

# International Student Services Newsletter

International Student Services Office

JANUARY, 2024

## STAFF

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## From the Director's desk

Happy New Year!

This new year brings many new adventures for many of you. Some will be boarding a plane to travel half-way around the world to find a new home in a new country and to start a new program of study at UIS. Although it is a cold season in Illinois, we do want to extend a warm welcome and to encourage you to [contact the Office of International Student Services](#) with any questions or concerns that you may have. Even if you are seeking information outside our areas of expertise, we can likely point you in the right direction to get what you need. We look forward to seeing you in [orientation](#) on January 11 and at our new international student welcome party on the 19th.

If you are in the group of students addressed above and have not yet logged into iStart to upload a copy of your visa, do that right away. Classes are filling up, and you cannot register until you confirm your attendance with us and upload that visa copy. You will also want to look at the [UIS Health Services website](#) to submit your immunization records and at [Residence Life](#) to make your housing arrangements. There are, of course, a limited number of off-campus [apartments in Springfield](#), but you will find it much more convenient, especially when the snow comes, to be able to walk out of your campus housing and right into your classroom building. If you do choose to live off-campus, you will also want to take into consideration the [local bus routes](#) and wait times.

If you were hoping to come for this spring semester, but you could not get your visa in time to make it by January 11, please contact the [Office of Admissions](#) before that date to defer your enrollment to the fall term. When Admissions confirms the deferral, we will update your form I-20 and get that to you so that you can start to work on your arrangements for fall.

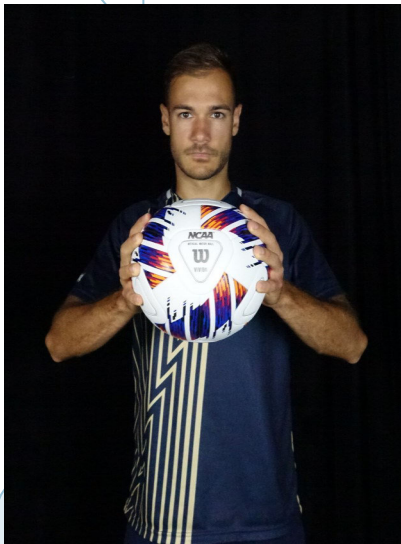
That was a lot about the new students. We have not forgotten those who are continuing with us, either in your programs of study or in Optional Practical Training. Those still taking classes will want to verify that the program end date on your form I-20 matches your actual plans. Those entering your final semester and not needing a full course load will want to request authorization for a [Reduced Course Load](#) prior to the start of the semester. Those who have already finished your courses and are now completing OPT will want to make sure that you are fulfilling your [reporting requirements](#).

Let's all make 2024 a great year at UIS!

Rick

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Marco Buttler



My pronouns are he/him. I am from Schwandorf, Germany and can speak German, English, and a bit of Italian. I appreciate the rich cultural heritage of Bavaria, Germany, where traditions are cherished by people of all ages, fostering a strong sense of community and identity. One notable example is the tradition of wearing Lederhosen on special occasions, symbolizing a connection to history and a commitment to preserving cultural practices.

favorite dish would have to be cordon bleu paired with potato salad, a delicious schnitzel variation featuring a succulent blend of ham and cheese encased in a crispy outer layer. In the US, I tried Pumpkin Pie at Thanksgiving and I really enjoyed it. I like the Mission Impossible movies. The seamless blend of action and comedy, coupled with Tom Cruise's exceptional acting makes these movies highly entertaining for me.

Hashtags that best describes me are #studentathlete, #engineer, and #communicative. After UIS, I will probably return to Germany to start my professional career. There's also the possibility of pursuing a Ph.D. in collaboration with a German company. However, my current focus is on getting a solid master's degree at UIS and having another successful soccer season next fall. My dream job is to work in the German car industry as an Industrial engineer.

Tips I can give to new students are to take advantage of new opportunities, stay organized, and prioritize self-care to effectively balance your academic and social life.



I am a graduate student completing my Master of Business Administration, and am going to be a GPSI intern starting February 1st. Additionally, I play on the UIS men's soccer team, and also participated in the Volleyball intermural tournament. The combination of playing soccer on a good level and gaining work experience while earning an excellent degree was the reason I committed here.

I enjoy spending time with friends and meeting new people. As a hobby, I play volleyball, soccer, and skiing. At home, my



## INTERNATIONAL TAX WORKSHOPS

Be ready for the tax season!

If you worked on campus during year 2023, you will need to be ready for the tax season in January. Please check an email from System HR Services and take appropriate action before December 31, 2023. For more details, please visit the System Human Resource Services website.

The ISS office is planning to support our F-1 international students with Sprintax service. Sprintax will provide Nonresident Tax Webinars until April, so we strongly encourage you to participate in the webinar and learn about the nonresident tax in the US. **2023 tax forms must be filed by April 15, 2024!**



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

sprintax

### Sprintax Webinar Schedule 2023/2024



#### Sprintax Nonresident Tax Webinar (EAP)

In these tax webinars, international students, scholars and professionals will be run through everything they need to know about nonresident tax for the 2023 tax season. Topics will include who must file, tax residency, FICA, State returns, implications of misfiling as well as how to use Sprintax to prepare a compliant tax return.

- > Thursday, December 14th @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Thursday, January 25th @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Wednesday, February 7th @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Wednesday, February 28th @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Monday, March 11th @ 4pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Thursday, March 28th @ 3pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Wednesday, April 3rd @ 2pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Thursday, April 11th @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Monday, April 15th @ 11am EST – [Register here](#)

#### Sprintax Nonresident Tax Overview for OPT/CPT

Topics covered in these webinars will include residency for tax purposes, tax liabilities when on OPT/CPT and pre-employment tax forms when on OPT/CPT. The Sprintax team will also provide an overview of Sprintax Forms which can be used to prepare your pre OPT/CPT employment tax documents.

- > Thursday, November 16th @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Wednesday, December 13th @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Tuesday, January 23rd @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Wednesday, February 28th @ 2pm EST – [Register here](#)
- > Thursday, March 21st @ 3pm EST – [Register here](#)

### Sprintax Nonresident Tax Webinar (EAP)

January 25th @ 11am – [Register here](#)

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April 3rd @ 1pm – [Register here](#)

April 11th @ 12pm – [Register here](#)

April 15th @ 10am – [Register here](#)

### Sprintax Nonresident Tax Overview for OPT/CPT

January 23rd @ 12pm – [Register here](#)

February 28th @ 1pm – [Register here](#)

March 21st @ 2pm – [Register here](#)



## ISS BULLETIN BOARD

In case you didn't know, there is a tunnel that connects the Health Sciences Building (HSB), Brookens Library, and PAC. If you are cold on these winter days, use the tunnel and check out the ISS bulletin board, located below the library. It has been updated with winter events, activities, and important information about registration for Spring 2024.

Go take a look at it!



## MALAWI AND KAZAKHSTAN

For this Spring 2024 semester, we are receiving one international student coming from Malawi and other two coming from Kazakhstan. Below some interesting facts about these countries.

### Malawi:

- Located in southeastern Africa.
- It is endowed with spectacular highlands and extensive lakes.
- Most of Malawi's population engages in cash-crop and subsistence agriculture.
- The country's exports consist of the produce of both small landholdings and large tea and tobacco estates.
- Malawi has received a foreign capital in the form of development aid, which has contributed greatly toward the exploitation of its natural resources and has allowed them to produce a food surplus.
- Most Malawians reside in rural locations.
- The country's few large urban centers include Lilongwe, the capital, and Blantyre, the seat of the country's judiciary.



### Kazakhstan:

- Located in Central Asia.
- It is bounded on the northwest and north by Russia, on the east by China, and on the south by Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, the Aral Sea, and Turkmenistan.
- It is the largest country in Central Asia and the ninth largest in the world.
- The country dominates Central Asia economically and politically, generating 60 percent of the region's GDP, primarily through its oil and gas industry.
- Its major exports include agricultural products, raw materials, chemical products, and manufactured goods.
- Their climate is sharply continental, and hot summers alternate with equally extreme winters, especially in the plains and valleys.
- About three-fifths of Kazakh families live in rural areas.





## WORLD CELEBRATIONS



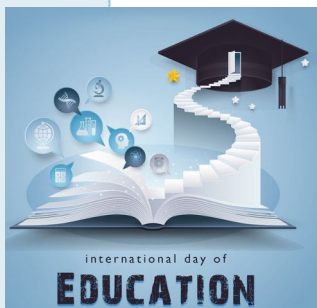
January, 1—New Year's Day: Nearly the entire world recognizes New Year's Day on January 1st and it's one of the most celebrated holidays of the year. The start of New Year's Day, at midnight, is heralded by fireworks, and parties, which are often televised. For many, it is a day of recovery from the New Year's Eve celebrations the previous night. The birth of the first baby in the New Year is often celebrated with gifts to their parents and appearances in local newspapers and on local news shows. Many people make New Year's resolutions. These are usually promises to themselves that they will improve something in their own lives. This is a state public holiday and state government offices, schools and businesses are closed on this day.



January, 1—World Day of Peace: This day invites all people to reflect upon the important work of building peace. When trying to define peace, people often use words like tranquility, calm, and quiet. Some associate peace with law and order. No matter how the word is defined, most people enjoy the feeling of being at peace. The Pope gives a special message that reflects the theme for the year and to pray for peace.



January, 1—Euro Day: This day celebrates the issuance of the monetary unit of the European Union. This monetary unit is called the euro. The United Nations recognizes 180 currencies used by the Member States throughout the world. We typically refer to currency as money. Currency includes paper, metal coins, banknotes, and cotton. The dollar, peso, franc, yen, and yuan, are all examples of different kinds of currencies.



January, 24— International Day of Education: This day celebrates the role of education in global peace and sustainable development. Education is essential for many reasons. It provides knowledge and helps people better themselves and understand the world around them. Additionally, education paves the way for employment. However, over 72 million children around the world do not have access to education. Many more millions of children and adolescents don't have the opportunity to complete their education.



January, 26—Australia Day: Australians celebrate the day their country was founded as a British colony in 1788. On this date, the first governor of New South Wales arrived at Sydney Cove and raised the first-ever Union Jack flag. This day is a celebration of freedom. It's a day to celebrate the land, people, and cultural diversity of Australia. State Governments host numerous events across the country. Families gather to watch parades and enjoy many other fun-filled events. Many will fire up the Barbie (BBQ), spend time on the beach, watch fireworks, and wear the Australian flag.

## International Student Services Office

### FIND US:

University of Illinois Springfield—  
One University Plaza, MS BSB 20  
Springfield, IL 62703-5407

### CONTACT US:

Phone: 217-206-6678

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

[On Facebook](#)

## Upcoming Events

- ◇ New International Student Orientation:  
January 11, 9am @ Student Union  
Ballroom.
- ◇ New International Student Welcome Party:  
January 19, 5-7pm @ Student Union  
Ballroom.
- ◇ OPT Workshop for Spring 2024 grads:  
February 2, 2-4pm @ Brookens  
Auditorium.
- ◇ OPT Workshop for Summer 2024 grads:  
March 22, 2-4pm @ Brookens Auditorium.

### New International Student Orientation Spring 2024

Date: January 11, 2024  
Time: 9 AM  
@ Student Union Ballroom



### WALK-IN HOURS:

Monday-Thursday  
2:00-4:00pm

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

### OPT WORKSHOP Spring 2024 Graduates

Brookens Auditorium  
Friday, February 2  
2 pm - 4 pm



This workshop will cover Optional Practical Training (OPT) eligibility and the application process. All students graduating Spring 2024 that plan to apply for OPT must attend! It is mandatory to attend the workshop in order to apply for OPT. Contact [ISS@uis.edu](mailto:ISS@uis.edu) if you have any questions.

### OPT WORKSHOP Summer 2024 Graduates

Brookens Auditorium  
Friday, March 22  
2 pm - 4 pm



This workshop will cover Optional Practical Training (OPT) eligibility and the application process. All students graduating Summer 2024 that plan to apply for OPT must attend! It is mandatory to attend the workshop in order to apply for OPT. Contact [ISS@uis.edu](mailto:ISS@uis.edu) if you have any questions.