Greetings Global Ambassadors!

Welcome new and returning international students & scholars!

The Office of International Student Programs & Services (OISPS) Team and I hope your Fall 2018 was off to a great start!

We are excited that 112 new F-1 international students and 5 J-1 scholars have joined a diverse student population of dedicated undergraduate and graduate students and scholars from 62 countries.

Whether you are a new or returning student/scholar, please take advantage of the many learning opportunities and social and cultural programs and events offered by the Office of International Student Programs & Services, the Division of Global Diversity, Inclusion, and Intercultural Affairs, and the Division of Student Engagement.

To facilitate your transition to U.S. campus life and to provide ample opportunities for you to make new American and international friends, OISPS has developed numerous social and cultural events. We launched an International Movie Series, featuring some of the best of international cinema to be held twice a month on Fridays in the International and Multicultural Lounge. We also hope to see you at the

To further help you, OISPS is sponsoring biweekly coffee/tea hours with the OISPS director. Twice a month, I invite you to enjoy a hot cup of tea or coffee, meet with other international students, share your success stories, and raise any concerns you may have about OISPS or the University. These informal gatherings will occasionally feature guest speakers from counseling services, academic advising, career services, and campus safety.

We are here to make sure you have a great educational experience. Your active participation in these social and cultural events and programs will help all of us have a better understanding of your needs to ensure we are always ready to get you where you deserve to be academically and professionally.

As a former F-1 student myself, I understand first-hand the challenges you will encounter. Thus, I strongly encourage you to get involved in campus life. Take advantage of all campus services, join a student organization/club, use the recreational center, consult with an academic advisor, seek assistance from the tutoring and writing labs, ask for help with your research from a librarian, and especially ask for help from your professors. Professors at U.S. colleges and universities are open to meeting with their students after class or by appointment in their offices. If you are struggling in a class, do not hesitate to write an email to your professor immediately to ask for help. Professors appreciate students who are proactive and politely ask for help with course content.

Finally, OISPS is an important resource for you. You can use the International Lounge to study, browse the internet, rest, and ask for help. If we can’t help you, we will be happy to connect you with the right LU professionals to help you.

I hope to see you at many of the events and programs we have planned for you!

Very best wishes,

Dr. Mustapha Jourdini

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Director

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Office of International Student Programs and Services is to help students and scholars maintain their visa status while studying at Lamar University. Our objective is to assist international students and scholars with cultural adjustment and other issues they may face as new students to Lamar University and living in the United States. We also encourage students and scholars to take advantage of the many social, cultural, and educational programs and events to meet other international and domestic students, faculty, and staff.

Vision

The Office of International Student Programs and Services strives to be the primary resource for non-immigrant regulations for F-1 students, J-1 scholars, and Lamar University.
OISPS proudly serves 1,497 F-1 and J-1 students and scholars from 62 countries spanning 5 continents, including gainfully employed international alumni.

Student Spotlight

Q. Why did you choose Lamar University?
A. It has a good Chemical Engineering program.

Q. What do you most like about Lamar University?
The diversity of culture and kind people.

Q. What expectation of American culture did you have prior to arriving? Are there any differences between what you expected prior to arriving compared to what you have experienced once you arrived?
A. Diversity of culture. Festivals such as Thanksgiving and Christmas Day are very important time for family to get together peacefully but are not carnival days as I thought.

Q. What differences are there between the American educational system and the Chinese?
A. This question is really a big topic. As far as I know, the selection of classes for a semester is made by students themselves in the U.S., whereas in China classes are preselected by the department. Another big difference is that in China a class will be graded based only on the final exam, while in the U.S., quizzes and midterm exams will also be taken into account.

Q. What do you miss most about being away from home?
A. Family and Food.

Q. What is your favorite quote/phrase in your native language? What is the English translation?
A. 补漏趁天晴，学习趁年轻。 "Repair leakage while the weather is fine, study hard while you are young."
Halloween Traditions and Social Event

Traditions

Like many holidays, Halloween has evolved throughout history. More than 2,000 years ago, people called the Celts lived in what is today Ireland, the UK, and areas of Northern France. November 1st was their New Year’s Day. These people believed that the night before the New Year, or October 31st, the living and the dead came together.

Over a thousand years ago, the Christian church made November 1st All Saints Day (or All Hallow’s Eve) to honor the saints. The night before All Hallow’s Eve was called Har-lows Eve. The name later changed to Halloween, which is what we call it today!

Just like the Celts, The Europeans of that time believed that the spirits of the dead would visit the earth on this day. They also worried that evil spirits would cause them problems. Because of this, on that night people wore costumes that looked like ghosts or evil creatures. They thought that if they dressed in scary costumes, the spirits would think they were one of them and not harm them.

The tradition of Halloween was brought to America by European immigrants, although some of the traditions have changed. For example, on Halloween in Europe some people would carry lanterns made from turnips. In America, pumpkins were more common; people began putting candles inside them to use as lanterns. This is the origin of the carved pumpkins with lights or candles inside that you see in the U.S. around Halloween, also known as “Jack O’ Lanterns”.

Halloween Mixer

***FREE Door Prizes & Giveaways!!!***

Please join us for the 1st annual OISPS Halloween Mixer. We will have free food and drinks while viewing a scary movie. There will also be fun Halloween activities.

Date: October 31st
Time: 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm
Location: OISPS Lounge
117 Wimberly BLDG
Event Spotlight

International Education Week
November 14th—18th

International Education Week (IEW) is an annual celebration of international education and exchange worldwide. Institutions across the United States and around the world are hosting events throughout the week to recognize international students, education abroad, and internationalization.

International Education Week celebrates the benefits of cultural and academic exchange programs around the world. This joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Education promotes international education programs that prepare Americans for a global environment and attract future international leaders to the U.S.

Thanksgiving Feast—November 21st

OISPS will host an authentic American Thanksgiving Feast for international students and scholars on November 21st, starting at 12:00PM on the 8th floor of the Mary and John Gray Library. The event will also be attended by a number of University Executives.

Menu

Turkey Breast
Stuffing
Mashed Potatoes
Yams
Cranberry Sauce
Salad and Dressings
Rolls w/butter
Peach Cobbler
Ice Water
Hot Coffee
Unclear about the CPT and OPT process?

CPT and OPT: Question & Answer Session
November 6, 2018 at 2PM

Our PDSO will be hosting a one-hour long question and answer session regarding Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT). The session will be held in the OISPS International Lounge in Wimberly Building, Room 117 and is open to all international students and scholars.

Coffee/Tea Hour

10AM - 11AM

October 31, 2018  November 13, 2018  November 27, 2018  December 05, 2018

The Director and OISPS Team are excited to host bi-weekly Coffee/Tea Hour for International Students and Scholars to meet, greet, and informally discuss student concerns and accomplishments.
Global Ambassadors Program

The Office of International Student Programs & Services (OISPS) is launching a Global Ambassadors Program. The Global Ambassadors Program will consist of international and domestic students interested to serve both students and scholars through diverse social, cultural, educational, and recreational events and programs held on and off campus.

The Global Ambassadors Program is designed to assist new international students and scholars to adjust to the educational system and life in the U.S. and at Lamar University. Through their active engagement, domestic students will, in turn, learn about other cultures, practice other languages, and make life-long international friends.

Global Ambassadors will play a vital role in developing the social, cultural, and educational programs.

To become a volunteer Global Ambassador, please contact the Director of OISPS, Dr. Mustapha Jourdini, at mjourdini@lamar.edu for more information and to schedule an interview.

Make A Difference - Get Involved!
7th Annual
International Cultural Festival
April 13, 2019

OISPS Team
Dr. Mustapha Jourdini, Director
Margo Hymer, Assistant Director
Joshua Kai, Coordinator
Tracey Bourgeois, Sr. Specialist
David Frederick, Administrative Assistant

Student Workers
Jasmine St. Julien
Ramya Kannan
Sierra Davis

Get Involved
Lamar University is home to over 200 student organizations. Below is a listing of student affinity groups that represents the diverse population of students at Lamar. https://www.lamar.edu/international/current-students/student-affinity-groups.html

Stay in Touch
OISPS provides numerous activities throughout the year to promote intercultural and cross-cultural experiences for domestic and international students. Visit our Orgsync page to get involved: https://orgsync.com/163582/chapter

Connect With Us
Do you have comments or concerns that you’d like to share with OISPS? Please submit your feedback at https://www.lamar.edu/forms/international/oisps-feedback.html

www.lamar.edu/international

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