



Dear International Gauchos,

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the difficult reality we are all navigating. The current events we are witnessing across the United States have created a sense of uncertainty and weight that can feel overwhelming. For all of us in the international education community, this is a particularly challenging and complex time.

The actions by immigration enforcement in Minnesota and other cities across the country are deeply upsetting and stand in direct opposition to the values of inclusion and safety UCSB strives to uphold. While we all feel the gravity of this moment, we recognize that this burden is not distributed equally. Our international community and other vulnerable groups often shoulder the greatest weight, balancing these local concerns with news from home and events far beyond your control.

At OISS, our mission is to support you. We are here to serve as a source of information, comfort, and advocacy. If there are ways our office or the broader UC Santa Barbara community can more effectively support your success and well-being, please do not hesitate to reach out.

While we advocate for you regularly, the most powerful voice on this campus is yours. As vital members of our community, you deserve to see your needs reflected in the vision of this university. I welcome your questions, ideas, and dialogue as we move forward.

OISS exists because of you and for you. We hope you will lean on us and the many campus resources available as we navigate these challenging times together.

In Community,

Erik Williams
Director, Office of International Students & Scholars
erikwilliams@ucsb.edu / 805.893.3820

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Scholarship Opportunity



Scholarship Opportunity for International African & Asian Students in STEM!

The Office of International Students and Scholars is delighted to share that we have recently received a generous scholarship donation to share with our international community! Multiple scholarships will be dispersed for eligible recipients, up to \$5,000 each*.

To be eligible you must meet the following requirements:

- Be an undergraduate or graduate student earning a degree from UC Santa Barbara
- Be from a country in Africa or Asia on an F-1 or J-1 Visa
- Be in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) major
- Have at least a 2.5 GPA

*Due to limited funds, submitting an application does not guarantee you will receive a scholarship. All applications will be reviewed by a committee in OISS for eligibility.



Calendar Reminders



Office Closure

The OISS office will be closed
Monday, Feb 16 for Presidents Day

2026

FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

A stylized illustration of a red and gold horse, the symbol for the Year of the Horse. The horse is depicted in a dynamic, leaping pose. To the left of the horse, the numbers '2026' are written vertically. To the right of the horse, the text 'LUNAR NEW YEAR' is written in large, bold, red letters. Below 'LUNAR NEW YEAR', the date 'February 17th' is written in a smaller, blue font. The background features a gold and red patterned circle and some small gold stars.

Lunar New Year is a major holiday for many Asian communities, focusing on family reunions and tradition. Celebrations start on the new moon and end on the first full moon (Lantern Festival).

Upcoming Sprintax Webinars **WEBINARS**



Sprintax Nonresident Tax Webinar

In these tax webinars, international students, scholars and professionals will be run through everything they need to know about non-resident tax for the 2025 tax season. Topics will include who must file, tax residency, FICA, state returns, implications of misfiling as well as how to use Sprintax to prepare a compliant tax return.

- **Dec 9th @ 12pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Jan 20th @ 10am ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Jan 28th @ 12pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Feb 5th @ 1pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Feb 10th @ 7pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Feb 18th @ 3pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Feb 24th @ 10am ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Mar 5th @ 12pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Mar 11th @ 1pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Mar 16th @ 2pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Mar 27th @ 11am ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Apr 1st @ 1pm ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Apr 7th @ 8am ET** → Register [here](#)
- **Apr 14th @ 2pm ET** → Register [here](#)

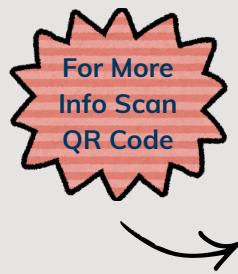


Important:

OISS does not provide tax advice. You are welcome to use any tax service you prefer.

Sprintax Nonresident Tax Overview for OPT/CPT

In these tax webinars, OPT/CPT participants will be run through preparing for their employment from a tax perspective. Topics covered will include residency for tax purposes, tax liabilities when on OPT/CPT and pre-employment tax forms when on OPT/CPT. The Sprintax team will also provide an overview of Sprintax Forms which can be used to prepare your pre-OPT/CPT employment tax documents.



Community Events —

UC SANTA BARBARA
Education Abroad Program

UC SANTA BARBARA
Office of International
Students & Scholars

UCSB All Languages Language Exchange

All Levels and Languages Welcome
Open to Students, Staff & Faculty



Register on Shoreline for Winter 2026
Events will be held in the Third Floor Forum in the
Student Resource Building from 4-5:30pm

Jan 8 Jan 22 Feb 5 Feb 19 Mar 5



Have questions?
Contact: oiissprograms@ucsb.edu

Come join us for our
special Lunar New
Year ALLE event
Feb 19th

And join our ALLE event
with UCSB Reads
celebrating “Crying in H
Mart” by Michelle Zauner
of band Japanese
Breakfast.*

* OISS is offering free copies at
our front desk while supplies
last (Rm. 3130, SRB 3rd floor)

Find your people. Discover new cultures. Build community.
Learn more about UCSB's cultural centers [here](#). 



ASIAN
RESOURCE CENTER



AIICRC
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
PROGRAM



MIDDLE EASTERN, NORTH
AFRICAN, SOUTH ASIAN
RESOURCE CENTER



AFRICAN DIASPORIC
CULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER



CHICANOX/LATINX
CULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER

Community Events —

Shoreline Events



[Different Cultures, Same Conversation](#)



[Flavors of the Diaspora!](#)



[Global Mentorship Study Jam](#)

Interstride Career Webinars



- [Job search strategy for international students](#)
- [F-1 student to H-1B worker: Process and planning in turbulent times](#)

**Santa Barbara
INTERNATIONAL
Film™
FESTIVAL**



International Directors Panel

Directors of this year's Oscar-nominated International Films will share their diverse perspectives on the craft and business of filmmaking.

- 46 World Premieres
- 80 U.S. Premieres
- 50 Countries Represented

[**Scan For Tickets and Full Schedule**](#)

Maintaining Status

While OISS is here to support you, maintaining your immigration status is ultimately your responsibility. Be sure you understand your immigration obligations.



Basics of
Maintaining
F-1 Visa Status
(For students)



Basics of
Maintaining
J-1 Visa Status
(For students)



Basics of
Maintaining J-1
Visa Status
(For scholars)

Need to speak with an OISS Immigration Advisor?
Check out the [OISS People Directory](#)

Thanks for Reading!

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

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.

Let's stay in touch! Follow our social media accounts to stay up-to-date with everything happening at OISS.

