

Syracuse University
November 12, 2015 Edition
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Important Issues

AETNA request for a Social Security number

If you receive a request for a Social Security number from AETNA, you only need to reply if you HAVE either a U.S. social security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), AND you are currently covered by the AETNA health insurance policy. If you have a Social Security number or ITIN ***and*** you are currently covered by the AETNA health insurance policy, you should reply by providing that number to AETNA.

Please note that ***you may disregard this solicitation*** if you are an international student without a Social Security or Tax Identification Number (ITIN), or have successfully waived your Syracuse University's coverage and are not insured through Aetna Student Health.

Be Aware of Scams

There are a number of scammers which target students and especially international students. When we find out about new forms of scams, we attempt to notify you through the SCIS News. However, scams are constantly changing and becoming more unique and sophisticated. If someone is demanding money from you, we recommend that you seek advice from our office or DPS before paying them or giving them any personal information.

Recently, we found out about a scam in which people ask students for help to support their international travel. These people request various amounts of money with the least being \$400. They position themselves on campuses near ATMs, and they claim that anyone who gives them money will be reimbursed. BUT, they have no intention of returning any money.

Again, use caution when people ask you for money. Try to obtain additional information, do not give payment on the spot (especially in cash which cannot be traced), and seek advice from our office or DPS before you give any payment or personal information.

STEM OPT Update

On August 12, 2015, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia issued a court decision finding that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) did not follow required procedures when it created the STEM extension of Optional Practical Training (OPT) back in 2008. The Court decision dictates that the STEM extension of OPT will no longer exist after February 12, 2016 but gives DHS six months (from August 12, 2015 until February 12, 2016) to submit the STEM extension regulations again following proper procedures. These six months should give DHS enough time to reissue the STEM extension regulations following proper procedures.

In the meantime, this court decision has no immediate impact on the employment authorization of students currently authorized for the STEM extension of OPT. This court decision does not prevent students who are eligible for the STEM extension of OPT from applying for the STEM extension by February 12, 2016. To be eligible for the STEM extension of OPT, you must be authorized for OPT on the basis of your program of study in a STEM field and have employment with an employer that participates in E-verify. You may apply for the STEM extension up to 120 days before the end date of your authorized OPT.

We have been informed that DHS is reviewing this court decision and will issue guidance in the next few weeks. We will inform you of any guidance we receive.

Slutzker Center News and Events

Optional Practical Training

If you are graduating in December, you are now within the 90 day window to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT). We recommend that you apply early because it can take 60 – 90 days for USCIS to process your applications.

Step 1: You must attend an OPT Seminar before you apply for OPT. OPT seminars are the first and third Wednesday, and second Friday, of each month at 3:45 PM in the Slutzker Center. The next OPT seminar is Wednesday, October 21 at 3:45 PM.

Step 2: Once you have attended an OPT seminar, you need to bring all required documents to the Slutzker Center during our Practical Training processing hours (Mondays from 3PM – 5PM and Thursdays from 10 AM – 12 Noon).

For more information please refer to our [website](#).

International Education Week Film Series

Children of Heaven

November 17, 6:30 PM

Newhouse 3 Room 141

Throughout the month of November, to celebrate international education week, the Slutzker Center will show international films. This week, Pedram Maghsoud, Ph.D. Candidate, will moderate a discussion following the film *Children of Heaven*. A buffet dinner including Iranian dishes will be served.

Undergraduate Rock Climbing Trip

December 2, 3:30 - 6:30PM

The Ledge at Pacific Health Club

On Wednesday, December 2nd, a bus will leave from the Slutzker Center at 3:30PM to go to The Ledge at Pacific Health Club in Liverpool for in door rock climbing.

If you are interested in joining, please email ejvoigt@syr.edu.



Orientation Volunteers Needed Spring 2016 International Graduate Student Orientation

If you would like to help new students when they first arrive in Syracuse, we are looking for volunteers to help run

Graduate Student Orientation on Friday, January 15, 2016 from 8AM -5PM.

If you are interested, please email midzior@syr.edu with your contact information.

Syracuse University Events

South Campus Apartments Open House
November 15, 2-4PM
131 Farm Acre Dr, 140 Small Rd, 151 Winding Ridge Rd

A chance to tour South Campus, ask questions and meet your peers. The shuttle from main campus picks up at Ernie Davis Hall, Flint Hall and Sadler Hall.

For more information, click [here](#).

UNICEF Snowflake Ball
November 15, 7PM
Goldstein Auditorium, Schine Student Center

The Annual UNICEF Snowflake Ball supports humanitarian efforts to aid children in Syria and surrounding countries.

For more information, click [here](#).

Tickets: \$5

International Student Organization
General Meeting
Thursday, November 12, 6:30 PM
Slutzker Center

The International Student Organization (ISO) invites you to join our community!

The International Student Organization is a diverse organization aiming to create a comfortable environment for students from different cultural backgrounds in order to have a strong network of students that actively enrich SU in a cultural manner.

How to get involved: Attend the General Meeting tonight at 6:30 PM in the Slutzker Center and Like the **(SU International Student Organization)** on Facebook.

The International Student Organization looks forward to meeting you!

Cultural and Community Events

Point of Contact's 40th Anniversary Patron Gala
November 13, 6 - 8 PM
Point of Contact Gallery
350 W Fayette St, 13202

Point of Contact Gallery requests the pleasure of your company at an exclusive Patrons Holiday Benefit celebrating Point of Contact's 40th Anniversary.

Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.

Important Reminders

[Full-Time Course of Study](#)

[Meeting Your Health Requirements](#)

[HR notice for on-campus employees](#)

[Is it your last semester of study?](#)

[Transferring from SU to a new U.S. school](#)

[Optional Practical Training EAD cards](#)

[Address Change Reporting Requirements](#)

[Keeping Good Rental Records](#)

[Protecting Your Property](#)

[US Embassy Announcements](#)

[Check your VISA Application Status in India](#)

[E-Verify Employers & Federal Contractors List](#)

[Copycat "Immigration Help" Sites](#)

[CPT/OPT Seminars](#)

[Studying Abroad](#)

[International Student Arrests & Public Safety](#)

"Everything has its beauty, but not everyone sees it." - **Confucius**



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