As fall weather approaches, take time to enjoy the trees changing and crisp cool days! We have lots of fun events coming up online and in-person following COVID-19 procedures. Stay updated on our social media platforms and our website for what's going on!
FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

FALL HAS ARRIVED IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS AND WITH IT ALL THE CHANGING COLORS ON THE UIS CAMPUS. I HOPE THAT THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE LIVING ON CAMPUS AND/OR TAKING IN-PERSON CLASSES ARE ENJOYING THEM AND THE COOLER WEATHER. THOSE OF US STILL WORKING OR STUDYING FROM HOME OWE IT TO OURSELVES TO AT LEAST DRIVE THROUGH FROM TIME TO TIME AND APPRECIATE THE BEAUTIFUL CAMPUS TO WHICH WE WILL ONE DAY RETURN.

OF COURSE, THE CONTINUING PANDEMIC HAS NECESSITATED MANY CHANGES TO OUR NORMAL PROCEDURES, OFFICE HOURS, WORKSHOPS, AND CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EVENTS. BEAR WITH US AS WE DO THE BEST THAT WE CAN TO PROVIDE THE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS TO WHICH YOU HAVE GROWN ACCUSTOMED. YOU MAY ALSO NEED TO MAKE A LITTLE EXTRA EFFORT TO STAY INFORMED, INVOLVE YOURSELVES, AND MAINTAIN YOUR COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT GROUPS.

WE FEEL THE LOSS OF CONTACT, TOO, AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IT TAKES TO KEEP GOING. IF YOU NEED ANYTHING SPECIAL/EXTRA DURING THESE STRANGE TIMES, DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT. IF YOUR NEED FALLS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF WHAT WE CAN DO, WE WILL POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION OR HELP YOU TO MAKE THE CONNECTION,

WATCH FOR AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE REGARDING A NEW RESOURCE AVAILABLE TO YOU. MANY OF YOU WILL ALREADY KNOW THE PERSONNEL INVOLVED BECAUSE SHE HAS BEEN ONE OF OUR OWN FOR SEVERAL YEARS. THAT MEANS THAT SHE ALREADY HAS A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR NEEDS. CONTACT HER IF YOU WANT THE HELP THAT SHE WILL OFFER.

ALLOW ME TO CLOSE BY THANKING ALL OF YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE DONE TO KEEP UIS SAFE AND OPEN. WE KNOW THAT IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY. WE ARE PROUD OF YOU AND YOUR EFFORTS.

RICK
National Day of Nigeria is always celebrated on October 1st. It marks independence from British rule on this day in 1960. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with around one in every five Africans being Nigerian. European influence in modern-day Nigeria began when in the 16th century when the first explorers from Spain and Portugal began trading with locals, leading to the development of ports, such as Lagos. The British became an increasingly dominant influence on the region in the late 19th century through the Royal Niger Company, resisting German attempts to expand in the region. In 1900, the territories under the control of the Royal Niger Company became the Southern Nigeria Protectorate. In 1914, this was combined with the Northern Nigeria Protectorate to create the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria, which forms the borders of modern-day Nigeria. Many aspects of modern life in Nigeria were established under the period of British Rule, but by the middle of the 20th century, the call for independence sweeping across Africa and the decline of the territories in the British Empire led to Nigeria being granted independence on October 1st 1960 under a constitution with a parliamentary government and a degree of autonomy for the country's three regions. Nigeria marked total independence from Britain when it became a federal republic when a new constitution was adopted on 1 October 1963 with Nnamdi Azikiwe as its first president. Political unrest led to a series of military coups in 1966 and Nigeria was ruled by a military junta with the democratic rule not being restored until October 1st 1979.

Prepare traditional Nigerian Food with how to videos:
10 interesting facts about Nigeria:

1. Nigeria is the seventh-most populous country in the world, home to more than 200 million people. While that may be a lot of people, population numbers would likely be even higher if it weren't for the country's high mortality rates and low life expectancy.

2. While there are a number of different religions practiced in Nigeria, the majority of the population is either Christian or Muslim.

3. The town of Igbo-Ora is known as the nation's home of twins. Many of the local Yoruba people believe their consumption of yams and okra leaves to be the cause of their high birth rate of twins. While some fertility experts believe that certain yams contain a natural hormone that could cause multiple ovulation, there is no scientific evidence of this phenomenon.

4. Nigeria is a diverse multiethnic country with more than 520 spoken languages. While English is the official language, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo are also major languages in the country.

5. Lagos, the former capital of Nigeria before being moved to Abuja, is the country's largest and most populous city and has been dubbed "Africa's Big Apple," in reference to New York City.

6. The country's film industry, known as Nollywood, is one of the largest film producers in the world, second only to India's Bollywood.

7. Nigeria is home to Aliko Dangote, the richest man in Africa. Dangote's business interests in agriculture, banking, cement, manufacturing, salt and sugar have earned his net worth of more than $12 billion.

8. Largely due to its export market, Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa. While the agricultural industry accounts for approximately 70 percent of the country's employment, petroleum products are the primary export —accounting for more than 90 percent of Nigeria's exports.

9. Like in other African countries, some Nigerians consider the left hand to be unclean and using it to be a sign of disrespect. Those that believe this do not eat, shake hands or receive items with their left hand.

10. Despite gaining their independence in 1960, Nigeria has remained a member of the British Commonwealth, an association of 53 sovereign states. The country is also a member of the African Union.

The Mid-Autumn Festival falls on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month. At this point of the month, the moon appears to look extraordinarily round, big and bright so people have chosen to celebrate this day to mark the season during which the crops and fruits are all ripe and ready to be picked. This festival has a long history in ancient China, where people believe the emperors followed the rite of offering sacrifices to the sun in spring and the moon in autumn. To properly celebrate this festival, families will have dinner together than following dinner, the family members will offer sacrifices to the moon with the belief that it will bring them good fortune. There are many stories and myths families from Chinese and Vietnamese descents hold true for these festivities but no matter why myth, this festival is a way of showing gratitude to the people and good fortune around you. Among both cultures, the sacrifices that are generally used are symbolic fruit and mooncakes. The mooncakes are round pastries that consist of a rich thick filling of red paste of lotus seed paste that often contains yolks from salted duck eggs. The round shape symbolizing the connection between friends and family while they share these delicious pastries. Another aspect of this festival is the fire dragon dance and lantern making are just some activities that are common among these festivities.
TASTE OF CULTURE: MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AMBASSADORS

OCTOBER 1, 2020
My name is Hateeyat Salifu. My major is Political science. My dream job is to become a lawyer. I am from Ghana. I can speak English, French, and two native Ghanaian languages, which are Twi and Dagbani. My home country is very hot and absolutely stunning. We have 16 regions, and each has its own unique culture and food. What I love best about my country is the food and how peaceful the people are. I love listening to music, traveling, watching movies, and series. I have so many favorites movies. I love chick flicks because I am a sucker for soppy romance stories! My favorite food in my home country is Jollof rice, and in the US, I would say Mac ‘n cheese. I want to travel to Singapore and Indonesia. A hashtag that best describes me is #youngblackandbeautiful. My favorite US holiday is Martin Luther King Day. I chose UIS because of the good programs they have to offer and its beautiful campus. I am currently a Graduate Public Service Intern. I work at the Illinois Department of Transportation. It is a program that allows you the opportunity to go to graduate school while working at a public agency. I enjoy it because it gives me the opportunity to expand my network. After UIS, I hope to continue to explore more of the world and attend law school. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, there is not much to do. Tips I have for new students are, if possible, try to reach out to your classmates to make new friends, explore different groups and organizations, and have as much as you can!
Indigenous Peoples’ Day honors the past, present, and futures of Native peoples throughout the US. The holiday recognizes the legacy and impact of colonialism on Native communities, and it also celebrates the cultures, contributions, and resilience of contemporary Native peoples. It’s celebrated on the second Monday of October, and this year, that’s October 12.

Folks have been opting to celebrate Indigenous Peoples’ Day in place of Columbus Day since 1977. Right now, nine US states and 121 cities officially recognize Indigenous Peoples’ Day, and places like Wisconsin and Washington, DC are joining the movement to honor the holiday. “This change allows the opportunity to bring more awareness to the unique, rich history of this land that is inextricably tied to the first peoples of this country and predates the voyage of Christopher Columbus,” the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) said in a statement. “It also acknowledges American Indians and Alaska Natives as thriving, contemporary sovereign nations who hold their rightful place among the American family of governments.”

Indigenous Peoples’ Day pushes back on this invisibility. It allows Native people and their perspectives to be centered and celebrated. It’s a time to honor the achievements of folks like Joy Harjo, the first Native American poet laureate of US, or the Indigenous youth activists who are saving sacred lands and fighting for climate justice. The holiday also gives non-Native people the chance to gain a better understanding of Native communities -- namely, that they are still here, they are relevant today, and their identities are valid.

National Indigenous Peoples Day is an opportunity for the U.S. to acknowledge the reality of the nation’s history, honor the long-standing contributions and identities of Indigenous peoples, and fight for Indigenous representation, equality, and justice.
Each year on October 31, people all over the United States celebrate Halloween. Children and adults alike dress in costumes and attend parties, visit haunted houses, and eat plenty of Halloween candy. Most kids spend the night “trick-or-treating”, or going door-to-door to collect candy from their friendly neighbors.

Even though the origins of Halloween, or All Hallow’s Eve, are often debated, many believe that it began with Samhain, one of the major celebrations of the Ancient Celtic people who lived throughout Europe, including present day England, Ireland, and Scotland. Traditionally, Samhain was considered their New Year’s celebration because it marked the end of the growing season and the beginning of winter. As part of the celebrations, people would light fires, dress in animal costumes, and tell each other’s fortunes. Over time, the holiday evolved and the Catholic Church turned November 1, the original date of Samhain, into the religious holiday of “All Saint’s Day” or “All Hallows”, making October 31 the date of “All Hallow’s Eve”, or Halloween. American colonists are responsible for initially bringing Halloween to the United States. Most of the colonists were Puritans and they primarily came from England which traditionally celebrated Samhain back when the Celts lived there. Although the Celtic religious traditions had been long replaced by Christianity, many of the old practices remained. However, since the American Colonies were influenced by a variety of cultures, Halloween traditions began to change. In the New World, All Hallow’s Eve became a time for “play parties”, which were private parties thrown to celebrate the harvest. People would dress in costumes, read each other’s fortunes, and tell scary stories. These were amongst the first Halloween parties! In the mid 1800’s, Irish immigrants began to come to the United States. Since the Celtic people also lived in Ireland, the people brought their Halloween traditions with them. This included dressing up in costumes, asking their neighbors for food and money, and pulling pranks in the evening on Halloween. Americans started doing the same thing, which eventually turned into our tradition of “trick-or-treating.” However, it wasn’t until recently that the “treats” were a lot more common than the “tricks.” In the 1920’s, for example, rowdy pranks had become expensive and costly, especially in major cities. Over time, cities and towns began organizing tame, family oriented Halloween celebrations, which eventually helped control the pranks. Once candy companies began releasing special Halloween candies, our modern idea of “trick-or-treating” was born.
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, Mictēcacihuātl. Mictēcacihuātl’s role in the festival was to watch over the bones of the deceased and preside over the celebration in general. Today, Mictēcacihuātl 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!
Upcoming Events

International Student Ambassadors, CSF and the Community Garden Club present:

Pumpkin Carving

When: 2:00-4:00pm
Friday, October 16th
Where: Community Garden

LIMITED PUMPKINS AVAILABLE
RSVP on UISConnection by October 12th

Learn about the origins of Pumpkin Carving and carve your own pumpkin!

Contact the Office of International Student Services at iss@uis.edu or at 217-206-6678 for more details.

International Student Ambassadors presents:

Build-A-Calavera

When: 2:00pm to 4:00pm
Thursday, October 22nd
Where: Student Leadership Center at the Student Union

RSVP on UISConnection by October 20th

Learn about Dia de Los Muertos and partake in the annual tradition of making Calaveras

Contact the Office of International Student Services at iss@uis.edu or at 217-206-6678 for more details.
Upcoming Events

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AMBASSADORS PRESENTS:

HALLOWEEN HANGOUT

10.24.20 | SATURDAY | 5PM

ENJOY GETTING TOGETHER TO PLAY GAMES, AND CONNECT ON ZOOM
#UISINTERNATIONAL

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