



# InterAct

The Newsletter of the International Center (IC)  
Florida State University Division of Student Affairs



Immigration Edition Fall 2009

## SEVIS II: What's in Store for You

In February of 2010, the Department of Homeland Security is expected to begin a transition of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), to a re-engineered student and scholar database called SEVIS II. SEVIS is a web-based information system that the federal government uses to track international students and scholars. Since the Florida State University is certified by the DHS as a school that can bring in international students and scholars, it has reporting requirements to DHS that are done through SEVIS. SEVIS II, however, represents a big change in the way that international students and scholar data is handled. More importantly, some of the reporting responsibilities will shift from the university to the students and scholars.

So how will SEVIS II affect you? The program is currently being built and details are being determined, but a few things are clear at this point. International students and scholars will:

- have to create an immigration account and obtain an Immigration Identification Number (IIN) which will be used for any and all transactions with SEVIS II and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services;
- have access to their own SEVIS record to check on their current immigration status and admissibility indicator, i.e., at any point in time, you can check on whether you are in good standing and can enter the United States should you leave or have plans to leave;
- report on your physical/ mailing address when you first arrive in the U.S. and each time you change your residence;
- report on your employment status, and provide employer information such as name of company, address and employment dates;

The transition to SEVIS II also means a consolidation of all your immigration history as an international student or scholar. As with any attempt to merge data, this will most likely mean that you will need to check the data in your SEVIS II record for accuracy.

The International Center immigration advisers will be preparing a series of workshops and/or town hall meetings to help you prepare for SEVIS II. These will begin in the spring semester. You will receive information through the immigration listserv, so make sure you check your email. If you forward your school email to another email address such as hotmail, yahoo or Gmail, please make sure that any email from the address [ic-immigration@lists.fsu.edu](mailto:ic-immigration@lists.fsu.edu) is not blocked or treated as junk mail. It is very important that you keep up-to-date with new developments for SEVIS II.

SEVIS II is expected to be in full deployment by fall 2010.

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## Diversity Visa Lottery

The 2011 U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery registration period began at noon on October 2 and will end at noon EST on Monday, November 30. The Diversity Visa Lottery is a program through which individuals can apply to become eligible for an immigrant visa ("green card") through a lottery selection process. Entries must be registered online (no paper applications) through the U.S. Department of State at [www.dvlottery.state.gov](http://www.dvlottery.state.gov) during the registration period.

You can find detailed information with eligibility requirements, instructions, and frequently asked questions on the State Department's Consular Affairs Website at [http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types\\_1318.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types_1318.html). When checking eligibility, you should know that *your country of birth or the country of birth of your spouse* is important for determining eligibility, *not* the country of citizenship. If you or your spouse was born in an eligible country, both of you are eligible to apply if you meet all other requirements.

If you decide to enter, you can apply directly yourself. Be aware of fraud and avoid companies that offer to facilitate your entry or increase your chances of winning for a fee. There is no fee for entering the lottery, and the system will issue a receipt to you so you can confirm your entry. This year, the system will also allow you to check the status of your application online, to see if you were selected or not.

## Immigration Attorney Presentation

Immigration Attorney David Ware will provide information about working in the U.S. at a presentation on Saturday, November 14 at 10:00 am in HCB 101. His presentation will discuss the H-1B and other work options, as well as the processes through which one can obtain a "green card," or permanent resident status in the US.

Please register for the presentation on the International Center website at:

<http://www.ic.fsu.edu/eventsandworkshops.cfm>.

## Enrollment in Online Classes

The F-1 Federal Regulations restrict enrollment in online distance education courses for all F-1 international students. As a reminder, please make note of the online enrollment rules listed below.

**Online Enrollment in Summer:** For summer enrollment, unless it is a student's first or last semester, a student may enroll in as many online classes as desired.

**Online Enrollment in Final Term:** In a student's final term, enrollment must include some face-to-face component. An F-1 student may not be enrolled in a 100% online course of study in a final term.

**Online Enrollment in Fall & Spring:** Only 1 on-line course or distance education class that counts toward a full course load is allowed per semester. An undergraduate student must have a minimum of 9 credit hours of face-to-face enrollment out of the required 12 hours of full-time enrollment. A graduate student must have a minimum of 6 credit hours of face-to-face enrollment out of the required 9 hours of full-time enrollment.

## Join Us for Coffee Hour!

The International Center is the place to be on Friday evenings. At least 75 international students, scholars as well as U.S. students have been gathering every Friday at the Center to start the weekend with complimentary coffee, tea, snacks, and great conversation. Coffee hour begins at 5:30 and ends around 7:00. Come by to relax, meet new people, and see friends!

For other International Programs, check the Campus and Community Programs link on the IC website, [www.ic.fsu.edu](http://www.ic.fsu.edu). And check out our calendar for a weekly list of events:

<http://sacommunications.fsu.edu/calendar/main.php?calendarid=ic&view=upcoming>



## Fulbright And Exchange Students

This semester, FSU is hosting 29 U.S. government-funded, degree-seeking students in a rich variety of disciplines. The students were awarded prestigious scholarships from the Fulbright Commissions, the Organization of American States, the Vietnam Education Foundation, and USAID.

Each year the Modern Languages department also hosts a non-degree Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant in their Arabic program. This year's student is Ms. Farah Abou Hassan from Lebanon. And, for the first time, the International Center is hosting a UGRAD scholarship recipient, Seda Grigoryan, from Armenia, studying Media Production.

FSU also has formal exchange agreements with universities around the world to host students for one or two semesters on our campus, and in turn to send FSU students abroad to our partner universities. This semester we are pleased to host students from Erasmus University in the Netherlands, Hiroshima University and Miyagi University in Japan, Jonkoping University in Sweden, University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, and Sookmyung University in South Korea.

For more information on graduate scholarship opportunities for study and research, visit the new Office of Graduate Fellowships at <http://ogfa.fsu.edu>, and for information on FSU's exchange programs, visit <http://global.fsu.edu/currentInternationalExchanges.htm>

## Welcome to our New International Students!

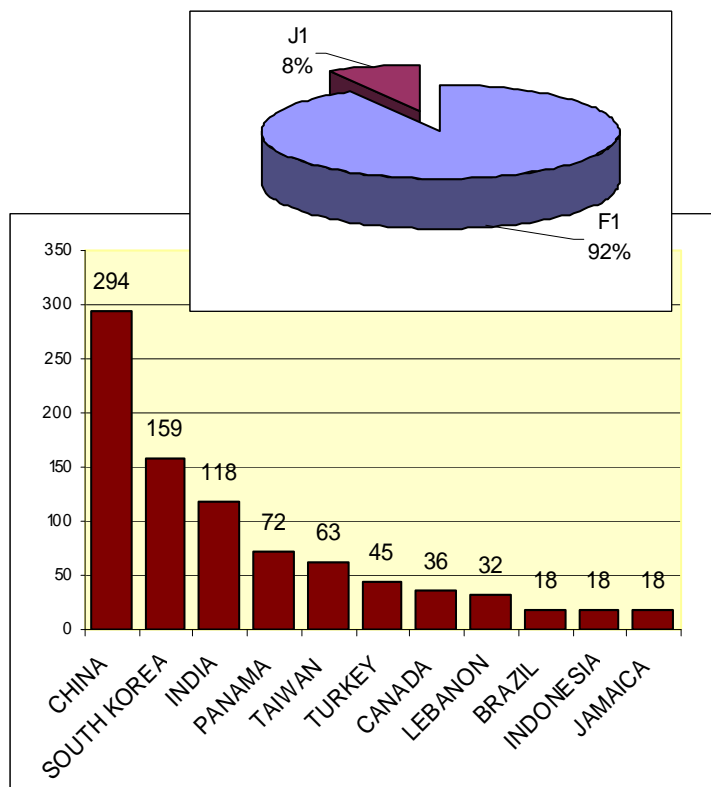
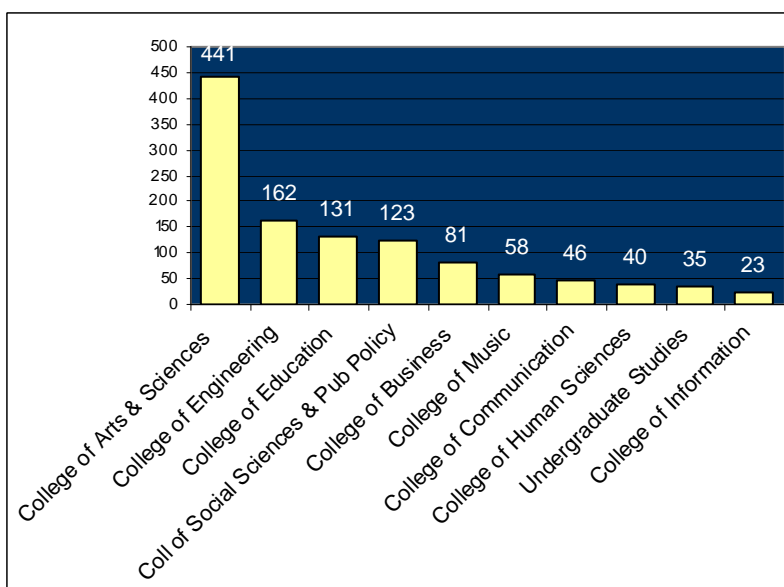
This August, the International Center welcomed a record number of new students, with more than 300 students from 51 countries! The majority of the new students are seeking Doctorate degrees, with Masters level students a close second. The top five countries of origin are: China, India, South Korea, Taiwan, and Panama.

To welcome these students to their new university and city, the International Center hosted "Weeks of Welcome" (or WOW!) in addition to a New Student Orientation. WOW events and activities included trips to Wal-Mart and the Social Security Office, as well as sessions about topics such as healthcare in the U.S., getting started at FSU, student rights and responsibilities, and FSU sports and football. The WOW weeks concluded with a Welcome Reception at Alumni Hall, which was well attended by both new and current students and scholars. The International Center staff enjoyed welcoming these new students and we hope to see them often at International Center events!

## International Student Snapshot Fall 2009

Total international student population: 1211

81% Graduate, 18% Undergraduate, Other 1%



# Employment Workshops

Are you in F-1 status and planning to graduate soon? If so, and you wish to apply for Post-Completion OPT (Optional Practical Training) work authorization, you are required to attend an OPT workshop. Below are the remaining OPT workshops this Fall 2009. All OPT workshops this semester will be held in the Dunlap Student Success Center (corner of Woodward Ave & Traditions Way). Please register for these workshops online at: <http://ic.fsu.edu/eventsandworkshops.cfm>.

## OPT Workshops:

- Thursday, October 22, 2009 – 2:00pm-4:00pm, Dunlap Student Success Center, Room 1006
- Wednesday, November 4, 2009 – 3:00-5:00pm, Dunlap Student Success Center, Room 2201
- Friday, November 13, 2009 – 2:00pm-4:00pm, Dunlap Student Success Center, Room 2201
- Tuesday, December 1, 2009 – 3:00pm-5:00pm, Dunlap Student Success Center, Room 1006
- Friday, December 11, 2009 – 2:00pm-4:00pm, Dunlap Student Success Center, Room 1006

## Congratulations to Undergraduate Tuition Waiver Recipients

Congratulations to the following students who received undergraduate out-of-state tuition waivers in the fall semester: Rehenika Himali Algama, Ye Ji An, Nidia Baez, Seda Grigoryan, Won Jae Jang, Da-kyong Lee, Yongwoo Lee, Rebeca Marques, You Lee Sun, Saniya Tabenova, Huan Toh, Carlos Vitale, Apiwat Wangweerawong, Yao Yuan, and Hang Zhang.

The State of Florida provides an allocation of money each year to be used for out-of-state tuition waivers for deserving **undergraduate international students**. The awards are made for one semester at a time for up to 12 hours. Students must reapply each semester that they would like to be considered for a waiver or grant. The deadline to apply for the Spring semester is the last day of drop/add for that semester which is January 11, 2010

For eligibility requirements and to apply, visit: <http://ic.fsu.edu/currentstudents/financialassistance.cfm>

## How to Update Your Address!

The International Center is required to keep a record of your current physical address for immigration purposes. The university also requires your current address. We use your address in the FSU Blackboard system (>Secure Apps >My Address) to update the federal immigration database with your correct address information. Note that you are required by law to update your address within 10 days of any change.

### Tips for address updates:

- Don't use abbreviations! Please write out the city name as Tallahassee. (Not TLH, Tally, etc.)
- You don't live in your department! Please do not use your lab, or academic department's address.
- Your local address must be a US address.
- If you live in an **FSU Residence Hall**, you must report **both** your **PO Box #** and your **physical address**:
  1. Report your PO Box address through BlackBoard and use the following format:  
PO Box #XXXXXX  
Tallahassee, FL 32313
  2. Email the International Center at: [IC-Advising@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:IC-Advising@admin.fsu.edu) with your street address and room number, for example:  
134 Convocation Way, Rm. 123  
Tallahassee, FL 32306

### Street Names for Halls

Broward Hall - 668 University Way  
Bryan Hall - 182 Convocation Way  
Cawthon Hall - 119 Honors Way  
DeGraff Hall (1) - 808 W. Tennessee St.  
DeGraff Hall (2) - 810 W. Tennessee St.  
Deviney Hall - 806 University Way  
Dorman Hall - 812 W. Jefferson St.  
Gilchrist Hall - 702 University Way  
Jennie Murphree Hall - 126 Convocation Way  
Kellum Hall - 74 Chieftain Way  
Landis Hall - 714 University Way  
McCollum Hall - 1165 Academic Way  
Ragans Hall - 919 Learning Way  
Reynolds Hall - 134 Convocation Way  
Rogers Hall - 1147 Academic Way  
Salley Hall - 1106 W. Call Street  
Smith Hall - 78 Chieftain Way  
Wildwood Hall (1) - 938 W. Jefferson St.  
Wildwood Hall (2) - 202 Varsity Drive

Available in alternative format upon request.