



International
Scholars

Monthly Newsletter

Aug 2024



Upcoming ISS Events

Scholar Coffee Hours

What: Meet to chat with other scholars – bring your own beverage and make some friends!

When: Fridays 11:00AM-Noon

Where: Outside of Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

Meet & Greet

Please come meet our new scholars!

Where: HUB 265

When: August 31st, Noon – 1pm

As always, we will provide lunch 😊



Cultural Conversation Class!

If you or your spouse is interested in participating in the Cultural Conversation Class to help improve your English and to meet new friends - our next class is on September 10th.

Where: HUB 379

When: Every Tuesday 9-10 AM



Check this out!

Follow our fellow international scholar/staff from the UK, **Phoenix Alexander**, through his work at the Eaton Collection, the No.1 vault in the UCR Library!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eB32B1TLQ2k>



This Month's Spotlight



Dr. Marko Princevac Vice Provost, International Affairs Professor, Mechanical Engineering

We interviewed Dr. Marko Princevac, who will be speaking at the International Scholars Meet & Greet on July 31st! Follow his story below.

Please tell us a little bit about your background (before coming to UCR).

Even as a little boy from Yugoslavia, I was always interested in machines, was curious about making things and understanding how stuff works. Particularly, I like all kind of transportation: from bicycles and motorcycles to cars, trains and ships. This interest led me to study Mechanical Engineering. During undergraduate studies I became exposed to fluid mechanics, and it fascinated me how knowledge of engineering fluid mechanics can be applied to atmosphere, biology, medicine. While during my doctoral studies I became expert in fluids, I again realized that there is yet so much to be discovered. Hence, I decided to look for a position at a research university.

How was your transition from teaching mechanical engineering at UCR to becoming the Vice Provost of International Affairs?

The transition did not happen suddenly. Already as an assistant professor I became part of international research projects, but most faculty engages internationally, so that would not make much distinction. What made a difference is my involvement and leadership in establishing international programs in my role as the Associate Dean of Engineering. My experience in creating and promoting engineering international engagements along with my personal experience and interest made me curious to become a senior international officer at UCR. I feel very proud to be part of International Affairs and to participate in enabling and easing the transition for our international students and scholars and to help promoting education abroad experiences to our students. I still feel I am transitioning and yet have a lot to learn.

What have been some challenges that you have faced since coming to the US, especially having to transition from one visa status to another throughout the years?

I presume as for every international, the first several months were full of surprises. From the traffic rules that bicycles cannot be driven on sidewalk in opposite direction (the rule that I quickly started to appreciate and wish it is enforced to the extent possible) to the openness of American society and American ideas of freedom. From the visa side, while on F1 I had no worries nor concerns other than nightmares of being on travel and realizing that I did not get the signature in I-20. Fortunately, that happened only in bad dreams. As I was approaching graduation, stress was piling up as I was in a relationship with a lady from Korea (we are now married for 20 years). I did not feel like going to Korea, she did not feel like going to Europe so we decided to try the US and see how US immigration could accommodate us. We were anxious about every visa expiration day, every renewal, did not know how US immigration would look at a couple from such different countries. There were days when we would receive a note from employers that if the visa renewal does not come on time, we would not be able to get paid. Somehow, all renewals happened on time.

What is one thing you wish you had known, looking back at your immigration experience?

While the system may be slow, it works. What I say now to many who are complaining or are worried about US immigration is: while US immigration system may not be perfect, it works very well and probably there is not better immigration system. Looking backwards on my colleagues and friends that for one or another reason wanted to stay in US, they all succeeded. I do have colleagues and friends that returned to their home country or went to third country, but that was always their decision irrelevant from US immigration.

What are some of your favorite memories at UCR?

The best memories have to do with career successes of my students, both undergraduate and graduate. While professors tend to focus on the impact of their research, quite often we overlook that the biggest impact are our students and how we impact their lives and consequently they impact the life of others and the world in general. In my administrative roles I celebrate professional and personal achievements of my colleagues. While I always continue to learn from my colleagues, I never forget to be a mentor.

Do you have any advice for international scholars?

Focus on what you like and what you are good with but be flexible. You are already proven to be able to acquire new skills, and if there is a project that is a bit out of your comfort zone, but success would benefit your career, do not hesitate to go for it.



What to do This Month in Riverside

CatVideo Fest 2024

When: August 3, 3pm & August 4, 1pm

Where: Culver Center of the Arts, Riverside, CA

Price: \$5-8

What: CatVideoFest is a compilation reel of the latest and best cat videos culled from countless hours of unique submissions and sourced animations, music videos, and classic internet powerhouses.

<https://events.ucr.edu/event/catvideofest-2024>

UCR Botanic Gardens Twilight Tour

When: August 17, 6-8pm

Where: UCR Botanic Gardens

Price: \$10/member & \$15/non-member

<https://events.ucr.edu/event/ucrbg-twilight-tour>

Budget Bites @UCR

FREE!

When: August 9, 2pm – 3:30pm

Where: Student Recreation Center, classroom kitchen

What: Let Basic Needs and Chef Val teach you about what the R'pantry has to offer! Learn how to make some delicious, cost-effective dishes with items you can get at the R'pantry. Participants will get a free grab and go bag of groceries, provided by R'pantry.

https://events.ucr.edu/event/budget_bites



ScotSurplus Public Sale

ScotSurplus is home to an eclectic assortment of used (but still useable) furniture, electronics, office supplies, clothing, books, bikes, lab supplies, and much more — collected from departments from every corner of the university.

When: August 6, 11am – 4pm AND August 24, 8am – 1pm

Where: ScotSurplus, UCR Corporation Yard

<https://cbs.ucr.edu/scotsurplus>

FAQs for International Scholars

I need to leave the U.S. and ISS has not signed my DS-2019 document! Is that OK?

Please know that you do not need a travel signature on your DS-2019 document to either remain in or to depart the U.S. You do need a valid travel signature to return to the U.S. in J-1 status. A valid travel signature must be no more than twelve months old on the date that you return to the U.S.

If you are departing the U.S. soon and know that your travel signature will expire by the time you expect to return to the U.S., please contact our international scholar advisor at makbule.koksal@ucr.edu. If your DS-2019 is going to expire soon, please consult with your department to extend your stay and then contact our scholar advisor.

What will happen if I end my UCR appointment early and/or depart the United States and do not intend to return to the U.S. for my J program?

If you are a scholar and you depart the U.S. early (more than 15 days before your DS-2019 end date) and you do not intend to return to the U.S. for the remainder of your J program, please discuss this with your faculty sponsor. Please also email our advisor so that she can advise you on the steps and the visa implications of ending your program early.