As I write this newsletter, the rain is coming down pretty hard, and a light “dusting” of very wet snow covers the ground. It must be November. Yes, the end of the semester is almost here! Before you take off on your travels during the winter break, please remember that travel conditions are constantly changing, especially for international travelers. Please read the travel information in this newsletter carefully, and let me know if you have any question.

-Sally

AU REVOIR

This semester we bid farewell to our Maastrict exchange student David Huber. We’ll miss you, we wish you all the best in your future endeavors, and hope that you’ll stay in touch with us!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

We would like to send our best wishes to the International students whose birthdays are in December and January.

Takeo Sumitomo  Dec 9
Hee Sun Park  Dec 27
Yu Ya Wang  Jan 13
Hana Jic  Jan 13
Won Kim  Jan 14
Sachiko Shinohara  Jan 18

KEEP YOURSELF SAFE AND HEALTHY

As finals and winter break are drawing near, we at International Programs want you all to be safe and healthy. Recent events of a series of local rapist attacks have raised questions of safety among UPS students. A detailed article on this can be found in the Trail issue No.8. Therefore, we urge you to do everything to stay safe. It is advisable that you do not walk alone at night, even across campus. Also, take advantage of the Escort Service provided by the Securities Office (ext. 3311).

Additionally, the coming flu season is something to watch out for. It can affect your performance on the finals as well as how enjoyable your break will be. Flu shots are available at CHWS (Counseling, Health and Wellness Services – ext. 1555) at $14.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE HOURS

The Office of International Programs and the entire university will be closed for winter break December 22, 2005 - January 2, 2006. If you have an emergency and need to contact International Programs between Dec 22 and Jan 2, you can call Campus Security Services at (253) 879-3311. Please only contact Security Services if it is truly an emergency situation.

INS INFO CORNER

Increased security measures in the US and abroad will affect your travels during winter break. You should be aware of possible delays and closer scrutiny of immigration documents and visa status when traveling outside of and seeking re-entry to the US. Be prepared and informed with proper documentation and information. Please read on for important information.

INS Travel Documents

Before you head out for vacation or a visit home, make sure you have all of your documents that verify your student status. When you travel anywhere in the US or abroad you should bring:

1) valid passport
2) I-94
3) properly endorsed I-20* or IAP-66*
   *signed by me or by Jannie this semester
4) proof of enrollment or official transcript
   (available from the Registrar’s Office)
5) My business card

(continued on next page)
Travel Update
There have been many changes to air travel since September 11. Many items that you used to be able to bring in your carry-on baggage, like razors and nail clippers, are now prohibited. You will also find more delays at the airport due to increased security checks. Plan to arrive at the airport early (2 hours for domestic flights, 3 hours for international is advisable, but you should check with your airlines for specific details). For more information on air travel, take a look at the Federal Aviation Administration Web site at: http://www.faa.gov. Click on “Security Tips for Air Travelers.” You should also look at the web site for SeaTac airport at: http://www.seatac.org.

If you’re traveling to Canada or Mexico you can find out information about the border crossing, including possible delays at the borders, on the web at:
**Canadian Customs Web Site** http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/customs/general/times/

Please note that some foreign nationals need a visa to travel to Canada or Mexico. Information on a Canadian Visitor Visas is available on the web at: http://www.cic.gc.ca/. Information on visas for Mexico is available by calling (206) 448-3526 Monday – Friday 8am-2pm.

Visa Renewal
If you have an expired visa and will be leaving the US, you will have to apply for a new visa in order to re-enter the country. Expect a delay in visa processing in your home country; apply early!

Please note that processing of visa applications in Canada and Mexico from third country nationals who are not residents in the consular districts has been temporarily suspended.

US Military Service
Ok, this next bit goes without saying, but in the interest of keeping you up to date on recent developments, I’ve included it. Some international students on other campuses have been recruited to work for the US military. Nonimmigrants are NOT eligible to be admitted to any military unit. Sometimes, in their zeal, military recruiters are blissfully unaware of this. Please remember that you are not allowed to work for the military, and doing so would be a violation of your student status.

I will continue to update you via this newsletter and via email, on changes that may affect you. Please check your email!! If you have any questions about immigration regulations, please contact me right away at x2871.

NEW PEER TO PEER MENTOR PROGRAM
International Programs and the International Club would like to implement a new program in which American students are partnered with International students to offer help, support, or simply just a good friend. The partners will be able to learn about each other and each other’s culture as well as to share different experiences. We would like to experiment this program next spring, with the help from all of you. If you have any questions or ideas, please contact Sally at ssprenger@ups.edu.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES
Here are just a few of the events and activities that are going on at Puget Sound. For more information and updates visit http://events.ups.edu/index.php

Tamanawas
Tamanawas – a student run year book on campus – is on sale now at $15 for seniors and $35 for everyone else. Tamanawas is an ancient Indian word meaning the time of change from adolescence to adulthood. If you are interested in purchasing, contact Tamanawas at tamanawas@ups.edu

Hope against Hope
Recent UPS alumnus Justin Garland will be sharing his experience as an HIV/AIDS educator in Swaziland, a tiny African country that had been devastated by poverty, flood, and AIDS. The event will be held Tuesday Dec 6th, 4:30 pm in Murray Boardroom.

Destress Fest
A time to destress with games, food, arts and crafts as well as free massages. Sign-up sheets for massage therapists available at noon. The fun lasts for 4 hours the last day of classes Wednesday, December 7, 12-4 pm.
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?
My roommates are great. 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 arround 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 semester and the next, 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!

FINALS AND WINTER BREAK
International Programs wish you good luck for all your final exams and have a great time enjoying your vacation and preparing for the next exciting semester!

HAVE A WONDERFUL WINTER BREAK!!!