Hello Autumn

Some photos from October's events: Pumpkin Carving & Build-A-Calavera. Make sure you are staying connected with our hybrid events. Check out our website or connect with our International student ambassadors for future events on social media Instagram, Twitter & Facebook.
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AMBASSADORS
BUILD-A-CALAVERA-OCTOBER EVENT

Following COVID-19 procedures, students shared in this experience by creating their own Calavera.
Students from all around the world came together to carve pumpkins to celebrate Halloween around the world. For some students, this was the first pumpkin they've ever carved! All that participated had a great time.
FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

All,

As I write this, we are all eagerly awaiting news from the US government regarding several issues that may impact our F-1 students. 1) We have not yet received any updated guidance regarding the many impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and what options you will have for study on-campus and on-line, in the US and from abroad. 2) The US government has proposed eliminating Duration of Status (D/S) for F-1 status. The University of Illinois, along with many others, professional organizations, immigration lawyers and others have submitted over 20,000 comments and objections to this proposal. 3) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) recently identified a number of fraudulent employers for whom F-1 students on OPT were supposedly working and has arrested students and cracked down on the employers. 4) USCIS was in the process of changing several of its forms and processes and increasing the costs of these, including OPT, but was stopped temporarily by a federal court.

As you can imagine all of these, and others, are keeping the Office of International Student Services hopping as we try to stay abreast of all the ways that these may impact you. We are working hard to follow all the announcements, participate in online forums, and to get the word out to everyone who is impacted as quickly as possible. If you have questions about any of these, please check our website first. We will post anything that we can find there. You might also look at studyinthestates.ghs.gov and at travel.state.gov for the latest from these to government sites. Finally, you might want to bookmark the URL for your home country’s embassy in the US. Finally, we are, of course, available to try to assist you in finding your answers. Since most of us are continuing to do most of our work from home and access to the ISS physical office is limited. The best way to contact us is to write to iss@uis.edu.

Our in-person programming has also taken a hit due to the virus and the related rules governing social distancing, and we will especially miss the annual fall International Festival. If things change in time, we will try to do that in the spring, but, for now, it is off. On the other hand, there are still a lot of cultural and educational programs occurring. Watch the Campus Announcements and visit our website for fliers and updates on these.

We will miss seeing you after Thanksgiving this year as all the classes and exams go virtual for the remainder of the semester. We will look forward to seeing you again in January. Hang in there. All of this will pass one day. And, most of all, stay safe.

Rick
I am from a village called Codsall, which is located in Wolverhampton, England. My home country is England. England is an amazing place full of culture. I love the closeness of everything back home. Sometimes I miss being able to walk 5 minutes from my house and I am at the grocery store. One of the best things though is the variety of available foods. Unfortunately, there are things that I cannot get in the US that I could get back home in England. For example, there are no Chip Shops for me to get fish and chips from or doner kebab. I love to play and watch soccer. Soccer is basically most of my life but I do like to play video games and watch movies in my spare time. A hashtag that best describes me is #teamplayer. I would love to travel to Australia one day. I have a lot of favorite movies. One of them is Good Will Hunting. I love this movie because of the storyline and acting. Matt Damon, the main character is an extremely smart adolescent but grew up in a rough neighborhood and doesn't want to seem smart. Robin Williams' character in this was played amazingly. Their relationship is interesting and seeing how it changes is intriguing.

My favorite food back home would have to be a Chicken Tikka Murghi Masala with Pilau Rice and a Keema Naan. My favorite food in the US is a rare steak with mac and cheese, and mash potatoes. My favorite US Holiday is the Fourth of July. The best thing about Springfield is the size, I am close enough to the city center that I can go there easily but I am also far enough away that I can enjoy the countryside of Springfield. I like to go out to eat a lot in different places and there are plenty of places to go to Springfield. Currently pursuing a Master’s in Communications. My dream job is to be a Professional Soccer Coach. I chose UIS 5 years ago before my freshman year because of soccer as I was recruited by Coach Hall to be on the Men’s Soccer Team. I liked the size of the school, it also had the major which I wanted to complete. I am glad I chose UIS and would never change my decision. I am currently the Academic Skills Tutor in The Learning Hub and a volunteer assistant coach for the UIS Men’s Soccer Team. My future plans for life after UIS is to hopefully stay in the US and find a coaching position at a college. Some tips I have for new students are: (1) Ask questions if you are unsure. (2) Stay positive, it will be okay! (3) Make friends (4) Engage in classes (5) Get to know the campus!
Diwali is called the Festival of Lights and is celebrated to honor Rama-chandra, the seventh avatar (incarnation of the god Vishnu). It is believed that on this day Rama returned to his people after 14 years of exile during which he fought and won a battle against the demons and the demon king, Ravana. People lit their houses to celebrate his victory over evil (light over darkness). The goddess of happiness and good fortune, Lakshmi, also figures into the celebration. It is believed that she roams the Earth on this day and enters the house that is pure, clean, and bright. The Diwali festival in southern India often commemorates the conquering of the Asura Naraka, a powerful king of Assam, who imprisoned thousands of inhabitants. It was Krishna, a deity worshipped in Hinduism, who was finally able to subdue Naraka and free the prisoners. Diwali celebrations may vary in different communities but its significance and spiritual meaning is generally “the awareness of the inner light”. It is also the beginning of the new financial year for the business community. On the first day of the festival people pray, eat a special breakfast consisting of different foods, and the Hindu goddess Lakshmi’s statue is carried throughout the streets in procession. Children are sometimes given candy or toys from booths set up for the occasion. In southern India children wear flower wreaths on their heads or anklets of bells. Boys in some areas construct elaborate castles and forts of mud and display them for visiting guests. After dark there are fireworks and people who live near rivers float lighted lamps on tiny rafts. To add to the festival of Diwali, melas (fairs) are held throughout India. These are found in many towns and villages.

Join us celebrate!
International
EDUCATION WEEK 2020

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16
Challenge! Geography Contest at 12 pm-2 pm,
Union Lobby, presented by ISS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17
Fashion Around the World Quiz at 1 pm-5 pm,
on Instagram Live, presented by ISS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17
AAUW Work Smart Salary Negotiation
Workshop at 4-6 pm, SAB 50 and via Zoom,
presented by Career Development Center

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
Lunch and Learn about WACCI at 12 pm-1 pm,
via Zoom, presented by WACCI

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
Table Tennis Tournament at 3 pm, at TRAC,
presented by TRAC & ISS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19
H1B Workshop at 11 am-12 om, via Zoom,
presented by Hugo Rojas & ISS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19
Spin Around the World at 4 pm, at TRAC,
presented by TRAC

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19
Zumba class at 5:30 pm, at TRAC, presented by
TRAC

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19
Sahaja Yoga class at 7 pm, at TRAC, presented
by TRAC

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20
Opt Workshop at 2 pm-4 pm, via ZOOM,
presented by ISS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20
Thanksgiving Around the World at 4 pm-6 pm,
Union Ballroom, presented by ISS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20
Sahaja Yoga class at 7 pm, at TRAC, presented
by TRAC

*Online International Education Week Quiz - from
Mon - Fri. Announced via a campus announcement
every day.
Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday in the United States. The Plymouth colonists and Wampanoag Indians shared an autumn harvest feast that is acknowledged today as one of the first Thanksgiving celebrations in the colonies. For more than two centuries, individual colonies and states celebrated days of Thanksgiving. It wasn’t until 1863, amid the Civil War, that President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day for all to celebrate each November. Many celebrate by having friends and family over for a big dinner to give thanks for what they have.
CURRENT COUNTRIES REPRESENTED AT UIS

Argentina, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Brazil, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cote D'Ivore, Ecuador, Gambia, Ghana, Germany, Honduras, India, Iran, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Korea, Kuwait, Lithuania, Mexico.