We’re well into the Spring Semester and starting to see signs of new growth and blossoming trees. As you are preparing for Midterm exams and the well-deserved Spring Break, be sure to take a bit of time to walk around campus to notice the emerging Spring.

- Sally

WELCOME and ENJOY YOUR UPS EXPERIENCE

Please welcome Ferdane Bekmezci, Lachlan Hillman and Maryam Malekpour who are joining us this Spring. Ferdane and Lachlan are exchange students from Belgium and Australia, and they will be here for the Spring semester. Maryam is a new OPT graduate student from Iran. We hope that you will have a wonderful time with us at UPS!!

INTERNATIONAL CLUB

If you are interested in getting more involved with the campus community, here is a great chance for you. The International Club is looking for candidates for President position. You can either run or nominate someone you know in the Club. Email Caitlin Bloomquist cblomquist@ups.edu or Alina Vaynberg avaynberg@ups.edu if you are interested.

Also, the International T-shirt design has been finalized and we will start making T-shirts very soon. Come join us in making the International T-shirts or support the UPS International spirit by getting one. Contact Caitlin or Alina if you have any question.

Weekly meetings are on Wednesday at 6 pm.

USCIS/INS INFO CORNER

Travel over Spring Break

If you’ll be traveling to Canada or Mexico over spring break please check page 2 of your I-20 or your DS-2019. As usual, you need to bring:
1) Your passport
2) Your I-20 or DS -2019 signed by International Programs this academic year
3) Your I-94
4) Copy of your transcript that shows you are enrolled in classes this semester

OPT

This is a reminder for all graduating seniors. If you are interested in remaining in the US for another 12 months, stop by OIP to file your application for Optional Practical Training. All in-status F-1 students who have been in school for a year may qualify for 12 months of work related to your major after graduation. Because the recommendation for OPT takes approximately 60-90 days to process, I recommend that you file your application before the end of March. For those of you with an OPT application in progress, please remember that from the time you file your application for OPT until you receive your employment authorization card, you may not leave the country or the USCIS will assume that you have abandoned your application. If you have plans to travel outside the US, please complete it before you file for OPT. Travel within the US has no restrictions. In fact, you may travel anywhere in the US to apply for work as long as it is related to your major.

For questions or to set up an appointment for OPT you can call (879-2871) or email me ssprenger@ups.edu. Please call to schedule an appointment. You will need the following documents for your OPT application:

- the completed I-765 form. (Make certain that the address you put in item #3 will be valid for the next 90 to 120 days as that is where your receipt and employment card will be sent). Mail from USCIS will not be forwarded by the US Postal Service.
- A copy of your I-94 form (both sides) and a copy of the visa and identification pages from your passport
- A copy of your I-20s signed within 30 days
- A OPT recommendation I-20
- Two recent photographs per the attached instructions from USCIS (see sample). Write your name and SEVIS number in pencil on the back of the photos. Do not cut to size or staple.
- A check for $175 payable to US Citizenship and Immigration Services
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
The Office of International Programs sends out birthday wishes to the following students who celebrate their birthdays in January or February:

Hana Ilic January 13
Yu Ya Wang January 13
Won Kim January 14
Sachiko Shinohara January 18
Maryam Malekpour January 20
Ivo Andov February 12

EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS
There are several choices of employment available to International Students with an F-1 visa. If you qualify, you may be able to work on campus for up to 20 hours per week.
Additionally there are two BCIS/INS approved opportunities for training in your field. To be eligible for these programs you must have attended UPS for one year prior to employment.

CPR
Curricular Practical Training is a work experience that is directly related to your course of study, for instance an internship or practicum. You must be enrolled for coursework as well and you must be able to demonstrate that the employment is related to your program.

OPT
Optional Practical Training is available post degree completion. F-1 students may be eligible for up to 12 months of work experience related to their degree directly following graduation.
If you are applying for Optional Practical Training (OPT) and have not seen me, you need to contact me before spring break. Remember that once you turn in your OPT application, you must remain in the US until you receive your work authorization card and are employed. It takes about 90 days for your application to be processed by the INS, so now is the time to apply.

If you are an F-1 student who will be continuing at Puget Sound in the fall, you can work up to 40 hours/week during the summer on campus at UPS. As always, any work off campus requires authorization from the Office of International Programs and/or from the USCIS/INS. Questions about employment? Contact Sally at x2871.

TAX TIME IS COMING
Don't forget that April 15 is tax day. If you have any US source income (including wages and scholarships), you will need to file Forms 8843 and 1040NR (EZ) by April 15. If you need tax forms and instructions, they are available in the International Programs Office. If you do not have any US source income, you only need to file Form 8843 by June 15.
If you are working on campus and have not stopped by the Payroll office (Jones 107), you need to do so right away. You need to identify yourself as an international student if you want to claim exemptions from certain withholdings. We have emailed student with W-2 withholding form to pick up. Please stop by the office and collect them. Call Sally at x2871 if you have any questions.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST
Japanese Internment If you are wondering what all the signs next to the cherry trees on the way to the SUB are for, they are a memorial of the Japanese American Internment, following Executive Order 9906 issued by President Roosevelt after the Pearl Harbor attack. During this period, Japanese descendents were ordered to leave their homes and possessions to come live in camps and were rid of all their rights to citizenship. Thirty UPS students were ordered to internment camp, and before the students left, they gave these cherry blossoms to our school.

Leadership Opportunities Student Development is accepting applications for Leadership positions in various areas. If you are interested in becoming a Peer Advisor, a Passages or Perspective Leader, or be involved with ASUPS, submit your application now! For more information, go to http://www2.ups.edu/dsa/studev/Leadership.htm

Annual Scholarships Every year UPS offers numerous scholarships for currently enrolled students. As an international student, you are also eligible for these scholarships. For the Application Form and more information, visit http://www.ups.edu/x2881.xml. Scholarship deadline is March 31st.
In this issue, we feature **Meiko Shioya**, a freshman international student from Japan. Growing up in Yokohama, Japan’s largest and one of the busiest seaports, Meiko almost felt like she was coming home when she decided to continue her education at Puget Sound.

Meiko left her home town when she was 15 and went to a boarding Japanese school in Switzerland, where now she calls her second home. “What I miss the most in Switzerland is friendship, my friends there are my family,” she said.

**Tell me a little about yourself.**

My name is Meiko Shioya; Meiko means “bright child,” it’s not such a common name in Japan and I love it.

I love snowboarding. My favorite food is ice-cream (in Japanese, we call it ice-cream also!). I have very small handwriting (that’s what my friend said). I play the violin. I have taken interest in knitting ever since I moved in with my two roommates in Regester.

And I’ll say I’m lucky to be here.

**What did you expect prior to coming to UPS?**

I was excited. I was very excited when I came to Switzerland. And this time I was also very excited. But at the same time I had many worries. Would I get along with my roommates and everyone else? Would I be able to speak English? I think it was that nervous feeling you get when you have to make a big transition.

**So how are you doing at UPS?**

I get along with many people. And I’m surviving the course work. So I guess I’m doing fine.

**Do you think that you have grown up a lot since you left Yokohama?**

Yes and No. Now that I am here and look back at the time I was in Switzerland, I can see that I have grown up – from a little girl in Yokohama, I became a person who can recognize the value of life, especially that of friendship.

But I can’t say that I’m growing up right at this moment. I’m still experiencing this new environment, many new experiences and new friendships, so I guess it’s hard to see if I’m actually growing up.

Sometimes, however, I feel that I could have made better use of what I have learned and be a better person, a more grown-up person. I’m working on it.

**What do you value most in your life?**

How happy I am, and how happy people around me are. If you asked me to describe myself, I’d say “I’m a happy person.” I try to be happy, not self-satisfied, but happy, with what I have, and I try to make others happy.

**What are your future plans?**

I’m going back to Japan when I finish my studies. I want to be able to take care of my parents; I’ve been away for too long.

As for a career, I don’t know for sure yet. I’m trying out IPE as a major; we’ll see how it goes.

**This is your first semester. If nothing changes, you will be here for another three and a half year. What do you think of “becoming a part of the campus?”**

I feel like I’m a part of this campus. I participate in many activities on campus. But I would like to be more involved and do more for UPS.

It’s hard however, especially for international students, due to the cultural and language differences. This year, I want to focus on my studies. Maybe next year I will become more involved.

**Thank you for sharing with us your insights and thoughts!**

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**Spring Break!!!**

*Spring break is coming before you know it. Study hard and have a great time wherever you plan to be.*

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*International Programs Newsletter will be featuring international students on our campus. They will be sharing their cultural and academic experiences, as well as their unique perspective, dreams and hopes. Get to know them with us!*