

AUGUST 2021

OISS Newsletter



Dear International Gauchos,

There's a saying that goes, "August is like the Sunday of summer." With Fall quarter starting next month, it feels like the end of summer is in sight. In the same way you soak up the last moments of relaxation on a Sunday, we hope you find rest and rejuvenation this month.

If you're in the local area, you still have time to fit a few more beach days in! If you haven't arrived yet, keep reading to find the OISS team's list of favorite beaches. Enjoy this month's beach-themed newsletter!

In community,

UC SANTA BARBARA
Office of International
Students & Scholars

In This Issue:

- Communication Tips
- Visa Survey
- Fall 2021 Letter of Support
- Housing Resources
- COVID-19 Vaccinations
- Fall 2021 Immigration Guidelines
- OISS Recommends

Alerts & Updates

Effective Communication with OISS

In past newsletters, OISS has communicated that we are working diligently to serve thousands of international students — those who were supposed to arrive last Fall, those planning to arrive this Fall, current continuing students, and alumni on OPT, STEM OPT, and Post-Completion Academic Training. Our student advising team is understaffed at this time, so requests are being processed by fewer advisors than before. This is the reality of our team's situation and we share it with you for transparency's sake. We are doing as much as we can to fill our vacancies and hope to be fully staffed as soon as possible. We underscore how much **we appreciate your patience** and perhaps modified expectations of our services at this time.



As a large university, UCSB has many departments, each with their own areas of expertise. OISS is the only immigration-specific office on campus for international students and scholars. Although OISS maintains partnerships with other departments and shares non-OISS resources, we cannot speak to policies or procedures beyond our expertise. For example, if you have questions about student housing, then UCSB's Housing, Dining & Auxiliary Enterprises is the best department to give you answers. If you have questions about UCSB's COVID-19 vaccination requirements, then Student Health is best-equipped to answer those questions. It will help us answer all student requests more efficiently if non-immigration related questions are directed to the appropriate department.

What is an immigration related question?

Anything related to your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record, your visa status, or your I-20/DS-2019 document is considered an immigration related topic. If you look at [this page](#) on our website, you will see colored boxes with terms like, "Basics of Maintaining Your Status," "Withdrawal or Voluntary Leave of Absence from UCSB," and "Employment." These are examples of immigration related topics for international students, which we encourage all students to be familiar with.



When you have immigration related questions, we ask that you **only send one email to oiss@sa.ucsb.edu**. Please do not send duplicate emails to both the OISS general inbox and a student advisor or Carbon Copy (CC) multiple advisors. Responding to duplicate messages slows our overall response time down significantly. Emails sent to oiss@sa.ucsb.edu will either be answered by our front desk staff or forwarded to the student's assigned advisor. You can view advisor assignments on [this page](#). We utilize these assignments to evenly distribute advisor workloads and ensure equitable access to advising services for students. If your assigned advisor is out of the office, then our front desk staff will forward your message to another advisor. Please note that the newintl@sa.ucsb.edu inbox is not being monitored at this time.

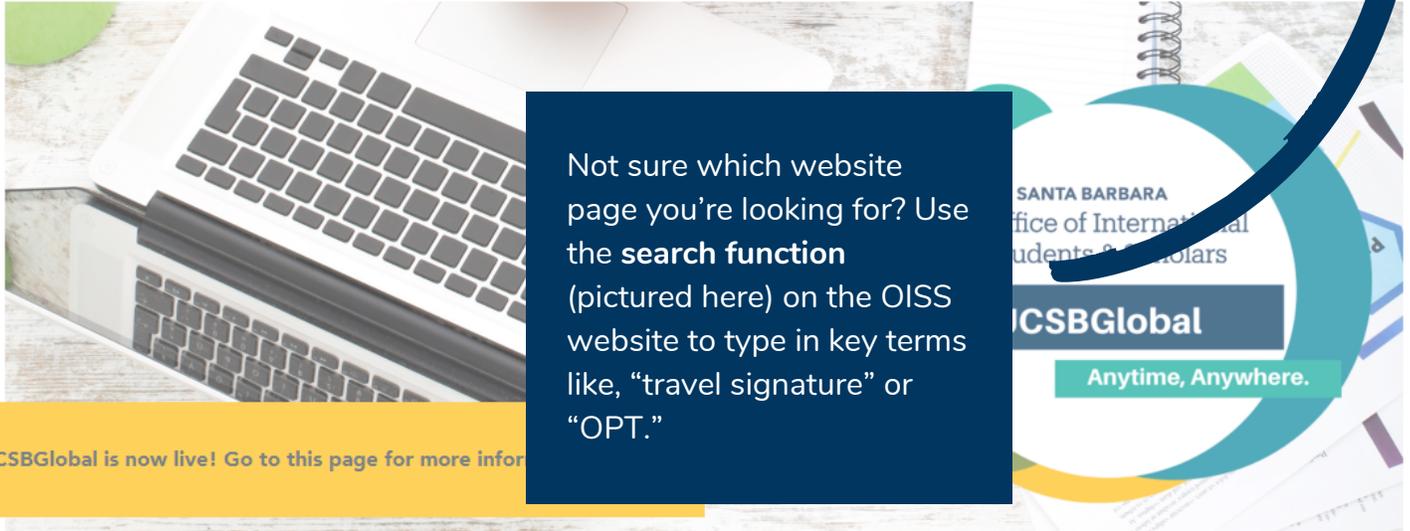
Our practice is to answer requests in the order in which we receive them. However, we acknowledge that some requests might be more urgent than others. While we do our best to prioritize urgent requests, we ask for your help in planning ahead when possible. Although emergencies can be unexpected, other urgent situations can be avoided when students are proactive in their approach.

These are examples of what OISS considers to be an **urgent situation or emergency**:

- Danger to your personal safety, whether physical or psychological
- Danger to someone else's personal safety, whether physical or psychological
- Arrest or other interaction with law enforcement entities
- Natural disaster
- Student is currently out of status
- Student is on the verge of falling out of status
 - I-20 or DS-2019 is expiring within one week
 - End of grace period is approaching (60 days after program end date for F-1 students, 30 days after program end date for J-1 student)
 - Transfer out deadline is within one week
- Student is stuck at the airport and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is trying to contact UCSB



Tools for Success

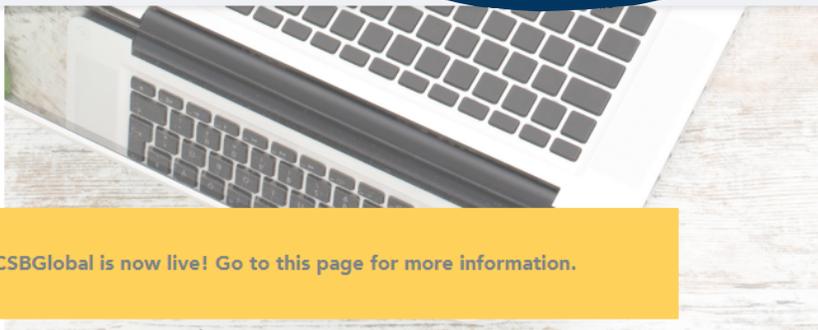


Not sure which website page you're looking for? Use the **search function** (pictured here) on the OISS website to type in key terms like, "travel signature" or "OPT."

UCSBGlobal is now live! Go to this page for more information.

UC SANTA BARBARA Office of International Students & Scholars

- Overview
- Student Advising
- Virtual Front Desk Drop-ins
- Prospective Students
- Current Students
- I want to...(Student Requests)



UCSBGlobal is now live! Go to this page for more information.

Ready to submit a request? This **Request Guide** shows you all your request options. When you're ready to submit, find the corresponding e-form in UCSBGlobal. OISS no longer accepts processing requests (i.e. OPT applications, travel signature requests, leave of absence forms, etc.) via email. All requests can be made in UCSBGlobal.

Visa Survey

Whether you have received your visa, faced a denial of your visa application, or are under administrative processing, we want to know the current status of your visa application! **Please fill out this survey** so that OISS and UCSB can get a snapshot of the current visa status of our international Gauchos.



New OPT Tutorial

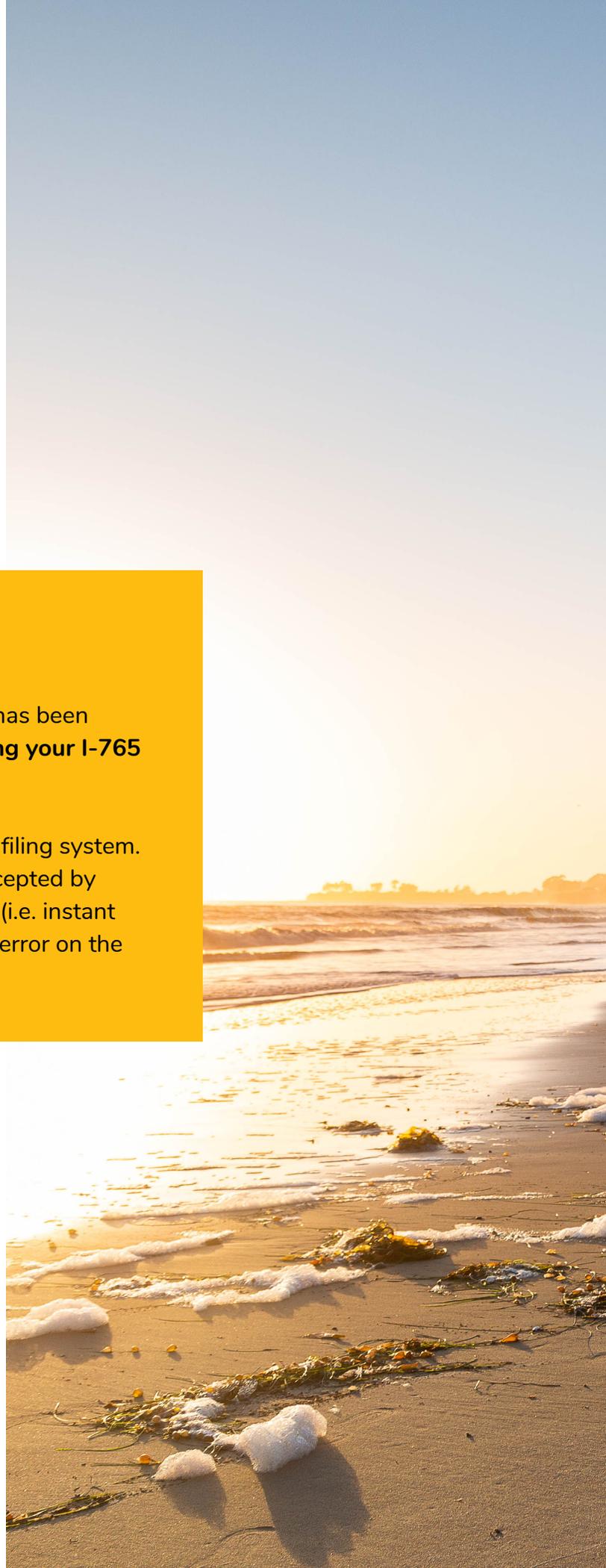
The Optional Practical Training (OPT) Tutorial has been updated! It now includes information about **filing your I-765 online**.

OISS encourages all students to use the online filing system. Although mail-in applications are still being accepted by USCIS, the online filing system has its benefits (i.e. instant receipt number generation and less margin for error on the application).

Fall 2021 Letter of Support

OISS has created a Letter of Support for Fall quarter.

In case you missed it, you can view our announcement [here](#).





In Need of Housing Resources?

We got you! Here's a list of resources for finding housing, getting help reviewing a lease, and more.

- [List of Leasing Companies](#) in Isla Vista, procured by the UCSB Associated Students Pardall Center
- [UCSB Housing, Dining, and Auxiliary Enterprises](#)
 - a. [COVID 19 page](#)
- [UCSB Community Housing Services](#)
 - What they offer:
 - Off-Campus Rental Listings
 - Landlord/tenant, neighbor, and roommate dispute resolution
 - Mediation Program
 - Advice and information about rental rights and responsibilities for tenants and property providers
 - Educational Workshops (see below)
 - Publications + forms
 - Move-in and Move-out Videotaping
- [UCSB AS Legal Resource Center](#)
 - They can help with:
 - Security deposit disputes, evictions, habitability situations
 - Lease review & landlord/tenant questions
- [Isla Vista Tenants Union](#)

If you're looking for housing outside of Isla Vista, you may consider taking the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) bus. **Students ride for free!** The UCSB Transportation and Parking Services [website](#) has the details.

COVID-19 Vaccinations



As stated in the Chancellor's recent [message](#), "all UCSB students must either **provide proof of full vaccination or submit a request for Exception or Deferral no later than September 9, 2021.**" The message contains this helpful chart, showing the latest date you should get your COVID-19 vaccination by in order to meet the September 9 deadline.

Moderna Vaccine	Pfizer Vaccine	J&J Janssen Vaccine
Start no later than July 29	Start no later than August 5	Start no later than August 26
Receive second dose after 4 weeks	Receive second dose after 3 weeks	No second dose required
Second dose no later than August 26	Second dose no later than August 26	N/A
Fully vaccinated two weeks after second dose	Fully vaccinated two weeks after second dose	Fully vaccinated two weeks after single dose
Fully vaccinated by September 9	Fully vaccinated by September 9	Fully vaccinated by September 9

The J&J Janssen Vaccine is available at the Los Angeles International airport, the San Francisco International airport, and at UCSB's Student Health Center. For more information about how to upload proof of your vaccination record, which international vaccines are accepted, and how to apply for a request for Exception or Deferral, please visit the [UC COVID-19 Vaccine Policy FAQs](#). General COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs are located [here](#). For any questions or concerns about submitting your exception or deferral, please contact Student Health for assistance. OISS does not manage vaccination requirements.

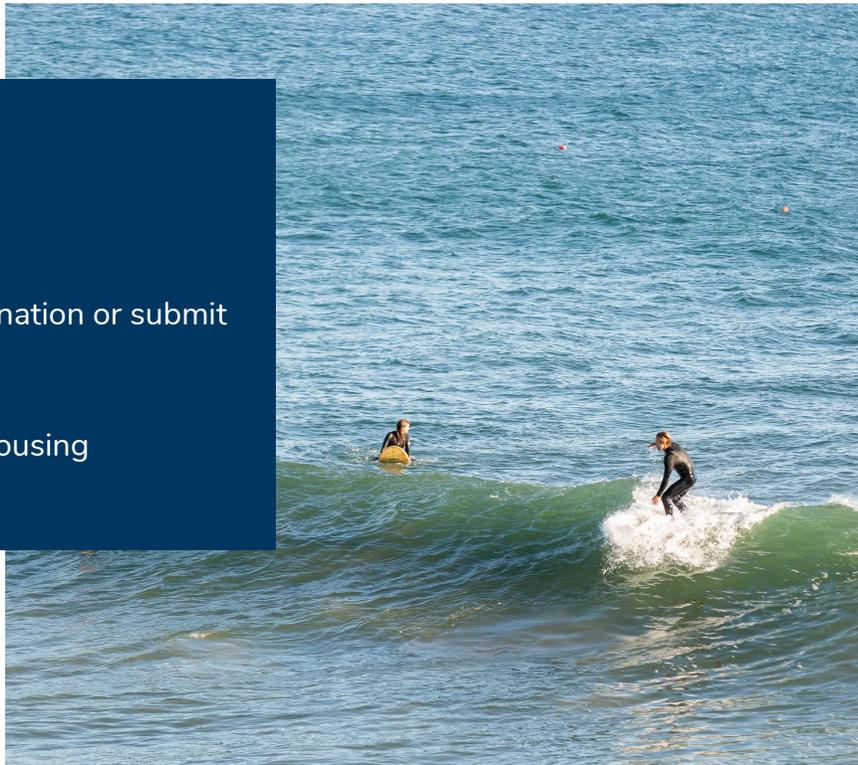
We encourage you to read the full [COVID-19 Vaccination policy](#). To schedule your vaccination appointment at UCSB's Student Health Center, visit this page. Housing information can be found on the UCSB Housing website.

Important Dates!

August 26 - latest date to receive J&J Vaccine

Sept 9 - deadline to provide proof of full vaccination or submit a request for Exception or Deferral

Sept 15 - early move-in date for on campus housing



Fall 2021 Immigration Guidelines

In his June Campus Planning Update [memo](#), the Chancellor noted that UCSB plans to return to primarily in-person instruction with regular classroom occupancy. If you have questions about the availability of remote coursework, please contact your academic college or graduate department. On April 26, 2021, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) [extended the guidance](#) originally issued in March 2020 for the 2021-22 academic year. Meaning the COVID-19 guidance that we have been following the past fifteen months will continue to apply. Although no significant changes have been made to the [FAQs for SEVP Stakeholders about COVID-19](#), we will reiterate how the guidance applies to students.

Students In Initial Status

(Students who were: 1) admitted to UCSB with a start date after March 9, 2020 or 2) issued a new initial I-20 after taking a leave of absence.)

- You may continue studying remotely from outside of the U.S. You must contact OISS to request an updated I-20 or DS-2019 before you plan to enter the U.S. in the future. To enter the U.S., enrollment in at least one in-person course is required. Again, if you have questions about the availability of remote coursework, please contact your academic college or graduate department.
- If you entered the U.S. using a new initial I-20 or DS-2019 any time after March 9, 2020, then you must be registered in a course with an in-person component in order to be eligible to remain in the U.S.
- If you do not plan to enroll full-time in Fall 2021, then you must be outside of the U.S. You will need to contact OISS to request a new I-20 or DS-2019 in the future, when you plan to enroll at UCSB and enter the U.S. If you already paid your I-901 SEVIS Fee, you may be able to request a refund or transfer of your fee payment to your new SEVIS ID (once issued). Find out how by visiting the [I-901 SEVIS Fee FAQ page](#).

Continuing Students

(Students who have maintained an Active SEVIS record since before March 9, 2020.)

- Continuing students (students with an active I-20 or DS-2019) may study remotely from inside or outside of the U.S. The in-person component requirement does not apply to any continuing student who was in the U.S. before March 9, 2020. Again, this is subject to remote course availability.
- In order to keep your SEVIS record Active, please make sure that you are enrolled in a full course load for Fall 2021. For undergraduate students, a full course load is 12 units. For graduate students, a full course load is 8 units. The only exception is if you have already been approved by OISS to go on a Reduced Course Load (Academic or Medical RCL) To get more RCL information, click [here](#) if you are an F-1 student and click [here](#) if you are a J-1 student.
- If I cannot return to the U.S. this Fall and cannot secure a full course load of remote classes, what should I do?
 - Please contact your assigned OISS advisor. This [page](#) has advisor assignments listed at the bottom.

OISS Recommends

Our Favorite Beaches

In a town known for its beaches, everyone has their favorites. These are ours:

- Hendry's Beach (dog friendly)
- Ellwood Beach
- East Beach (volleyball courts)
- Butterfly Beach
- Campus Point
- Thousand Steps



Campus and Community Offerings

Free Community Yoga

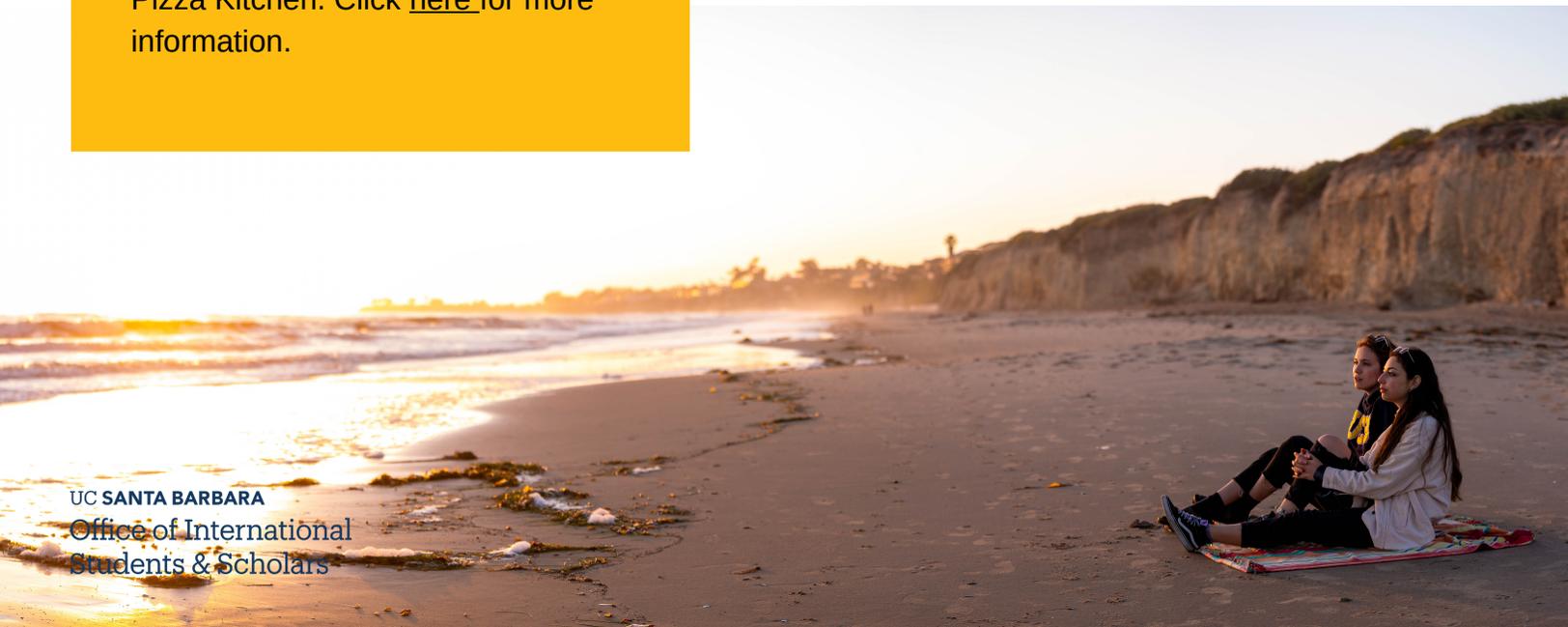
Sat, Aug 28, 2021

9am-10am

Location: Upper Arts Terrace on the 2nd floor, outside of Museum of Contemporary Art and Center Stage, above Panda Express and California Pizza Kitchen. Click [here](#) for more information.

Department of Recreation

Reservations no longer needed! This summer has plenty of Adventure Programs, Virtual Fitness Classes, and In-Person Fitness Classes for you. Check their website for more information.





CLAS Summer Workshops

During summer A 2021, CLAS Academic Skills will offer **fourteen academic skills workshops live on Zoom and six on-demand, online study skills videos and self-guided exercises**. Students can find on-demand offerings online and on the CLAS Academic Skills page on Shoreline. You can save a spot in any of the workshops by going to myclas.sa.ucsb.edu, clicking “my workshops” and then “academic skills.”

In addition, CLAS offers individual academic skills consultations in which students receive guidance to

- develop their study plans for specific courses, including plans to catch up if they have fallen behind;
- identify strengths and weaknesses in their study habits;
- get more out of lectures, readings, assignments, and problem sets;
- organize their time;
- strategize around issues of focus, motivation, confusion, and confidence.

Some students also schedule brief, weekly appointments as accountability check-ins that help them to cultivate steadiness in their work habits. Students can make appointments for individual consultations by going to myclas.sa.ucsb.edu, clicking "my appointments," and then clicking "academic skills."

Santa Barbara Bowl

The Santa Barbara Bowl hosts well-known musicians, comedians, and other performers year-round! Find upcoming performances on their website [here](#).



Thanks for Reading!

We hope you enjoyed this issue of the OISS Newsletter. Past newsletters can be viewed on the OISS [website](#).

Questions?

If you are a current international student with questions regarding immigration, advising and other requests, email oiss@sa.ucsb.edu.

J-1 Scholars should reach out to j1scholar@sa.ucsb.edu. For those with questions related to employment-based visas; please contact longtermvisa@sa.ucsb.edu.

For any inquiries regarding upcoming OISS events, or collaboration opportunities, contact oissprograms@sa.ucsb.edu.

If you are a UCSB department or organization and would like to publicize any information or upcoming events to international Gauchos, contact mmotomazie@ucsb.edu.

Let's stay in touch!

Follow our social media accounts to stay up-to-date with everything happening at OISS.

