ISSO NEWS  April 2016

OPT Workshop Dates for Graduate Students
If you are a grad student and if you will be graduating in 2016 you should attend one of our workshops about Optional Practical Training (OPT). This is an immigration benefit that you can apply for that will allow you to gain work experience after graduation. You must attend an OPT workshop prior to applying for OPT. Pre-registration is not necessary.

OPT Workshops for the Spring semester will take place as follows:

Wednesday, April 6—3:00 PM until 4:30 PM
Jonas Clark, room 218

Graduating in May or August and cannot attend? Contact our office to schedule a time to meet with our staff about OPT. Students who cannot attend an OPT workshop can attend Open Hours with Amanda Connolly to learn about OPT. Open Hours are Tuesdays from 1:30—3:00 PM in Corner House and Thursdays from 11 AM—12:30 PM in Carlson Hall.

STEM OPT Workshop Dates
We are going to see big changes to the OPT regulations for students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields beginning on May 10. Come to one of our STEM OPT workshops to learn about these changes and how they affect you. These workshops are open to graduate and undergraduate students in a STEM degree program at Clark or who have earned a STEM degree from another US university within the past 10 years.

Friday, April 29 - 12:30 PM until 2:00 PM; Lurie Conference Room
I-20 end date check!
Now is the time to check your I-20 or DS-2019. If you are not graduating this May and the end date is listed as May 2016 on your I-20 or DS-2019, now is the time to make arrangements to extend. Make sure to contact the ISSO for instructions on how to extend you end date and stay in status.

International Dining Meeting
If you eat in the Dining Hall or in the Bistro and would like to join a small group that meets with Dining Services Staff, please contact Patty Doherty (pdoherty@clarku.edu). The group meets several times throughout the semester to learn about new offerings from Sodexo (Clark’s food services provider) and to offer feedback.

Student Leadership and Programming workshop:
Leading with Cultural Competency
On Wednesday, April 20th from 4:30-6pm in the Higgins Lounge in Dana Commons. For more information on this, please contact Tim St. John (tstjohn@clarku.edu).

Donut Day!
Donut Day will be held on April 26, 2016 in the Grace Conference Room in the Higgins University Center. All those who will travel outside of the US after May, 2016 should get a new I-20 signature in preparation for entry to the US. More details to come!

International Support Network Message from Mark Jonas, Clark University student:
Are you an international student and have previously had an experience with counseling at the Center for Counseling & Personal Growth? If so, I would like to invite you to participate in a project focused on the creation of a booklet to help connect international students to mental health resources. This booklet will focus on intercultural mental health beliefs/stigma, as well as the hesitancy that international
students may feel in seeking counseling. My ultimate goal is to create a helpful resource for current and future internationals here at Clark.

If you would like to participate or if you have questions, please contact Mark Jonas (mjonas@clarku.edu)

**Be Careful of Tax Scams!**
We have been alerted that some international students are receiving phone calls from people who are pretending to be US government agents. These scammers are threatening international students in an attempt to get money from them. If you receive a call like this, hang up. Representatives from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) do not contact individuals who owe taxes by phone or by e-mail. Helpful information on this topic can be found [here](http://www.clarku.edu/offices/oia/international/taxes.cfm).

**Taxes**
All students who worked in the US in 2015 should file their taxes by April 15, 2016. Please refer to ISSO e-mail dated February 1, 2016 or this link, [http://www.clarku.edu/offices/oia/international/taxes.cfm](http://www.clarku.edu/offices/oia/international/taxes.cfm) for more details.

**Travelers – take note**
You may have heard about the Zika virus in the news lately. For those of you who plan to travel during spring break, please take a look at this link to find out where cases of the Zika disease has been found: [http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/). Although most cases of the Zika virus are mild, here is some information about preventative measures you can take to avoid contraction: [http://www.cdc.gov/zika/disease-qa.html](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/disease-qa.html)

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Spring is here!