

# DVC

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ADMISSIONS (ISAS)

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# NEWSLETTER

Vol, 11, No.2  
Spring 2009 Edition

Dear Students:

Once again we want to welcome everyone back from the winter break. As we start a new semester we look forward to meeting all of you especially the new students entering DVC for spring 09. Feel free to come in to the ISAS office to say hello. We hope you will read this newsletter because it is full of great information pertinent to international students.

Finally, congratulations to the 38 students who transferred to 4 year universities for the winter/spring 09. We will miss all of them but are happy that they are getting closer to their academic goals!



### NEWS FROM THE ISAS OFFICE

#### International Student Medical Insurance

The medical insurance fee for this semester is \$401.00 (includes summer). This amount is automatically added to your registration fees when you register for the spring 09 semester. The coverage starts 1/7/09 and ends 8/10/09 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 2008 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 13<sup>th</sup>**.  
**No medical insurance waivers will be given out after February 13.**

The International Student Admissions and Services (ISAS) website at (<http://dev.dvc.edu/international/resources/insurance.htm>) has valuable contact information and information on how to find a doctor.

**Note: All International Students who do not have a waiver must pay the mandatory insurance fee by February 13 otherwise they will be dropped from all their classes.**

#### FALL 2009

#### IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR ALL DVC F-1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

#### **NO MORE INSURANCE WAIVERS ACCEPTED!!**

**This semester (spring 2009) is the final semester the ISAS office will accept medical insurance waivers (deadline 2/13/09). Starting fall 2009 insurance waivers will no longer be accepted. All DVC F-1 international students must pay the required mandatory medical insurance fee. This mandatory insurance medical fee must be paid no later than 30 days after the start of the semester or the student will be dropped from all registered classes.**

## **Address Changes or Corrections**

Please remember to inform the ISAS office of any address changes or corrections so we can make the change in SEVIS and the school database. **The Department of Homeland Security USCIS regulations require that students inform the DSO within 10 days of a change of address.**

**Note:** Check your address in Web-Advisor to make sure your address is correct, if not; go to the International Students Admissions Office to put in an address correction.

DO NOT CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS THROUGH WEB ADVISOR, INSTEAD YOU MUST COME TO THE OFFICE OR USE THE NEW STUDENT REQUEST FORM AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [www.dvc.edu/isas](http://www.dvc.edu/isas), follow the link on the left to 'After you are accepted' then click on [Student Request \(online form\)](#) link located on the right hand side of ISAS website.

**Transfer Students Reminder** – If you are transferring for the fall 2009 semester you need to bring your letter of acceptance from the new transfer school to the ISAS office. After making sure you are in status, we will then transfer your SEVIS I-20 record 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 2009 semester in your transfer school, you must use the new school's I-20 to re-enter the U.S.

## **Spring 2009 transfers**

Congratulations to all the students who transferred for the spring 2009 semester. A total of 38 students transferred to four-year universities. Some of the schools students transferred to were:

- Ohio State University (3)
- University of Los Angeles (2)
- San Francisco State University (11)
- University of Nevada, Los Vegas (2)
- Boston College (2)

## **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 you have an acceptable reason for being 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 (summer or winter break) 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. DVC campus regulations require that all students working on campus must be enrolled in at least 6 units. Therefore, if you are authorized to be below units for medical reasons or because it is your last semester before finishing a program you must **STILL** maintain 6 units if you wish to work on campus.

## **Curriculum Practical Training (CPT)**

See the ISAS Student Handbook for more information on Curriculum 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 curriculum 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. Students must plan ahead, it takes approximately 90 days for the DHS Service Center to process an OPT application. See the DSO's (Gloria or Gena) early in the semester to begin the application process.

## **\*\*Department of Homeland Security Regulations Reminders\*\***

The Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS the student tracking system) places more responsibility on F-1 students to maintain their status. As we begin a new semester at DVC, we want to make sure all students are aware of some of these regulations so their student status is not jeopardized.

1. Students will need to maintain their **full-time status** at all times. Students must talk to a DSO **before** dropping to fewer than 12 units. The student's GPA should not go below 2.0.
2. Report a change of address within 10 days. The ISAS office will change your address for you.
3. Attend the college on the I-20 that you used to enter the country.
4. Report to the school international office within 15 days of your arrival to the school.
5. Transfer students need to pick up their I-20s from the DVC ISAS office within 15 days of their arrival.
6. Students who drop out of school or quit school will need to leave the U.S. immediately (within 15 days).
7. You must inform the DVC DSO of the school you will transfer to AND present an admissions letter from that school before we will release your record to that school. Student will only be able to get an I-20 from the new school after we release the SEVIS record.
8. Only one on-line class can count towards the 12-unit full-time requirement load for F-1 international students.
9. Students who travel outside of the U.S. must have the third page of their I-20 signed by a DSO (Gloria Zarabozo or Gena Gruber) for RE-ENTRY to the US.
10. Students must sign up for their classes no later **than 30 days after the close of course registration each semester.**

SEVIS requires that all students be registered for the current semester in SEVIS no later than 30 days after the close of course registration each semester.



## **Social Security Number**

You can only get a Social Security Number (SSN) 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 and signed 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



## Travel Reminder

**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 three working days** for Gloria or Gena to sign your I-20.

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**Remember to pick up the signed I-20 from the ISAS office before leaving the U.S. ISAS will no longer mail I-20 to students' home country who forget to get DSO signature or do not pick up their I-20 from the ISAS office. Students will need to ask for a I-515 form at the U.S. port of entry and will need to report to the ISAS upon arrival at DVC for instructions on how to mail their I-20 and I-94 for processing.**

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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**)

## **Special Events**

**Tax Assistance for 2008:** 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, 2008 and December 31, 2008.

**ALL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS PRESENT IN THE U.S. DURING THOSE DATES MUST FILE TAX FORMS.**

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**The tax workshop will be held on MARCH 18 at 3:00 in the Trophy Room. Students who entered the US for the first time in January 2009 do NOT need to attend.**

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### **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 14, from 2pm to 4pm at Round Table Pizza, 85 Chilpancingo Pkwy (located in the Diablo Valley College Mall, next to Kmart).



## **International Student Club**

All students are invited to join the International Student Club for the spring 2009 semester. The club is a great place to make friends and have some fun besides learning about student government. Email Mark Isham, the International Student Club advisor, at [misham@dvc.edu](mailto:misham@dvc.edu) if you have any questions or would like to know when the club is meeting this semester.

The International Students Club does a great job coordinating our yearly **International Education Week** celebrations. Last fall in conjunction with the other clubs, the International Student Club celebrated this joyful event, which included a sampling of food from the various countries, dancing, singing, music performances, display booths from the various clubs, and games. Check out some our pictures [here](http://dev.dvc.edu/international/fun/international-education-week.htm).  
<http://dev.dvc.edu/international/fun/international-education-week.htm>

## General Information

### **International Students Request Form NOW ONLINE**

International students can now submit requests online without having to come into the ISAS office. Although you still need to drop off your I-20 if you wish to have it signed for travel and re-entry some of the things you can do online include:

Address changes

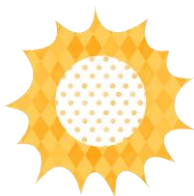
Letter requests: full-time status, bank letters, military letters, etc.

Change of major on your I-20

The link to the online request form is located in ISAS website: [www.dvc.edu/isas](http://www.dvc.edu/isas), follow the link on the left to **'After you are accepted'** then click on ***Student Request (online form)*** link located on the right hand side of ISAS website.

### **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 2009 start date.**



### **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. The link to practice tests on the DVC website that may be useful at: [http://www.dvc.edu/admissions/math\\_assessment.htm](http://www.dvc.edu/admissions/math_assessment.htm).

## **Scholarships for International Students**

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

The DVC Scholarship application opens November 1, 2008 and closes February 2, 2009.

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

[www.edupass.com/](http://www.edupass.com/)  
[http://www.nafsa.org/students.sec/financial\\_aid\\_for\\_undergraduate/#funding%20Factors%20to%20consider](http://www.nafsa.org/students.sec/financial_aid_for_undergraduate/#funding%20Factors%20to%20consider)  
<http://www.iefaf.org>  
<http://www.internationalstudentloan.com>  
[www.InternationalScholarships.com](http://www.InternationalScholarships.com)  
[www.Schoolsoup.com](http://www.Schoolsoup.com)  
[www.InternationalStudent.com](http://www.InternationalStudent.com)  
[www.Fastweb.com](http://www.Fastweb.com)  
[www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)  
[www.scholarshipexperts.com](http://www.scholarshipexperts.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.

## Off Campus 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 for volunteer positions.
2. When you find a volunteer position, print the information.
  - a. Visit Volunteer Services 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 and return it 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://dev.dvc.edu/org/departments/career-employment/special/volunteer.htm>

## Alcohol and International Students

Many international students experience some difficulty adjusting to a new culture, climate, and traditions in a new environment. Students may experience loneliness, anxiety, and depression leaving their home country to come to the U. S. to study. It is not uncommon to experience some difficulties. Remember that turning to alcohol to lessen the adjustment difficulties will cause more problems. Some important points to remember about excessive drinking:

- The legal age to drink in the U.S. is twenty-one.
- It is a misdemeanor to be drunk in a public place, (California Code 647f).
- Alcohol use in the school grounds is considered grounds for disciplinary action (Student Code of Conduct, [www.dvc.edu/union/CodeAll.htm](http://www.dvc.edu/union/CodeAll.htm)).
- It is illegal to drive under the influence of alcohol-DUI (California Vehicle Code 23152a).

A reminder that DVC students are eligible for five free visits to speak to a skilled confidential professional who can provide support in coping with stressful issues. Call 800-227-1060 to make an appointment with a counselor. Also the International Student Wells Fargo Insurance will pay 50% of counseling fees for up to twenty visits per semester. Call 866-378-8885 to find a doctor or provider. The Alcohol & Drug Abuse Hotline telephone number is: 925-932-8100.

**Planning for summer  
by Mark Isham  
International Counselor**

Now that the spring semester is underway, it's not too early to begin thinking about your summer plans. The summer 2009 Schedule of Classes is online. You can find the schedule at <http://www.dvc.edu/org/info/schedules/search.htm?term=Summer+2009>.

Remember, the summer term is short; the first classes begin June 1, and the last classes end on July 31, with only a few exceptions. So, pay attention to the start and stop dates of the classes you want to take. There are two other things to remember: First, not all classes are offered in the summer term, and second, students may pre-register for a maximum of 12 units. Since the summer term is so short compared to the fall and spring semesters, it is not advisable to try to take more than 12 units, anyway.

Another thing that you might consider for the summer is taking a summer class on another college or university campus. UC-Berkeley offers the opportunity for students to take a class, but some restrictions apply and course offerings may be limited. Stop by the Transfer Center, which is located in the front of the Counseling Center, for more information. If the summer term is considered your vacation term according to your I-20, then you may take as many courses as you like on another campus, but you must consult with the campus you would like to attend for details and possible restrictions.

Summertime is also a good time to perform community service or do an internship. The DVC Career and Employment Services office has more information about opportunities for internships and community service. They are located on the first floor

of the Student Services Building, and here's a link to their website:

<http://www.dvc.edu/org/departments/career-employment/index.htm>.

If you plan to go home for the summer, you might consider doing an internship in your home country. This can be beneficial in two ways: First, it looks good on your university application; second, it might help you find a job later on when you return to your country after completing your bachelor's degree.

And finally, remember that you are not obligated to take any classes in the summer as long as the summer is considered your vacation term according to your I-20. So, relax! Have fun! Explore! There are many interesting and amazing things to see and do right here in the Bay Area, and the U.S. is a big country with lots of diversity. You might even take the opportunity to visit the campuses of universities that you are considering. You wouldn't buy an expensive article of clothing without first trying it on; to make sure it's a good fit for you, right? Attending a school that's not a good fit for you is like wearing a shirt that you hate, every day, for two or more years. You'll never know for sure whether or not a school is right for you until you first visit it and see for yourself what it's like. You might spend several hundred dollars on the trip, but in the long-run, it might save you thousands of dollars and years of time.

Have a good spring semester, and enjoy your summer!

**Academic Counselor for International Students  
Information**

**Express counseling available at ISAS most Fridays,  
at 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

### Internship at Vector Marketing

By Tri Darsono Wijoyo

During the last summer, I decided to do an internship with Vector Marketing by becoming their sales representative. Vector Marketing is a company that sells a high quality kitchen cutlery called CUTCO. As Vector's sales representative, I was not allowed to just knock on someone's house and sell the product. My job involves only calling people that I know, set up appointments, and then I give about 1½ hour presentation about the product and finally asking for references from that client so that I can set up more appointments. To put it simply, I was selling knives all summer and convince working or married people that CUTCO knives are the best.

My job was difficult at first mainly because I only know how to buy goods but not to sell them. Moreover, I was in the US for only a year and only had the phone number of my host family. The other people on my contact lists are fellow students like me. I was fortunate that my host family gave me 10 references to expand my diminutive contact list. However, I was doing terribly during my first 3 weeks. I only managed to set up like 1 or 2 appointments every week or 3 if I was lucky. I got very few references so my contact list remained minute. A few people even hung up on me when I was trying to set up appointments with them. Worst of all, the only person that bought from me during that period was my host family. My sales skills were obviously inadequate and I believe that the only reason my host family bought from me was because he pitied me. It was a period where I was really frustrated. I had read books on sales technique, go to team meeting and workshop every weekend. I even tried to strike up a conversation with a complete stranger. My sales still

remained the same. Only 1 knife sold in a month. During this period, I always imagine that my boss would say "you don't have to come back tomorrow" a.k.a you're fired. So, I was always petrified whenever he calls me. Instead of getting mad at me, my boss was actually encouraging me. He told me that the only thing that really matters is that I did not give up. He told me that if I continue my hard work, the result will soon come. He was probably the main reason I continued working. After the first month, I was doing much better and was starting to have fun with the job. I was making like 6-10 appointments every week (I could have made more if I had not taken any classes during the summer). I started selling a small set almost every week and actually got a promotion towards the end of summer and an A for my internship. I also got a certificate of achievement from Vector Marketing which I can definitely use for my personal statement. Working for Vector Marketing was difficult but it was rewarding. Obviously, I learnt more about knives. More importantly, I made friends with many people whom I did not even know before and these people actually come from different working industries like accounting, finance, teaching, secretary, engineer and etc. This job had expanded my networking. I am also more confident at speaking and have learned that the key to having a better conversation with people is to listen more. I am able to convey my ideas more clearly and persuade other people to support my ideas. I believe that I had spent my summer productively by doing that internship. Although, I have stopped working there now, the skills, knowledge and experience that I had gained will remain with me, especially these words from my boss that propel me forward. "Life never gets easier. It's our skill that gets better."