

DVC

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www.dvc.edu/isas

ISAS



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADMISSIONS & SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 10, No. 1

Spring 2008 Edition

Dear Students:

We would like to welcome everyone back for the spring 2008 semester. A warm welcome to all new incoming students. We especially would like to welcome the new International Student Academic Counselor Mr. Mark Isham.

Please read this newsletter!! It contains a lot of important information that will be helpful in maintaining your international student status and also provides information about support services, procedures and policies that will keep you abreast of what is happening on campus.

Finally, congratulations to the 51 students who transferred to 4 year universities for the winter/spring 08.

NEWS FROM THE ISAS OFFICE (SS 210)

New International Student Academic Counselor

A new international student academic counselor, Mr. Mark Isham, was hired to assist international students with academic counseling issues.

Mark comes to DVC after five years as an academic advisor at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. Mark's educational background includes a bachelor's degree in English and Speech Education, and master's degrees in Teaching ESL, Human Relations, and College Student Development. Mark has also served as the international student counselor at Cerritos College, near Los Angeles, and he has taught in several ESL programs in California and Tennessee. Mark lived in the Republic of Korea for over eight years, where he taught English to college students, and he has traveled in Mexico, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, Macau, China, Thailand, Egypt, Guam, Saipan, the Philippines, the Netherlands, England, Wales, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Do you think Mark likes to travel? Maybe he will visit your country someday, too, if you invite him!

You can meet Mark in the Counseling Center to discuss your academic goals and educational plans, and to talk about anything else you would like to discuss. Call 925-685-1230, extension 2276 or 2278 to set up an appointment

International Student Medical Insurance

The medical insurance fee for this semester is \$401.00 (includes summer). This amount is automatically deducted when you register for the spring semester. The coverage starts 1/7/08 and ends 8/10/08 and is continuous for students who had the insurance in the fall. Only new students will receive a medical insurance card this semester, continuing students can still use the same medical insurance card they received for the fall 2007 semester. All DVC F-1 students will be charged this fee.

The last day to obtain a medical insurance waiver for the spring semester is on **February 14th**. **No medical insurance waivers will be given out after February 14.**

The International Student Admissions and Services (ISAS) website at (<http://www.dvc.edu/isas/insurance.htm>) has valuable information on how to file a claim, contact numbers, and information on how to find a doctor.

Address Changes or Corrections



Please remember to inform the ISAS office of any address changes or corrections so we can make the change in the SEVIS immigration system and in the DVC student database. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations require that students inform the DSO within 10 days of a change of address.

Transfer Students Reminder

If you are transferring for the fall 2008 semester you need to bring your letter of acceptance from the new transfer school to ISAS to show Gloria or Gena to have your SEVIS I-20 record transferred to your new school. Please let us know if you are planning to work or travel so that we can make the best possible choice on when to transfer your record.

NOTE: If you are planning to leave the U.S. for the summer break before starting the fall 2008 semester in your transfer school you must use the new school's I-20 to re-enter the U.S.

Spring 2008 transfers

Congratulations to all the students who transferred for the winter/spring 2008. A total of 51 students transferred to four-year universities. Some of the schools students transferred to were:

San Francisco State University (8),
University of California, Berkeley (7),
University of California, Los Angeles (4),
California State University, East Bay (3)
Ohio State University (2),
University of San Francisco (5),
Academy of Art University (2),
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1),
Indiana University, Bloomington (1).

Social Security Reminder

You can only get a Social Security Number (SSN) if you are offered a job. If you are offered a job these are the steps you must follow:

1. You must first be offered a job on campus.
2. Pick up a letter of employment form from Business Services with the employment package.
3. Take the letter of employment to your supervisor. The letter needs to be filled out by the supervisor confirming that you have been offered employment.
4. Go to the ISAS office to fill out status confirmation form. (This can take two to three days).

Take the completed letter of employment to the Social Security Office with the following documents:

- a. Letter from the ISAS office verifying full time status
- b. SEVIS I-20
- c. Passport
- d. Visa
- e. I-94

Nearest Social Security Office:

Walnut Creek District Office
1111 Civic Drive, Ste. 180
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

****Department of Homeland Security Regulations Reminders****

- You need to maintain your **full-time status** at all times. You must see the DSO **before** taking fewer than 12 units.
- You must report a change of address within 10 days.
- Attend the college on the I-20 that you used to enter the country.
- Report to the school's international office within 15 days of your arrival at the school.
- If you are a transfer student you need to pick up your I-20 from the DVC International Student Admissions and Services Office within 15 days of your arrival.
- If you drop out of school or quit school you will need to leave the U.S. immediately (within 15 days).
- You must inform the DSO of the school you will transfer to before you will be able to get an I-20 from the new school.
- Only **one on-line class** can be counted towards the required 12 units to maintain full-time status.

Full-time Status

You are required to maintain full-time status while studying at Diablo Valley College. A minimum of 12 units must be taken each semester. Your GPA should not drop below 2.0. You **must talk** to a DSO **BEFORE** dropping below 12 units to make sure that they can authorize you to be below the full-time equivalent.

Campus Employment

You can work anywhere on campus for 20 or fewer hours a week. You can work more than 20 hours a week during vacation time or school holidays. If you are working on campus you **must maintain** your full-time status (12 units or approval below 12 units) in order to continue working on campus.

Traveling Outside of the USA

If you wish to travel outside the U.S. and you are returning to DVC you **must have** the DSO, Gloria Zarabozo or Gena Gruber sign on page 3 of your current I-20. This travel endorsement is required for re-entry into the U.S. and means that you have been attending DVC **and** you intend on returning to DVC. Allow a **minimum of two working days** for Gloria or Gena to sign your I-20.

Documents needed to re-enter U.S. after travel:

1. Current SEVIS I-20 signed on page 3 for travel by DSO at ISAS
2. A valid passport (with at least 6 month validity)
3. A valid F-1 visa
4. A recent financial or bank statement (recommended)
5. Current school transcript from Web Advisor (recommended)

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) See the ISAS Student Handbook for more information on Curricular Practical Training. You must have been in status for TWO semesters in an ACADEMIC program to be eligible. Time in an ESL program does NOT count. You must get the approval of a DSO (Gloria or Gena) to do CPT each semester. Students doing curricular practical training (CPT) need to maintain full-time student status.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) See the ISAS Student Handbook for more information on Optional Practical Training. You must be completing an Associate's degree or a Certificate to be eligible for OPT.

General Information

Summer School Reminder:

You are not required to take summer classes if you are currently in full-time status and intend to register for the next term. Summer is considered vacation time before starting up for the fall semester. **Summer school is only required for students whose I-20 has a summer 2008 start date.**

Tax Assistance for 2007:

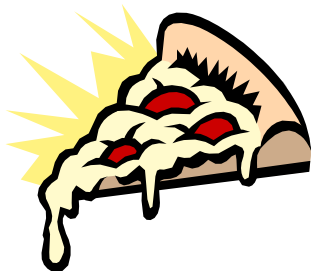


Gloria Zarabozo will be conducting a workshop on tax form 1040NR-EZ and form 8843 for all DVC F-1 International Students who were present in the United States AT ANY time between January 1, 2007 and

December 31, 2007. **ALL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS PRESENT IN THE US DURING THOSE DATES MUST FILE TAX FORMS.** The tax workshop will be held on March 14th from 1:00 to 3:00 in the Trophy Room. Students who entered the US for the **first time** in January 2008 do NOT need to attend.

Pizza Party

The yearly **FREE** Pizza Party for **ALL international students** to celebrate the successful transfer of all transferring international students is scheduled for May 2, from 2pm to 4pm at Round Table Pizza, 85 Chilpancingo Pkwy (located in the Diablo Valley College Mall, next to Kmart).



Assessments:

For students who have brothers, sisters, relatives or friends coming to DVC next semester, the math department recommends that the new student spend a little time reviewing their mathematics coursework before taking the math assessments, in order to ensure that the student is placed in the appropriate course. There are also some links to practice tests on the DVC website that may be useful at:

www.dvc.edu/mathematics/math_assessment_test.htm

Scholarships for International Students

International Students are eligible for some scholarships at DVC. By filling out the master DVC Scholarship Application, you can be eligible for many different scholarships. The DVC Scholarship Program application is available on-line on the DVC web site <http://www.dvc.edu/scholarships>.



You can also find information on scholarships and loans for international students at the following websites:

http://www.nafsa.org/students.sec/financial_aid_for_undergraduate/#funding%20Factors%20to%20Consider

<http://www.iefaf.org>
<http://www.internationalstudentloan.com>

Please remember that neither DVC nor the ISAS office has any connection with these sites. If you have any questions about them you must contact them directly.

Volunteer Services

How do I volunteer?

1. Complete an **Application** from Employment Services, which is located in the Career and Employment Services Office in the Student Services Center, Room 138.
 - a. You will receive a password that allows you to search the online system, MonsterTRAK, for volunteer positions.
2. When you find a volunteer position, print the information.
 - a. Visit Volunteer Services in Student Services Center, room 138 for additional information.
 - b. Contact the agency and set-up an **appointment/interview**.
3. If the agency offers you the position and you accept:
 - a. Pick-up the **Volunteer Handbook** from Career & Employment Services.
 - b. Both you and your supervisor should complete, and sign the **Volunteer Agreement Form**. Return by due date.
 - c. You should complete the **Volunteer Timesheet** by logging your hours. You and your supervisor should sign. Return by due date.

Contact Information:

Hours:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Student Services Center, Room SS 138
(925) 685-1230 x2435

<http://www.dvc.edu/career/Volunteer.htm>

International Student Club



Amazing Thailand Club Dance

All students are invited to join the International Student Club for the spring 2008 semester. The club is a great place to make friends and have some fun besides learning about student government. The first meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 14 in SS 205 from 2:30pm to 3:30pm. We hope to see you there. If you have any question contact Gena Gruber at ggruber@dvc.edu.

This semester the International Student Club has decided to focus on fund raising activities for an international student scholarship. Of course there will be more activities, field trips and fun things to do this semester.

The International Students Club had a very successful fall semester. The activities and events planned by the club were a great success. Some of the activities included a picnic at Lafayette Reservoir, bowling, potlucks, games and several field trips.



Japanese Club Culture Dance

International Student Club (continue)

The International Students Club did a great job coordinating our yearly **International Education Week** celebrations. All the officers and club members worked really hard to make sure the event was a success. This year the event was celebrated in conjunction with several DVC clubs (the Chinese Music Association, Japanese Culture Club, Korean Culture Club, Tae Kwon Do Club and the Amazing Thailand Club). Everyone enjoyed the event. There was lots of food, dancing, music and games for everyone's enjoyment. Thank you everyone for your help and cooperation in making this a memorable event.

TRANSFERRING TO OUT-OF-STATE AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS Some Things to Consider

By Mark Isham (Intl Student Academic Counselor)

Diablo Valley College has articulation agreements with many programs in the University of California and California State University systems. In the least, students can complete lower-division General Education requirements and the minimum 60 transferable units at DVC. However, when transferring to an out-of-state or private college or university, choosing courses that will transfer and meet general education or major requirements can be complicated. Here are a few things for students to remember if they are planning to transfer to an out-of-state or private institution:

1. Units earned at a regionally-accredited college or university that are considered to be college-level and not high school or remedial level will, IN MOST CASES, transfer to another regionally-accredited institution in the U.S. (DVC is accredited

by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges). Of course, **there are exceptions**. The only way to know for sure how your units will transfer is to submit an application and an official DVC transcript to the institution(s) of your choice and get a transfer evaluation from the institution(s). DVC counselors are unable to tell you exactly how your courses will transfer, and in most cases, a counselor or advisor at your target institution will not be able to give you a formal evaluation, either, since transfer evaluations are usually done by professional evaluators in the institution's admissions office. A good source for determining whether or not an institution is regionally accredited is College Source online: <http://www.collegesource.org>. Other online resources are listed below.

2. Some courses will easily match-up with courses at other institutions; for example, courses in English Composition, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Computer Science, and many introductory courses in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences will have direct equivalents at other institutions. Other courses that are more specific in content, or with content that is unique in nature, may or may not transfer. Examples might be a Film class on 1950's Science Fiction Cinema, or a Literature class on Gay and Lesbian Writers. *It is a good habit to save ALL of your syllabuses from EVERY class you take at DVC.* That way, if you need to challenge the way a particular course was evaluated, you can provide a copy of the syllabus to help the institution determine the course content.
3. To determine how a DVC course might transfer to an out-of-state or private institution, look at the DVC course's description in the DVC catalog or on the

course syllabus, then look at courses in the same or a similar department in your target institution's catalog, and see if you can find one with the same or a very similar description. If you do, then it is likely that the DVC course will be evaluated as the equivalent of that course. *This activity is your responsibility.* A DVC counselor is unable to do this course-by-course evaluation for you. However, if you have questions about a course, you can consult with a DVC counselor to get the counselor's professional opinion.

4. Remember: Higher education in the U.S. is NOT standardized. The federal government does not tell colleges and universities what to teach or how to teach it. Neither do the state governments exercise strict control over course content or curriculum. While public institutions in a state will make efforts to articulate course content and program requirements to a certain extent, private institutions are free to determine their own policies and practices. This creates great diversity in course and program offerings, and this diversity adds to the richness of choice that students in U.S. higher education institutions have. Conversely, these choices can complicate a transfer. Determining your academic goal early in your college career will help you in your educational planning as you research the requirements for out-of-state and private institutions.

For more information and assistance, make an appointment with Mark Isham, International Student Counselor, in the Counseling Center, 925-685-1230, extension 2276 or 2278.

Helpful Online Resources

College Source Online

<http://www.collegesource.org>

General information and links to college and university websites throughout the U.S. and even in some other countries.

Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities

<http://www.aiccu.edu>

Similar to ASSIST, CSU Mentor, and UC Pathways, but with search features and information on transferring to private colleges and universities in California.

Peterson's Publications

<http://www.petersons.com>

Peterson's publishes college guides annually, and their website features many search options.

Taking things for granted

By Hartman Harris Christian

Humans cannot survive without the basic essentials of survival, mainly food, air and water. Yet it is these basic things that we often take for granted. In ancient times, people used to hunt for food and they did it solely to survive; they eat to live. People now live to eat. Food is so readily available now that no one ever stops to think, "How did this get onto my plate?" Like the nature of all man, we won't cherish what we haven't lost. We only realize the true importance of something or someone until we lose it. We never do appreciate things when we have them. Life is short; we only have once to live.

Human beings have a tendency to take things for granted. The most flawless of diamonds loses its luster with familiarity. Miracles like the rising and setting of the Sun fail to astonish us because they are [clichéd](#). Repetitious activities dulled our sense of wonder.

The irony is that the very things that used to excite us now are a disappointment. We are never satisfied, never contented and always wanting more. It is not always easy to constantly remind ones self to look out and appreciate the blessings that come our way. We can start by looking at the things that one has, that others would kill for; for

example, having a loving family that has been giving their love, care and support. Then think about the people who come from dysfunctional families. Think about how lucky one is compared to many others. Families would always give you unconditional love, loving you for what you are and what you will be.

Our friends, life-long soul mates are hard to come by so if they do come by, make sure to hold onto them and never let go. Best friends are the best mirrors one has got; showing your flaws and weaknesses, and ways to improve. We should learn to cherish those around us and hold on to them dearly.

Humans are nothing but the thread from which the dream of life is woven. Therefore we cannot say that one is truly living if that person just chooses to waste his or her life away; we should do something. We have to seize every opportunity that comes our way. "Carpe Diem", to seize the day, we should always take advantage of each and every opportunity. We should never be building castles in the sky, a waste of precious time. For no one knows when one's existence will come to a halt. We should always stop to smell the roses, enjoy every little thing in life. Absorb everything life has to offer.

I always tell my friends that there are more to life than work. One has to enjoy the finer things

in life. People seem to have forgotten that. Sometimes I feel like I am the only one in this world who actually feels this way. I feel that people are getting more and more robotic because people now like everything to be symmetrical, proportionate, on time and efficient. This is much like the behavior of robots, now we do everything like clockwork and there really isn't much time to sit back and enjoy life. We are always rushing to meet deadlines and worrying about the next deadline. Seems like all the spontaneity in the world has been sucked out, and what's left are mindless zombie's doing the same things day after day.

My friends dislike the fact that I eat fairly slow because eating that slowly is a waste of time to them. However, every time they tell me off, I will always try to explain to the importance of savoring every bite. Not only is it better for the body biologically, it is also a way to really live in the moment. I believe in living in the moment, thus I don't usually think about the future or reminisce about the past. What has done is done and what will come would come; everyone should always live in the "now". Every bite I take, I would always take time to taste the bitter, sweet, salty and sourness of the food. Every mouthful triggers of a different feeling. My friends also find it odd that I like to drink black coffee with no sugar or milk added. Black coffee to me is like life, sort of like a bittersweet symphony. Each sip starts of bitter but

it would always end with an unforgettable lasting aroma that lingers even after one swallows the black liquid down. Much like life, usually we only taste success after a great deal of hardship because with each step a person is able to take on his own, he has become that much stronger.

Though it is never a bad thing to work toward our goals, we should never forget to live in the moment and enjoy the finer things in life. Because by taking a step back from time to time, we would be able to enjoy the fruits of our success even more.