

Spring 2012**Special Points of Interest**

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**Director's Note****2011: The Year in Review**

Happy New Year! On behalf of the entire ISSS staff team, I would like to wish you good health and much happiness in 2012!

As the new year begins, it is a good time to pause and reflect on all that has happened in 2011 and to look forward with anticipation to all that is to come in 2012. Here are some highlights about ISSS' activities during the past year:

Thousands of Service Requests Processed

2011 was the first full year that the ISSS staff were able to enjoy the benefits of the relatively new fsaATLAS database system. Implemented by USF in November 2010, the fsaATLAS database system allows the ISSS staff team to more accurately track and maintain international student and scholar data, as well as more efficiently process immigration documents and other types of service requests for international students and scholars. Among its many features, fsaATLAS allows the ISSS staff to electronically keep track of all the service requests or "tasks" that have been submitted for each student and scholar, including which ISSS staff member is working on each task and what the processing status is for every task. Then, once each service request/task has been processed, fsaATLAS can automatically send an email message to the student to notify him/her that the task has been completed and, if applicable, that his/her new immigration document is ready to be picked-up at the ISSS office.

Thanks to the improved data tracking capabilities and more efficient business practices made possible by the fsaATLAS data-

base system, ISSS staff members were able to process 2,252 service requests for international students and scholars in 2011.

The top five types of service requests processed by ISSS in 2011 (in order of volume) were:

Top 5 Types of Student & Scholar Service Requests Processed By ISSS in 2011

Request Type	Number of Requests Processed
Travel Signature	980
Replacement I-20/DS-2019	212
Optional Practical Training (OPT)	204
Change of Major	124
Transfer In	107

In addition to helping the ISSS staff process such a large volume of student and scholar requests, the fsaATLAS database system also enabled the ISSS staff to more efficiently assist F1 students and J1 exchange visitors in maintaining their legal status in the U.S., and keep USF in compliance with federal immigration reporting requirements, through its ability to transmit "batch" files, or large quantities of data for multiple student and scholar records at a time, to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Prior to the implementation of fsaATLAS, ISSS staff generally had to log into the SEVIS web site and manually update the individual records of F1 students and J1 exchange visitors, one record at a time, which, given the large number of international students and scholars at USF, involved hundreds of hours of manual data entry work by the ISSS staff each year, especially at the start

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The International Student Association (ISA) 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.



Get Involved!

ISA on Facebook: ISA at USF

ISA on OrgSync: Sign up to be a member of ISA from your USF Connect account

Email ISA: isa@usfca.edu

The USF international student body elected new ISA officers to serve on the ISA Executive Board for Spring 2012 and Fall 2012. Please join us in welcoming the new officers!

ISA President: Allison (Xuxi) Wang
ISA Vice President: Koyel Samtani
ISA Secretary: Stephanie Zou
ISA Finance Chair: Luling Zhang
ISA Events Chair: Stephanie Ling
ISA Public Relations Chair: (Vacant)
ISA Domestic Student Outreach: Christ'I Deguia
ISA International Student Outreach: (Vacant)

Become an ISA Officer

Did you love Culturescape? Have you ever wanted to take a more active role in the campus community? If so, this may be your chance! The International Student Association (ISA) will hold elections for their vacant positions in February.

For a description of the available positions and application instructions email ISA at isa@usfca.edu. Applications can be submitted via e-mail (isa@usfca.edu) or in-person to the ISA mailbox in the ISSS office on the UC 5th floor.

ISA Events and Spring Welcome Back Reception – February 2nd, 2012

Keep an eye out for the first ISA social event of the Spring semester! ISA invites all international students (both new and continuing) to attend the Spring Welcome Back Reception. This reception is a great opportunity to start off your semester in a fun and relaxing way while connecting with old friends and making some new ones! ISA will be posting details on Facebook (Friend "ISA at USF") and via email announcements.

Connect with ISA and learn about their Spring 2012 events, open positions and more!



HIGHLIGHTS FROM CULTURESCAPE 2011



*Culturescape 2011
Performer Rosa Contreras*

Culturescape is the annual signature event of the International Student Association (ISA), with advisement and support from the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office. As part of a national celebration of International Education that takes place every November, Culturescape highlights how our campus community is enriched by both domestic and international diversity. With eleven cultural performances and ten different international cuisines, Culturescape 2011 was successful in bringing together USF's diverse and talented community. Cultural performances included dances from China, West Africa, Mexico, India, the Philippines, El Salvador and Hawaii, and songs from Europe and Latin America. The delicious post-performance spread included authentic morsels from Korea, the Middle East, Japan, Brazil, Hawaii, China, the Philippines and India. On behalf of ISA and ISSS we want to say thank you to our dedicated

and talented student clubs and all who were part of last year's successful event. If you were not able to make it to Culturescape 2011, look for tickets sales again in November 2012, you won't be disappointed.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK PROGRAM

The International Network Program (INP) offered by ISSS helps build community by providing social activities and opportunities for engagement among new and returning USF students. INP coordinators specifically hope that INP will assist new international students with their adjustment to life at USF and in the United States. The program is open to current undergraduate and graduate U.S. domestic and international students. Planned on and off-campus activities are offered during the first two months of each semester. Fall 2011 INP events included Opera in Golden Gate Park, a San Francisco Giants professional baseball game at AT&T Field, a trip to Muir Woods, bowling, and a dinner in one of San Francisco's neighbor-

hoods, North Beach. Please check the INP website in January for a full list of the upcoming activities for the Spring 2012 semester: <http://www.usfca.edu/iss/inp/>



INP members at AT&T park, Fall 2011

LET'S TALK INTERNATIONAL



Interested in joining a student group that gets together and talks about the experiences of living in a different culture, the struggles they've faced and the lessons that they learned? Want to get to know people from other countries? Then "Let's Talk International" is the group for you! This group is for international students who are interested in meeting other students who have similar interests in culture and travel or who may just want to practice their English. This group meets every Thursday from **4:30-6:00pm in UC 412**. Coffee, tea and snacks will be provided. No need to RSVP but attending a minimum of **3 sessions is strongly encouraged**. If you have any questions please contact, Chris Fitch, Graduate Intern for International Student and Scholar Services, at cdfitch@usfca.edu or Jane, Pre-Doctoral Intern for the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), at jcdessing@usfca.edu. Hope to see you there!

SPRING 2012 ISSS WORKSHOPS:

Schedule of workshops at: www.usfca.edu/iss/workshops

- OPT Off-Campus Work Authorization
- Tax Filing
- H1-B Visa and Green Card

5 reasons to register for ISSS workshops:

1. Immigration is complicated! ISSS workshops help.
2. You want to work off-campus. You can't apply for OPT off-campus work authorization unless you've attended a workshop.
3. All F and J visa holders are required to file certain U.S. tax forms. Get guidance from an ISSS staff member about complying with your U.S. tax filing requirements.
4. You want to know how to get an H1-B visa or Green Card.
5. Registration is easy (and required): www.usfca.edu/iss/workshops

MEET THE ISSS STAFF



*Lisa Kosiewicz,
Director*

Lisa is the Director of the International Student and Scholar Services office and has been a member of the ISSS staff team since August 2006. Prior to coming to USF, Lisa gained over 18 years of experience working with international students and scholars at the University of California-Berkeley and at Mills College. Lisa is an alumni of USF, having earned her M.A. degree in International and Multicultural Education here in 2004.

Lisa's favorite place to visit in the U.S. is the state of Oregon, where she was born and spent most of her childhood and teenage years, and where the rest of her family still lives. Her favorite international destinations so far have been the Philippines, for its remarkable diversity of regional cultures and traditions and delicious food, and Peru, where she enjoyed spending time in July-August 2009 doing volunteer work in low-income, rural communities outside the

northern city of Piura. When she's not in the office, Lisa enjoys spending time with friends, hiking, doing arts & crafts, and watching documentaries.



*Brad Lancaster,
Assistant Director*

Brad has worked with international students in the San Francisco Bay Area for over 11 years, and prior to that, he studied and worked in Taiwan for almost four years. He is also currently finishing up his Master's degree in International Education at San Francisco State University. His favorite place that he has been is an amazing temple complex in the north of Cambodia called Angkor Wat. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site because the temples are so historic that they are considered a world treasure. The people in Cambodia are very welcoming so it's a wonderful place to visit.

Brad enjoys anything outdoors: surfing, hiking, camping, fishing, sports... He also enjoys sitting down with a good book and playing with his daughters, Iris and Ruby!



*Marcella Pitcher DeProto,
Assistant Director*

Marcella has worked internationally in Nepal and Vietnam, interned at the Institute for International Education in San Francisco, and received a Master's degree in International Education from the SIT Graduate Institute. She has also traveled extensively throughout Asia, Europe and Central America.

When given the choice to choose her favorite international destination, she said it would have to be someplace in Nepal. In 2003, Marcella went trekking in the Himalayas near Everest base camp. "It is such a beautiful place, and the people are so kind and welcoming." She can't think of a place getting much better than this.

When not on the 5th floor of the UC, Marcella is spending time with her husband, Pablo and son, Sebastian. Marcella loves doing yoga, walking, running, hiking and just being outside.



*Ying-Sing (Cynthia) Lai
International Student
Advisor*

Before joining ISSS, Cynthia worked at Golden Gate University as an international student advisor and spent three years in a Public Relations agency in San Francisco. Cynthia received her Masters degree in Integrated Marketing Communication from Golden Gate University and was an international student from Taiwan.

Cynthia's favorite place is the southern part of Spain, where she was amazed by the Arabic style palaces and art. Her favorite food is Taiwanese night market food, which ranges from oyster pancakes to beef noodle soup.

Cynthia enjoys traveling, reading, and going to movies. The biggest project that she is working on is training her dog, Kari, not to jump on people when she greets them!

We're on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/usfiss>

Like ISSS to receive info on workshops, upcoming events, & announcements via status updates.



SEVIS Compliance—Spring 2012 Registration

Students in F or J status are reminded that in order for them to be in compliance with Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) requirements, they must register promptly for the Spring 2012 semester. SEVIS is the online database system that is overseen by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and it is the system that all schools are required to use to issue Form I-20s, Form DS-2019s, and to track and report changes to international students' and scholars' immigration-related data during their time in the United States.

The last day to add classes for the Spring 2012 semester is Friday, January 27th. All international students must be registered full-time by that date.

Full-Time Enrollment

In order to be considered full-time, international students must be enrolled as follows:

Undergraduate students:	12 units
Masters and Doctoral level (non-Law) students:	6 units
LLM students:	10 units
JD students:	12 units

Students Graduating in May 2012 Who Will be Less Than Full-Time

Undergraduate and graduate students who will be graduating at the end of the Spring 2012 semester and who plan to register for less than a full-time course load because they need fewer than full-time credits to complete their remaining USF degree requirements must complete a "Request for a Reduced Course Load" form (available at the ISSS office or online at www.usfca.edu/iss/reducedcourseload) in order to receive immigration approval to be enrolled less than full-time. The completed form must be submitted to the ISSS office by Wednesday, February 1st.

If you want to drop below full-time enrollment and it is not your final semester, you MUST schedule an appointment with an ISSS advisor to discuss your eligibility for a reduced course load authorization BEFORE you drop below full-time. USF is required to notify the U.S. Department of Homeland Security via SEVIS by mid-February of any new or continuing students who do not register, or who are enrolled less than full-time without authorization. Any F-1 student who drops below full-time enrollment without the prior authorization of an ISSS advisor is considered to be in violation of his/her U.S. immigration status.

SPRING 2012 USF UPCOMING EVENTS

January	February
17-18 International Student Orientation	2 USF Involvement Fair
19 New Student Orientation	2 ISA Welcome Back Event
23 Spring 2012 Classes Begin	3 OPT Workshop
	17 OPT Workshop
	29 Tax Workshop

ISSS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1) **I'm traveling abroad during Spring Break. Do I need a travel signature?** *In many cases, the answer will be yes. To re-enter the United States you should have a travel signature on your Form I-20 (Page 3) or DS-2019 (Page 1) that is less than 6 months old. If you will be returning to the U.S. more than 6 months after the last signature on your Form I-20/DS-2019 form you will need to submit a request to the ISSS office to obtain an updated travel signature from an ISSS advisor.*
- 2) **I'm an F-1 student and my Form I-20 is about to expire, but I will not graduate until next semester. Do I need to do anything?** *Yes! Once your Form I-20 expires your program ends and you have 60 days to leave the country. If you need more time to complete your studies you need to apply for a "Program Extension" through ISSS several weeks before your program expires to allow for processing time. To apply for a program extension, you must obtain a program extension form from the ISSS office, have your academic advisor complete the form, and submit the completed form and a new certificate of finance to the ISSS office (the amount of funding that you will need to document will depend on your program of study, the duration of the requested extension, and number of credits to complete).*
- 3) **What do I do with my old Form I-20s/DS-2019s?** *It is important to keep all of your previous I-20s and DS-2019s. It is a record of your stay in the United States as a student and will be needed for future applications such as Optional Practical Training (OPT) or the H1-B work visa. Keep all I-20s/DS-2019s in a safe place, and use your most recently issued document for international travel.*
- 4) **Can I work on campus?** *F-1 degree seeking students and J-1 visa holders with a sponsor permission letter can work on-campus during their studies. Students who are eligible to work can work 20 hours per week during mandatory terms, usually Fall and Spring, and over 20 hours per week during vacation (Summer, Spring Break, Winter Break). Intensive English Program (IEP) students are not eligible to work on-campus. On-campus jobs are posted on the Student Employment website. The largest on-campus employers are Bon Appetit, Koret Recreation Center, Athletics, Gleeson Library, and Modern and Classical Language (language tutors).*
- 5) **Can I work off-campus?** *All international students need specific work authorization to work off-campus. Working off-campus without authorization is a violation of your visa status and is cause for termination of your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record. ISSS recommends that students seek work authorization even when engaging in unpaid off-campus work. In some cases interning and volunteering off-campus without work authorization may be acceptable. Please speak with an international student advisor before pursuing work off-campus, such as internships or training, without authorization.*
- 6) **How can I get a Social Security Number (SSN)?** *In order to apply for an SSN you will first need a job offer and be eligible to work (see Employment). Once you have an on-campus job offer you will need to have your supervisor download the SSN letter from the ISSS website, print it on letterhead, and fill it out. Bring this letter to ISSS for an advisor to sign. Once you have the SSN letter completed you can bring it to the Social Security office with your Form I-20/DS-2019, passport, visa (if applicable) and I-94 card (the small white card issued to you by the U.S. immigration authorities as your port of entry) to apply for your SSN.*
- 7) **I need to rent an apartment but my prospective landlord won't let me unless I have a SSN. I am also having the same problem with opening a cell phone account. What can I do?** *Please go online to the ISSS website and view the Vendor Letter under "Services." You can print this letter and show your Form I-20/DS-2019 and photo ID to prove that you have significant finances to cover your living expenses. The vendor letter is good for most landlords and phone service providers.*

NEED HELP WITH TAXES?

ISSS is pleased to be able to offer a variety of services during the Spring 2012 semester to assist international students and scholars in fulfilling their U.S. tax filing requirements.

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.** The type of tax forms the student or scholar needs to submit depends on the individual's tax-filing status (non-resident or resident). 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.

U.S. tax forms from individuals for 2011 must be submitted by April 17th, 2012.

TAX WORKSHOPS

ISSS will host two Tax Workshops during the Spring 2012 semester, one on February 29 and one on March 29, to address international students' and scholars' questions about their U.S. tax filing requirements and to provide them with information about U.S. tax forms, U.S. tax treaties, and resources for their tax-related questions. Registration for these workshops is required. Registration for the tax workshops is now available at www.usfca.edu/iss/worksops

GLACIER Tax Prep

ISSS will once again be offering access to GLACIER Tax Prep (formally called "Cintax"), a tax preparation software specifically designed for non-resident members of 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 either via their current GLACIER account or via a special link in USFconnect starting in late January/early February.

ISSS OFFICE—Important Things to Know

Business hours:

Monday through Friday 9am to 4pm

Advising hours:

ISSS offers drop-in hours every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 11:30am to 1:30pm. ISSS also offers two hours of advising appointments every Monday, Tuesday, and Friday. Schedule an appointment by calling or visiting the office. Appointments are 30 minutes long.

Certain issues require an appointment with an ISSS advisor, such as:

- ✦ leave of absence
- ✦ withdrawal from the University
- ✦ change of status
- ✦ program extension
- ✦ complicated cases

During normal business hours, the ISSS front desk staff will help you determine whether an advisor appointment is necessary or if they can answer your question for you.

Document Processing:

ISSS will process your completed immigration documents requests as soon as possible—usually within a few days. Incomplete submissions may cause delays in turn-around time. The ISSS staff will let you know the day you can pick up your documents.

Please note that the processing time may be longer around holidays or when ISSS advisors are not available. ISSS will communicate any temporary changes to the processing time in such cases.

Third Party Document Release

Want your friend to pick up your document for you? ISSS must receive an email from you with the name and phone number of anyone you authorize to claim your documents on your behalf. ISSS will not release a document to someone other than you prior to receiving this email.

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of each term, when USF is required to report the registration status of each and every student. Through the SEVIS batch-file processing capabilities of fsaATLAS, ISSS staff submitted a total of 5,570 record creation and/or record update requests to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) in 2011. These SEVIS updates

2011 at ISSS: By The Numbers

Processed **5,570** SEVIS record updates

Completed **2,252** service requests for students and scholars

Provided advising support and assistance to **1,180** international students in Fall 2011

Served **319** students over the course of 6 Same-Day Service Travel Signature Days in Spring and Fall

Delivered a total of **31** informational workshops on a variety of topics, including Optional Practical Training, U.S. tax filing requirements for foreign nationals, preparing to enter the U.S. job market, H-1B visas & pathways to permanent residency, and health insurance in the U.S.

involved the ISSS staff issuing a total of 1,306 Form I-20s and a total of 54 DS-2019 forms in 2011.

Global Residential Community Launches

With the start of the Fall 2011 semester, the long-anticipated Global Residential Community (GRC) finally became a reality. Co-sponsored by ISSS and the Office of Student Housing and Residential Education (SHaRE) and housed in Pedro Arrupe Residence Hall, the GRC is a living community option that provides community members an opportunity to gain essential skills and knowledge for navigating the reality of today's multi-lingual, multi-cultural world. The mission of the GRC is to engage students, faculty, and staff in the common goals of gaining a global perspective, creating interactive internationally-focused learning opportunities, and forming meaningful intercultural relationships within the USF and San Francisco communities.

During the Fall 2011 semester, the GRC community focused on programs and activities that explored the regions/countries of North America, Europe and South America. GRC events this past semester included a Fall Retreat, a scavenger hunt in a local neighborhood, weekly community dinners, movie nights, mini-lectures by USF

faculty and other guest speakers from the Bay Area community, holiday parties and other social gatherings, and an on-going "Geography Series" that featured presentations about Iceland, Austria, Russia, and Brazil given by USF international students from those countries. See page XXX for more information about the GRC, including a call for "Geography Series" presenters for the Spring 2012 semester, and information about how to apply for this living community option for 2012-13.

Staffing Changes: Hellos and Goodbyes

I am very pleased to announce that **Ying-Sing (Cynthia) Lai** has joined the ISSS staff team on a permanent basis as the new International Student Advisor. Cynthia first began work in the ISSS office back in June 2011, when she was hired as a temporary employee to assist us with the processing of immigration document requests and basic student advising services while Marcella DeProto, ISSS Assistant Director, was on maternity leave. We were quickly impressed by Cynthia's exceptional skills, dedicated work ethic, and her eagerness and enthusiasm for helping out whenever and however her assistance was needed, so we were thrilled to be able hire her for our new staff position.

Prior to working for USF, Cynthia served as an Assistant Director in the International Admissions and Advising office at Golden Gate University. As a former international student from Taiwan, Cynthia knows first-hand what it's like to have to adapt to a new country and culture while navigating the U.S. immigration system, and we're glad that she'll be able to draw upon her cultural background, language skills, and previous work experience for the benefit of the ISSS office and the entire USF community.

While we are glad to welcome Cynthia as the newest member of our staff team, we are also sad to say goodbye to **Daniela Contreras**, who will be leaving her position in the Center for Global Education as the Program Assistant for ISSS and the Intensive English Program to become the new Intensive English Program Coordinator within the College of Arts & Sciences. Daniela's last day of work at ISSS will be January 24 and we wish her the best of luck as she transitions into her new role at USF. Plans are currently underway to hire a new Program Assistant for ISSS as soon as possible, but, in the meantime, please be assured that the rest of the ISSS staff team, especially our terrific group of Student Assistants, are ready and willing to assist you when you contact the ISSS office.

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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK 2011



International Education Week (IEW) is an annual event sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of State that celebrates international education and cultural exchange. During IEW 2011, November 14-18, a total of ten events took place on campus that encouraged intercultural learning and engagement.

Among the many IEW activities organized at USF, highlights include: the USF World Cup, which brought together five teams of USF international and American students in a friendly soccer tournament, IEW Photo Contest, which yielded 31 inspiring photos; Language & Culture tables hosted by students from the Intensive English Program in Market Café, international myths and legends in the Stories from Around the World event, a panel discussion on Internationalization efforts at USF, and the International Student Association's (ISA) annual signature event, Culturescape, an evening of performances, music, and food from all around the world.



USF World Cup Winning team! Fall 2011



Stories from Around the World, Fall 2011



Culturescape, Fall 2011



Language and Culture Tables, Fall 2011

We're on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/usfissv>

Like ISSS to receive info on workshops, upcoming events, & announcements via status updates.



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Enrollment Trends

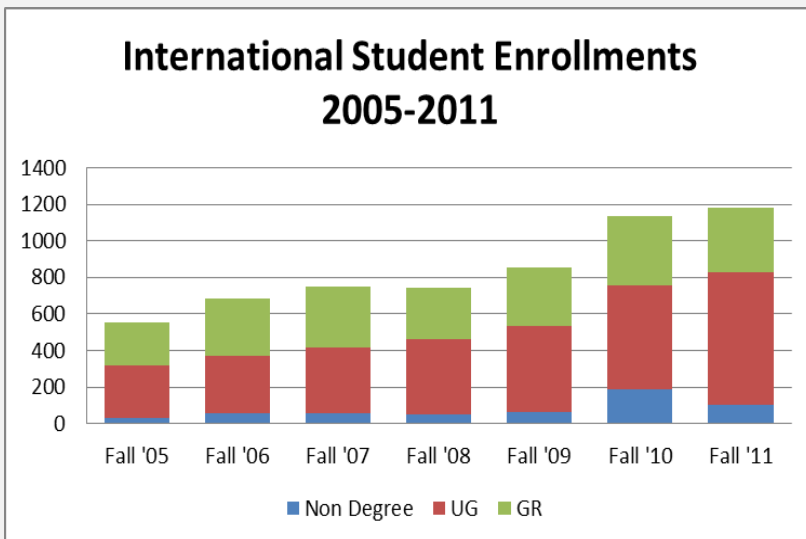
International student enrollments continued to grow at USF during 2011. In Fall 2011, there were a total of 1,180 international students enrolled at USF, as compared to 1,137 international students enrolled at USF in Fall 2010. This represents a 3.8% increase in international student enrollments between Fall 2010 and Fall 2011.

Once again, the majority of international students at USF in 2011 came from Asian countries. In Fall 2011, the top five countries of origin for international students at USF were:

International Students Top 5 Countries of Origin Fall 2011	
China	582
Indonesia	63
Saudi	62
Taiwan	40
Thailand	36

In looking closer at the number of international students enrolled at USF in Fall 2011, there have been some slight shifts in the proportion of undergraduate to graduate students, as compared to Fall 2010. Between Fall 2010 and Fall 2011, the number of undergraduate international students at USF grew from 567 to 727 (an increase of 28%), while the number of graduate international students dropped from 384 to 350 (a decrease of 9%). As noted earlier, though, overall international student enrollments at USF continue to grow (see chart below) and since Fall 2005 there has been

an increase of nearly 113% in the size of the international student population at USF. According to the [USF Fact Book 2011](#), international students comprised 10.7% of the total student population at USF in Fall 2010.



Looking Ahead...

With growing numbers of international students and scholars at USF, ISSS' focus and attention in 2012 will continue to be on delivering high quality service and support to the clients we serve, as well as ensuring that the programs and services we offer create a welcoming and supportive environment for international students and scholars and, in keeping with the University's mission, vision and values, help contribute to the development of a global perspective at USF.

To that end, ISSS anticipates continuing to work on the following projects in 2012: a revamped Facebook presence; an updated ISSS website that includes online, fill-able versions of the most frequently used ISSS forms; further collaborative programming with the Office of Student Housing and Residential Education (SHaRE) and other campus departments; the implementation of additional features and functionality within the fsaATLAS database system; the recruitment and selection of new community members for the 2012-13 Global Residential Community, and the rollout of redesigned pre-arrival materials and orientation programs and services for new international students and scholars.

We hope that you, too, are looking forward to all that lies ahead for you in 2012! If there is anything that ISSS can do to assist you in achieving your goals for the new year, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Lisa Kosiewicz
ISSS Director

Share Your Country/Culture: Volunteer for the GRC Geography Series!

Do you wish more people were familiar with your home country? Are you frustrated when you encounter stereotypes/misconceptions about your culture? Then make a difference by volunteering to be a presenter for the Spring 2012 Geography Series!

The Geography Series is one of several programs offered by the Global Residential Community (GRC) in Pedro Arrupe Residence Hall. The goals of the Geography Series are to enrich and enhance the GRC participants' knowledge about different countries and cultures in order to help them gain a broader world perspective, and to give them the opportunity to interact on a personal basis with USF students from around the world. The presentations are open to all USF students, faculty, and staff.

For the Spring 2012 semester, the GRC is specifically seeking volunteers from countries in Asia, Africa, and Oceania, but all international students are encouraged to volunteer as Geography Series presenters.

The Geography Series presentations are held in the Pedro Arrupe Residence Hall Lounge and typically last about one hour. Presenters are encouraged to incorporate one or more of the following elements into their country/culture presentation:

- Basic history
- Brief country synopsis (e.g. population, capital, explanation of the flag, geography, etc.)
- Presentation and explanation of traditional clothing
- Highlights of major cultural events
- Interesting facts not typically known about the country
- Provide a typical snack and drink from the country
- Display a video highlighting the country
- Highlight cultural sites of significance in the country
- Offer a suggestion of the "Top 10 Places to Visit" during a trip to the country

Students have also presented their country and culture through teaching a traditional dance, leading a cooking class and providing recipes to hand out to the group, engaging the group in discussion, etc. The style and manner in which you wish to present your country and culture is for you to decide, but **we do ask that there is some basic history and facts included in your presentation.** After that it is entirely up to you, so HAVE FUN WITH IT!

If you'd like to volunteer as a Geography Series presenter for Spring2012, please contact the ISSS Graduate Student Intern, Chris Fitch, at cdfitch@usfca.edu or (415) 422-5344. We hope that you'll consider sharing your country and culture through the Geography Series!

About the Global Residential Community

USF's newest living community option, the Global Residential Community (GRC), officially launched in Pedro Arrupe Residence Hall in Fall 2011. Co-sponsored by ISSS and the Office of Student Housing and Residential Education (SHaRE) and comprised of both domestic and international juniors, seniors, and graduate students, this residential community offers USF students the opportunity to learn about different cultures, enrich and enhance their intercultural competency and cross-cultural communication skills, and gain a broader global perspective. For more information about the GRC, see <http://www.usfca.edu/iss/grc/>.

Join the 2012-13 GRC Community!

Applications will soon start being accepted for the 2012-13 Global Residential Community (GRC). Rising junior and senior students, as well as graduate and international students may apply for the GRC, which is housed in Pedro Arrupe Residence Hall. The GRC application is only offered online and must be completed in addition to the regular 2012-13 housing application form---we anticipate that both application forms will be available starting in February.

Questions about the GRC? Contact the ISSS office at (415) 422-2654 or iss@usfca.edu for more information.

New USF Buddy Program Launches in Spring 2012



ISSS is pleased to announce that the USF Buddy Program, a newly established social mentorship program for new international students, will be offered starting with the Spring 2012 semester. The purpose of the program is to ease the cultural transition for new international students and provide a social network that helps improve their overall experience at USF.

Current USF students, including students who have previously studied or lived abroad, will be selected and trained to serve as Buddy Program mentors for a group of 3-5 new international student students and these mentors will have a chance to practice and develop their cross-cultural leadership, organizational, and communication skills. New students who commit to participating in the Buddy Program will able to meet other new students while learning from, asking advice from, and building a community with continuing USF students. The Buddy Program mentor/mentees groups will meet twice a month throughout the Spring 2012 semester, with the possibility of additional gatherings.

The USF Buddy Program is being developed by Julie Goldapp, a student in the Master's in Organization and Leadership program in the School of Education, as part of her master's degree field project. Julie has been working closely with ISSS staff and Peter Bassoe, one of the International Student Representatives to ASUSF Senate, to plan and organize the Buddy Program for the Spring 2012 semester.

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.



International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)
Center for Global Education
University Center 5th Floor
Tel: (415) 422-2654
Fax: (415) 422-2412
Email: iss@usfca.edu
Web: <http://www.usfca.edu/iss>