EXPERIENCE AMERICA: Snow Tubing Trip!

Join the Office of International Services for...

SNOW TUBING
Sunday, February 8, 2015

2:30 – 4:30 pm (Bus departs WPU at 1:45 pm)

Boyce Park (near Monroeville)

$17 ages 13 and older; $13 ages 12 and younger

Tickets can be purchased at the William Pitt Union ticket office and are refundable up until February 5th.

Transportation provided.

All participants must be 42 in (107 cm) or taller to participate!

Experience America
WANT TO WORK AFTER YOU COMPLETE YOUR PROGRAM?

Optional Practical Training for F-1 Students

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is defined as temporary employment directly related to a F-1 student’s field of study. All F-1 students who have been maintaining their status and who have completed at least one academic year are eligible to apply for OPT. The standard OPT period is 12 months, and it may be granted during or after students complete their academic program.

You do not need a job offer to apply for OPT and the application, submitted to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), can take 2—3 months to be approved. In other words, APPLY EARLY!

OIS provides MANDATORY Information Sessions to discuss students’ status while they are on OPT, as well as some tips and pointers about preparing the application. See the flyer below for more information about the dates for the OPT Information Sessions scheduled for the Spring 2015 semester. It is critical that you attend and apply early so that you have the most flexibility in choosing your desired employment start date! You can read more about OPT on the OIS website or in My OIS and you can register for an OPT session here on our website!

Be among the first in line!

Join us for Priority OPT Information Sessions — Spring 2015

April 2015 graduates are highly encouraged to attend one of the following Priority OPT Information Sessions in order to begin the Optional Practical Training (OPT) application process.

Attendees of a Priority OPT Session will have their completed OPT requests processed by OIS in 3 business days*. NOTE: The full OPT application must be mailed to USCIS for adjudication, which can take 2-3 months.

Thursday, January 15 | 4—5:30 pm
Tuesday, January 27 | 1:30—3 pm
Wednesday, February 11 | 4—5:30 pm
Tuesday, February 24 | 1:30—3 pm
Tuesday, March 10 | 1:30—3 pm

The January 27 session includes info about the H-1B visa process presented by an immigration attorney.

Registration for all sessions is required.
www.ois.pitt.edu/about-us/events/#priorityopt

*Requests will be processed in 3 business days if submitted within 30 days of the session.
Academic Training (AT) is defined as work, training, or experience related to a J-1 student’s field of study. The standard period of AT is 18 months or the period of time the student is engaged in their academic program, whichever is shorter. For example, if a student is engaged in an 11 month academic program, they will be eligible for 11 months of AT. If a student is engaged in a 24 month academic program, they will be eligible for 18 months of AT. Doctoral students are eligible for up to 36 months of AT, with 18 months of authorization available prior to program completion and 18 months available after program completion.

Unlike OPT, AT cannot be authorized without an offer of employment and the support of your Academic Advisor; however, it is authorized by OIS. Your Academic Advisor must submit a letter to OIS explaining how the proposed employment relates to the field of study and how it is integral to the academic program. Once AT is competed, the Academic Advisor will be required to submit an evaluation of the experience, assessing how effective and appropriate it was to achieving the initial goals and objectives. You can read more about AT on the OIS website or in My OIS.

DON’T FORGET TO VISIT CDPA FOR HELP WITH YOUR SEARCH!

The Office of Career Development and Placement Assistance provides services and resources to students “from start to finish” during their career journey.

- Visit with them to have your resume reviewed. You can never have too many people review your resume!
- Practice your interview skills with Interviewstream.
- Search for employment opportunities via Passport Career.
- Visit during walk-in hours, Monday—Friday, 10 AM until 5 PM for general questions or to have a resume or cover letter reviewed.
Baby, It’s Cold Outside!

Depending on your country of origin, you may not be accustomed to cold weather, but Pittsburgh winters can be very cold. Please bundle up when you go outside and remember — if you wear a lot of layers, you can always take one off to get more comfortable! If you think it’s too cold, icy, snowy, or windy to have class/work today, you can always check the Pitt website or sign up for the Emergency Notification system through My Pitt to see if the University is closed. This might be a great time of year to learn how to use the public transportation system so you can stay a bit more warm while travelling to campus!

HEALTHY U FITNESS CLASSES

HEALTHY U is a program designed to help Pitt students maintain optimal health encompassing 9 dimensions of wellness. Among these is to be physically healthy and one way to do that is to join in the HEALTHY U Fitness Classes offered during the Spring 2015 semester. FREE Preview Classes are offered Jan 20—23.

Classes include Bollywood Fusion, Cardio Kickboxing, Cycling, Pilates, Swimming and Yoga, among others! More info here and full class calendar here.
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 request.)

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: Hemingway’s Café

After the holiday season, I am looking for a good place to eat that is not expensive in order to watch my budget for the month. An Oakland staple offers just that, at Hemingway’s Café at 3911 Forbes Ave. If you can be selective as to when you eat lunch, you can get majority of their menu at half price! The half price menu is available on weekdays from 11:00 am to noon and 2:00 – 4:00 pm (as well as 9:00 pm to midnight for a very late dinner). Hemingway’s features American cuisine, ranging from burgers, wraps, creative grilled cheese, pizza, and chicken entrées.

This trip to Hemingway’s I sampled the Spinach & Artichoke dip for my appetizer. The dip was served with fried pita chips and had big chunks of artichokes and a little spicy kick. The appetizer was also half priced and was a great option for sharing! For my entrée, I order the Spicy Cajun Chicken salad. The salad had a nice portion of chicken and I liked the sautéed mushrooms and onions on top of a fresh bed of greens. With splitting the appetizer, my entire meal cost under $6! Other menu recommendations would be the Pittsburgh Chicken salad, which is a Pittsburgh tradition of having the fries piled high on the salad, and the ABC wrap (or any of the wraps for that matter). Make sure to be sitting and ordered during the designated time frame to receive the half price menu options!

CURIOUS ABOUT PAST ZAPPA-TITES?

Have you ever wondered about other restaurants in the Oakland area? You can read through old issues of the Global Perspective to see the other places Alison has reviewed OR you can start reading the OIS blog! We will re-feature Alison’s Zappa-tites every two weeks. There are tons of great places to eat in Oakland, and Alison is helping us learn about them all!
Twice a year, Pittsburgh hosts a **Pittsburgh Restaurant Week**, typically the first week is in January and the second is in August. The first Restaurant Week this year is January 12 — 18. During this week, you can try some of the best restaurants around the city with special pricing and (occasionally) special menu items! A few years ago, Meat & Potatoes offered a wonderful 5 course meal featuring a different animal each day (Monday — all 5 courses had some type of chicken, Tuesday — all courses included goat meat).

Most of the restaurants offer a three-course fixed-price meal or $20.15 dinners. These restaurants are all over the Pittsburgh area, so in addition to a great meal, you may get to visit a neighborhood in the city that you haven’t yet experienced. While the menus for Restaurant Week are more than enough to make people hungry, there are also a number of Special Events leading up to Restaurant Week. One of these events is a **Kickoff Party** on January 8th (6 — 8pm) where you can try sample foods from many of the participating restaurants.

**Pittsburgh Restaurant Week Winter 2015 Restaurants**

**CDPA EVENTS: January**

**January 14: Careers in Business Networking Event**
6:30pm — 8:00pm
O’Harra Student Center, Dining Room
Meet alumni in a range of business fields

**January 21: Innovation Week Networking Event**
6:30pm — 8:00pm
WPU, Assembly Room
Meet alumni and community entrepreneurs

**January 26 — 30: Internship Week** (various programs/events)

[Office of Career Development and Placement Assistance Website]
GET OUT OF TOWN: The Pennsylvania Farm Show
Harrisburg, PA, January 10-17, 2015

Did you know that Pennsylvania hosts the largest indoor agricultural exposition in the nation?! Plan a road trip to Harrisburg, PA for the annual Pennsylvania Farm show. This kid-friendly event is free to the public and is a great way to experience traditional Pennsylvania culture.

- Visit over 6,000 animals
- Watch cooking demonstrations
- Experience a rodeo
- Witness a sculpture made entirely out of butter
- Eat traditional Pennsylvanian food

For more information visit: www.farmshow.state.pa.us

Other Activities in Harrisburg:

- Take a tour of the majestic State Capital Building
- Visit the State Museum of Pennsylvania

Driving Distance from Pittsburgh: 3.5 hours

Expenses: Gas and Parking
English as a Second Language
Community Education Courses Spring 2015
All courses are non-credit and offered each term (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Tuition prices do not include textbooks.

IELTS Prep
Course description:
• prepare learners for the IELTS English proficiency exam
• for intermediate to advanced speakers of English (equivalent to ELI levels 4, 5 and 6)
Dates: Jan. 29 – Mar. 5
Time: Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
Price: $200 ($165 for students in the ELI’s intensive program)
Registration Deadline: Jan. 28

TOEFL Prep
Course description:
• prepare learners for the iBT TOEFL by focusing on reading, listening, speaking & writing skills
• for intermediate to advanced speakers of English (equivalent to ELI levels 4, 5 and 6)
Required Text: Longman Preparation Course for the iBT TOEFL (paperback, with online access to MP3s and answer key files, 3rd edition 2014 (ISBN: 978-0133248128)
Daytime TOEFL Prep
Dates: Jan. 21 – Feb. 25
Time: Wednesdays, 10 am – 3pm (lunch break 12-1 pm)
Price: $400 ($330 for students in the ELI’s intensive program)
Registration Deadline: Jan. 20

Evening TOEFL Prep
Dates:
• Module 1 (Reading & Writing) Jan. 13 – Feb. 17
• Module 2 (Listening & Speaking) Feb. 24 – Apr. 7 (no class Mar. 10)
Time: Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:20 pm
Price: $200 per module ($165 for students in the ELI’s intensive program)
Registration Deadlines:
• Module 1: Jan. 12
• Module 2: Feb. 23

General English Evening Course
Course description:
• practice of general English language skills applicable to everyday, work, and academic settings
• focus on improving speaking and listening skills; course integrates pronunciation, grammar, reading, and writing to achieve this goal
• for intermediate to low-advanced learners of English (at least 52 on the iBT TOEFL)
Required Text: Northstar Listening & Speaking, 5, Third Edition
Dates: Jan. 13 – Apr. 7
(no classes March 10, 12)
Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 pm – 7:50 pm
Price: $895 plus application fee and university fees
Application Deadline:
• Jan. 7
• All students must take a placement test Jan. 8, 6:00 – 7:50 pm.
For the General Evening Course, University of Pittsburgh faculty scholarships may be available for eligible full-time faculty and research associates and their husbands and wives. For more scholarship info, contact Faculty Records at 412-624-4232 or visit their office in G-48 Cathedral of Learning.

Campus Conversation Course (CCC)
Course description:
• intended for English learners
• three levels: low-intermediate, high-intermediate, and low-advanced
• informal conversation and listening practice with teachers-in-training
Required Text: Textbook information will be provided at registration.
Dates: Jan. 20 – Apr. 1
(no classes Mar. 9 - 13)
Time: Classes meet for 2 ½ hours each week on campus. Exact schedule is distributed at registration.
Registration Fee: $50 (non-refundable)
Registration Deadline: You must register in person yourself and take a short oral placement exam on Jan. 14 between 12 pm and 4 pm in Parkville Building, Room 102, 200 Meyran Ave. Late registration may be accepted until Jan. 26.

Contact: ccc@pitt.edu

For an application and more information about these and other courses, visit www.eli.pitt.edu/geninfo/programs. The English Language Institute (ELI) also offers an accredited intensive ESL program in which students may study part-time or full-time (4 to 20 hours per week). The ELI can issue I-20s for an F-1 student visa for students studying 20 hours per week in the intensive program.

University of Pittsburgh
English Language Institute
Parkville Building, Room M13, 200 Meyran Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-5901 • eli@pitt.edu • www.eli.pitt.edu/geninfo/programs
ACADEMIC RESOURCES

WRITING CENTER
317 O’Hara Student Center
The Writing Center provides a place for all University of Pittsburgh students to come to work on their writing. The Center is staffed by experienced consultants who have been trained to help others with their writing. They can help you with conventional or digital projects. The services are free to all University of Pittsburgh affiliates.

The Writing Center is a part of the University of Pittsburgh’s Composition program. One program designed specifically for international students is the International Café.

International Café
The International Café is a series of workshops that tackle some of the difficulties of writing and using English as a non-native speaker. Learn something, chat with other international students, and enjoy refreshments several Friday afternoons this term at the Writing Center.

International Café meets most months during fall and spring terms. Past International Café sessions include topics like these: Tips for Using Commas, Periods, and Semicolons; Writing Effective Sentences; All about Paraphrasing; and Going with the Flow: Using Transitions and Anticipating Readers’ Reactions to Make Your Own Writing Flow More Smoothly; "What Does My Professor Want? Interpreting Writing Assignments"; "The Heart of Reading: Understanding Difficult Texts with Success"; "Crossing the Divide: Writing in L1 and L2"; "The Right Right Word."

To subscribe to the listserv or learn more about their events, email writecen@pitt.edu or visit their website: http://www.composition.pitt.edu/writingcenter/IntlCafe.html

ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER
G-1 Gardner Steel Conference Center
The Academic Resource Center (ARC) is a student’s one-stop-shop for the most comprehensive set of academic services available at the University of Pittsburgh. The ARC offers study skills coaching and peer tutoring in a great environment that includes study space as well as access to the PittNet wireless network. Highly trained peer tutors are available to all undergraduates irrespective of school. Visit the ARC’s website for more information: http://www.asundergrad.pitt.edu/offices/arc/index.html

MATH ASSISTANCE CENTER
215 O’Hara Student Center
The Math Assistance Center (MAC) provides a walk-in service; no appointments are scheduled or needed. All graduate teaching assistants present at any time have the capacity to aid in any undergraduate mathematics course. Undergraduate teaching assistants are there to provide assistance in sub-calculus classes. For more information, visit their website: http://www.mathematics.pitt.edu/about/math-assistance-center
PITT ARTS Presents

ARTFUL WEDNESDAYS
Spring 2015

JANUARY 21 - JOY IKE  Ike is a popular pianist and singer/songwriter. Her songs uplift and cheer.

JANUARY 28 - STEEL IMPRESSIONS  Steel pan music is the sound of the Caribbean, with uplifting tones that cheer your day. Listen for twists like classical music for the steel pan.

FEBRUARY 4 - CHORO NO VINHO  A fun Brazilian brass and string ensemble that is known to sing and even have tuba solos.

FEBRUARY 11 - ANNA ELDER with GUARDIANS OF SOUND  A classically trained vocalist with an amazing range, Anna Elder explores soul music as she headlines a band of acoustic guitar, cello and drums.

FEBRUARY 18 - BEN OPIE with THOTH TRIO  Opie is an experimental master of the saxophone, and with the artistry of the musicians in the trio, take the wild ride.

FEBRUARY 25 - CITY DWELLING NATURE SEEKERS  This group’s combination of country, bluegrass, indie-rock, and psychedelia is by turns mellow and intense.

MARCH 4 - THE HARLAN TWINS  James Hart and Carrie Battle headline this unique Americana sound, blending elements of indie, folk, country, and blues.

MARCH 18 - CORNING WORKS  Beth Corning’s contemporary dance company uses top residencies to keep the art fresh and highly original.

MARCH 25 - COLOR FEET  Check out this popular alternative band with Artful Wednesdays’ audiences, boasting a sweet sound and clever lyrics.

APRIL 1 - HIP HOP UNPLUGGED  Feel the beat, groove, rhythm and rhyme of hip hop in an acoustic setting with Pittsburgh’s emerging Hip Hop Stars including Zoe Z.

FREE performances and lunch in Nordy’s Place, William Pitt Union Lower Level, 12-1 PM
PITT ARTS 907 WPU  www.pittarts.pitt.edu  412.624.4498  pittarts@pitt.edu
CALENDAR OF EVENTS — January

5   Spring Term Classes Start

5-9  Donate used clothing to the Give a Thread Campaign! Help Pitt break a Guinness World Record and celebrate Pitt’s Year of Sustainability! Check Website for drop off locations, times and other details.

8   Pitt Women’s Basketball, vs. North Carolina, 7 PM, Peterson Events Center

14  Katy Gongaware’s Birthday. Email her to wish her a happy one!

14  Winter Volunteer Fair, 11 AM—2 PM, WPU Ballroom & Assembly Room

14  GPSG Event: Panthers & Politics: Chancellor Gallagher on Science Policy. Seating is Limited, RSVP here. Hor d’oeuvres will be served and each attendee will be provided one (1) drink ticket.

15  Priority OPT Information Session, 4:00—5:30 PM. Register here!

16  Last day for add/drop period.

16  Lecture: “Resilience governance by way of risk taking: the efforts and lesson of Taiwan, presented by Tsung-Shiuin Li, Visiting Scholar, GSPIA & Center for Disaster Management, 12:00—1:30 PM, 4217 Posvar Hall, Via UCIS Events.

19  No Classes and all University offices closed in observation of Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Join PittServes for MLK Day of Service!

21-24 Internship Week! See p. 1 of the Global Perspective or CDPA’s website for more information!

25  Pitt Men’s Basketball vs. Louisville, 4 PM, Peterson Events Center

27  Priority OPT Information Session, featuring Immigration Attorney to discuss H-1B process. 1:30—3:00 PM. Register here!