

Syracuse University
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Important Issues

A letter from the Director

Dear Students, Scholars, Staff and Faculty,

*Last week the world was rocked by the tragic events which dominated the media in every country. Here, in the U.S., media attention focused upon Paris, in part due to the centuries old alliances between the U.S. and France. Social media, including the very humble SCISNEWS of this office, focused upon France, and in so doing, we were perceived as not global in our perspective or inclusive in our published condolences and sympathies. For those of you who know us, this is the farthest thing from the reality of our outreach to the almost 5000 students, scholars, faculty and staff from 120 countries who are currently connected with Syracuse University, and the thousands of alumni all around the world. I was wrong to not include all the other parts of the world which had also been affected, **and which were recognized** during the Sunday and Monday vigils on campus.*

*At these vigils, we from the Slutzker Center joined students from Lebanon, from Russia, from Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, the U.S., and many other countries which had recently suffered from senseless and horrific bombings and other tragedies. These students saw us and knew that we care just as deeply about them and their suffering at this time, and always. This mourning is part of the DNA of Syracuse University, in the wake of the 1988 Pan Am 103 bombing which took the lives of 35 of our students. We want all of you to know this. The [Rolling Stones](http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/not-just-paris-why-is-beirut-brutal-terrorist-attack-being-ignored-20151115) magazine (11/15/2015) published an article entitled, "Not Just Paris: Why is Beirut's Brutal Terrorist Attack Being Ignored?" <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/not-just-paris-why-is-beirut-brutal-terrorist-attack-being-ignored-20151115>. In the article, we are all challenged by this question: "**Why is violence in one part of the world barely worthy of news coverage, while violence in another collectively mourned?**"*

Let me assure you that every part of the world is important to us, and every family member, every friend, every colleague, every former schoolmate and teacher of our students is important to us. I thank the students who brought this to my attention. We have met and talked, hugged and been mutually assured that every part of the world is important to us, at the Slutzker Center, and to Syracuse University. I hope that this will be proven time and time again as we join together to, paraphrasing the words of John Lennon: "live life in peace."

Most sincerely,

Patricia A. Burak, Director



“IMAGINE”
By John Lennon (1971)

“Imagine all the people, living life in peace. . .”

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

Closed for Thanksgiving November 26 -27

Please remember, Syracuse University offices will be closed for Thanksgiving on November 26 and 27. We will reopen at 8:30 AM on Monday, November 30.

The Thanksgiving feast commemorates a harvest meal shared by the Plymouth colonists and Wampanoag Indians in 1621. Colonies and states continued to hold their own days of thanksgiving until 1863 when, in the midst of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day.

Thanksgiving is a federal holiday in both the US and Canada although it is celebrated on different days. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint resolution of Congress on December 26, 1941 which officially changed the US national Thanksgiving Day



from the last Thursday in November to the fourth Thursday.

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, December 2 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](#).

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.

Peer Assistant Volunteers Needed Spring 2016 International Student Orientation

We are seeking [Peer Assistants](#) to help new students who will arrive in Spring 2016. If you are interested, please see the information on our website and complete the [form](#).

You may also contact, Fariba Rahmanzdeh, farahman@syr.edu for more information.

Syracuse University Events

**Outlaw Culture Music
November 19, 6:30 PM
Community Folk Art Center
805 E. Genesee St**

Award winning pianist and composer and Assistant Professor of Music in African American Studies, James Gordon Williams, will be performing Williams' original music at the Community Folk Art Center. The concert will feature the

guitar artistry of Marvin J. Sewell, most notably connected to Grammy winning musician Cassandra Wilson. Rounding out the rhythm section is Joshua Dekaney, College of Visual and Performing Arts instructor and hip drummer; and Syracuse native and creative bassist Ian Stewart.

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

Free and open to the public.

SAC Presents: Hindi-Urdu Language Table

December 2, 4PM

352 Eggers Hall

The South Asia Center at the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs invites you for chai and conversations. This is a chance for speakers of all skill level to practice Hindi-Urdu conversation skills.

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

Cultural and Community Events

Buy Local Bash

November 23, 5 - 8:30 PM

**F Shed at Regional Market
2100 Park St, 13208**

Going into its 6th year, SyracuseFirst's 'Buy Local Bash' brings community members and merchants together for a one-of-a-kind social, shopping and tasting event to highlight locally owned, independent businesses of Central New York.

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

Midnight Market

November 28, 6PM

**SKY Armory
351 S Clinton St, 13202**

Midnight Market is an urban pop-up market featuring local artists, designers, retailers. There will also be unique cocktails, food and music.

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

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](#)

"All great achievements require time." - **Maya Angelou**



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If you would like to submit news or events for the SCIS Newsletter, please send your information and any related graphics to ejvoigt@syr.edu with subject line as "Article for SCIS Newsletter"