

# February 2012

## Monthly Update

February 2012

### Special points of interest:

- **Taxes: Workshops and Glacier Tax Prep**
- **American Culture**
- **ISA Welcome Back Reception**
- **Chinese New Year Celebration at USF**
- **ISSS Upcoming Workshops**

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## Taxes: Workshops and GLACIER Tax Prep Software

International students and visiting scholars who were physically present in the U.S. in F, J, M or Q status in 2011, are required by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to complete and submit certain U.S. tax forms, even if they did not earn any money in the U.S. during 2011.

To learn more about the type of tax forms to submit, register for a Tax Workshop at [www.usfca.edu/iss](http://www.usfca.edu/iss) in the "Workshops" section.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** ISSS staff are not certified tax advisors and cannot help you fill out your tax forms! Our website and our tax workshops are designed as resources to guide you through a proper tax filing.

ISSS will once again be offering access to a tax preparation software called GLACIER Tax Prep (formerly called CINTAX), specifically designed for non-residents in the USF international student and scholar community, which includes F-1 students who are currently pursuing post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) in the United States. International students, scholars, and alumni will be able to access GLACIER Tax Prep at no cost via a special link in USFconnect starting early/mid February. Those students, scholars and alumni who

already have a GLACIER account will access GLACIER Tax Prep through their current GLACIER account.

In general, U.S. tax forms from individuals must be submitted by April 15th of each year. However, this year the deadline to file is April 18th.

For the TAX YEAR 2011 (January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011), non-resident tax filing status includes: (1) students on F-1 or J-1 visas who began student status on or after January 1, 2007; OR (2) visiting scholars on J-1 visas who arrived in the U.S. on or after January 1, 2010. Persons not meeting these categories are considered residents for tax filing purposes, unless special conditions apply.

### Spring 2012 USF Tax Workshops

Wednesday, February 29th, 2012, 10:00-11:30am Thursday, March 29th, 2012 from 2:00-3:30pm

Register online at [www.usfca.edu/iss](http://www.usfca.edu/iss) and click on taxes under the workshop tab

## ISSS Hours and Holiday Closures

Regular ISSS business hours are Monday - Friday, 9am-4pm. During this time you can visit our office to turn-in or pick-up documents and ask basic questions. If you would like to talk with an advisor, you can come to our drop-in hours (no appointment needed) or call and make an appointment.

### Drop-in Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 11:30am-1:30pm

In addition, the ISSS Office along with the rest of the university offices will be closed on Monday, February 20th in observance of the President's Day holiday.

## International Network Program

Greetings and we hope your semester is off to a good start. The Spring 2012 International Network Program (INP) has kicked off the semester with a dinner outing, but there are many more events for you to participate in.

Please follow the link for the complete list of events [http://rock.usfca.edu/uploadedFiles/Destinations/Office\\_and\\_Services/ISSS/SPI2\\_INP\\_schedule\\_incolor.pdf](http://rock.usfca.edu/uploadedFiles/Destinations/Office_and_Services/ISSS/SPI2_INP_schedule_incolor.pdf).

As a reminder we still have tickets for the Six Flags Discovery Kingdom trip at the end of February, so come on in while tickets are still available! Unfortunately, the Alcatraz trip and NBA game are sold out.

## Let's Talk International

The first session for Let's Talk International is going to be this Thursday, February 2nd, from 4:30pm to 6:00pm in UC 412. It is going to be a meet and greet session and a great opportunity for our returning students to meet the new students and to share some advice and their experiences thus far in the US and studying at USF. New students come with questions for your colleagues and a smile to share! Cookies, tea and coffee will be provided. Hope to see you there!

## USF Buddy Program



USF Buddy Program participants have fun exploring the neighborhoods around USF

### USF Buddy Program: Off to a Great Start!

On Sunday, January 29, the USF Buddy Program got off to a fun-filled start with its Kick-Off event for the Spring 2012 semester. The Buddy Program, a social mentorship program that is designed to ease the transition for new international students, matches new international students with current USF student "mentors" to provide a social network to help improve the international students' overall experiences at USF.

At the Buddy Program Kick-Off event, the mentors and mentees had the opportunity to meet each other in person and to get better acquainted with each other through a variety of icebreakers and other interactive activities. The afternoon concluded with a lively scavenger hunt game, in which teams of mentors and mentees had to work together to solve clues that would take them to various locations on, and near, the USF campus. A fun time was had by all as each team raced to reach as many of the destinations as they could within the time allotted and then, once at each correct destination, they had to take a group photo (that also had to include a complete stranger, too!) in order to score points for the game. The Kick-Off event concluded with the teams coming together to share their photos and to laugh over the adventures they had in playing the game, and prizes were awarded to the winning team.

If you would like further information about the USF Buddy Program, please contact the ISSS main office at (415) 422-2654 or [iss@usfca.edu](mailto:iss@usfca.edu).

## International Student Association—Welcome Back Reception!

### ISA Spring Welcome Back Reception

Food, fun and karaoke!

Want to meet and mingle with new and returning international students? Join us for the International Student Association Spring Welcome Reception on **Thursday, February 2nd from 6-8:00pm in the UC 4th Floor Lounge.**

### GET INVOLVED WITH ISA:

ISA has one vacant executive officer position (the Public Relations Chair), and two additional representative positions. Contact ISA for an application and get to build your student leadership skills in a fun and dynamic club!

[isa@usfca.edu](mailto:isa@usfca.edu)

*The International Student Association promotes cultural education, advocates for the USF international student body, and provides a social community by being the voice of the international students, creating social interactions, and developing educational opportunities for cultural enrichment.*



ISA officers at the Fall 2011 Involvement Fair



Join us on Facebook: ISA at USF

## The Year of the Dragon



### About Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year is the most important traditional Chinese holiday. People will spend money to buy presents, decoration, food, and clothing. It is also traditional for every family to thoroughly clean their houses, in order to sweep away any ill-fortune and for good incoming luck!

### 2012 is the year of Dragon

In Chinese astrology the dragon is the only animal of the Chinese zodiac year that is not real. The dragon holds special significance for the Chinese people. In Chinese astrology the dragon was seen as a powerful almighty king because it was made up of different parts of animals such as a tiger, fish, snake and an eagle. The Chinese dragon

was not seen as a threatening evil being as we do in the west - rather a symbol of power, superiority and rule.

Credited to: <http://www.about-sichuan-china.com/year-of-the-dragon.html>

## Updating Your Local Address

You are required by U.S. immigration law to keep an updated Local Residence address with the ISSS office. U.S. immigration law also requires you to update ISSS of your Local Residence address within ten days of an address change.

To submit your address information through your USFconnect account by following these instructions:

1. Go to the USFConnect web site at <http://connect.usfca.edu>
2. Enter your login ID and password.
3. After USFConnect opens, click on the "Student" tab.
4. On the Student tab, click on the "Student Self Service" link.
5. In Student Self Service, click on the

"Personal Information" tab, then click on the link for "Addresses and Phones".

6. If the next page displays an address type of Local Residence, then click on the "Current" link to update your Local Residence address with your current U.S. address information. If there is no Local Residence address type listed, then select "Local Residence" as the "Type of address to insert" from the drop-down list at the bottom of the page and then click on the "Submit" button in order to be able to enter your current U.S. address information.

## OPT and Other ISSS Workshops in February

OPT is a type of off-campus work authorization that allows F1 students to pursue up to 12 months of full-time employment in the United States in their field of study. OPT applications submitted to ISSS will not be accepted if you haven't attended an OPT workshop. Register in the "Workshops" section of the ISSS website: [www.usfca.edu/iss](http://www.usfca.edu/iss).

Applications for post-completion OPT employment authorization, i.e. work authorization following the completion of your degree requirements, must be received by the USCIS no later than 60 days after your program completion date. Please note that the typical USCIS processing time for employment authorization applications is approximately 3-4 months, but additional delays may result if you file an incomplete application.

Visit <http://web.usfca.edu/iss/opt/> for further information about eligibility for and instructions about the OPT application process.

### Other Workshops in February

Register in the "Workshops" section of the ISSS website: [www.usfca.edu/iss](http://www.usfca.edu/iss)

H1B and green card Workshop: 2/15/2012

Tax Workshop: 2/29/2012

## Celebrate Chinese New Year at USF

Please join the Chinese Student and Scholar Association for this cultural celebration of Chinese food and performances!

LOCATION: McLaren Conference Center 250

DATE: February 3rd, Friday

TIME: 6:30pm

\*note that much of show will be in Mandarin

## The International Student Representatives WANT your Ideas and Opinions

**As an international student, do you have an issue or concern that impacts your student life or your experience at USF?**

**Are there USF policies or programs that you think should be modified to better meet the needs of international students?**

If so, your ASUSF International Student Representatives---Peter Bassoe and Danxia (Katrina) Huang---want to hear from you! Peter and Katrina have been elected to represent the needs and concerns of students like YOU within the student government system at USF and in order to be effective in their jobs they need to know what campus life issues are most important to you.

Peter and Katrina invite you to contact them. They will be holding office hours this semester, please email them with your questions or to find out when you can talk to them in person. You can email Peter and Katrina at [internationalstudentrep@usfca.edu](mailto:internationalstudentrep@usfca.edu).

## U.S. Holiday's in February

**President's Day** is the third Monday of February and celebrates the birthday of the United States first president, George Washington. George Washington is best known for helping lead the American Revolution, which led to American independence from British rule. Some also take this day to celebrate Abraham Lincoln, the country's 13th president, who led the country through the American Civil War and the emancipation of American slaves. Abraham Lincoln is best known for being a great speaker and honest person. He also was an embodiment of the "American Dream", a vision and belief that everyday people, born to modest means, can become whatever they want including the President. This year, President's Day falls on February 20th, 2012.\*



**Valentine's Day** is rooted in different Roman legends and falls on February 14th every year. This date in Roman history was a celebration of Romulus and Remus being nursed as infants by wolves. The holiday thus developed as a celebration of nurturing and fertility, and couples paired up to attend the festivities together. Cupid, the Roman God of Love, is a common image at Valentine's Day and is believed to make people fall in love when shot with his

bow and arrow. Today in the United States people celebrate this holiday by making romantic plans with partners, buying them chocolates, sending flowers, and writing messages to loved ones. In primary school, students often write "Valentines" to their classmates and exchange them on Valentine's day. "Valentines" are small cards with kind messages written on them. They can be store bought or homemade.\*

\*From the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

## What is the SUPER BOWL?

Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup> is the most important day for American Football! It's the Super Bowl! The Super Bowl is the championship game and this year the game is between the New England Patriots and the New York Giants. The American tradition for the game is to get together with friends and family to eat food and watch the game. At Super Bowl parties, it's common to eat lots of "finger foods" like salsa and chips, chicken wings, vegetables and dip and pizza. Even if you don't like to watch sports, many people watch the game just for the commercials. Almost every company that advertises during the Super Bowl makes completely new and funny commercials that no one has ever seen before. Indeed, more people seem to talk about the commercials after the game than the game itself!

**When: February 5th, 2012, 3:30pm– 7:30pm**  
**(American football, funny commercials and a half time show featuring Madonna).**



For more immigration and event information visit the ISSS website at [www.usfca.edu](http://www.usfca.edu)

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