WELCOME & WELCOME BACK!

For those who are new here, we are so happy that you have chosen the University of Pittsburgh and we wish you every success. Our sincerest hope is that you take advantage of the many opportunities to become involved in campus and city life and to fully enjoy the cultural and natural richness of our region. We realize that so much is new and different for you, but I ask you to take the time to read through our newsletter, and if you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask us (ois@pitt.edu).

For those who are continuing at Pitt, you will notice several changes in OIS. These are introduced more fully throughout the newsletter, but I want to highlight the following:

- Expanded online request and filing services for most immigration processes through My OIS;
- New student immigration advising teams on the Bradford, Greensburg, and Johnstown campuses;
- New information pages for Dependents on our website;
- A new fun series of local topics offered to international graduate students and postdocs through Experience America; and
- Continuing information workshops and a preview process for Outstanding Researcher/Professor petitions for those seeking US permanent residence.

One thing has not changed, though, and that is our commitment to provide the highest quality of immigration services to you.

Good luck to all!

Charles Nieman, Ph.D., Director of OIS
HAIL 2 PITT FAMILIES!

Make YOUR Family
Pitt’s 2013 Family of the Year!

All undergraduate Oakland students are invited to nominate their families to become Pitt’s 2013 Family of the Year! Students must submit 1) the nomination form, and 2) an original 800 word (or less) essay which describes why their family deserves this award. Essays must be submitted electronically, double-spaced, and as an attachment to: parents@pitt.edu by 5pm, September 16, 2013.

To be fair to all participants, late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted.

The winning student/family will receive:
- A laptop computer
- 2 nights’ hotel accommodations for Family Weekend.
- 4 free football tickets for the Pitt vs. Old Dominion football game on October 19. Time TBD.
- Recognition and a commemorative clock.

The nomination form, essay details, and judging criteria can be found at www.parents.pitt.edu or in the Office of Parent and Family Resources, 130 William Pitt Union, Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

UPDATING YOUR ADDRESS

One of your responsibilities while staying in the United States is to keep us informed any time that you move.

You must update your address within 10 days of moving. To update your address, please follow the appropriate steps below:

If you are at the University of Pittsburgh as a scholar or employee, please log-in to My OIS and select Change of Address under Biographical Information.

If you are a Pitt student, please check your addresses listed on My Pitt to make sure that they are all accurate. Log into My Pitt.

1. Click on "Student Center Log In"
2. A new window will open - Click on "Self Service"
3. Under "Campus Personal Information" click on "Addresses"
4. Update all addresses
   - Enter your Pittsburgh address in the section "SEVU"
   - Enter your address in your home country in the section "SEVF"
PITTSBURGH EVENTS: Knit the Bridge

Knit the Bridge is a large, public art installation that involved “yarn bombing” the Andy Warhol bridge in downtown Pittsburgh. Yarn bombing is where people knit or crochet around large objects like trees, statues, or (in this case) a bridge. Knit the Bridge was a community-led arts project with the support of many volunteers and different organizations in Pittsburgh. This art installation celebrates the history of Pittsburgh as a city of bridges and steel as well as highlighting its current arts community.

For months volunteers in the Pittsburgh region have been knitting and crocheting different sized sections for this art project, from small squares to large panels and the black railings holding everything together. This project will not only make Pittsburgh more colorful for the month it is up, but once the panels are removed from the bridge, they will be cleaned and donated to homeless shelters to keep people warm this winter.

The Andy Warhol bridge will host the Knit the Bridge art installation until September 6th, so hurry downtown to enjoy this beautiful addition to Pittsburgh! For more information, and to see pictures of all the panels (if you can’t enjoy the art-covered bridge before the project is removed), please visit the Knit the Bridge website.
MEET THE OIS STAFF!

Genevieve Cook (Associate Director)
I am originally from Connecticut but I grew up in Pittsburgh and I’ve lived here most of my life. I’m a Pitt alum — bachelor’s in anthropology — and several members of my family, including my husband and sister, are too. I love to travel with my family — usually to places near the ocean. One of the things I enjoy doing on my vacations is scuba diving, which I have been doing for a few years. I’m a certified rescue diver and I’m working on my master scuba diver certification. When I am not at work, my other hobbies/interests include: hiking, reading, movies, and enjoying good food.

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.

Sara Jones (Immigration Specialist, Employment Team)
I have been a part of the University of Pittsburgh community in some capacity since 1997! I attended undergraduate and graduate school here, and have worked in OIS since 2005. I adore Oakland (especially its restaurants!), and enjoy visiting the Carnegie museums and library frequently. My favorite part of the world is the Adirondack Mountains in New York State, where I have vacationed for over 20 years. Although I’ve traveled to many parts of Europe, some places I’d like to see in the future are Scandinavia, the Netherlands and Alaska. When I am not working, I enjoy spending time with my family, watching my kids grow into their personalities.

Juliann Mehall (Administrative Assistant to the Director)
I am a true Pittsburgher, born and raised in the South Side Slopes area of the city. I love spending time with my family and grandchildren; Dylan, Lucas and Alaina. You may find my husband and I walking around the City visiting various flea markets and yard sales looking for “hidden treasures”? I enjoy talking with our new students and scholars and sharing stories of their travels and interesting foods from their home countries. Welcome to Pittsburgh!

Charles Nieman (Director)
As a kid I loved geography games and would dream about interesting adventures and faraway places. An early degree in Anthropology and Art History reflected my curiosity about people, places, traditions and cultures, and over the years I have been blessed to travel widely and live and work for an extended time internationally. Throughout these years, my wife, Rita, and I shared fun adventures with our sons, and now it is our greatest joy to see them as husbands and fathers and to share a new set of fun adventures with their children, like riding a carousel on a lazy summer day. Traveling, hiking, exploring historic national parks, enjoying the arts, repairing antique furniture, and baking continue to be high on my list of interests.

Lauren Panetti (Immigration Specialist, Employment Team)
Originally from the Philadelphia area, I came to Pittsburgh as an undergraduate student majoring in Anthropology. In 2006, I began working in the Undergraduate Admissions Office at Pitt working mostly with international students and later earned my masters degree in Higher Education Management through Pitt’s School of Education. I live in Point Breeze and enjoy exploring the city and trying new restaurants. In my spare time, I love to practice yoga and travel. Some of my favorite places I have visited are Australia, Jamaica, Las Vegas, Hawaii, Mexico and the Bahamas.
Meet the OIS Staff!

Melissa Reinert (Immigration Specialist, Student Team)
I am originally from Northeastern Ohio, but now at Pitt since April 2012 by way of Little Rock, Arkansas, where I lived for five years. My background is in regulatory compliance, working in the pharmaceutical industry before returning to Higher Education which is my true passion. I hope that you will love Pittsburgh as much as I do! In my spare time, I love to cook pasta, fresh baked bread and cookies and I am to learning to make Indian and Chinese inspired dishes! I also enjoy ziplining, hiking, biking, knitting, telling snarky (hilarious!) jokes, and reading. My favorite husband and I are expecting our first child in October, so I will be on maternity leave for much of the fall semester. Welcome to Pitt!

Elizabeth (Betta) Risa (Senior Immigration Specialist, Employment Team)
I am a Pittsburgh native who has lived and worked with international students for longer than I would care to mention. I like to say that since my father was an international student, I have been working with international students my whole life. I have been with the University of Pittsburgh for almost ten years, and am now heading up the Employment Team in OIS’ new structure. I have travelled Europe extensively, but have yet to make it to Asia, Africa or South America. (I almost made it to Africa, but there were high seas that day.) In addition to writing epic tales of heroism and adventure, I publish articles related to my work from time to time. This winter, you’ll see me on the slopes doing my best to connect with my Scandinavian roots by actually staying upright on my skis.

Diane Saran (Senior Immigration Specialist, Student Team)
I take pleasure in helping new international students and scholars since I have lived abroad when I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Romania. One of my hobbies is traveling around the world! When I am not working I play outdoor sports such as tennis and swimming and indoor sports such as yoga. I have two dogs I love—one of which is a therapy dog at Pittsburgh Children’s Hospital.

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.

Kati Von Lehman (Compliance Coordinator)
I grew up in Pittsburgh and attended Penn State University. Over the past 10 years, I have worked at a number of different colleges and universities across the country. I have travelled to 47 states in the U.S. and my favorite places to go are national parks (such as Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, and Arches) and quirky towns with lots of history and art. I also love attending arts festivals and seeing the amazing things people make. Here in Pittsburgh, I try to go kayaking on the rivers and find new places to go hiking. Finally, when I am at home I enjoy crocheting and watching my 5 year old daughter dance and/or chase our dog.

Alison Zappa (Immigration Services Coordinator)
I was born right here in Oakland at Magee hospital. I was meant to be at Pitt! Other than at the front desk of OIS, you may find me running around campus or taking classes in the HPA program. I love to cook and bake, but ironically I do not like chocolate! I absolutely love to travel with my husband; I actually got engaged in London! Don’t hesitate to ask me questions, I am here to help!
I was super excited to try another Schenley Plaza food stand, Waffallonia. Waffallonia, a Liege Waffle Station, opened this past summer and I finally made it over to sample their fare. I have had waffles for breakfast before, but never a true Belgium waffle. When you order, your waffle is made fresh. The dough is baked in a waffle press and there are different topping varieties to choose from. The smell alone while my waffle was baking was mouthwatering. I chose the ‘Bruges’ waffle, which was fresh chopped strawberries and a nice helping of whipped cream on top. They call their waffles ‘sugar waffles’ because a layer of sugar is baked on top of the waffle. The sugar coating gives the waffle a nice crunchy coating and was baked to perfection. I definitely recommend Waffallonia as a sweet treat to end lunch or a break in the day!
## Experience America Topics and Schedule

**Academic Year 2013-2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Football and Soccer</strong></td>
<td>A survey of the most important rules and keys to speaking smartly about football in Pittsburgh. Pizza will be provided.</td>
<td>03 Oct 2013 12:30—2 PM</td>
<td>WPU 527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winter in Pittsburgh / Health and Wellness</strong></td>
<td>A discussion to help students prepare for winter in Pittsburgh. Including resources to obtain cold-weather clothing, how to protect oneself from the flu, and cold-weather activities such as sledding, ice-skating and skiing.</td>
<td>07 Nov 2013 12—1 PM</td>
<td>WPU 538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Holidays</strong></td>
<td>A discussion of American Holidays, including Christmas and other major US holidays in the context of how international students can better understand and relate to Americans, either in the classroom, the workplace or in a friendship situation.</td>
<td>21 Nov 2013 12:30—2 PM</td>
<td>WPU, Dining Room A, Floor #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Tea &amp; Treat Swap</strong></td>
<td>A session in which OIS staff and interested dependents will meet to share tea and swap treats and recipes</td>
<td>12 Dec 2013 4—5 PM</td>
<td>WPU, Lower Lounge, Main Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pittsburgh Culture and the Typical American Weekend</strong></td>
<td>A discussion of Pittsburgh Culture and typical activities in which an American participates during an average weekend in the US.</td>
<td>16 Jan 2014 4—5 PM</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Politics and the Presidential Election</strong></td>
<td>This session will provide a brief description of the American Political System, Election Day and the Electoral College</td>
<td>13 Feb 2014 4—5 PM</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation: Buses, Bikes and Bipedal Locomotion</strong></td>
<td>Getting around in Pittsburgh can be challenging and dangerous if travelers don’t take the proper precautions! Learn about steps you can take to stay safe!</td>
<td>06 Mar 2014 12—1 PM</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Baseball and Fun Summer Activities</strong></td>
<td>A survey of the most important rules and keys to speaking smartly about baseball in Pittsburgh. Strategies and ideas for fun summer activities in Pittsburgh will be discussed.</td>
<td>03 Apr 2014 12—1 PM</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For your FREE ticket or more information: [http://www.ois.pitt.edu/new-here/experience-america/](http://www.ois.pitt.edu/new-here/experience-america/)
REDUCED COURSE LOAD: 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.
ON CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

OVERVIEW

Many students will seek employment while studying at the University of Pittsburgh. International students have a few different options for working in the United States without violating their nonimmigrant status.

On-campus employment is typically work performed on the school’s premises that is paid by the University of Pittsburgh. **NOTE: UPMC is NOT considered on-campus employment!** On-campus employment may also include work at on-location commercial firms which provide services for students on campus, such as the school bookstore or cafeteria.

Both F-1 and J-1 students are permitted to do on-campus employment, although the requirements for each visa category are slightly different as noted to the right.

International students who need to apply for a Social Security Number can get request the letter necessary from OIS through My OIS. Students will get further instructions when they pick-up this letter.

F-1 and J-1 students who have completed their academic programs are NOT eligible for on-campus employment. This includes continuing employment that began before the program ended.

Questions? Email OIS@pitt.edu.

F-1 Students

F-1 students are permitted to accept on-campus employment without additional authorization from OIS as long as the student is currently enrolled, has a valid I-20 issued by the University of Pittsburgh, is otherwise maintaining F-1 status, and employment is restricted to 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. F-1 students may work full-time during the summer or winter breaks.

J-1 Students

J-1 students sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh ARE required to seek authorization before beginning on-campus employment. **J-1 students are only authorized to work for one year at a time and must seek this authorization each additional year to maintain status.** J-1 students can do this by contacting their Immigration Specialist and requesting an on-campus work authorization letter. J-1 students who are sponsored by an organization other than the University of Pittsburgh will have to contact their sponsor to request permission for on-campus employment.

A J-1 student will receive a work authorization letter from OIS as long as the student is currently enrolled, has a valid DS-2019, is otherwise maintaining J-1 status, and the employment is restricted to 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. J-1 students may work full-time during the summer or winter breaks.

POST-COMPLETION OPT TIMELINE for December Graduates
English as a Second Language
Community Education Courses Fall 2013

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)
Required Text: Barron’s IELTS with Audio CDs, 3rd edition
ISBN: 978-1438072784
Dates: October 23 – December 4
(no class November 27)
Time: Wednesdays, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
Price: $150
Registration Deadline: October 22

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)
Daytime TOEFL Prep
Dates: September 11 – October 16
Time: Wednesdays, 10 am – 3 pm (lunch break 12-1 pm)
Price: $375 ($300 for students in the ELI’s intensive program)
Registration Deadline: Sept. 10

Evening TOEFL Prep
Dates:
• Module 1 (Reading & Writing)
  September 10 – October 15
• Module 2 (Listening & Speaking)
  October 22 – November 26
Time: Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:20 pm
Price: $150 per module
Registration Deadlines:
• Module 1: September 9
• Module 2: October 21

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, and integrates pronunciation, grammar, reading, and writing to achieve this goal
• for high intermediate to advanced learners of English (at least 52 on the iBT TOEFL)
Required Text: Northstar Listening & Speaking 5, Third Edition
Dates: September 10 – December 3
(no class November 28)
Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30 pm – 7:20 pm
Price: $870, plus application fee and university fees
Application Deadline:
• September 4
• All students must take a placement test Sept. 3, 10 am – 1 pm, or Sept. 5, 5:30 – 8:30 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-39 Cathedral of Learning.

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

Parkvale Building, Room M13, 200 Meyran Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-5901 • elipitt@pitt.edu • www.eli.pitt.edu/geninfo/programs

Campus Conversation Course (CCC)
Course description:
• for low-intermediate to low-advanced speakers of English (equivalent to ELI levels 3, 4, 5 and 6)
• informal conversation practice
Required Text: Textbook information will be provided at registration.
Dates: September 16 – November 19
Time: Classes meet for 2 ½ hours each week on campus. Exact schedule is distributed at registration.
Registration Fee: $40 (non-refundable)
Registration Deadline: You must register in person yourself and take a short oral placement exam on September 11 between 11 am – 3 pm in Parkvale Building, Room 102, 200 Meyran Ave. Late registration is accepted until September 25.
Contact: ccc@pitt.edu
This season is the inaugural season for Pitt joining the ACC (Atlantic Coast Conference). What does this mean exactly? Universities and colleges are broken up into different conferences or groupings of schools so that within that group they will play each other in sporting events and share academic resources. Pitt was previously a part of the Big East conference, but recently, several schools have decided to leave the Big East, Pitt included. By moving to the ACC, Pitt positions itself to be a part of a prestigious academic and athletic conference. Other schools in the ACC conference include: Boston College, Clemson, Duke, Florida State, Georgia Tech, Maryland, Miami, North Carolina, NC State, Notre Dame, Syracuse, Virginia, Virginia Tech, and Wake Forest.

This past Labor Day was the first football game against an ACC opponent, Florida State. Pitt unfortunately lost their home opener, but it was a great turnout at Heinz Field with 65,500 fans! Below is the football schedule for this season; make sure to check it out and support our Pitt Panthers!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Opponent / Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/02/13</td>
<td>vs. Florida State</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/14/13</td>
<td>vs. New Mexico</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/21/13</td>
<td>at Duke</td>
<td>Durham, N.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/28/13</td>
<td>vs. Virginia</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/12/13</td>
<td>at Virginia Tech</td>
<td>Blacksburg, Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/19/13</td>
<td>vs. Old Dominion</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/26/13</td>
<td>at Navy</td>
<td>Annapolis, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/02/13</td>
<td>at Georgia Tech</td>
<td>Atlanta, Ga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/23/13</td>
<td>at Syracuse</td>
<td>Syracuse, NY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be exciting to see Pitt play their new opponents not only in football, but also basketball and all other collegiate sports. The ACC has a big presence in the NCAA tournament and could help strengthen Pitt’s basketball schedule.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**September**

17th – Constitution Day

20th – Mid Autumn Festival (China)

26th – I Love Pitt Day!

27th-28th – Homecoming Weekend Activities

**October**

1st – Chinese National Day

3rd - Experience America Event – American Football & Soccer

14th – Fall break – no classes for students

18th-20th – Family Weekend

28th – Spring term enrollment begins

31st - Halloween

**ONGOING**

- First Sunday of every month— International Market Days in the Strip District 10AM-4PM.
- Every Friday we host a session on Optional Practical Training (OPT) from 2PM-3PM. Register on our OIS website.

Office of International Services
708 William Pitt Union
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Telephone: 412-624-7120
Fax: 412-624-7105
www.ois.pitt.edu
ois@pitt.edu
Office Hours:
Monday to Friday,
8:30 AM to 5:00 PM

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