

January 10, 2025



International Student News

Important Updates from

UCR

International Students
and Scholars



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Dear Students,

Happy New Year! Welcome to the Winter 2025 quarter at UCR! Thank you for being a part of the UCR international community.

California Wildfires.

We hope you and your loved ones are doing okay during this difficult situation. Our heart goes out to all the people who have been struggling. However, It is important to be prepared in case a fire develops near you.

Visit [CALFIRE](#) for important information.

Immigration Reminders F and J students

Did your address recently change? Update your address and phone number with our office by updating your ISSM Portal and in R'web. Instructions on how to update your portal can be found on our [website](#).

- **All F and J students are required to report any change in their physical address within 10 days.**
- You should also update your address in R'web in addition to reporting it to our office.

- **U.S. Address (physical address):** (Do not include any dashes/hyphens, street address and apartment number should be on line one)
- Example Address format (use your physical address) Scott Highlander
Address Line 1: 900 University Avenue, Apt. 2
Address Line 2: (Name of Residence Hall- if any)
City: Riverside
State: CA
Zip Code: 92521

All **F-1 and J-1 students** must enroll in full-time units (12 units) each quarter per federal regulations. Please ensure that you are registered full-time for the Winter quarter.

- Students can drop below 12 units in very limited circumstances with advanced approval from an international student advisor in the ISS office.

- F and J students can only take one online course to count towards their full-time enrollment of 12 units. J students can only take one online course per quarter.
- Please remember that academic advisors/graduate student services advisors are not your international student advisor. Academic advisors and graduate student services advisors cannot provide F and J students with permission to drop below 12 units.

If you have decided to take a quarter off or cancel your enrollment for any reason, it is your responsibility to directly notify an international student advisor in the ISS office. Plan ahead and speak with an ISS international student advisor before dropping below 12 units or before taking a break from school during the Fall, Winter, or Spring quarters.

- Enrolling in less than 12 units or taking a break from courses during the academic year without advanced permission may impact your ability to maintain status and remain in the United States.
- **F-2 students** cannot enroll in full time units. F-2 students must enroll in less than 12 units.
- **F-1 and J-1 Graduate and Undergraduate students** requiring less than 12 units for their final quarter, must submit a [Reduced Course Load Form](#) to our office.

Undergraduate Students Only (F and J)

- **If this is your last quarter and you will be below 12 units or if you are an F-2 student and will be taking 10 units or less, you must submit a Reduced Course Load Form to our office by the end of the day on Wednesday, January 15.** This will give us time to initiate a reduced tuition fee request on your behalf in My Forms. This request will then be routed to the Registrars' office. The Registrar's office has a strict deadline for these forms and will not accept any late forms. Please review the [academic calendar](#) for important dates and deadlines.

F-1 students

- If you are graduating this quarter and are interested in applying for a period of OPT (Optional Practical Training), now is the time to attend an OPT workshop and apply! Learn more at <https://international.ucr.edu/students/employment-and-taxes>

CAMPUS CLOSURE

Due to the Martin Luther King Jr Holiday, all offices will be closed on Monday, January 20, 2025. The International Students and Scholars Office will reopen again on Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

TAX SEASON

Tax season for Tax Year 2024 starts soon. In February, we will offer access to Glacier Tax Prep for federal tax filing and discount codes for Sprintax for state tax filing. F and J students who were here in 2024 will be required to file tax related documents. Please check your email regularly for updates about when these programs and codes become available, and please wait until this access is released to ensure that you have the necessary documentation before filing your taxes. We strongly recommend that you attend one of our upcoming tax workshops to learn more. The upcoming workshop dates are listed later in this newsletter.

For any questions, please reach out to us at internationalstudents@ucr.edu.

ISS FEEDBACK SURVEY

Dear highlanders,

With this new year, we would like to gain your valuable feedback to improve ourselves and provide the best events that you would love to engage in. Hence, your feedback is significantly important for us to measure our performance throughout the year. Please give us a minute of your time and fill this survey form. [HERE!](#)

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Dear highlanders,

The ISS is kicking off the new year with an exciting initiative: the Student Spotlight Form! This platform is designed to help students connect with one another through our network. Here's how it works: students can fill out the form to request assistance or support in a specific area, and we'll match them with another student who fits their needs. Here's an example of how the conversation might go:

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT FORM SAMPLE

Student 1
I would like to practice and improve my Hindi and I can exchange that for Spanish if someone is interested in learning Spanish.

Student 2
I would like to engage for exchange of language learnings with you.
I know 3 languages on working level efficiency (English Marathi & Hindi)

Please contact lauren.bracamontes@ucr.edu for more details.

Please contact lauren.bracamontes@ucr.edu with any questions.

WINTER WORKSHOPS

Workshop	Date & Time (PST)
Optional Practical Training (OPT)	Thurs. January 16, 3:00 - 4:30 pm (Click to Register)
STEM OPT	Wed. January 22, 3:30 - 5:00 pm (Click to Register)
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)	Wed. January 29, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm (Click to Register)
Optional Practical Training (OPT)	Fri. February 7, 10:00 - 11:30 am (Click to Register)
Tax Workshop	Fri. February 14, 10:00 - 11:30 am (Click to Register)
Tax Workshop	Mon. March 3, 2:00 - 3:30 pm (Click to Register)
Optional Practical Training (OPT)	Thurs. March 6, 4:00 - 5:30 pm (Click to Register)
Tax Workshop	Fri. March 7, 12:00 - 1:30 pm (Click to Register)
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)	Wed. March 12, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm (Click to Register)
Tax Workshop	Thurs. April 3, 3:00 - 4:30 pm (Click to Register)

UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

Kite festival : Peer Network Social (PNS)

Paint your kite and learn how to fly a kite while celebrating the Kite festival with us. Enjoy delicious appetizers as well! [RSVP here.](#)

Date: January, 14th

Time: 2:30 - 4:30 PM

Location: HUB 367

Please contact lauren.bracamontes@ucr.edu with any questions.



Lunar New Year: Peer Network Social (PNS)

Celebrate Lunar New Year this year with ISS and your peers. Feel like home and make origami stars while enjoying traditional delicacies. [RSVP Here.](#)

Date: February, 7th

Time: 2:30 - 4:30 PM

Location: HUB 355

Please contact lauren.bracamontes@ucr.edu with any questions.



Grad Division Re-Orientation

Re-Orientation is a fantastic opportunity for current grad students to get just-in-time information. A big part of the event is a resource fair for the graduate students, and we are inviting you to participate with an information table. (All resource fair participants will receive lunch)



Date: Tuesday, February 4th
Time: 11 AM : 2PM Location: HUB 302

RESIDENTIAL LIFE RECRUITMENT

Reslife Recruitment

UCR Residential Life is now recruiting for the upcoming 2025-2026 year!

RA and PA applications are due January 15th, 2025 at 11:59 pm.

Be sure to check out the recruitment website at <https://resedrecruitment.ucr.edu/> for the link to the application, job descriptions, and learn more about what it means to be a Student Staff member! A recording of the info session can be found at:

<https://resedrecruitment.ucr.edu/apply/>

For any questions, please contact joseph.Briones@ucr.edu.



ISS FORMS AND GUIDES

Did you know that you can find essential forms, guides, and information about maintaining your status, travel, and employment on our website? international.ucr.edu/students

- [Need a Form?](#)
- Learn about [F and J requirements](#)
- [Travel and Dependents](#)
- [Employment and Taxes](#)

Contact Us

There are several ways you can reach our team. Our staff works Monday-Friday, from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (closed from 12:00 - 1:00 PM for lunch).

General Email: internationalstudents@ucr.edu

General Phone: 951-827-4113

Michael Schmelzle, Director: michael.schmelzle@ucr.edu

Kelly Eldridge Hinosawa, Associate Director: kelly.hinosawa@ucr.edu

Alan Joss, Senior International Student Advisor: alan.joss@ucr.edu

Jen Gerardi, Senior International Student Advisor: jennifer.gerardi@ucr.edu

Brandon Chao, International Student Specialist: brandon.chao@ucr.edu

Lauren Bracamontes, Program Coordinator: lbracamo@ucr.edu

Thank you from all of us in International Affairs!

As a reminder, the International Student News is an email for international students sent monthly. You will find important information from our office, such as:

- notices from the U.S. government
- reminders to ensure that you stay in status
- UCR campus updates and cultural event information

Please read the newsletter carefully. If you have any questions, please email our office at internationalstudents@ucr.edu.