me happy personally and with ISS, it’s a whole lot of fun, thanks to the counselors who make you feel really special.”

-Leela Rama Roa “Ram” Cherukuri

Graduate Student in the School of Aeronautics and Astronautics Engineering

### Top Five Reasons to Boiler Out!

1. It’s intrinsically rewarding.
2. It will look great on your resume.
3. You’ll learn new skills.
4. It’s a great way to meet people.
5. It’s fun!
The Inside Scoop
The following excerpt was taken from an interview with two international students

Meet Mariam Alamyar and Freshta Sediqi

Q: How did you first hear about Purdue University?
A: Purdue has a partnership with Kabul University (where we are from) and there is a scholarship available to study at Purdue.

Q: Why did you choose to attend Purdue?
A: An Afghan professor who had been at Purdue encouraged us to come.

Q: How long have you been in the U.S.?
A: We arrived here on Oct. 29, 2007. We started in a six month English and culture preparation course to help prepare the group of us who came (mostly agricultural students) for the TOEFL test. Then we came to Purdue in June of 2008.

Q: What do you hope to gain from your experience in the U.S.?
A: To learn more about American teaching methods used in the classroom. Both of us are university English teachers and we want to help students learn to speak English. Afghan students are not encouraged to talk during class time but we feel the most effective way to learn English is to use the communicative approach. Some teachers also share this view, but it is new for Afghans and will not be so easily accepted.

Q: What aspect of your home country do you miss the most?
A: Close, intimate relationships such as we have at home. When I (Mariam) was sick in my home country, my mother would take care of me. Here when we’re sick, we must rely on ourselves.

Q: Name one characteristic of American culture that you find interesting and why.
A: How friendly, open and helpful people are here. And that the relationship between teacher and student is like a friend. You can call your professor by his/her first name without using a title of respect, and yet students still respect their teachers here, you can tell.

Q: What aspect of your home country do you miss the most?
A: The people on campus! They are so diverse, literally from all over the world! Also, when you go places where you need help with something, everyone must stand in line — this is very different from Afghanistan. We aren’t used to lining up for things. Also, in Afghanistan, if you have seniority or are wealthy you get special treatment — you would never need to stand in line.

Q: What is your favorite place in the U.S. to visit?
A: Chicago, for the shopping and tourist attractions like the Sears Tower and other tall buildings. Also California for its beaches.

Q: Do you have any comments on American food?
A: You find cheese on so many things, even salad! We are used to one kind of cheese only, something like cream cheese here. We do love pizza, however — thin crust is best!

Q: What American expressions have you begun to use?
A: “cuz,” “kinda,” “yep” and “hope.” Also “oops!” and “I see!” Some are funny, like, “He’s a pain in the neck” and, “I’m so happy I could jump out of my skin!”

Q: What makes being an international student difficult?
A: Being away from family, especially during holidays and school breaks. It can be very lonely. Also, it can be very challenging to have to rely on “legs” for transportation. We use the bus, but it is hard to get around and we sometimes get lost!

Q: What has surprised you most about Americans?
A: All ages, young and old, are interested in American football!

Q: What do you hope to accomplish in ten years from now?
A: (Freshta) Working on my Ph.D. and writing a book. Both of us want to work with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, lobbying for women’s rights.

Q: Working on your Ph.D. and writing a book. Both of us want to work with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, lobbying for women’s rights.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish in ten years from now?
A: (Mariam) Most importantly, I see myself teaching English and working on developing ESL curriculum. Also working closely with the Association of Teachers to provide workshops and seminars for other teachers.
Staff Spotlight: ISS Welcomes New Staff Members

Laura Crabtree, Information Specialist

Having joined the ISS Office on July 1, 2009, Laura Crabtree describes her experience thus far as a positive one. “The students and scholars that I have met are very kind. It’s been very interesting meeting people from all over the world.” Fortunate to have a sister who is a travel agent, Laura has also traveled to Europe three times. She has visited Belgium, England, France, Germany, and Scotland, though she counts London as one of her favorite cities to visit, given its history and museums.

Having grown up in Chicago, Laura later spent four years in eastern Texas while in college. She is joined in Indiana by her husband and three sons, one of whom is a freshman at Purdue, studying Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology.

Be sure to welcome Laura to the ISS Office the next time you stop by the front desk!

Amanda Merrill, Immigration Secretary

Amanda Merrill is a Hoosier through and through, having always lived in Indiana. Before coming to Purdue, Amanda worked in Indiana University’s International Admissions Office as an Admissions Assistant and worked at Eli Lilly for five years, as well.

While Amanda has not traveled outside the U.S. yet, her favorite travel adventure was to Texas. “I went on a cattle drive by myself about six years ago. I am a horse lover and enjoyed every minute of it!” Her advice to international students and scholars: “Get out and explore Indiana and other states. There is so much to see and do just in this area alone!”

Let’s wish Amanda congratulations on her new job and her engagement! Amanda will be getting married this October.

Twila Ortiz, Immigration and Admissions Counselor

Twila Ortiz is a language enthusiast, having studied French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Portuguese. She even taught French at the university level before joining the ISS Office.

Originally from Laramie, Wyoming, Twila has lived in Rodez, France, Holyoke, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C. and has traveled to The Bahamas, London, New Caledonia, and New Zealand. Twila describes Alaska Basin, Wyoming, as the “most beautiful place” she has ever visited. “This is an area of icy mountain streams, crystal blue lakes, and lush meadows untouched by man and only accessible by several days of hiking down the backside of the Teton mountains near Yellowstone.”

Her advice to international students and scholars: “Be adventurous. Try new things. Ask yourself, “Why am I saying no?” You may be missing an opportunity.”

Bryant Priester, Undergraduate Admissions Counselor

Born in South Carolina, Bryant Priester spent two years participating in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. He has also traveled to the following countries: Argentina, Australia, The Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and the United Kingdom. Of all of his travels, Bryant claims New Zealand as his favorite, stating that the natural beauty of the country “is breathtaking.”

Bryant challenges international students to step outside of their comfort zones: “Purdue University offers all students the opportunity to meet and interact with students from over 100 countries. Take this exceptional opportunity at Purdue to learn about people you normally would not have the opportunity to meet.”
Global Café

Jointly sponsored by the ISS Office and the International Center, Global Café is a program that is both socially and educationally oriented. Held every Friday during the fall and spring semesters, Global Café takes place from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the International Center. Regarded as a “little taste of home,” Global Café brings together Purdue students and staff, as well as local community members, for a relaxed evening of coffee, tea, a light meal, and the sharing of cultures.

During Global Café, international volunteers give informal presentations about their home countries, with a different country being featured each week. Past presentations have focused on the following countries: Afghanistan, Belgium, Colombia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Turkey, and Thailand. Ethnic cuisine is also prepared by international volunteers, giving those in attendance an opportunity to experience food from around the world.

While general attendance is always welcomed, there are also a variety of ways to volunteer at Global Café, including the following:

1) Give a cultural presentation
2) Share music from your home country
3) Prepare your native cuisine
4) Help set-up for the evening
5) Help clean up afterward

If you are interested in getting involved in any aspect of Global Café, contact Beth Tucker for more information.

Quick Culture: The Romanian Sarmale

The Polish and Ukrainians have them. The Bulgarians and the Greeks have them. And we, Romanians, have them too. I’m talking about sarmale, the favorite dish for Christmas, Easter, weddings and funerals. It’s ground meat mixed with half a cup of rice, spices, and fried onions which is carefully wrapped in a cabbage or grape leaf, and is then boiled slowly in a sour mix of broth and vinegar. In the historical province of Moldova we like them small as a nut, while in Transylvania they like them as big as a fist.

My literature teacher in high school is from Transylvania and she got engaged to a math teacher from Moldova. When the Moldovan visited her parents’ house, they asked him how many sarmale he would like on his plate. The young man said, “Ten!” The mother-in-law-to-be raised her eyebrows and brought out a big bowl just for him. The lesson is to always start with two or three sarmale and if you like them ask for more. Romanian hosts will take that as a compliment.

Written by Elena Gabor from Husi, Romania. Elena received her Ph.D. in Communication in August 2008.

Translation Needs

Did you know that the ISS Office maintains a listing of translators on our website? The individuals listed can be contacted to assist with your varied translation needs. This service is free of charge; in fact, you should not offer the translator remuneration since without proper authorization, it could be considered illegal employment.

Would you like to volunteer as a translator? If you are interested in assisting someone with document translation, please email Karen Lembcke with the following information to be added to the list of available translators:

1) Name
2) Mailing Address
3) Telephone Number
4) List each language you are fluent in for translation.

Please Remember: If you decide to volunteer as a translator, you will not receive remuneration. Also, you have the right to refuse requests for translation. Those seeking translation services should provide the translator with ample time and transportation, if necessary.

Challenge Chest

Difficulty Level: Geography Buff

There are 11 world capitals that begin with the letter “k.” How many of these capitals and the respective countries can you name?

Hint: One capital has already been mentioned in this newsletter.

Check your knowledge: The answers are listed on the last page of the ISS Insider.
Lost Immigration Documents

Your immigration documents, which include your I-20/DS-2019, passport, visa, and I-94 card, are very important. In fact, they are your official identification papers while you are residing in the United States. Whether you lose or misplace your immigration documents, or if they are stolen, this is a serious situation that must be dealt with in a timely manner.

If after searching for the missing documents you are still unable to find them, you will need to file a police report. You should contact the police station in the area in which you lost the documents. If you were on-campus at the time, you can either go in-person to Purdue’s Police Department or you can call their non-emergency phone number (765-494-8221). Make sure to bring a copy of the police report to the ISS Office for your immigration file. Then use the following list to help you decide your next step.

If you lose your I-20/DS2019:
1. Request a replacement from the ISS Office by filling out a Student Request Form.
2. Give a copy of the police report to the ISS Office for your immigration file.

If you lose your passport:
1. The ISS Office should have a copy of your passport on file. Request a copy using the online Document Photocopy Request Form.
2. Contact your home country consulate or embassy in the U.S. and follow their instructions.
3. When your new passport arrives, bring it to the ISS Office to add a new copy to your immigration file.

If you lose your visa:
1. You cannot replace a U.S. visa from within the United States. However, you can legally remain in the U.S. as long as you have entered legally and you maintain your current status.
2. You will need to replace your visa if you wish to travel outside the U.S. and then return to the U.S. to continue your studies.
3. The ISS Office should have a copy of your visa on file. Request a copy using the online Document Photocopy Request Form.
4. Send the completed Form I-102, the I-94 card copy, and a check for $320, payable to the Department of Homeland Security, to the address noted in the instructions.

If you lose your I-94 card:
1. Review the instructions for completing Form I-102.
2. Complete Form I-102.
3. Request a copy of your I-94 card from the ISS Office using the online Document Photocopy Request Form.
4. Send the completed Form I-102, the I-94 card copy, and a check for $320, payable to the Department of Homeland Security, to the address noted in the instructions.

This Issue’s Idiom: Get Into the Swing of Things

Meaning: To become accustomed to or familiar with an activity or circumstance.

History: Though the history of this idiom is indefinite, some people trace its origins to the 1500s, when the phrase, “in full swing” was used to show that something was very active. Others feel the idiom’s use of the term “swing” denotes the regular back and forth movement of a child’s swing or a clock pendulum. Later, in the 1800s, the expression developed its current idiomatic form, “get into the swing of things.” Still used today, the idiom signifies becoming comfortable with a new task or situation and is commonly used to refer to social situations.

Example: For new and returning students alike, the ISS Office hopes that you’ve gotten into the swing of things with your coursework and other responsibilities.

Quotables

Learn everything you can, anytime you can, from anyone you can -- there will always come a time when you will be grateful you did.
— Sarah Caldwell
What’s Your Perspective?

Share your perspective on various topics about U.S. culture, such as media and friendship, as well as celebrate American holidays in this ongoing program sponsored by the ISS Office. During Perspectives, held every Friday afternoon, a small group of international students meet in an informal, relaxed setting. Theme-based discussions follow a free meal of pizza or other food. Designed as an ongoing orientation program, Perspectives is a great option for new students, though all are welcome to attend.

If you would like to get involved in Perspectives, contact Nancy Montague. Your name will then be added to the list of participants, allowing you to receive email announcements with details about each week’s activity and the location of the meeting.

When Words Aren’t Enough

During a recent conference for international educators, three ISS staff members gave a presentation entitled, “When Words Aren’t Enough: Navigating the Jargon Jungle.” Geared toward immigration counselors, the presentation focused on one’s awareness of the terminology used when advising international students. Because immigration regulations are riddled with technical jargon, one goal of the ISS Office is to help students and scholars alike in understanding the meaning of these regulations.

While the ISS staff does its best to remain sensitive to the technical nature of the language used in immigration matters, there may be times when this is inadvertently overlooked. If a concept, such as RCL or STEM extension is not fully understood, please ask the ISS staff for further clarification. Likewise, if during a walk-in or appointment an immigration counselor uses terms that you are unfamiliar with, you should stop the counselor and ask for further clarification. In fact, if you do not do so, it will be assumed that you understand the information being presented to you. Again, it is in your best interest to bring such situations to the immigration counselor’s attention. After all, you are ultimately responsible for understanding the regulations for maintaining your status in the United States.

In Appreciation

A special word of thanks goes to Mira Bekar, Neeraj Iyer, Yipin (Amanda) Lu, and Shen Wang for their participation in the “When Words Aren’t Enough” presentation.

Challenge Chest Answers: (1) Kabul, Afghanistan; (2) Kinshasa, Republic of the Congo; (3) Kingston, Jamaica; (4) Kuwait City, Kuwait; (5) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; (6) Kathmandu, Nepal; (7) Kigali, Rwanda; (8) Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; (9) Khartoum, Sudan; (10) Kampala, Uganda; (11) Kyiv/Kiev, Ukraine