It’s a new season. A perfect opportunity to do something new, something bold, something beautiful! Hope all of you are enjoying the lovely Autumn season in the Mid-West. At times Autumn is here and gone in a blink, so make sure to enjoy the weather before Illinois winter begins. Button up, and look out for fun programs with Erika Suzuki! ISS is just one call and an e-mail away, if you need anything, let us know we are always happy to help!
From the Director’s Desk

Can you believe that the fall semester is already half finished? I hope that all is going well for you so far this semester and that the remaining half goes even better.

Some of you have recently arrived and have just experienced or are currently experiencing some difficulties with culture shock. Take some time to reflect on that experience, to recognize it for what it is, and to deal with it appropriately. If you need some assistance along those lines, there are resources available to help. We can point you to those.

Others are preparing to finish your studies at UIS in the next few weeks and are busy preparing your OPT applications, submitting applications for admission to new programs, or planning your return to your home countries. If you haven’t done so already, now would be a good time to meet with your academic advisor and to make sure that everything is on track for the completion of your current program. If OPT is in your future, you will also want to meet soon with someone in our Career Services Center. They can help you to get ready for that job hunt.

I know that many have already taken advantage of the great opportunities offered by our office to learn more about Springfield and the surrounding area. Watch for more of those in the coming days. There is one that you will definitely not want to miss – The 42nd UIS International Festival coming up on November 1. Come for all the great food, performances, and cultural learning. Better yet, share a performance of your own with the rest of the campus and community. We want to learn from you.

I will close with an important reminder: Maintaining your immigration status is your responsibility. Review your documents from time to time to make sure that none of them will be expiring anytime soon. Especially check that program end date on your form I-20. It should match the end of the term when you actually expect to finish your studies at UIS. If it doesn’t, make sure that you submit a request to shorten or extend your program before the date currently shown. After that date passes, it will be too late.

Enjoy the cooler weather that is finally arriving. Fall is a beautiful season in Illinois.

Sincerely,

Rick Lane, Director ISS
New Bulletin:
International Prairie Star Spotlights

Featuring all ISS F1 Student Athletes
Located in the tunnels of Brookens Library

Created by: Geraldina Mulville (Graduate Assistant) & Jennifer Arcos Rojas (Student Employee)
The students enjoyed the Mid Autumn Festival presentation with trivia quizzes, and the chopsticks games.

The students visited the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, the Gateway Arch National Park, and the Old Courthouse Museum at St Louis. The students learned about a pre-Columbian Native American city and people at the Cahokia Mounds and the West Expansion and the famous Dred Scott trial at the Gateway Arch National Park.
The students visited the New Salem Historic site on the day of Candlelight Walk. They experienced period-clothed interpreters that were inside many of the preserved log houses and shops and demonstrated the life of 19th century Illinois with music, games, business, and everyday’s housework.

Dussehra is a major Hindu festival celebrated at the end of Navaratri every year. Dussehra signifies Glory and triumph over Darkness. The Celebration not only showcases devotion, but also several cultural forms including the traditional dance, food and some cultural games,
October Programs

October 2019

The international Ambassadors promoted respect for different cultures inspired by Day of respect for cultural Diversity in Argentina.

Halloween pumpkin carving is a typical American seasonal event. The students enjoyed the American culture.
Day of the Dead, or *Día de Muertos*, is one of Mexico’s most significant holidays. Day of the Dead lasts for three days every year from October 31st to November 2nd. During the holiday, it is believed the spirits of the deceased return to visit the material world, and so family and friends come together to remember deceased loved ones through a variety of rich traditions. Graves of loved ones are visited, and private altars called *ofrendas* are built. *Ofrendas* are personal and unique constructions, but typically they include pictures of the deceased, offerings of favorite foods, possessions of the deceased, or anything that may aid the deceased in their spiritual journey. Colorful and intricate decorations such as *calaveras* (representations of the human skull), and native flowers are used extensively. Despite its mournful subject matter, Day of the Dead is actually a cheerful celebration of reunion with the spirits of the departed. Although the modern form of the holiday is syncretic, combining indigenous Mexican and European Spanish traditions, the origins of Day of the Dead are distinctly Mesoamerican. Ancestor veneration is a key feature of Mesoamerican cultures, and Mesoamerican celebrations remembering the dead stretch back at least 3,000 years. In traditional Mexican indigenous beliefs, death is not considered an end, but rather viewed as part of a cycle in balance with life. The Aztecs held a festival every year on the ninth month of their calendar, around the beginning of August, dedicated to the goddess of the underworld, Mictlēcacihuatl. Mictlēcacihuatl’s role in the festival was to watch over the bones of the deceased and preside over the celebration in general. Today, Mictlēcacihuatl appears in the form of a female skeleton called a Catrina. After the arrival of the Spanish, Day of the Dead celebrations were moved from the summer months to October 31st to coincide with the Catholic All Saints’ Day. Today’s Day of the Dead incorporates motifs and traditions from Catholic and native sources and is on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage List. We hope you explore and enjoy the beauty of this holiday!
Sugar Skull

The three International Student Ambassadors, Mae, Sujani, and Spencer, challenged to decorate a calavera that was made of sugar to celebrate the Day of the Dead. It would be a great decoration for the Day of the Dead. Making a calavera is very easy following the recipe below.

Ingredients and Materials:

- Skull mold
- Spoon
- 6 cups of granulated sugar
- 2 egg whites
- Small pieces of cardboard
- Colorful decorations like glitter, frosting, and beads

Recipe:

Mix sugar and egg whites together in bowl to feel like wet sand.
Put the mixture in the skull mold, and pack in firmly, overfilling it.
Take a piece of cardboard, and with a straight edge, scrape off excess mixture to flatten the surface.
With a spoon, scoop out some mixture from the middle of the mold, leaving at least one-inch thick walls around.
Place a flat piece of cardboard on the mold, covering the mixture, and carefully flip mold over.
Gently lift off mold, leaving front piece of sugar skull on the cardboard.
Repeat with the back piece of the skull.
Place sugar skull pieces in oven at 200°F for 30 minutes to harden.
When dry, glue front and back pieces together with thick icing.
Decorate with colored frosting, beads, glitter, and so on.

Note: this recipe is for decoration, not for eating!

Written by Spencer and Erika
Jiaying Li

Student Employee: ISS
Program: Master’s in Accounting
Country of Origin: Beijing, China

Jiaying’s Nominators wrote:

“I’ve witnessed many situations involving a student’s immigration status or questions surrounding a cultural issue and the ease at which Jiaying is able to carry herself, deliver the information, and consistently educate the student. She handles herself very well in high pressure situations where language differences are present and always allows her positive attitude to control the circumstances. Jiaying’s level of independence is refreshing and she is an extremely valuable addition to ISS and our campus community.”

Thank you for all the hard work you do!
One Week Away: INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL - NOVEMBER 1

“This year’s theme is “Worldwide Snapshots”. Our hope is to not only showcase all the different cultures around the globe, but also bring together the local domestic community and the international community. The festival will highlight talent, food, dress, culture, and much more from all around our world.

The event will be free to the public and offer a festive celebration of cultures with lots of fun, activity, music, food, and energy.”

-Erika Suzuki
Upcoming Programs

October 30 - Halloween

November 1 - International Festival - TRAC, 5-8pm

November 8 - ECCE: China’s Repression of the Uyghurs, Brookens, 7:30pm

November 12 - Cambodia Water Festival, Student Union Patio, 11am - 2pm

November 18-22 - International Education Week

November 19 - International Thanksgiving Luncheon, Student Union Ballroom, 12 pm - 1 pm
Office of International Student Services

Find Us:
University of Illinois Springfield
One University Plaza, HRB10
Springfield, IL 62703-5407

Office Hours:
Monday–Friday
8:30–5:00pm

Walk-In hours:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
2:00–4:00 pm
Wednesday
9:30–11:30 am

Contact Us:
Phone: 217-206-6678
(country code 011)
Email: iss@uis.edu
Facebook

International Student Services
University of Illinois Springfield