Dear Students:

We, at the International Student Admissions and Services office, want to welcome everyone back from the summer break. A special welcome to the new in-coming students!

Congratulations to the 268 students who transferred to 4 year universities for the fall 2009 term. We’ will miss them but are very happy they are moving forward with their academic goals.

Please read this newsletter. It has information that will help you be a more informed DVC International Student. Have a great semester!!!!

REMINDERS FROM THE ISAS OFFICE

International Student Medical Insurance

All international students will receive a new medical insurance card to use for the fall 09 and spring 2010 semesters from Wells Fargo of California Insurance Services, Inc. Let Gena Gruber know if you have not received your medical insurance card by October 12th, and she will contact the insurance company to request a card to be sent to your home. Please make sure that your address is correct by checking in Web Advisor.

To get more information on your medical coverage, you can pick up the 2009/2010 medical insurance brochure at the International Students Admissions and Services Office (ISAS) room 210 of the Student Services building. See http://www.dvc.edu/international/resources/insurance.htm for information on contact information, and medical care providers.

The medical coverage begins 8/10/09 and ends 1/7/10 and is continuous for students who will have the insurance in the spring. All DVC F-1 students will be charged the $279.00 when they register for the fall 2009 semester. This medical insurance is mandatory for all DVC F-1 students.

NO MORE INSURANCE WAIVERS ACCEPTED!

Note: Students who have not paid the mandatory insurance medical fee of $279 by the deadline (9/14/09) will be dropped from their 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. Also make sure that we have your latest telephone number and email. The Department of Homeland Security USCIS regulations require that students inform the DSO within 10 days of a change of address. You can use the online request to change your address http://www2.dvc.edu/isas/Forms/Student_request.asp.

NOTE: Check your address in Web-Advisor to make sure your address is correct. If it is not correct use the link above or 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 AS INDICATED ABOVE.
Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Information

**DHS—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 SEVIS I-20 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.

**SEVIS II**

The Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is launching the latest SEVIS II in 2010. The new SEVIS II places even more responsibility on the students. Some of the features include a paperless system, students will be able to access SEVIS II and make changes and check status, there will be a one person, one record, students enter all the bio information in SEVIS II and get one number that stays with him/her as long as they study in U.S. Students’ I-20 will be electronic so they no longer need a hard copy I-20 to enter the U.S. Stay tuned for more information on this coming event via the Department of Homeland Security.

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

Remember to pick up the signed I-20 from the ISAS office before leaving the U.S. ISAS will no longer mail the I-20 to the home country of the students 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.

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)

======================================

**Social Security Number**

Students who want a Social Security Number (SSN) card must show evidence of employment from their campus employer. The procedure to obtain a Social Security card is as follows:

1. F-1 student 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 supervisor. The letter needs to be filled out and signed by the supervisor confirming that the student has been offered employment.
4. Go to the ISAS office to fill out full time status confirmation form. (This authorization process may take three days.)

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

- Letter from the ISAS office verifying full time status
- SEVIS I-20
- Passport
- Visa
- I-94

The closest Social Security Administration Office is located:
Walnut Creek District Office
1111 Civic Drive, Ste. 180
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
EMPLOYMENT

Campus Work

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 to go below 12 units) in order to continue working on campus. Note: A minimum of 6 units is required for all students (domestic and international) during the fall and spring semester to work at Diablo Valley College.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Students interested in working off campus must talk to the International Students’ school’s DSOs (Gloria or Gena) to discuss whether or not they are eligible and to get authorization. For more information on CPT please refer to the Student Handbook. You can pick up a copy at ISAS in room 210 of the Student Services building.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Students interested in applying for OPT starting in the spring 2010 semester must see Gloria or Gena to make sure they are eligible and for authorization. See the ISAS Student Handbook for more information. Students must be completing an Associate’s degree or a Certificate to be eligible for OPT. It takes 90 days for the Department of Homeland Security to process an OPT application. Remember to see Gloria or Gena at least 2 or 3 months before the fall semester ends if you are interested in applying for OPT for spring 2009!

Severe Economic Hardship

Students who apply and are approved for Severe Economic hardship are granted authorization by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to work off campus for 20 hours or less a week for up to one year. The work does not have to be in the student’s major. The application fee is $340.00. Severe Economic Hardship employment is intended to address situations where a financial need beyond the student’s control arises, which was unforeseen at the time the student enrolled at the school. Students must be in status and have attended the school for at least one academic year. See Gloria or Gena for more information.

Transfer Students

Congratulations to all the students who transferred from DVC. For the fall 2009 268 international students transferred to four-year universities/colleges. Many students transferred to California universities (public and private) but there were, also, many transfers to universities and colleges outside of California.

Top five California schools students transferred to:
- University of California at Berkeley (UCB) 70
- University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) 32
- San Francisco State University (SFSU) 31
- University of California, San Diego (UCSD) 26
- University of Southern California (USC) 17

Some of the out of state universities and colleges were Indiana University, Bloomington (7), University of Illinois, Urbana Champagne (5), Iowa State University (2), Babson College (2), and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2).

Transfer Students Reminder (spring 2010 semester)

If you are transferring in the spring 2010 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 winter break before starting the spring 2010 term in your transfer school you must use the new transfer’s school I-20 re-enter the U.S.

Plagiarism

Please remember that plagiarism is considered cheating at all educational institutions in the US and is enforced by all DVC instructors.

Plagiarism is representing someone else’s words, ideas, artistry, or data as one’s own, including copying another person’s work (including published and unpublished material, and material from the internet) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else’s opinions and theories as one’s own, or working jointly on a project, then submitting it as one’s own (DVC 2009/2010 Catalog, pg. 30).
Scholarships for International Students

Continuing international students are eligible for some scholarships at DVC. They need to fill out the on-line DVC Scholarship application (filing period November 1, 2009 to February 2, 2010). By filling out the master DVC Scholarship Application on-line, students can be eligible for many different scholarships. Go to the DVC.edu website http://www.dvc.edu/org/departments/foundation/scholarship/ for more scholarship information and the on-line application. The Scholarship Office is located in the Student Services Center, telephone is 925-685-1230 ext. 2559, it is open Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. You can also find information on scholarships and loans for international students at the following websites:

www.edupass.com/
http://www.nafsa.org/students.sec/
financial aid for undergraduate/#funding%20Factors%20to%20Consider
http://www.iefa.org
http://www.internationalscholarship.com
www.InternationalScholarships.com
www.Schoolsoup.com
www.InternationalStudent.com
www.Fastweb.com
www.studentservices.com
www.scholarships.com
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.

Reminders

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).
- 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 a 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.

Apartment Rental Alert (Stacking)

A warning to International Students renting apartments--Beware of individuals subleasing apartments to students and partitioning the rooms to accommodate more students. These individuals are charging the students for these rentals more than what the apartment rents for the other tenants. All students are advised to rent the apartments directly from the apartment rental office, sign the contract individually to make sure that they are protected from fraudulent individuals taking advantage of the students.

Please come the International Students Office and ask to see Gena Gruber if you believe that you are in a stacking situation. We will contact the apartment manager and report this illegal situation.
International Student Club

All students are invited to join the International Student Club for the fall 2009 semester. The International Student Club provides an opportunity for students to participate in student government, volunteer work, meet other students, and plan and participate in activities. Also, club participation looks great on the students’ essays when they are ready to transfer. Email Vanus Che, the International Student Club president, at chemani_2004@hotmail.com for information about the club. The club will meet every Monday, 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., in Humanities Building, room H110. The first club meeting is yet to be determined.

International Education Week

The International Students Club does a great job coordinating our yearly International Education Week celebrations. Last fall in conjunction with other campus clubs, the International Student Club celebrated this event with music, dancing, ethnic foods, singing and games. We all had a wonderful time and look forward to this year’s celebration. Go to http://dev.dvc.edu/international/fun/international-education-week.htm to see pictures of the event.

Academic Counselor’s Corner (Mark Isham)

Visit Mark’s International Counseling Blog at: http://dvcintlcounselor.blogspot.com/

The link contains lots of great tips and information. New students who missed or want to review the New International Student Presentation Just go to http://www.authorstream.com/tag/misham type “DVC International Counselor” in the search bar, and you’ll see the slideshow. Click on the “Also by User” tab to the right, and you’ll see the IGETC, CSU-GE, and DVC AA handouts.

The presentation is an introduction to college which includes information on effective course selection, student support services, transfer information and career goals to help students successfully transition into a college environment.

ISAS student staff’s turn to speak out about their DVC and international student experience

Name: Kazuya Tsukagoshi
Home country: Japan
Major: Botany
Transferring to: Haven’t decided yet, but I hope I could transfer to US Berkley’s graduate school to get master degree of Botany.
Goal(s): Doctor of plants
Summarize your experience at DVC: I started studying at DVC in Fall 2006. In my first semester, I was tired every day—classes, classmates, all the new things I was learning and the English language itself. I remember that speaking in another language used a huge amount of energy for me.
What do you like to do outside of DVC?: Traveling, eating, going some places new for me, and cooking.
Comments: Thank you and enjoy your life. Peace you all.

Name: Thibauld Guillon
Home Country: France
Major: Business Economics / Economics
Transferring to: UC Berkeley
Goal(s): Learn about America. Improve my English. Get the best higher education.
Summarize your experience at DVC: Interacting with my instructors. Being a part of the community. Interacting with knowledgeable academic members. Having friends from all over the world.
What do you like to do outside of DVC?: Hanging out with friends from different countries. Enjoying cultural events. Traveling inside the US. Practicing sports.
Name: Efe Ertas  
Home country: Turkey  
Major: Psychology  
Transferring to: CSU  

Goal(s): Get a master degree, Learn new languages and come back to college for different major in future.

Summarize your experience at DVC: I have been attending DVC since spring 2009. In my opinion, DVC gives students more than an education with a nice campus, friendly workers, teachers and professors. When I started my first class in DVC I was very excited and thought college will be very complicated and hard for me. After a couple weeks later I saw that as long as you do your job in DVC you should be fine. On the other hand, when you are having trouble everyone is ready to help you here so you do not feel lonely. I can say that’s pretty much it since I have started but I believe I will experience more things and learn a lot more at DVC.

What do you like to do outside of DVC? When I do not have classes at DVC, I am mostly at San Francisco or going around as much as I can because I believe this city have a lot to discover and see. I also spend time with new people, listening to music and spend time on cooking new things.

Comments: Education is very important for everyone but as an international student I can say that, having college education in the United States and DVC is a big experience. It is usual to have education in your own country but if you are at different country for education you learn also outside of classes. As a result, I can say I am happy to be here, it feels nice to experience and learn new things every day. Enjoy DVC and ask anything you want to anyone.

Name: So Takai  
Home country: Japan  
Major: Fashion Merchandising  
Transferring to: Fashion Institute of technology in NY  

Goal(s): I want to burst into the fashion Industry and own my brand

Summarize your experience at DVC: I have been able to meet so many people and have made a lot of friends at DVC. I think these are very precious experiences I can only do here.

What do you like to do outside of DVC?: I like working out in gym, going a party, clubbing and hanging out with my friends. Also I belong to a baseball team so I like play baseball with them.

Comments: Treasure every encounter, for it will never recur.

Name: Mari Kadota  
Home country: Japan  
Major: Cinema and Television  
Transferring to: CSU Northridge (from Fall’09)  

Goal(s): Working in entertainment field

Summarize your experience at DVC: I don’t usually stay in school except for classes, work and editing videos. The best class I had is SPEECH-120. I loved my classmates, and we still keep in touch. Also, I like learning other languages! I took Italian for 2 terms. I wish I had good memorization skills...

What do you like to do outside of DVC?: I like having chat with my friends and meeting people in café. I have found editing pictures and making videos are fun so they will be my hobbies soon. Also, I love my Nintendo DS. I train my kanji (Chinese characters) skills with it. It sounds like I’m indoor person, but honestly students should travel more! If you don’t do it now, when will you do? I often ask myself, but it’s sad I don’t have money… My favorite place in East Bay area is Muir Wood Forrest.

Comments: I’ve had terrible living situation with people my old roommate found on Craigslist. I don’t recommend you to use it for finding places at all. It’s a long story, so ask me if you are interested. Otherwise, go out, meet nice people, and have fun!

Name: Nari Jung  
Home country: KOREA  
Major: BUSINESS  
Transferring to: UC or CSU  

Goal(s): One of my dream goals is to work at a hotel in France!

Summarize your experience at DVC: I have been able to learn more and understand better about America not only by learning history but also by interacting with people.

What do you like to do outside of DVC? Just like any other girls, I do love shopping!! I enjoy exploring all kinds of restaurants and trying new food as well. I love going clubbing, especially house music clubs! Also, I do love French language!! So I, sometimes, watch French movies to learn the language.

Comments: I will do my best to help other international students who need help!