Meet the Two Newest OIS Staff Members!

Richard Sherman (Immigration Specialist, Student Team)
I’m a native New Englander: I spent my childhood in Massachusetts and later attended college in Maine. As an undergraduate student, I travelled to Nicaragua and Cuba and majored in Latin American Studies and Spanish. My wife (a Pitt graduate!) and I relocated to Pittsburgh in 2008 and I’ve been in love with the city and its friendly people ever since. Apart from spending time with my wife and two children, I enjoy crossword puzzles, running, gardening, photography, and documentary films. Though I remain loyal to my hometown Boston Red Sox, I love watching baseball games at beautiful PNC Park here in Pittsburgh.

Katy Gongaware (Office Assistant)
I graduated from Allegheny College in 2011 with a degree in Spanish and a minor in History. While I was an undergrad, I was very involved with my school’s International Club and had several close friends from other countries, so coming to OIS felt completely natural. In my free time, I like crocheting, watching hockey, running, going to museums and art shows, people-watching in the city, and outdoor activities like camping and hiking. Once I’m more settled in at Pitt, I want to learn how to rock climb, hopefully without breaking any bones.

My OIS Helpful Tips

- Your Peoplesoft # or Temporary # are referred to as your “University ID Number” in My OIS. If you do not know your number, it was included in your December Monthly Update email.

- If you submit a request that requires another person to complete an online form (your Academic Advisor or family member), please let them know they will be receiving an email from OIS and follow-up with them a few days later.

- Once you have submitted a request, please check your email regularly in case OIS has any follow-up questions before they can process your application.

- Certain request forms are now only available on My OIS. Please submit all requests through My OIS.

OIS Winter Break

OIS will be closed for the official University of Pittsburgh Winter Break. Our office will be closed from 12pm on December 21st and we will reopen January 2nd. If you have an urgent concern, you can email OIS@pitt.edu. One of the OIS staff members will be checking this email account during the break, but you will only get a quick response (within 24 hours) if OIS determines that your situation can not wait until January.

Have a great break!
The Global Perspective

Recipes from the OIS Kitchen

The holidays are a wonderful time to share family traditions and favorite meals. Here are some of the OIS staff members family recipes. Try some of our recipes and then head to our Facebook page to share some of your own family recipes for others to enjoy!

Stuffed Meat Loaf (Juliann)

1-2 Loaves white or wheat bread cut into cubes
1/2 - Stock of celery, washed, and chopped fine
4-6 Yellow onions, peeled and chopped fine
1-2 cloves of garlic, peeled and chopped fine
1/2 - can chicken, vegetable or beef broth
1 Tbsp. parsley, 1/2 tsp. pepper
1 - McCormick Chicken Packet
2-3 Pounds of Ground Meat
2 cups bread crumbs
1-2 eggs

Put cut celery, onion and garlic into a large skillet with 2-3 Tbsp. of butter
Cook on low heat with the lid on to sauté

Place the cut bread cubes into a large bowl and add the McCormick Chicken Packet, parsley and pepper. Mix this through the dry ingredients.

Add the cooked celery, onion and garlic into the bread. Mix thoroughly to incorporate. Add and mix as much broth as needed for mixture to be well moistened
Once mixed, the stuffing is ready to be put into the ground meat.

Mix as you would for meatloaf, add bread crumbs and egg and seasoning. Divide the meat in half. Place half of the meat mixture into an 11”x13” glass pan. Pat it down as though you are making crust. You want the meat (crust) to be at least 2” thick. Place the stuffing on top of the meat crust and spread it out but leave an edge to close the meat with the rest of the meatloaf mixture you top it with. Now place the rest of the meat on top and enclose the stuffing. Pour a can of tomato sauce or stewed diced tomatoes over the meatloaf. Cover with foil and put into the oven for 90 minutes to cook. When you remove the meatloaf, drain off the fat. Let the meatloaf set for 5 min. Cut into slices with long knife; be sure to go slow as not to separate the meat from the stuffing.

Artichoke Dip (Alison)

1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup grated parmesan cheese
1 can artichoke hearts (drained, chopped)
1 Tbsp. garlic salt

Mix all ingredients until well blended. Bake in a small casserole dish at 350° for about 20 minutes until it turns brown at the edges. Serve with your favorite crackers.

Shrimp Butter (Melissa)

Prep time: 30 minutes; Chill time: >12 hours

1-8 oz cream cheese, softened
2 cans – 3 oz shrimp, drained and rinsed well then chopped
4 Tablespoons ground horseradish
2 Tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 stick butter
1 medium onion, chopped
1 jar cocktail sauce
1-2 boxes sociable or other crackers

Lightly brown onion in butter. Add lemon juice.
Add shrimp, sugar, horseradish to mixing bowl. Whip in cream cheese.
Next add butter/onion mixture. Mix well. Place mixture in cool whip bowl or other molded bowl and refrigerate overnight. When ready to serve, invert molded bowl on plate or platter.
Depress a hollow space in the middle of the mixture and pour cocktail sauce in the depression and drizzle over the sides. Serve with crackers.
### Snickerdoodles (Richard)

- 1 stick of margarine
- 1 stick of butter
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 ¾ cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt

Coating mixture:
- 3 TBS sugar
- 3 tsp cinnamon

Mix shortening, sugar and eggs together thoroughly.

Blend dry ingredients in another bowl, then gradually stir into shortening/sugar/eggs mixture. Blend well.

Roll into balls the size of small walnuts.

Roll balls in coating mixture and place 2” apart on ungreased baking sheet.

Bake 8-10 minutes at 400°. They puff up then flatten out. Makes about 5 dozen 2” cookies.

### Peppermint Crunch Puppy Chow (Diane)

**Makes 5 Cups**

- 5 cups Rice Chex cereal
- 10 ounces melting white chocolate
- 1 cup crushed candy canes
- 1 cup powdered sugar

Pour Chex cereal in large bowl. Melt white chocolate according to package directions. Pour melted chocolate over cereal, stirring & folding until cereal is completely covered. Fold in crushed candy canes. In a covered container, add the powdered sugar and then pour chocolate covered cereal into container. Seal and shake until all cereal is coated with powdered sugar. Discard excess powdered sugar and enjoy! Store at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.

### Pumpkin Bars (Juliann)

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 2/3 cup sugar
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 cup oil
- 2 cups flour
- 1 16oz can of pumpkin
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. cloves (optional)
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ cup nuts (optional)

Beat 4 eggs, sugar, oil and pumpkin until light and fluffy. Add and mix together, 2 cups flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and baking soda. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit in a 10x15x1 inch pan for 25-30 minutes.

Beat the oleo or butter, cream cheese, sugar and vanilla to a smooth consistency. Once cooled, spread the icing on the pumpkin bars and top off with crushed walnuts. Cut into bars and serve.

### Hermits (Richard)

- 2 cups raisins
- 2 cups flour
- 1 ½ cup sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ cup margarine
- ½ tsp cloves (optional)
- 2 eggs
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ cup nuts (optional)

2. Blend margarine and sugar. Add eggs one at a time.
3. Add sifted dry ingredients, then nuts and raisins.
4. Grease 13x9 pan or cookie sheet with sides.

Bake at 350° until golden brown - 20 to 30 minutes. Sprinkle with sugar while still warm. Cool and cut into squares.
Please help us improve the international student experience at Pitt!

We are asking you to complete the OIS International Student Survey about your experience thus far at the University of Pittsburgh. This year’s survey is the second in a three-year series that is being used to determine what is working well and what is frustrating so that we can help current and future students have the best collegiate experience possible.

Your responses will be confidential.

Please be assured that your responses will be confidential and the resulting data will not identify you in any way. We do want to caution you, though, that the reporting process includes the text of any comments that you provide; therefore, we recommend that you avoid making comments that might enable you to be individually identified.

This survey is extremely important to the University and we sincerely hope that each international student will take the time to complete it—average time to complete it is 15-20 minutes. However, we also want you to know that you will not be subject to any penalty of any kind if you do not complete it. Please be sure to encourage your friends to complete it as well.

You could be a winner!

The survey forms part of a wider ongoing study and is independently administered for the University by the International Graduate Insight Group. Those successfully submitting a completed questionnaire will have the opportunity to win either an Apple iPad or iPod, which are offered by OIS, or to be entered into a drawing to win a $1,000 cash prize or to suggest a $1,000 donation to charity, which is offered by i-graduate. In all cases, the winners will be chosen by i-graduate to ensure that your submission remains confidential and anonymous.

Further analysis may be done at Pitt on the data and by taking part in the survey you agree to this. If you want to know more about i-graduate, please view its privacy policy and FAQs.

Thank you for your participation!

Just click here to start the OIS International Student Survey!
FEATURED STUDENT GROUP

Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)

The Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG), formerly the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA), was founded more than forty years ago at the University as a resource organization and student government dedicated to graduate and professional students and their concerns. Throughout its existence, GPSG has operated to provide services, information, representation, event planning, and (more recently) funding opportunities to all graduate and professional students across the university. It is the only organization that represents graduate and professional students across all schools and colleges at Pitt, and takes this responsibility to the constituents seriously. GPSG is currently located in 825 William Pitt Union and online at gpsg.pitt.edu. The website has information regarding operations, events, funding, and more. There are a number of services GPSG offers for students, and these can be divided into three main categories: representation, funding, and event planning.

GPSG represents graduate and professional students at Pitt on every possible level: by sitting in on Provost, Senate, and Board of Trustee committees throughout the university to communicate graduate student needs and concerns; sitting on the Pittsburgh Student Government Council as a liaison with the mayor and city council; by speaking to local and state elected officials in conjunction with Pitt's Governmental Relations Office; working with the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students to lobby federal legislators; and finally, by helping represent students by retaining a licensed attorney for legal council free of charge. For funding, GPSG operates the hugely popular Travel Grant and Travel Award program, in which they award funding for graduate and professional students to travel for conferences, presentations, or dissertation research. GPSG annually funds 6 international graduate student organizations - ANKUR, CSSA, GOSECA, the Pan-African GPSU, the Persian Panthers, and TASA. Funding awards can also be sought by any registered graduate and professional student organization.

Lastly, GPSG hosts numerous events throughout the year to bring graduate and professional students together. Examples of recent events include: an international potluck competition, a Masquerade Ball, happy hours, breakfasts, meetings with legislators, waterpark and ski trips, picnics, and movie showings. Many other events are hosted in collaboration with international graduate student organizations, school governments, and other graduate organizations. Some upcoming events can always be found on their website (gpsg.pitt.edu).

One particularly proud moment for GPSG occurred in 2009-2010. The mayor of the city of Pittsburgh had announced plans to levy a tax against all students in the city in order to balance an unrelated deficit in the city’s budget. GPSG led the opposition response for students across the city; garnering national press coverage, appeared on news and TV programs, gathered thousands of petition signatures, networked with colleges and administrators across Pittsburgh, and presented evidence and testimony to the mayor and city council in chambers. With cities around the country watching to see if taxing students was a viable budgetary solution, GPSG and many allies forced the mayor and council members to concede and table the proposed tax indefinitely. This victory has led to closer relations with the city and Pitt’s administration as well as the ongoing collaboration of all the universities in the city through the establishment of the Pittsburgh Student Government Council. GPSG was elected to serve as the chair of this organization in 2010-2011, host the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students regional meeting in 2010, and was awarded the prestigious Good Government Award for Allegheny County in 2011 for their commitment to their constituents. Stronger than ever, GPSG continues to take on new issues and address student needs in order to serve the graduate and professional students at the University of Pittsburgh.
Celebrate the Holidays with PITT ARTS!

Pitt students, staff, and faculty and their friends and family get to enjoy this holiday season’s arts and culture events this year, and save money doing it thanks to the Cheap Seats offerings through PITT ARTS.

Holiday classics that can be bought cheap include:

★ **Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre’s *The Nutcracker***. Seating options for students start at $15 and for faculty and staff, they begin at $20. The run of the ballet is December 7-30 this year. Discounted tickets can be purchased only through the [PITT ARTS website for tickets](#), click on the promo code for PBT.

★ **Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera (CLO)** offers its charming *A Musical Christmas Carol* from December 7-23. Tickets are only $15 through the [PITT ARTS website for tickets](#), click on the promo code for the CLO.

★ **The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** has a few nice holiday concerts to attend:

- **Tchaikovsky’s Winter Dreams** from December 14-16, featuring a beautiful range of pieces, including violin virtuoso Gil Shaham playing Mozart’s “Turkish” concerto, and Tchaikovsky’s amazing Symphony No 1 “Winter Dreams.”

- From December 20-23, **Highmark Holiday Pops** with the Pittsburgh Symphony is another great holiday concert at Heinz Hall. Enjoy the gorgeous decorations in the hall, and celebrate the season with carols and much loved holiday music, including “Sleigh Ride” and selections from *The Nutcracker’s* beautiful suite.

- On December 3 and 4, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra also offers **Celtic Woman: A Christmas Celebration**. **Tickets start at $36** for this beloved concert live with the orchestra.

- Tickets for these concerts start at $15 for the whole Pitt community but must be purchased online only through the [PITT ARTS website for tickets](#), click on the promo code for the Pittsburgh Symphony.

★ **Pitt students may visit Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens for free** with a valid Oakland Campus student ID. **The Winter Flower Show**, beginning November 23 and **Candlelit Evenings** start on November 25, and there are other lovely holiday offerings. Visit the [Phipps Conservatory website](#) or call 412-622-6914 for more details on hours and dates.

PITT ARTS has been a program of the University of Pittsburgh since 1997. For more information, please visit the [PITT ARTS website](#).
Are You Registered? Full Time?

IF YOU ARE A(N) …

→ Undergraduate Student — you MUST be registered for at least 12 credits.

→ Graduate Student — you MUST be registered for at least 9 credits.

These are the minimum number of credits that you have to SUSTAIN in order to maintain your visa status. If you drop below this number of credits, whether it is the 9th day of classes or the 9th week, your visa status will be in jeopardy. If you need to take less than a full time course load, because of a medical condition or if you only need a few credits to graduate, you need to apply for a Reduced Course Load (RCL).

If you drop below a full course load without OIS approval, you will receive several emails from OIS reminding you to resolve the issue as soon as possible. Remember to check your Pitt email account so that you don’t fall out of status and have your SEVIS record terminated or invalidated!!!

STEPS TO A REDUCED COURSE LOAD:

1. Meet with your Academic Advisor to discuss taking less than full time credits. Explain that they will receive an email from OIS asking them to complete an online form recommending a RCL.

2. Log-in to My OIS and complete the Reduced Course Load e-form.

3. Your Academic Advisor will complete their e-form. (You may want to confirm they have completed this e-form 3-5 days after you submit the Reduced Course Load form.)

4. You will be notified when your RCL Request has been approved!

Remember: Other than your first and last term, you can only have ONE term with a Reduced Course Load during your time at Pitt! Use this option wisely and discuss all possible solutions with your Academic Advisor.
Alison’s Zappa-tite: Tamarind

During International Week this past November, I decided to take advantage of the International Restaurant Week deal “$8 is greAT”. One of the featured restaurants on the tour was Tamarind, Flavor of India, located at 257 North Craig St. Fellow foodie and immigration specialist Melissa Reinert joined me for dinner. Thankfully we brought our appetite, and decided to flavor several different options on the menu. We started with the Ethnic Sampler, providing a nice array of several fried Indian appetizers. Naturally, I could not make up my mind on an entrée, so we split 3 different dishes; a fabulous way to share a meal and try several flavors. We had the Saag Paneer, a creamy spinach dish, the Mutter Paneer, a delicious pea and cheese dish, and the special Navaratan Korma, a rich assortment of vegetable, fruits, and nuts in a velvety sauce. We finished our meal by sampling two desserts, the Gulab Jamun and Rice Kheer. Needless to say, we left very satisfied and pleased. This was my first time at Tamarind and I would highly recommend it. The service was very friendly and attentive. The renovated home to restaurant provided a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. The food was fabulous, with the unique blend of spices and robust flavor; I would say that Tamarind is my new favorite Indian restaurant in Pittsburgh.

http://www.tamarindpa.com/

INTERESTED IN A SPRING OR SUMMER INTERNSHIP?

Make sure you understand you work authorization eligibility in your current immigration status. F-1 and J-1 students can find work authorization information on the OIS website (ois.pitt.edu). The OIS Student team also plans to present information about employment options during several sessions in the Spring 2013 semester. Dates and times are to be determined but follow OIS on Facebook or watch the OIS Newsletter, Global Perspective, for more details!

If you are planning to participate in an internship for the Spring 2013 semester and you have not discussed your situation with an Immigration Specialist, please email OIS at ois@pitt.edu, schedule an appointment with an Immigration Specialist on the student team or come in during Walk-In Hours on Monday through Thursday between 1 PM and 4 PM. You MUST obtain prior authorization before beginning work, even if it is an unpaid internship!

Image courtesy of http://www.beyond.com/data/articles/images/top_internships.jpg
CHANUKAH 2012

Hillel JUC
4607 Forbes Avenue

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6TH
8pm - 11pm

3 FLOORS OF MAYHEM
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

• 3rd—7th: Travel Signature Week in OIS
• 7th (Friday): Last Day of Undergraduate Classes
• 7th (Friday): Last Day to Take the OIS International Student Survey and Possibly Win an iPad or iPod!!!
• 10th—15th: Finals Week
• 16th (Sunday): Residence Halls Close
• 16th: Winter Recess Begins

JANUARY

• 2nd: University Offices Reopen
• 3rd: International Student Orientation!
• 4th: Residence Halls Open
• 7th: Spring Classes start
• 18th: Add/Drop period ends
• 21st: Martin Luther King Day – University closed

ONGOING

• Every Friday OIS hosts a session on Optional Practical Training (OPT) from 2PM—3PM. Registration is required and can be done on the OIS website.