

DECEMBER 2021

OISS Newsletter



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Dear International Gauchos,

As we reflect on Fall quarter, two words come to mind: transition and adaptation. After many months of remote work and studies, the UCSB community returned to our campus by the sea. Needless to say, it was a large adjustment for all.

Our team is grateful to serve such a skilled international community with an aptitude for adaptability. We are proud of our Global Gauchos and hope everyone has a restful, well-deserved Winter break.

In community,

The Office of International Students & Scholars

Alerts & Updates

New Travel COVID Requirements

All travelers over 18 to the United States must show documentation of fully-vaccinated status. Detailed information can be found on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) website](#).

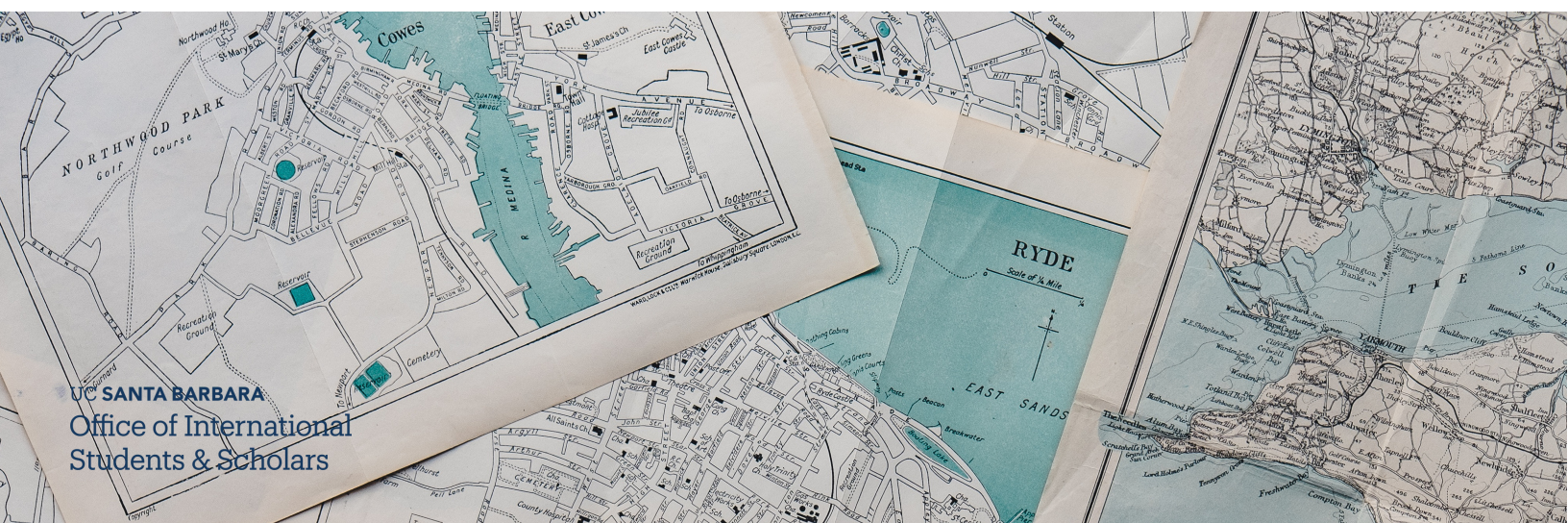
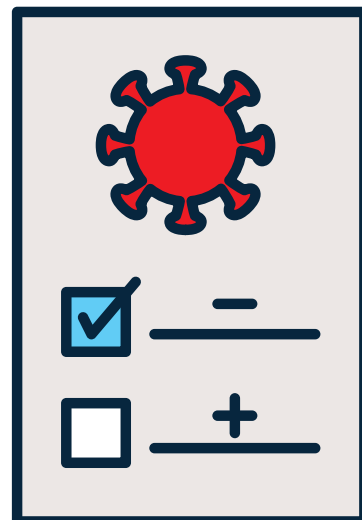
Per a CDC [announcement](#), effective November 8, all air passengers two years of age and older boarding flights to the United States must present one of the following:

(1) Documentation of a negative pre-departure COVID test result: For fully vaccinated passengers, the test must be conducted no more than three days before the flight's departure from a foreign country. For not-fully vaccinated passengers, the test must be from no more than one day before the flight's departure from a foreign country. —or—

(2) Documentation of recovery from COVID-19 in the form of both a positive COVID test from no more than 90 days before the flight; and a letter from a licensed health care provider or public health official stating that the passenger has been cleared for travel.

Current travel requirements are subject to change — please refer to the CDC and US Department of State websites for updates or clarifications.

Our website hosts standard travel information (e.g., how to request travel signatures) for [F-1 students](#), [J-1 students](#), [J-1 scholars](#), and [H-1B scholars](#). Please refer to our [holiday closure dates](#), especially for J-1 students and scholars who cannot receive electronic DS-2019s. We recommend applying for travel signatures sooner rather than later, at least two weeks before departure from the U.S.



Suspension of Entry

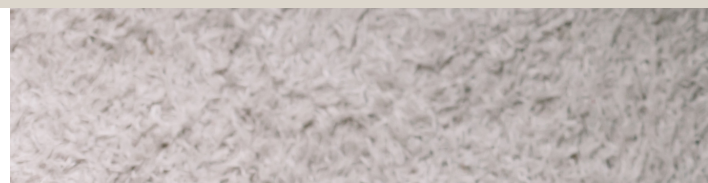
To prevent the spread of COVID-19, on November 26, 2021, President Biden signed a [proclamation](#) suspending the entry of certain noncitizens traveling as immigrants or nonimmigrants who were present in Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe during the 14-day period prior to their entry or attempted entry into the United States. The suspension takes effect 12:01 AM EDT on Monday, November 29. U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents are not subject to the proclamation. Other exceptions include, but are not limited to: foreign diplomats traveling to the United States on A or G visas, and certain immediate family members of U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents including spouses, children (under the age of 21), parents (provided that his/her U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident child is unmarried and under the age of 21), and siblings (provided that both the sibling and the U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident are unmarried and under the age of 21). There is also an exception for air and sea crew traveling to the United States on C, D, or C1/D visas. For the full list of exceptions, please refer to the proclamation. This proclamation shall remain in effect until terminated by the President.



Full-time Enrollment Reminder

Pass 2 has ended, so you have one more chance to register in full-time units for winter! To maintain a valid visa status, all international students must be enrolled full-time. For undergraduates, full-time is 12 or more units; for graduate students, full-time is 8 or more units. The only exception is if you have an approved medical or academic [Reduced Course Load](#) or have a Graduate Division approved [filing leave status](#). Enroll in full-time units now, even if you may need to adjust your schedule later; that way, you're guaranteed to meet the minimum amount of required units.

Please note that reduced course loads must be approved every quarter. For example, if you had a medical reduced course load for Fall quarter, you do not automatically have one for Winter as well. If you need a Winter medical reduced course load, you'll need to apply for the authorization in UCSBGlobal.



Hong Kong Special Student Relief

On Nov. 24, 2021, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) posted a [Federal Register notice](#) announcing the suspension of certain regulatory requirements for F-1 nonimmigrant students who are Hong Kong residents and are experiencing severe economic hardship as a direct result of emergent circumstances in Hong Kong.

This notice announces that the Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary) is suspending certain regulatory requirements for F-1 nonimmigrant students who are Hong Kong residents (regardless of country of birth) and who are experiencing severe economic hardship as a direct result of the emergent circumstances in Hong Kong. Eligible students may request employment authorization, work an increased number of hours while school is in session, and reduce their course load while continuing to maintain F-1 nonimmigrant student status.

Please contact your [assigned OISS advisor](#) if you wish to pursue these options.

Check Your I-20 or DS-2019 End Date

Is your immigration document nearing expiration? If you are not scheduled to graduate on or before your program end date, then you must request a program extension. It must be approved before your document expires. View the [Program Extension instructions here](#).

If you are graduating or completing your EAP program, then your grace period begins the day after the last day of the quarter in which you completed your final course. F-1 students have a 60 day grace period and J-1 students have a 30 day grace period.

During the grace period, you must do one of the following: 1) depart the U.S. 2) apply for OPT 3) transfer to another school 4) change your visa status or 5) start a new degree program. More details can be found [here](#) for F-1 students and [here](#) for J-1 students. J-1 students are also eligible to apply for [post-completion Academic Training](#).

2021 Holiday Closures

Date(s)	Doors Open	Doors Closed	Remote Operations	No Operations	Normal Operations
Nov 24	10 am - 12 pm	1 pm - 4 pm		1 pm - 4 pm	10 am - 12 pm
Nov 25 - 26		✓		✓	
Nov 29 - Dec 10	✓				✓
Dec 13 - 22		✓	✓		
Dec 23 - 24		✓		✓	
Dec 27 - 29		✓	✓		
Dec 30 - 31		✓		✓	
January 3 and on	✓				✓

*From Dec 13 - Dec 17, if you need to access the building for an appointment or document pick up, please coordinate with an advisor.

• Holiday Closures •

OISS will have modified services this holiday season. This table will help you determine when we will be entirely closed and when we will be operating remotely. Holiday closures are listed on the [contact page](#) of our website.

- Please be sure to plan in advance for any requests needing in-person pick-ups (e.g. DS-2019s with travel signatures).



Meet Our New OISS Staff Member!

Felipe Recinos (he.him.el)

Administrative Coordinator and Intake Advisor

I have no idea what it is like to be an International Student. But I am able to empathize with the experience of adapting to a new culture and juggling immigration paperwork while in college. I was born in El Salvador but came to the US at the very young age of 2. First couple of years in the US, I was only surrounded by Salvadoran, Spanish speaking culture. When I entered Kindergarten, I did not speak any English. I did start to learn quickly but I remember on the very first day, I did not have any idea what was going on. I was completely lost.

Eventually, I finished kindergarten speaking plenty of English. But starting school began my lifelong journey of having to learn and balance the American English speaking culture at school and the Spanish speaking Salvadoran culture at home.



Since a young age, my parents raised me to be proud and to never forget our family is from El Salvador. But this also meant being aware I was an immigrant, that I needed to go through a long long process to become a citizen of the US. After 5 years of obtaining my permanent residency, or green card, I was able to apply for citizenship! But I was already a second year student at UCSB. After two denials, (I tried to submit fee waivers but those were not accepted, haha) the almost year long process began. By November 2016, I became a US citizen, when I was already a third year in college.

Besides my own immigration story. I came to UCSB in 2013 and graduated in 2018 with a BA in Environmental Studies with a Minor in Anthropology. During my time as an undergrad, I was a brother of Theta Nu Kappa Multicultural and Academic Fraternity, Inc; a College of Letters and Science Senator for Associated Students; and helped create the on-campus Isla Vista Party. After graduating, I served as an Assistant Resident Director for Santa Catalina North 2018-2019 and for Manzanita Village 2019-2020. Some of you may have been my residents!



OISS Events

International Education Week Wrap Up

International Education Week was a great success! We had a wonderful time celebrating international education with students, scholars, student organizations, and campus partners. Thank you to everyone who supported, attended, and co-hosted IE Week events! We encourage you to stay engaged with the international community year round — follow OISS on [Instagram](#) + [Facebook](#), and keep an eye on our [Shoreline](#) events page.

Plan for Next Year!

We invite departments and student organizations to start thinking about IE Week 2022! OISS is happy to co-promote your events for next year. The more, the merrier! Please send your event information to oissprograms@sa.ucsb.edu.

Here are a few photos from the IE Week events.



Global Gaucho BBQ



International Transfer Student Resource Fair



Preparing for the Future: A Framework of Campus Internationalization



Ellwood Mesa Hike



Global Gaucho BBQ

OISS Recommends



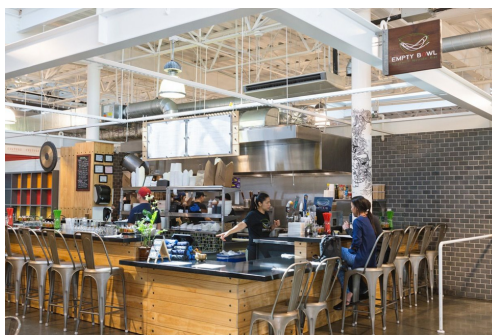
Staff Suggestions

Looking for your next favorite spot? The OISS team has plenty of suggestions for you: things to do, places to check out, gems in our community, and more. We will share a suggestion in each newsletter.

The Santa Barbara Public Market

We like this place because of the variety of food and unique dining experience. You can choose from sushi, falafel, gourmet noodles, Mexican cuisine, and artisanal ice cream. There is something for everyone here! The Public Market has a certain "hustle and bustle" about it, which makes it a lively place to eat and meet up with friends.

It's also a great place to bring visitors from out of town!



Santa Barbara Empty Bowls Fundraiser

Santa Barbara Empty Bowls will be an outside, in-person event on December 5. This year, the traditional Empty Bowls soup luncheon will be transformed into an outdoor holiday market, where guests can explore a range of holiday gift opportunities, all benefiting the Foodbank of Santa Barbara's work to transform hunger into health in our community.

Included with their purchase of \$30 ticket, guests will receive the handmade 'Empty Bowl' of their choice, a container of the soup to heat and enjoy at home, and a collection of Empty Bowls-exclusive offers from local restaurants to fill your bowl following the event. Guests will also have opportunities to take a Foodbank Warehouse tour, purchase tickets for the chance to win amazing raffle prizes, and access to the Empty Bowls pottery marketplace. The event will follow all current Covid-19 health protocols. Buy tickets and learn more [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.

