

January 8, 2023



Dear Students,

**Happy New Year! Welcome to the Winter 2024 quarter at UCR! Thank you for being a part of the UCR international community.**

### **Immigration Reminders F and J students**

Did your address recently change? Update your address and phone number with our office by completing our [document request form](#) and in R'web.

- **All F and J students are required to report any change in their physical address within 10 days.**
- When entering your address in R'web:
  - **U.S. Address (physical address):** (Do not include any dashes/hyphens, street address and apartment number should be on line one)
  - Example Address format (use your physical address)
    - Scott Highlander  
Address Line 1: 900 University Avenue, Apt. 2  
Address Line 2: (Name of Residence Hall- if any)  
City: Riverside  
State: CA  
Zip Code: 92521

- All **F-1 and J-students** must enroll in full-time units (12 units) each quarter per federal regulations. Please ensure that you are registered full-time for the Winter quarter.
  - Students can drop below 12 units in very limited circumstances with advanced approval from an international student advisor in the ISS office.
  - F and J students can only take one online course to count towards their full-time enrollment of 12 units.
  - Please remember that academic advisors/graduate student services advisors are not your international student advisor. Academic advisors and graduate student services advisors cannot provide F and J students with permission to drop below 12 units.  
If you have decided to take a quarter off or cancel your enrollment for any reason, it is your responsibility to directly notify an international student advisor in the ISS office. Plan ahead and speak with an ISS international student advisor before dropping below 12 units or before taking a break from school during the Fall, Winter, or Spring quarters.
  - Enrolling in less than 12 units or taking a break from courses during the academic year without advanced permission may impact your ability to maintain status and remain in the United States.
- **F-2 students** cannot enroll in full time units. F-2 students must enroll in less than 12 units.
- **F-1 and J-1 Graduate and Undergraduate students** in their final quarter, must submit a [Reduced Course Load Form](#) to our office.

### **Undergraduate Students Only (F and J)**

- **If this is your last quarter and you will be below 12 units or if you are an F-2 student and will be taking 10 units or less, you must submit a Reduced Course Load Form to our office by 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 17.** This will give us time to initiate a reduced tuition fee request on your behalf in My Forms. This request will then be routed to the Registrars' office. The Registrar's office has a strict deadline for these forms and will not accept any late forms. Please review the [academic calendar](#) for important dates and deadlines.

### **F-1 students**

- If you are graduating this quarter and are interested in applying for a period of OPT (Optional Practical Training), now is the time to attend an OPT workshop and apply! Learn more at <https://international.ucr.edu/students/employment-and-taxes>

# CAMPUS CLOSURE

Due to the Martin Luther King Jr Holiday, all offices will be closed on Monday, January 15, 2024. The International Students and Scholars Office will reopen again on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.

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# WE ARE MOVING!

The International Students and Scholars Office (ISS) will be moving to the second floor of the Student Services Building (SSB) this month. The official date is yet to be determined. Please continue to monitor your UCR email account for more information.

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# OPT FEE

## OPT Processing Fee starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

Starting January 1, 2024, students who apply for OPT or the STEM OPT Extension will need to pay a processing fee of \$100 for the regular 12-month OPT and \$300 for the STEM OPT Extension. This fee adjustment is essential to sustain and enhance the quality of our immigration services in light of Department of Homeland Security's ever-increasing demands and reporting requirements. In addition, they help ISS provide necessary immigration support to students during their OPT and STEM OPT Extension periods.

Students should submit their request forms to ISS first, at which time ISS will determine if they are eligible to apply for OPT or the STEM OPT Extension. Then, students will receive a link to pay the fee online by credit card. Once the payment receipt is forwarded to ISS, the OPT I-20 or the STEM OPT Extension I-20 can be issued. Please note that these I-20s cannot be issued before ISS receives the payment receipt. The OPT and the STEM OPT Extension fees are non-refundable, so make sure you are eligible to apply before paying the fee.

# USCIS PROCESSING FEES

## USCIS | Premium Processing Fees to Increase February 26, 2024

In December 2023 a rule was published by USCIS that will increase Premium Processing fees for requests postmarked on or after February 26, 2024. The new USCIS Premium Processing Fees will increase for the following forms:

Form Type	Current Fee	New Fee (2/26/2024)
I-129	\$2,500	\$2,805
I-140	\$2,500	\$2,805
I-539	\$1,750	\$1,965
I-765	\$1,500	\$1,685

USCIS has noted that any I-907 (Request for Premium Processing) received on or after February 26, 2024 will be rejected and the submitted filing fee returned. The [USCIS News Release](#) contains additional details and rationale for the increases.

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# WINTER WORKSHOPS

Workshop	Date & Time (PST)
Optional Practical Training (OPT)	Thurs. January 18, 3:00 - 4:30 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
STEM OPT	Wed. January 24, 3:30 - 5:00 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Post Graduation Immigration Hosted by WR Immigration Firm	Fri. January 26, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)	Wed. January 31, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Optional Practical Training (OPT)	Fri. February 9, 10:00 - 11:30 am <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Tax Workshop	Fri. February 16, 10:00 - 11:30 am <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Academic Training (AT)	Wed. February 21, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Consular and Customs and Border Protection Hosted By WR Immigration Firm	Fri. February 23, 10:30 - 11:30 am <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Tax Workshop	Mon. March 4, 2:00 - 3:30 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
CA State Tax Franchise Board	Thurs. March 7, 12:00 - 1:30 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>
Tax Workshop	Thurs. April 4, 3:00 - 4:30 pm <a href="#">(Click to Register)</a>

# UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

## Peer Network Series: Lunar New Year Planning Committee

ISS will be hosting a Peer Network Social to celebrate the Lunar New Year on February 9th, 2024!

To include diverse traditions and cultures from all places where Lunar New Year is celebrated, we are calling out for any students interested in joining the planning committee for this event.



- Have background/experience celebrating Lunar New Year
- Have an interest in promoting the cultures within Lunar New Year
- Want to volunteer a few hours towards the planning of this event

Please submit this [interest form](#) to join the committee.

The first committee meeting will be on Thursday, January 11th, 2024, 4-5 pm on ZOOM. Contact Patricia Yin at [pyin008@ucr.edu](mailto:pyin008@ucr.edu) for any questions.

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## Peer Network Social (PNS): Goal Setting 2024

In collaboration with Residential Life, ISS will be hosting a workshop to help you set your personal, academic, and professional goals for 2024. We will be providing free journals, stickers, and more! Supplies are limited.

**Date:** Tuesday, January 16th

**Time:** 12:00-1:30 pm (PST)

**Location:** Glen Mor K106/108

RSVP [here](#) to secure your spot.



Contact [jacqueline.hernandez@ucr.edu](mailto:jacqueline.hernandez@ucr.edu) with any questions

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## Language Circles

Learn or practice a variety of languages through informal conversations led by our Language Circle Moderators. All moderators are volunteers and native speakers of the specific language.

### Official Language Circle Schedule for Winter 2024 (week 2 - 8):

Wednesdays in HUB 379	
11:00 - 11:50 am	Spanish
11:10 am - 12:00 pm	Mandarin
12:00 - 12:50 pm	Russian/English
2:00 - 2:50 pm	Italian

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## Grad Division Re-Orientation

GradSuccess invites current graduate students to participate in their re-orientation resource fair, a chance for students to get relevant information related to their program of study. Look for the ISS Office! We will be at table #8.

**Date:** Thursday, January 25, 2024

**Time:** 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

**Location:** HUB 302



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## R'Time

A fun and safe space for International Student Women Free lunch and massages!

### Meeting Times for Winter Quarter:

- 11:00 am - 12:00 pm in HUB 260
  - Tuesday, January 23rd
  - Friday, February 16th
  - Tuesday, March 5th

Hosted by the International [Students and Scholars, The Well](#), & the [Women's Resource Center](#).

For questions, please contact [Jacqueline Hernandez](#)



# RESIDENTIAL LIFE RECRUITMENT

## Reslife Recruitment

UCR Residential Life is now recruiting for the upcoming 2024-2025 year!

If you are interested in applying, join ResLife and the ISS Office for an info session on January 12th from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm via Zoom.

Recruitment Website: <https://resliferecruitment.ucr.edu/> - links to the application. Applications are now open.

For any questions, please contact [joseph.Briones@ucr.edu](mailto:joseph.Briones@ucr.edu)



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## Residential Life Winter Lunch

If you are currently living on campus, the Residential Life Office invites you to join them for their winter lunch event.

- Date: Friday, January 12
- Time: 12:30 - 1:30 pm
- Location: Dundee Multipurpose Room
- No RSVP needed

For questions or for more information, please contact Kelsey Shook at [kelsey.shook@ucr.edu](mailto:kelsey.shook@ucr.edu)



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## ISS FORMS AND GUIDES

Did you know that you can find essential forms, guides, and information about maintaining your status, travel, and employment on our website? [international.ucr.edu/students](http://international.ucr.edu/students)

- [Need a Form?](#)
- Learn about [F and J requirements](#)
- [Travel and Dependents](#)

Please note that we do not recommend travel at this time since things are difficult to predict with changing governmental regulations and travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please consult with an advisor before making travel plans.

- [Employment and Taxes](#)

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### Contact Us

There are several ways you can reach our team. Our staff works Monday-Friday, from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (closed from 12:00 - 1:00 PM for lunch).

General Email: [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)

General Phone: (951) 827 - 4113

**Michael** Schmelzle, Director: [michael.schmelzle@ucr.edu](mailto:michael.schmelzle@ucr.edu)

**Kelly** Eldridge Hinosawa, Associate Director: [kelly.hinosawa@ucr.edu](mailto:kelly.hinosawa@ucr.edu)

**Alan** Joss, Senior International Student Advisor: [alan.joss@ucr.edu](mailto:alan.joss@ucr.edu)

**Tiffiney** Tse, International Student Specialist: [tiffiney.tse@ucr.edu](mailto:tiffiney.tse@ucr.edu)

**Brandon** Chao, International Student Specialist: [brandon.chao@ucr.edu](mailto:brandon.chao@ucr.edu)

**Jacqueline** Hernandez, Program Coordinator: [jacqueline.hernandez@ucr.edu](mailto:jacqueline.hernandez@ucr.edu)

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**Thank you from all of us in International Affairs!**

As a reminder, the International Student News is an email for international students sent monthly. You will find important information from our office, such as:

- notices from the U.S. government
- reminders to ensure that you stay in status
- UCR campus updates and cultural event information

**Please read the newsletter carefully. If you have any questions, please email our office at [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu).**