

MAY 2026

OISS Newsletter



Dear International Gauchos,

It is hard to believe that this is the last OISS newsletter of the 2025-2026 academic year! This time of year always brings a unique mix of optimism, uncertainty, and nostalgia.

To all of our Global Gauchos graduating this June: OISS extends our most sincere congratulations. The journey many of you have traveled is truly admirable, and we are deeply grateful that you allowed our team to be a part of it. Thank you for bringing your diverse cultures, academic excellence, and global perspectives to the UCSB community.

To our continuing students and scholars: we wish you a safe and rejuvenating summer break. Please know that OISS will remain open throughout the summer to assist you with any immigration needs. We look forward to welcoming you back to campus in September!

Warm regards,
The OISS Team

This Edition Includes

- End of Filing Leave of Absence
- Staff Spotlight
- OISS Services and Advisors
- Travel Reminders
- OISS & Community Events
- Maintaining immigration status

Attention International Graduates

Effective June 13, 2026, the **Filing Leave of Absence** is no longer an available option for international graduate students to maintain their F-1 or J-1 immigration status.

This policy change has been implemented to ensure all international students remain in compliance with federal visa regulations, which require active enrollment or specific authorized categories to maintain legal immigration status. Students who are on a Filing Leave of Absence are not enrolled and therefore are not registered students with UC Santa Barbara. In order to protect international graduate student status, we must require an official registration status to remain in the United States while completing your degree.

What this means for you:

- **Registration Requirement:** International graduate students must now be fully registered or have an alternative OISS-approved status (such as an authorized Reduced Course Load) to remain in the U.S.
- **Degree Completion:** If you are in the final stages of your degree, you must work closely with your academic department and OISS to ensure you are enrolled in the necessary units during your final quarter.
- **Visa Status:** Filing for a Leave of Absence without prior consultation with an OISS advisor may result in the termination of your SEVIS record and the loss of your legal status in the United States.
- **Continuing Students:** As a reminder if you are continuing your enrollment at UCSB from Spring to Fall quarters, any summer enrollment remains optional unless you are wishing to pursue CPT during summer quarter.

We understand this may impact your academic planning. We encourage all students who are considering graduating in Summer 2026 quarter to discuss your academic plan with your department and consult with an OISS advisor as needed.

Staff Spotlight

Name: Nora Faith

Title: International Student Advisor

Department: OISS



Nora Faith is the newest International Student Advisor on the OISS team. With over 9 years of experience in international education, Nora brings both expertise and a sense of adventure to her new role. Originally from Ventura County, coming to work at UCSB felt like a natural homecoming for Nora, but with slightly more paperwork. Her parents met in Santa Barbara, and so did her grandparents. And for that, she's fallen in love with the personal stories UCSB has offered, as well as the stories that come with this sunny campus's widely known history. Her favorite thing has become the campus's rich past alongside getting to help shape the experiences students receive to create their own stories here.

Nora's passion for global experiences isn't just professional, it's personal as well. She completed her Master's Degree from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, and she was a staff member on the Fall 2024 voyage of Semester at Sea, literally crossing oceans for her job. She has completed the famous Camino de Santiago in Spain—which is basically a very long walk with excellent tapas along the way. She's completed several long-distance bike rides including Los Angeles to San Francisco, Portland to San Francisco, and around Iceland's Ring Road (yes willingly). She hopes to pursue the Long Trail in Vermont, as well as bike ride the U.S.'s Great Divide in the near future.

When Nora isn't advising international students or collecting passport stamps, you can likely find her on a golf course, playing softball, lost in a good book, rooting for the LA Dodgers, or playing with her new Berne doodle puppy—Muncher. Muncher has yet to complete an epic journey with Nora, but she shows strong “paw”tential

Submitting Requests with OISS

Spring is a busy time of year for our campus. Here are a couple of tips for submitting requests with OISS

- Plan ahead
- Account for processing time noted on the UCSB Global e-form confirmation
- The “processing clock” begins once you have successfully submitted all required documentation
- Help us process your request as quickly as possible by waiting for a confirmation before scheduling a follow-up appointment. This allows our team to focus on completing your request within the expected timeframe

Walk-In Advising Services

OISS walk-in advising services are available for brief questions. For questions that will require more than a 10 minutes discussion, you may be asked to schedule a 30 min appointment with your assigned advisor.

Student Walk-In Advising is available Monday - Friday 10 am -12 pm & 1 -4 pm
Scholar Walk-In Advising is available Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 1-4 pm

[OISS is located in the Student Resource Building, Suite 3130](#)

Find Your Immigration Advisor

Our advising teams work hard to meet the needs of our international students and scholars year around. As our staffing levels shift, your assigned advisor may also shift. We ask for your patience and understanding with such changes. You can always find your assigned advisor on our [People Directory](#) page. If you have any questions, feel free to contact oiss@sa.ucsb.edu and we'll glad help direct you.

Travel Reminders

OISS advisors are here to support you, please note that we cannot definitively advise whether you should travel outside of the U.S.. Instead, we can provide guidance based on your individual circumstances, and the final decision will ultimately be yours.

Here are some important tips to keep in mind if you are planning to travel internationally:

- Ensure all your immigration documents are valid and up to date, including your I-20 or DS-2019 with a travel signature, passport, and visa.
- Be prepared for possible additional screening at the U.S. border. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers are permitted to search electronic devices.
- Share your travel plans with a trusted friend or contact in the U.S. so they can assist you in case you experience travel delays.
- When in doubt, schedule a meeting with an OISS advisor before traveling to discuss your specific situation.
- If traveling within the U.S., be sure to have your Real ID or Passport
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Your safety and peace of mind are important to us. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your assigned OISS advisor with any questions.

F-1 Undergraduate & Submission of Candidacy Requirement

Please note that degree candidacy and program completion are not the same when it comes to your F-1 status. Your F-1 status ends once you have completed all degree requirements, even if your candidacy is still pending or it's the summer quarter.

- Summer is not considered a free period to continue taking classes after completing your degree requirements.
- After completing your program, you enter a 60-day Grace Period. During this time, you may:
 - Apply for Post-Completion OPT
 - Transfer your SEVIS record to another school
 - Remain in the U.S. to prepare for departure or travel within the country

If you're unsure of your timeline or next steps, we strongly encourage you to meet with an OISS advisor.

OISS & 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 Spring 2026
Events will be held in the Third Floor Forum in the
Student Resource Building from 4-5:30pm

Apr 2 Apr 16 **May 7** May 21 June 4



Have questions?
Contact: oissprograms@ucsb.edu

Join our **ALLE**
event with UCSB
Reads celebrating
"Crying in H Mart"
by Michelle
Zauner

EA Tours- Santa Barbara

LA City Tour
Saturday, May 2nd



Universal Studios
Sunday, May 3rd



**San Francisco
Weekend**
May 8th-10th



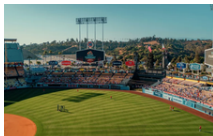
**Palm Springs /
Joshua Tree**
May 16th-17th



**Sand Dunes /
Solvang**
Saturday, May 30th



Dodgers Game
Sunday, May 31st



Scan or [Click Here](#)
for More Info

Explore iconic
California
destinations and
meet other students
with Expedition
America.

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.

