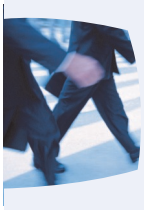
Office of International Admissions and Services
University Of Texas-Pan American

OIAS | January | 2014

- ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR A REDUCED COURSE LOAD?
- DID YOU MOVE?
- ERRORS ON YOUR SPRING BILL?



International *Student* Newsletter

The Office of International Admissions and Services (OIAS) wants to welcome you back and wish you a Happy New Year! We hope that you had a restful winter break and wish you a prosperous and fulfilling year! We want to extend a special welcome to all the new international students who have arrived or will soon be arriving on campus. We are expecting close to 90 new students. Please take the time to welcome them and make them feel a part of the UTPA international family!

International Student Activities- Spring 2014

Spring 2014 Events To Be Announced
Check your Bronc account regularly for more information.

- All events are subject to change! Deadline to sign in for events is Wednesday before the event.
- Keep an eye on your Bronc account, we will be sending reminders about the events and deadlines.
- For special accommodations, please contact us at (956)665-2922 or email: intladvise@utpa.edu

Did you move?

- F and J regulations require that students and their dependents maintain current residence information on file with the university at all times.
- Any changes to your address must be updated in our office and with the Registrar's office within 10 days of the change.
- Address updates will be reported by our office to immigration through SEVIS. These updates should also be reported to the Office of the Registrar.

Dropping Classes

- International students may not drop a class without the signature of our office on the drop form after the 4th class day.
- Any student who withdraws from all classes without prior authorization has violated their status and it can lead to a termination in SEVIS.
- Please take the time to talk to an immigration advisor before you make any decisions about dropping or enrolling in online classes.

Review your Spring Bills!

Unfortunately we do not live in a perfect world and at times there may be errors on your school bills.

- We always recommend that you review your bills before paying.
- Once paid it can be difficult to correct the errors and be reimbursed.

Full-time Enrollment: Don't Fall out of Status.

To be a full-time student:
Undergraduate students must be enrolled in 12 credit hours. Graduate students must be enrolled in 9 credit hours.

When taking online courses, see an advisor for rules.

A violation of any of these rules requires us to terminate your immigration status. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to talk to an immigration advisor. It is better to be safe than sorry.

General Reminders

- Remember to maintain full time enrollment at ALL TIMES.
  Undergraduate—12 hrs.
  Graduate — 9 hrs.
- You are only allowed to work up to 19 hours per week. It is your responsibility to make sure you are not working more than 19 hours per week.
- If you go above the alloted work time, you will fall out of status.
- You cannot drop a class without written authorization from the OIAS
- If you are changing your address, you are required to notify OIAS within 10 days.
- Make sure that you are attending class. Professors will drop you for excessive absences!
- If you are on a dependent visa, you must apply for a change of status before you turn 21.

Optional Practical Training for May Graduates:

- There is still time to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) for those who are graduating in May.
- Application fee is $380 and processing time is approximately 60 days.
- Please come by our office for more information. Applications available in OIAS.
- OPT advisement is Monday/Tuesday/ Thursday from 3:00-5:00 p.m.

OIAS Office Visits in the Coming Weeks

- On Friday, January 10, Advisors will not be available until after 3:00 p.m. due to the International Orientation for new students.
- Monday, January 20, we will be closed for Martin Luther King Jr. day (Holiday).
- We are asking that current students do not visit our office during the first week of school as we will be attending the needs of all the new students and time will be extremely limited.
- I-20's can be signed if you visit us after the 2nd week of classes.
- Please try and do not arrange your visits to our office from 12:00-1:00 as that is the normal lunch hour for our staff. If you come to the OIAS during those hours, you may not find an advisor present.

Medical Insurance Waivers: Deadline January 24th!

Medical Insurance for the Spring and Summer is always billed together!
For those students who have their own medical insurance that meets or exceed minimum requirements of coverage, the OIAS recommends that you turn in your waivers by **Friday, January 24, 2014.**

Authorization Form for Less than Full-time Study for Spring 2014

- Immigration only permits part-time study under very limited conditions.
- SEVIS requires the OIAS to report any student who is enrolled less than full-time study. RCL Forms must be submitted to our office before the beginning of classes and must do so every semester; do not depend on someone else to do it for you, or your departments. It is YOUR responsibility.
- Failure to do so requires us to terminate your immigration status in SEVIS.
- Part-time Border Commuter students do not have to submit these forms.

Advisement and Office Hours

Advisement for OPT, CPT, I-20 Extensions, change of major, and transferring out can be done on:
Monday/Tuesday/Thursday
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
For I-20 Endorsements:
Wednesday/Friday
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Regular operating hours of the OIAS are Monday—Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
Students may come in to turn or pick up in paperwork at any time.

Corresponding with the OIAS.

- All email correspondence should always be addressed to the intladvise@utpa.edu email address.
- No emails should be directed to personal accounts as this may result in a delay before they are answered. Often staff members are out of the office or on vacation and emails that are sent to them are not answered until their return.

PASE Re-Certification

- Come by the office to pick up a PASE Re-Certification Form starting February 1! The Submission dates are from February 1– April 15.
- Please be aware that some conditions will require you to file a completely new application and not a re-certification. You will be notified if you will need to do so.
- Any of the following will result in loss of the waiver:

Failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 at all times. The GPA will be checked at the end of each long semester.
Providing false information on the Re-certification form.

Good Neighbor Scholarship

- Information regarding the Good Neighbor Scholarship is not yet available. As soon as the OIAS receives information, you will be updated through the upcoming newsletter!