

# International Student Services Newsletter

## From the Director's Desk

Did you enjoy the big International Festival just a few days ago? That is always a fun time for everyone as we all learn from each other about the diverse cultural backgrounds of our international students. With almost 50 different countries represented by our international student body, we all have a lot to learn from each other about our differences and our similarities. Personally, I have never come away from the Festival without having learned something new and having enjoyed all that you have shared.

November is the last full month of classes for this semester. So, if you have not already done so, it is time to be making plans for what is coming up next month. If you will be completing your studies at UIS on December 16 and have not applied for OPT, been admitted to a new program of study, or made your travel plans to return home, you will want to do one of those right away.

OPT approvals are currently taking 2 – 4 months. That means, if you apply today,

you may not get your approval until March. Since the latest start date you can choose is in mid-February, you could lose some of your OPT. Don't put it off any longer unless you have doubts about successfully completing your program in December.

It is also getting quite late for applying for admission to a new program of study, either at UIS or at another school. If you are planning on that option, let us know as soon as you can.

If you will be returning to your home country after completing your studies, we wish you the best and hope that you will keep in touch. Also, if you will finish in December, but your current program end date on your form I-20 shows a future date, that does not mean that you can remain in the US. You should let us know that you will be finishing earlier than we expected so that we can shorten your program. Otherwise, it may appear in January that you are unenrolled and need a SEVIS termination. It is always best to make sure that the documents accurately

reflect your current situation.

I did not mention those of you who have a program end date of December 16 on your current form I-20 but will not be able to complete your studies by that date. As soon as you know for sure that you will need more time, you should submit your request for a program extension. Once the current program end date has passed, the extension will no longer be available. Don't let it sneak up on you.

Erika and our International Ambassadors have planned several fun and educational events for the month. You can find all of those on this page of our website: <https://www.uis.edu/iss/get-involved> Be sure to sign up as soon as the event registration opens to make sure that you have a place. These events always fill up. Don't miss out.

Enjoy!

Rick

## STAFF

### Director:

Rick Lane (He/Him)

### Immigration Specialists:

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Tracy Rakes (She/Her)

Joel Short (He/Him)

Jolene Vollmer (She/Her)

### Program Coordinator:

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### Graduate Assistant:

Claudia Falcon (She/Her)

### Student Employees:

Mariam Abdulsalam (She/Her)

Lynise Gutierrez (She/Her)

## Inside this issue:

We have moved!	2
Student Spotlight	3
ISS Past Events	4
Thanksgiving Celebration	5
World Celebrations	6
Black Friday 2023	7
Upcoming Events	8

## We have moved!



Our office have moved to a temporary space in the Business Services building, office #20 and we are finally settled.

Come visit us!





# International Student Spotlight

## Emmanuelle Mossi Yakana



I am from Gabon and Cameroon, in Central Africa and can speak French, English, and Spanish. Gabon is a beautiful place. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and so it has beautiful beaches and palm trees. I love that people there are friendly, very warm, welcoming, and hospitable. The usual diet for most Gabonese come from their own garden, so we eat healthy in general. The current political climate is allowing diverse changes to be made and I really love seeing it serves the interests of Gabonese people.

I am a graduate student and major in Public Policy. On campus I am involved in Student Government Association in which I serve as the President. I am a voting member for the UIS Campus Senate and UIS Campus Senate Executive. I am a member of the UIS Budget and Tuition and Fees committees. I work as a Graduate Public Service Intern for DCEO. I am also involved in different student-led organizations in which I am a member, and in others such as International Student Friendship for which I am President, and International Student Association for which I am the Public Relation person. I chose UIS because of the 'Leadership Lived' motto. I loved that UIS prides itself for giving opportunities to every student to be leaders on campus and in the community, and I wanted to experience that.



I love to spend time with my loved ones. I love listening to worship songs and execute them on the guitar. I have a great passion for languages. My favorite food back home would be Kasava leaves and rice. In the US, it would be the cultural Thanksgiving Day meal. I do not have a favorite movie, but I like the joy, the love, and the hope that movies in the Christian film industry proposes to its audience.

Hashtags that best describes me would be #Serve all as much as you are able to. And #Whatever I can learn, I can do well. By God's grace I believe life after UIS looks successful. I hope to get a good job opportunity in the higher government field as my dream job is to get involved with peace making between countries, advising their primary government officials. I would tell new students to take any opportunity our campus gives them to be as involved as possible. I will encourage them to engage in discussions and panels that need student voices and representation. These will make their experience at UIS meaningful and pave the way for others after them.





## ISS's October Events

### 45th International Festival—October 21st

ISS hosted the 45th annual International Festival featuring food, performances and exhibitions from around the world. With the theme "Better Together", we celebrated our campus cultural diversity!



### Pumpkin Carving—October 26th

The Community Garden Club and the ISS office organized a Pumpkin Carving Event. International students got a chance to learn how to carve, and for some students, it was their first time creating decorations with pumpkins.





## Thanksgiving Celebration

Thanksgiving is an annual national holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November in the United States. It has historical roots dating back to the early 17th century when the Pilgrims and Native Americans came together for a harvest feast to give thanks for a bountiful harvest and cooperation. Thanksgiving became an annual tradition, and in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed it a national holiday.

Thanksgiving Day in 2023 falls on November 23rd, and it marks the beginning of the holiday season, leading up to Christmas and New Year's. Celebrating Thanksgiving is a time-honored tradition that

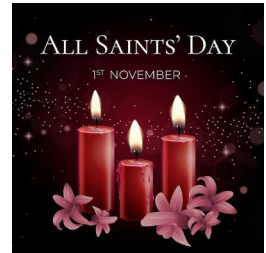
centers around gratitude and sharing. Here are some ways to celebrate Thanksgiving 2023:

- \* **Feast with Loved Ones:** Gather with family and friends to share a traditional Thanksgiving meal featuring turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, and various side dishes.
- \* **Express Gratitude:** Take a moment to express gratitude for the blessings in your life, whether through prayers, reflections, or conversations around the table.
- \* **Give Back:** Consider volunteering at a local charity, food bank, or homeless shelter to give back to the community during the holiday season.
- \* **Watch the Parade:** Tune in to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, a beloved tradition featuring giant balloons, floats, and performances.
- \* **Enjoy Football:** Many people watch NFL football games that take place on Thanksgiving Day.
- \* **Decorate and Craft:** Get creative with Thanksgiving-themed decorations, crafts, and centerpieces for your home or table.
- \* **Share Stories:** Share stories and memories with loved ones, especially those that evoke gratitude and warmth.



## World Celebrations

November 1st—All Saints Day: All Saints Day honors all the known and unknown saints of the Roman Catholic Church. The day is also called All Hallows' Day and the Feast of All Saints. Certain saints have been canonized by the Catholic Church. When a saint becomes canonized, the pope decrees that person to be holy and in heaven with God. Through the years, the Catholic Church has canonized about 3,000 people. Some saints are selected as patron saints. This means they are special protectors or guardians over particular occupations, situations, churches or countries. Catholics are encouraged to pray to these patron saints for provision and protection.



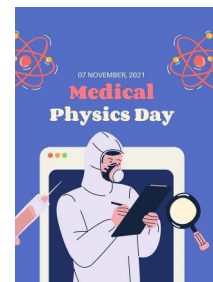
November 1st—Autistics Speaking Day: People with autism experience the world differently from most of us. They approach the world in often novel ways. Maybe one of the most important ways we all connect to and understand the world is through communication. This Day encourages autistic people to tell their stories using whatever means works for them. And everyone else is encouraged to listen, hear, read and comprehend their stories from their point of view.



November 3rd—National Housewife's Day: This day recognize the millions of hardworking housewives and honors the stay-at-home moms who take care of the children and the home. It's a 24/7 job that sometimes does not get the thank you that is much deserved.



November 7th—International Day of Medical Physics: This Day raises awareness about the role that physics play regarding patient care. It's also a day to acknowledge important medical physicists throughout history. Physics is the science that studies matter, motion, and energy. It's known as one of the most fundamental scientific disciplines. The main goal of physics is to study how the universe behaves. The study of physics is very beneficial to humans. Thanks to physics, we learn about how electricity, sound, gravity, inertia, and heat works. Medicine is another area that physics benefits humans.



November 11th—Veterans Day: This Day honors military veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces. The federal holiday coincides with Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, which marks World War I. These observances reflect the end of significant hostilities at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 when the Armistice with Germany took effect.



November 17th—International Students' Day: This Day commemorates the anniversary of the Nazi storming of the University of Prague. The day also promotes student activism around the world. Through the years, university students have not shied away from voicing their political opinions, and in many instances, express themselves politically in the form of demonstrations. One of the first demonstrations held by students occurred in 1939. That year, students at the University of Prague demonstrated against the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. During the demonstration, a student of the medical faculty was shot, injured, and later died. Thousands of students turned his funeral into an anti-Nazi demonstration.



## Black Friday 2023

Black Friday is a colloquial term for the Friday after Thanksgiving in the United States. It traditionally marks the start of the Christmas shopping season in the country. Many stores offer highly promoted sales at discounted prices and often open early, sometimes as early as midnight or even on Thanksgiving day. Some stores' sales continue to Monday ("Cyber Monday") or for a week ("Cyber Week").

Black Friday has routinely been the busiest shopping day of the year in the United States. National chain stores traditionally offer limited money-saving specials on a wide variety of goods in an effort to lure shoppers into stores while offering similar deals online.

A more accurate explanation of the term dates back to the early 1960s, when police officers in Philadelphia began using the phrase "Black Friday" to describe the chaos that resulted when large numbers of suburban tourists came into the city to begin their holiday shopping and, in some years, attend Saturday's annual Army-Navy football game. The huge crowds created a headache for the police, who worked longer shifts than usual as they dealt with traffic jams, accidents, shoplifting, and other issues. Within a few years, the term Black Friday had taken root in Philadelphia. City merchants attempted to

put a prettier face on the day by calling it "Big Friday."

The phrase "Black Friday" to signify a positive boost in retail sales didn't grow nationwide until the late 1980s, when merchants started to spread the red-to-black profit narrative. Black Friday was described as the day stores began to turn a profit for the year and as the biggest shopping day in. In truth, most stores saw their largest sales on the Saturday before Christmas.

In more recent years, Black Friday has been followed by other shopping holidays, including Small Business Saturday, which encourages shoppers to visit local retailers, and Cyber Monday, which promotes shopping online. Giving Tuesday has also emerged to spur charitable donations.

Historically, Black Friday has yet another connotation, one unrelated to shopping. In 1869 Wall Street financiers Jay Gould and Jim Fisk attempted to corner the nation's gold market at the New York Gold Exchange by buying as much of the precious metal as they could, with the intent of sending prices skyrocketing. On Friday, September 24, intervention by President Ulysses S. Grant caused their plan to fall apart. The stock market instantly plummeted, sending thousands of Americans into bankruptcy.





University Illinois Springfield

## International Students Services Office

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5407

### CONTACT US:

Phone: 217-206-6678

Email: [ISS@uis.edu](mailto:ISS@uis.edu)

[On Facebook](#)



### WALK-IN HOURS:

If you need to speak directly with an immigration specialist, you can come during walk-in hours, or email [ISS@uis.edu](mailto:ISS@uis.edu) to make an appointment.

Monday-Thursday 2:00-4:00pm

## Upcoming Events

- ◇ Hiking at Turkey Run State Park: November 3, 8:30am—6pm @ Student Union lobby.
- ◇ International Education Week: November 13-17.
- ◇ OPT workshop for Spring grads: November 17, 2-4pm @ Brookens Auditorium.
- ◇ International Thanksgiving Luncheon: November 21, 12-1pm @ Student Union Ballroom.



Friday, Nov. 10  
**Diwali: Festival of Lights**  
6 pm • SLB Gym

Indian student Organization or Office of International Student Services | 217.206.6678

Tuesday, Nov. 14

**Badminton Tournament**

8 p.m. • TRAC Campus Recreation | 217.206.7902

Wednesday, Nov. 15

**Morning Yoga**

8:30 a.m. • Multipurpose room in TRAC

Campus Recreation | 217.206.7902

**Study Away Trivia with the**

**Department of History!**

2 - 3 p.m. • Student Union North Ballroom

Department of History | 217.206.6779

Thursday, Nov. 16

**Nagme Farzaneh**

**Screening & Artist Talk**

7 p.m. • Visual Arts Gallery

Department of Art, Music & Theatre | 217.206.6506

Friday, Nov. 17

**Politics of Inclusion Symposium**

10 a.m. - 3 p.m. • Student Union Ballroom

School of Politics and International Affairs

Prof. Adriana Crocker | 217.206.6329

Friday, Nov. 17 (continued)

**15 Ways to Say "Hello"**

Noon - 2 p.m. • Student Union North

Entrance Table

Office of International Student Services | 217.206.6678

**OPT Workshop for**

**Spring 2024 graduates**

2 - 4 p.m. • Brookens Auditorium

Office of International Student Services at [iss@uis.edu](mailto:iss@uis.edu)

217.206.6678

**Learning Beyond Borders, Uniting**

**for Sustainable Solutions**

3 - 4 p.m. • Zoom webinar. Join at

[go.uis.edu/ENS](https://go.uis.edu/ENS)

Department of Environmental Studies

[ens@uis.edu](mailto:ens@uis.edu) | 217.206.8716

November 13 - 17

**IEW Online Daily Trivia Quizzes**

**Campus Announcement/Online**

Office of International Student Services at [iss@uis.edu](mailto:iss@uis.edu)

217.206.6678

**Global Health:**

**A Shared Responsibility - A video**

**documentary featuring UIS MPH students**

**discuss global health issues**

**Campus Digital signage in Student Union,**

**HSB, PAC, SLB, TRAC, UHB**

Department of Public Health

[mph@uis.edu](mailto:mph@uis.edu) | 217.206.8716

Visit [IEW.State.gov](http://IEW.State.gov) | #IEW2023

