Meet the OIS Graduate Intern: Alice Zdrale

Hi! I am originally from beautiful historic Prague, in the Czech Republic. I consider myself a very fortunate individual. I have been able to travel extensively and live in a couple European countries. My childhood and teen years were enriched with living abroad, learning about other cultures and exploring over 25 nations around the world. Now, I love living in Pittsburgh and exploring its parks, museums, restaurants and small coffee shops!

I recently went zip lining in the North Park. If you are looking for an outdoor activity be sure to check it out!

GOODBYE MESSAGE
- from Diane Saran

Pitt International students- it has been such a pleasure helping you transition to life at Pitt. I will be leaving OIS on December 13 to work in the Swanson School of Engineering as the Associate Director of International Engineering Initiatives. My next venture in international education is to help U.S. students and faculty in the realm of Education Abroad! I will miss you all, but I hope that many of you will visit in Benedum and maybe even study abroad!

OIS Winter Break

OIS will be closed for the official University of Pittsburgh Winter Break. Our office will be closed from 12pm on December 23rd 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!
Alison’s Zappa-tite: Fuel & Fuddle

Fuel & Fuddle is one of my favorite sit down places in Oakland. It’s a comfortable, relaxed environment with lots of different American style options. I enjoy reading the menu for creative items with funny titles and food descriptions, plus the food is always consistently good. I typically order one of their entrée salads for my meal (which are a nice serving), but since I was writing for my restaurant column, I decided to try something new. I still started my meal with a side fuddle house salad, which includes walnuts, 3 apple slices (yes, always 3 little slivers), and balsamic vinaigrette. For the main course, I ordered the Portobello and Hummus Phat Wrap and was very pleased! The wraps are served in an herbed tortilla stuffed with greens, tomatoes, and wild rice, plus the hummus, mushrooms, black olives, and onions. The rice was a neat touch to the wrap, almost making it like a burrito, but with the other ingredients, it still felt like a wrap. I would recommend getting a side of dressing with this wrap (I saved the leftover balsamic from my salad) and it was a nice hearty portion. Fuel & Fuddle also has great wood fire pizzas and sandwiches. They are located right off of Forbes at 212 Oakland Ave. Service is quick, so a great place for lunch or dinner!

First Year Mentor Applications are Now Available!

The Office of First Year Experience at the University of Pittsburgh is currently seeking to hire First Year Mentors for the 2014-2015 academic year. If you are interested in a paid leadership position and want to make a difference for new Pitt students, submit your application today!

Who are First Year Mentors?
First Year Mentors (FYMs) are an enthusiastic and diverse group of students whose primary responsibilities are to engage new students on campus including first year, commuter and transfer students in Pitt’s community. FYMs assist with planning and implementing summer programs such as Pitt Odyssey, New and Transfer Student Orientation, Commuter Day, and Transfer Day. Throughout the school year, FYMs plan programs, assist with Student Life initiatives, and help get students connected to campus.

Where can I find the application?
Visit our website at www.fye.pitt.edu to download the application.

When is the application due?
First Year Mentor applications are due Friday, January 31st by noon to 119 William Pitt Union.

Want to learn more?
Hear from current FYMs at one of our upcoming Information Sessions: Wednesday, January 22 at 8:30pm (119 WPU), Thursday, January 23 at 1pm (Dining Room B, WPU), Tuesday, January 28 at 8:30pm (119 WPU), or Wednesday, January 29 at 1pm (119 WPU).

We hope to see your application soon! Please contact fye@pitt.edu or 412-648-2172 if you have any questions.
WINTER WONDERLAND

‘Tis the season to enjoy the snow! We have had a taste of snow so far in Pittsburgh this fall, but soon that cold, white wonder will be all around us. For those of you for areas of the world without a lot of snow, here are some things you might want to try. These are all things you can do within minutes of your own home.

**Build a Snowman!** Roll that snow into a ball and keep moving it around until you have three large enough to stack into a man. Add a hat, carrot nose, rock eyes, and some sticks for arms and you are ready to go!

**Ice Skating!** There are several places in Pittsburgh to strap on some skates and glide around the ice, or in some cases strap on some skate and cling to the wall of the rink for dear life. (It's all personal preference.)

**Sled-riding!** When the snow is fresh, take some friends to a nearby hillside and ride down on a sled. You can buy them at any K-Mart or Target (and many other stores) for less than $10. Whether your sled makes it to the bottom with you still attached is all part of the fun!

**Stay in!** Stay warm by the fireplace or under a thick blanket and enjoy the snow from your window with a hot drink and great book. Sometimes the outdoors is best experienced from within.

*Whatever you decide to do, stay warm and enjoy!*
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 third 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 Air or Kindle Fire, 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!
TIPS FOR FINALS WEEK FROM THE OIS STUDENT WORKERS

STUDY TIPS  by Kai Fu

We’re almost done for this semester! Only several days left till the final week! And here’re some tips for you from me, as sophomore who survived from two final weeks in the past academic year. Hope they are useful for you.

★ First of all, get enough SLEEP!! I know there’re a lot we need to review for finals. However, enough time of sleep can help us more concentrated on the material, and also good for our health.

★ Second, start to prepare for the finals from TODAY! A lot of people, like me, always think that there’s plenty of time for me to prepare for the exams and papers. Actually, no! You’ll find out that there’s still plenty of material you need to read or a lot of sample questions you need to do on the day before the big day.

★ Also, if tomorrow is the big day and you still having a lot to prepare, don’t stop and think that “there’s no way I can finish the review so I can just give up right now”.

★ Last but not least, don’t stop studying!

There’re only about two more weeks left, and then we can enjoy out winter break, either go back to the home country or go travel. I believe everyone’s plan for the break is exciting, but don’t forget that there’re finals before the break! I always believe, one more sentence I read, one more point I’ll get. So get enough sleep, prepare for your finals as early as possible, and never give up~ let’s welcome our finals together! And good luck!

Finals Week Study Tips by Shirley Li

Final’s week is right around the corner and here are some personal tips might help you studying the finals.

* First, remember to keep warm and eat well. The body needs all the energy you consumed to focus on intensive study. The immune system and endocrine system will be disturbed and your body will be weaker than usual.

* Second, don’t stay up all night if you don’t need to. Staying up all night will affect your sleeping cycle and metabolic rates, thus negatively affecting your body. My suggestion is try to study in the daytime and, of course, ahead of time. You can do a little step by step. It just prevents things from jamming up in the last few weeks.

* Third, keep an agenda! Write down everything you need to do for the month, the week and the day, and do it sequentially. I also like to write my test dates on the agenda so I wouldn’t plan any unnecessary thing to do during that week and study for the test ahead of time.

* Fourth, install an App on your smart phone. I have an amazing app on my phone, called Pomo Do, especially effective for procrastinators. I’ve been using it for a year and it really helped me. It breaks down periods of work into 25-minute intervals separated by short breaks. Within each 25-minute, you are required to focus completely on your study. A 25-minute study sounds easy and also is easy to achieve; think it in a long term way, the sum of 25-minute intervals will really make your day efficient.
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 6-29 this year. Discounted tickets can be purchased only through the [PITT ARTS website](http://pittarts.com) for tickets, click on the promo code for PBT.

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

  • **Honeck and the Tallis Scholars** (December 6-8) - The Tallis Scholars, considered one of the world’s leading Renaissance vocal music ensembles, celebrate their 40th anniversary this year. During the first half of the concert, the Tallis Scholars present an a cappella program, including Allegri’s famous Miserere, that highlight the Renaissance inspirations in the music of Bruckner. Bruckner’s Symphony No. 4 is subtitled "Romantic", and has a detailed program about a medieval castle, knights on horseback, the beauty of Nature, and a hunt.

  • From December 12-21, **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.

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

★ **Highmark First Night** is the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust’s way to ring in the New Year in Downtown Pittsburgh. Highmark First Night Pittsburgh features more than 100 events and activities, including art installations, performances, hands-on activities, a parade and more, at indoor and outdoor locations throughout the Cultural District. The event ends with the grand finale midnight show. [Click here](http://pittarts.com) to buy your tickets!

★ 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](http://pittarts.com) 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](http://pittarts.com).
12 December, 4 – 5 PM
William Pitt Union, Main Floor, Lower Lounge

Spouses and dependents strongly encouraged to attend!

EXPERIENCE AMERICA:
TEA AND TREAT SWAP

JOIN OIS FOR AN AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRADITION:
THE COOKIE SWAP!

WE INVITE YOU TO BRING A FAVORITE TREAT FROM YOUR HOME COUNTRY, AND ENJOY A FEW FROM OTHER GUESTS AND COLLEAGUES.

TEA, COFFEE, HOT CHOCOLATE AND A SELECTION OF DESSERTS WILL BE PROVIDED!

Register here: http://www.eventbrite.com/event/7058597455
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

2nd – 6th – Travel Signature Week at OIS

6th – Last day of fall classes & ISB closes

12th - Experience America Event – Dependent Tea & Cookie Swap

15th – Residence Halls close

15th – Jan 5th – Winter Recess, no classes

23rd – Jan 1st – OIS closed for Winter Recess

January

2nd – International Spring Student Orientation

6th – Spring classes start

16th – Experience America Event – Pittsburgh Culture

17th – Add/Drop period ends

20th – 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.

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