Make sure you are taking care of yourself and checking in on others. As we continue to follow COVID-19 procedures we are able to provide more on-site services. We hope to continue to have hybrid activities for our upcoming events and programs! Keep an eye out for ISA events on our social media and do not hesitate to give our office an e-mail for more information!
As we approach the half-way mark for the current term, allow me to congratulate all of you for your hard work in making this semester a success. We have kept our COVID-19 cases to a minimum, gotten many vaccines in arms, warn our masks, kept our distances, and generally had a safe start to this semester. Keep up the good work! If you do, we may actually be able to see everyone back on campus this fall.

I hope that you have enjoyed the many online events that our Program Coordinator and International Ambassadors have provided. There are more coming. We are still hopeful that our annual International Festival may return this fall. Watch for more information about how you can be involved in that.

Watch for more information, too, about the end of the semester and all the different things that you will need to keep in mind as that approaches. Will you be completing your studies, starting a new program, at UIS or elsewhere, traveling, applying for OPT, working on a Change of Status? There is information currently available about all of those on our website, but we will also be sending you an email reminder soon after the mid-term grades come out. We hope that those will not hold any surprises for you, but, if they do, we will work with you to make sure that you are able to maintain your immigration status.

Finally, with so many things looking up, it is time for some of your friends back home who were awaiting good news to consider joining you at UIS. Have them contact the Office of Admissions right away. Visas for fall will become available in April. Now is the time to finalize applications and request forms I-20.

It has been an abnormally cold winter. Enjoy the warming temperatures. Spring is on its way.

Rick
International Student Ambassador's February Event: Lunar New Year 2021 Celebration

Thank you to our International Welcome Party Winners: Soyeon, Orefoe, and Gyeong!

Students had the opportunity to learn and celebrate Lunar New Year! Students created their own 囍 (double happiness), and 春 (spring) Chinese New Year paper cutting.

Thank you to our International Welcome Party Winners: Soyeon, Orefoe, and Gyeong!

Women’s History Month is a dedicated month to reflect on the often-overlooked contributions of women to United States history. From Abigail Adams to Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth to Rosa Parks, the timeline of women’s history milestones stretches back to the founding of the United States. The actual celebration of Women’s History Month grew out of a weeklong celebration of women’s contributions to culture, history and society organized by the school district of Sonoma, California, in 1978. A few years later, the idea had caught on within communities, school districts and organizations across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration. Six years later, the National Women’s History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.
I am from Gabon, Central Africa. My home country is beautiful. Since it’s boarded by the Atlantic Ocean, we get to enjoy the beaches anytime we want. What I love most about Gabon is that people are really welcoming so it gives a sense of belonging to anyone that lives there or just visits! Also, over there, people grow most of their food, so we eat a lot of greens, while also enjoying discovering meals from overseas! My major is Public Administration with a minor in Political Science. My dream job is to be the advisor for people in positions of leadership, mainly in government. I fluently speak French and English, and I speak a little bit of Spanish. I would love to visit a lot of countries, but I will say Spain, France, Belgium, Argentina, Japan, Vietnam, and Indonesia. I love reading the Bible, I love singing for God, I love to get to meet people and make friends, I love languages, I love being surrounded by people from all over the world. I love Christmas movies a lot. It is hard to pick one, but I enjoy them because they remind us of the greatest gift given to humanity: the person of Jesus Christ. The hashtag that describes me the best will definitely be: whatever I can learn, that I can do. In my home country, my favorite food is chicken and rice with cassava leaves. In the US, my favorite food is turkey with green beans casserole, and corn. My favorite US holiday is Thanksgiving! I love that the US has a day set in the calendar where we can all remember the goodness of God and be thankful for all we have! My favorite thing about Springfield is that it is not big and not so small, so it is right in the middle size-wise. I love that the city embodies the life and legacy of former President Abraham Lincoln. And I love getting to know the history of this town while visiting museums and other historical sites downtown. I chose UIS because I heard so many good things about the faculty and staff and the programs of study. I loved the campus size at first glance, and I love the leadership opportunities that every student is given at UIS regardless of where they are from. At UIS, I am involved with a couple of the student organizations such as the International Student Friendship, where I serve as the president, the Christian Students Fellowship where I serve in the worship team and for the International Student’s Outreach, the University Bible Fellowship where I am a member, the National Society for Leadership and Success where I am a member, the International Students Association, and the International Students Services where I am a member. Along with that, I have been involved with the UIS Springfest Committee as the committee chair, I am currently serving as the International Students Senator in the UIS Student Government Association, and I work as a student ambassador at the Admissions Office and for United In Safety. Since I started attending UIS I learned so much. I am really grateful for all these organizations I have been and am involved with where I am given the opportunity to serve others while learning to work with everyone. Life after UIS looks bright. I will probably look for a job in a government agency or an embassy, before planning on studying more. The best tip I can offer to new students is this; you probably enrolled in college with a purpose, focus on it, and put the necessary efforts to accomplish it—not forgetting to enjoy every adventure on the way!
International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day has occurred for well over a century, with the first IWD gathering in 1911. The day is not a country, group, or organization-specific - and belongs to all groups collectively everywhere. International Women's Day is all about unity, celebration, reflection, advocacy, and action - whatever that looks like globally at a local level. But one thing is for sure, International Women's Day has been occurring for well over a century - and continues to grow from strength to strength. Learn about the values that guide IWD's ethos. Internationally, purple is a color for symbolizing women. Historically the combination of purple, green and white to symbolize women's equality originated from the Women's Social and Political Union in the UK in 1908. Purple signifies justice and dignity. Green symbolizes hope. White represents purity but is no longer used due to 'purity' being a controversial concept.

IWD 2021 campaign theme: #ChooseToChallenge. 'A challenged world is an alert world. Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day. We can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality. We can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements. Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world. From challenge comes change, so let's all choose to challenge. Show your support and solidarity. Raise your hand high to show you’re in and that you commit to choosing to challenge and call out inequality. Strike the Choose To Challenge pose and share on social media using #ChooseToChallenge #IWD2021 to encourage further people to commit to helping forge an inclusive world.

#ChooseToChallenge
#IWD2021
Saint Patrick, who lived during the fifth century, is the patron saint of Ireland and its national apostle. Born in Roman Britain, he was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave at the age of 16. He later escaped, but returned to Ireland and was credited with bringing Christianity to its people. In the centuries following Patrick’s death (believed to have been on March 17, 461), the mythology surrounding his life became ever more ingrained in the Irish culture: Perhaps the most well-known legend of St. Patrick is that he explained the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) using the three leaves of a native Irish clover, the shamrock.

Since around the ninth or 10th century, people in Ireland have been observing the Roman Catholic feast day of St. Patrick on March 17. The first St. Patrick’s Day parade took place not in Ireland but in America. Records show that a St. Patrick’s Day parade was held on March 17, 1601 in a Spanish colony in what is now St. Augustine, Florida. The parade, and a St. Patrick’s Day celebration a year earlier were organized by the Spanish Colony’s Irish vicar Ricardo Artur. More than a century later, homesick Irish soldiers serving in the English military marched in New York City on March 17, 1772 to honor the Irish patron saint. Enthusiasm for the St. Patrick's Day parades in New York City, Boston and other early American cities only grew from there.

Today, people of all backgrounds celebrate St. Patrick's Day, especially throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. Although North America is home to the largest productions, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated around the world in locations far from Ireland, including Japan, Singapore and Russia. Popular St. Patrick's Day recipes include Irish soda bread, corned beef and cabbage and champ. In the United States, people often wear green on St. Patrick's Day.

One icon of the Irish holiday is the Leprechaun. The original Irish name for these figures of folklore is “lobaircin,” meaning “small-bodied fellow.” Belief in leprechauns probably stems from Celtic belief in fairies, tiny men and women who could use their magical powers to serve good or evil. In Celtic folktales, leprechauns were cranky souls, responsible for mending the shoes of the other fairies. Though only minor figures in Celtic folklore, leprechauns were known for their trickery, which they often used to protect their much-fabled treasure. Leprechauns have their own holiday on May 13, but are also celebrated on St. Patrick’s, with many dressing up as the wily fairies.
Novruz
نوروز
Sunday, March 21-Monday, March 22

is also known as Novruz is the Iranian New Year, also known as the Persian New Year, which is celebrated worldwide by various ethnolinguistic groups usually on or around March 21 on the Gregorian calendar. Nowruz has Iranian and Zoroastrian origins; however, it has been celebrated by diverse communities for over 3,000 years in Western Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Black Sea Basin, the Balkans, and South Asia. It is a secular holiday for most celebrants that is enjoyed by people of several different faiths but remains a holy day for Zoroastrians, Bahá’ís, and some Muslim communities. Nowruz is the day of the vernal equinox and marks the beginning of spring in the Northern Hemisphere. It marks the first day of the first month (Farvardin) of the Iranian calendars. The moment the Sun crosses the celestial equator and equalizes night and day is calculated exactly every year, and families gather together to observe the rituals. Nowruz's timing in Iran is based on the Solar Hijri algorithmic calendar, which is based on precise astronomical observations, and moreover use of a sophisticated intercalation system, which makes it more accurate than its European counterpart, the Gregorian calendar. Check out ISA's Novruz's celebration on Monday, March 22nd, 1-3 pm @ SLC!!
LET'S LOOK UP AT THE STARS.

EARTH HOUR 2021

Together, we can help address climate change.

Saturday, March 27, 2020
8:30 PM to 9:30 PM
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, South, Kuwait, Lithuania, Mexico.

Flag Image
International Dinner Party - Wednesday, March 3rd, 6-7:30 pm via Zoom

St. Patrick’s Day - Wednesday, March 17th, 1-3 pm @SLC/Online (Hybrid)

Happy Novruz - Monday, March 22nd, 1-3 pm @ SLC

Etiquette Dinner Workshop - Friday, April 2nd, 5-6 pm via Zoom

Learn About Ramadan - Wednesday, April 7th, 1-3 pm @ SLC

Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Celebration - Monday, April 19th, 1-3 pm & Wednesday, April 21st, 1-3 pm @ SLC