

International Student Services Newsletter

International Student Services Office

MAY, 2024

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From the Director's desk

This month we celebrate the accomplishments of all our Spring 2024 graduates. You have put in the work, gained new knowledge, made new life-long friends, and prepared yourselves well for what lies ahead. You can find all the UIS Commencement information on one page at: <https://www.uis.edu/commencement> And, of course, we especially look forward to seeing you at the [International Congratulatory Ceremony](#) on Friday afternoon, May 10. Take some time to celebrate with your family and friends before you begin whatever is next in your life journey.

We are also making our final preparations for those who will be joining us this fall. There is a page on our website designed especially for you at: <https://www.uis.edu/iss/newly-admitted-students> In order for us to have everything ready for you upon arrival, you will [need to confirm your attendance](#). [International Orientation](#) is mandatory. Make your travel plans and your housing arrangements well ahead of time.

Unfortunately, some of you will not be able to [obtain a visa](#) in time to make it this fall. So, let's start now working toward enrollment in the spring. If you discover that there are no more visa appointments at a US consulate near you that will allow you to arrive prior to fall orientation, contact the Office of Admissions to request a deferral. Then, once the deferral has been granted, we can issue you a form I-20 for spring, and you can schedule your visa interview for some time this fall.

For those of you who have already begun your studies at UIS and are not yet ready to graduate, we hope that you have some great summer plans made. If you will travel outside the US, be sure to check [our travel page](#) and to make sure that all your documents are up to date.

If you will enroll in summer classes and the summer will not be your final term, there are no limitations regarding on-campus vs. online classes. For you the summer is a vacation term. You can take whatever you want, or nothing at all.

If, on the other hand, the summer term will be your final term at UIS, you must enroll in a full course load (or receive prior authorization for a [Reduced Course Load](#)), and only one course of your full course load may be online. Check with your Immigration Advisor/DSO and your academic advisor to be sure that you do not violate your F-1 status.

All new students and continuing students should be registered for your fall classes by now. If you have not done that yet, you will want to do it as soon as possible. Some classes fill up quickly. After you have discussed your plan of study with your academic advisor, you can [complete your registration online](#). Just be sure that you follow the rules for being [a full-time student](#).

Finally, if you will be in Springfield this summer, whether you are taking classes or not, you will want to check out our links to [100 Things to do in Springfield](#) and [Visit Springfield, IL](#). There will, of course be a lot to do on campus, but some of the daily hours will change in some offices. Be sure to check ahead.

As for International Student Services, you can always find us M-F, 8:30-5:00, even during the summer months. Let us know how we can assist you. It is always our pleasure.

Rick

ISS'S MARCH AND APRIL EVENTS

Easter Around the World – March 29th

A table featuring details on Easter traditions from various countries was set up in the Student Union, providing students with the opportunity to explore and discover how people around the world celebrate this special occasion.



Professional Etiquette Dinner – March 29th



The Student Union Ballroom hosted a Professional Etiquette Dinner workshop organized by the CDC and ISS office. Randy Williams, an instructor specializing in Etiquette & Hospitality, guided students through essential practices in networking and proper dining etiquette.

Holi Celebration – April 5th

The UIS Holi/Festival of Colors 2024, organized by the Indian Student Organization (ISO) and supported by our office, took place at Rec Park. This event fostered unity among students from diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds.



Thank you ISO guys for coordinating the wonderful Holi event!



ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures that have shaped the United States. One particularly delicious aspect of this heritage is the array of foods brought to American shores by Asian immigrants. These culinary delights have not only tantalized taste buds but have also become integral parts of the diverse American culinary landscape.

The presence of Asian cuisine in the United States is undeniable. According to a Pew Research Center analysis, approximately 12% of all restaurants in the US serve Asian food, with Chinese, Japanese, and Thai cuisines leading the pack. Furthermore, Google Trends data reveals that Chinese food ranks as the most Googled cuisine in the US, followed closely by Mexican, Thai, Indian, and Korean foods. These statistics underscore the widespread appreciation for Asian flavors across the nation.

The journey of Asian cuisine to American tables is one marked by resilience, adaptation, and innovation. In the mid-18th century, the influx of Chinese immigrants to the West Coast during the California gold rush laid the foundation for what would become a culinary revolution. Despite facing numerous challenges, including discrimination and economic hardships, these immigrants brought with them their culinary traditions, which began to take root in their new homeland.

As the 19th century progressed, an increasing number of Americans embraced the allure of exotic flavors, paving the way for the popularity of Chinese cuisine. Chinatowns emerged as hubs of culinary exploration, offering Americans a taste of the Far East. However, it was not until the 20th century that Chinese restaurants truly began to adapt to American palates, creating dishes like egg rolls and General Tso's chicken that catered to local tastes.

The evolution of Asian cuisine in America is a testament to the cultural exchange and fusion that defines the nation. Today, there are over 45,000 Chinese restaurants across the US, outnumbering major fast-food chains like McDonald's, Burger Kings, Kentucky Fried Chickens, and Wendy's, combined. This proliferation of Asian eateries reflects not only the demand for their delicious offerings but also the enduring legacy of Asian immigrants in shaping American gastronomy.

As we celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, let us take a moment to appreciate the contributions of Asian immigrants to the rich tapestry of American cuisine. From the humble chop suey to the beloved California roll and more, each dish tells a story of resilience, adaptation, and the enduring bond between food and culture. So, let's raise our chopsticks in salute to the flavors that unite us and the people who brought them to our tables. Happy Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month!

Here are some examples of the notable Asian American foods.



Chop Suey is one of the first American Chinese foods and was served in New York City in the late 19th century.



Egg Foo Young was brought by Chinese immigrants from Guangdong in middle of the 19 century.



Philadelphia roll was created by Madame Saito in Philadelphia in the 1980s, inspired by the Lox.



Eggroll was created in the New York's Chinatown in the 1920s, based on spring roll in China. Eggroll has a thicker skin.



General Tso's Chicken was invented by Chinese chef, Peng Chang-kuei in Taiwan in the 1950s and was adjusted to fit Americans flavors by Tsung Ting Wang in New York in the 1970s.

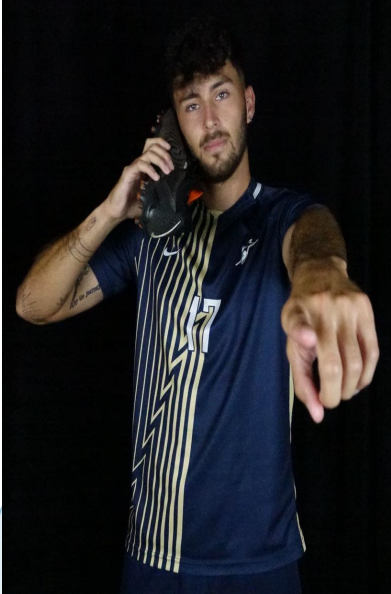


Poke bowl is a local food in Hawaii. The Hawaiian poke is marinated in its dressing to allow the fresh seafood to absorb the flavors. American poke today was transformed to fit Americans' tastes.

Source: Pew Research Center

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Or Levinstein



Hailing from Kadima-Zoran, Israel, I go by the pronouns he/him/his and can speak Hebrew and English. My home country is full of warm and friendly people, beautiful beaches, historical sites, delicious cuisine, and vibrant nightlife. What I like most about Israel is the sense of unity among its people. It is like being embraced by one big family. You can meet someone on the street, at a party, or just a friend of a friend, and in a second you become their best friend and feel like family.

I am majoring in Business Administration with a certificate in Human Resources Management. Opting for UIS was a deliberate choice driven by the dual opportunity to pursue a master's degree while also contributing to the men's soccer team. I do not think I will have the chance to live a similar experience again. Additionally, the GPSI program factored significantly into my decision, as it offers invaluable work experience in the US. I currently play on the UIS men's soccer team. It is worth noting the exceptional warmth and hospitality extended to us, international players, by both teammates and staff, fostering an immediate sense of belonging from the outset.

Soccer is my greatest love. Since I have been involved in this sport (I was six years old), I can say that it is more than just a hobby. In addition, I enjoy watching movies, hanging out with friends, and spending time with my family. I do not have a favorite food, but my

favorite meal is Friday night dinner. This meal is special for us because we sanctify and bless the Sabbath, which is an important day for Jews, and usually it is with the whole family and sometimes with friends too. My favorite movie is "The Untouchables" because it shows how a positive attitude can change your life, how things are up to us, how we accept ourselves and our lives, and that we have the ability to change if we just choose to see things in a positive and optimistic way.

The hashtag #positivity best sums up who I am. I always strive to see the bright side of things and try to make the best of everything that happens to me, so I can learn from it and move forward. I see most (if not all) things positively because my optimistic outlook stems from a deep-rooted belief that every experience serves a purpose and contributes to a greater good. My dream job is a job that allows me to combine sports and business. It is one that allows me to spend quality time with my family and not one that takes up all my time.

I have not decided what my life will be like after UIS. Perhaps I will pursue opportunities in the US, or maybe I will head back to Israel to work and be near my family, but one thing for sure is that I will never forget UIS. The most important tip I can give to new students is to enjoy school. Enjoy the experience, enjoy the friends, and everything you do while you are a student here, enjoy it.



MEMORIAL DAY – MAY 27 2024

Memorial Day is observed on the last Monday of May. It was formerly known as Decoration Day and commemorates all men and women who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Many people visit cemeteries and memorials this day, particularly to honor those who died in military service.

This day is recognized as a federal holiday, resulting in the closure of non-essential government offices, schools, businesses, and various other institutions. It is customary to lower the United States flag to half-staff from dawn until noon, symbolizing the remembrance of fallen soldiers. At noon, the flag is raised to full-staff, signifying that the memory of these soldiers is upheld by the living. Their sacrifices serve as a testament to the enduring pursuit of liberty and justice. Additionally, numerous volunteers take part in placing an American flag on every grave within national cemeteries.

Memorial Day weekend is often viewed by many people as a chance to embark on brief getaways or reconnect with loved ones, resulting in increased traffic on roads and at airports. Alternatively, some opt for picnics, sports activities, and family reunions. In addition, thousands of parades are held in every city, large and small. Most of them have marching bands, soldiers, veterans, and military vehicles from various wars also participate.

This occasion traditionally signals the commencement of the summer season for cultural festivities. While traditionally associated with wearing white attire, the adherence to this custom has dwindled over time, with many people now sporting white clothing year-round.



WORLD CELEBRATIONS



May, 1st—International Workers' Day: This day honors laborers and the working class from every corner of the world. It is commonly referred to as Labour Day or May Day in many countries. Many firms around the world observe this day by giving their employees a day off. In addition, many trade unions and labor associations hold parades, rallies, and other kinds of celebrations in honor of their employees.



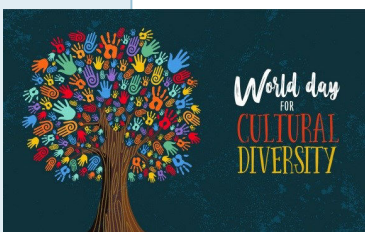
May, 5th—World Portuguese Language Day: This day highlights the important role this language plays in preserving human civilization and culture. Around the world, about 229 million people speak Portuguese, making this language the 9th most spoken language in the world. Many Portuguese-speaking countries celebrate this day with concerts, cultural and artistic activities, and literary events.



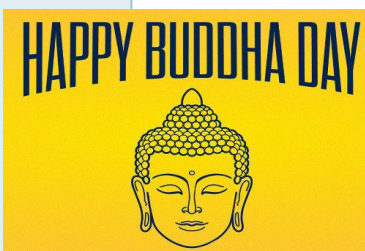
May, 9th—Europe Day: This day recognizes the diversity of the world's 2nd smallest continent. It is also a day that the European Union (EU) celebrates peace and unity in Europe. There are currently 44 countries in Europe and only 27 are part of the EU. The largest and most populous country is Russia with nearly 146 million people. The next most populous country is Germany with nearly 84 million people. While the most commonly spoke language is English, Europeans speak 200 languages there.



May 12th—International Nurses Day: This day honors the many contributions nurses make to society. They care for our loved ones at some of the most challenging times of their lives. They may run short of time, but not compassion. In Australia, Canada, the United States, and other countries, International Nurses Day often is part of a week-long celebration, usually referred to as National Nurses Week.



May, 21st—World Day for Cultural Diversity: This day is often referred to as Diversity Day. and urges everyone to do their part to bridge the gap between cultures. According to the UN, bridging this gap is essential for peace, development, and stability. Embracing other cultures helps us to lead more fulfilling lives and it can happen intellectually, spiritually, and morally. It all begins by having a dialogue between those who are different than us, developing respect and mutual understanding for different cultures and those of other faiths.



May, 23rd—Buddha Day: This day commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of Gautama Buddha in the Theravada or southern tradition. To celebrate, devout Buddhists and followers assemble in temples before dawn for the ceremonial and honorable hoisting of the Buddhist flag. They sing hymns in praise of the holy triple gem: The Buddha, The Dharma (his teachings), and The Sangha (his disciples). Devotees may bring simple offerings of flowers, candles to lay at the feet of their teacher and to make a concerted effort to refrain from killing of any kind.

International Student Services Office

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[On Facebook](#)

Upcoming Events

- ◇ International Congratulatory Ceremony: May 10, 2-4pm @ Union ballroom.
- ◇ Commencement ceremonies: May 10, 7pm; May 11, 10am & 3pm @ PAC Sangamon Auditorium.



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 to make an appointment.