

**ISO-NEWS: Issue 5
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International Services Office, University of Rochester**

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I. SEASONS GREETINGS & ISO HOLIDAY HOURS

Happy Holidays from the ISO!! Another year is almost gone, and with it comes a much-appreciated break from your studies and hopefully some time to share with friends and family. The staff of the ISO would like to extend warm wishes for a happy and successful new year. We truly enjoy working with the international community at UR all year round!

During the winter break, the ISO will maintain normal office hours, with the following exceptions. Please note:

Wednesday, December 17 th	Closed: 11:30 – 2:00
Thursday, December 25 th & Friday, December 26 th	Closed
Thursday, January 1 st & Friday, January 2 nd	Closed

ISO Office Hours at the Eastman School of Music are scheduled to end on Wednesday, December 17th and will resume for spring semester on Tuesday, January 13th.

Please do not leave your immigration questions or processing until the last minute!! The ISO will have fewer staff available during the winter break and may require additional time to assist you with program extensions, work authorizations, travel, etc. As always, ISO staff members are available by phone in the case of an emergency. Please call the main office at 585-275-2866, and follow directions for reaching someone when the office is not currently open.

II. END OF TERM CONCERNS: TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & PROGRAM UPDATES

As a reminder, all students should have an up-to-date F-1 travel signature or J-1 validation signature before traveling overseas. Students who anticipate that they will need to receive

Security Clearance authorization during the visa application, due to nationality or area of study, should plan ahead for potential delays. Most clearances are processed within 3 to 4 weeks. **You should carry your original immigration documents with you whenever you travel, even within the U.S.** These include your I-20 or DS-2019, passport, and valid I-94 card. Please see our recent bulletin on travel, sent by email on Dec. 2nd and available our [website](#), under the ISO News archives.

Also, this is a good time of year to check your I-20 or DS-2019 to ensure its accuracy. The completion date listed on this form has significant impact on your immigration permissions and benefits. If you will need more time to complete your studies, you must request a Program Extension before the current completion date passes. If you are finishing your program earlier than expected, you should shorten your program end date and consider whether you want to apply for available F-1 or J-1 work permissions. Please find forms and more information on our website, or call the ISO at 275-2866 to schedule an appointment with an advisor.

III. GLACIER ACCURACY IS CRITICAL AT YEAR END!

Students enrolled in GLACIER must ensure that their record is active and up-to-date. Data from GLACIER will be rolled into the CINTAX database to assist you with completing your tax forms. If your address and contact information are not accurately reported in GLACIER, you may have problems when it comes time to file your taxes in April. Take a minute to verify:

- Your current email address (especially for forms delivered electronically)
- Appropriate exit date, which should match the I-20 or DS-2019 completion date
- Accurate mailing address

Please see our recent bulletin on important tax information, sent by email on Dec. 8th and available our [website](#), under the ISO News archives.

IV. SEASONAL SAFETY TIPS

Winter in this part of the world can be a lot of fun, and a bit hazardous! This time of year usually brings a playful side for many people, but also increased risks of extreme cold, snow & other weather conditions, and heat-related fires. We hope that you and your families will enjoy the festivities, stay warm, and use caution in and around the Rochester area this winter! The following safety tips have been collected from various UR offices for your reference.

Winter Driving:

The snow and cold temperatures always provide additional driving challenges this time of year. Pay attention to all traffic signals and drive carefully, especially at night when other cars and pedestrians may be harder to see. The University will be hosting a 6-hour Defensive Driving course on Saturday, 12/20, if you are interested. Registration and a \$35 fee are required. Please see the attached flyer for details.

Decorations & Lights:

When holiday decorations are employed, they need to be used in a manner not to create a fire safety hazard. Combustible materials such as hay or straw, bamboo, dry moss, wood shavings, dry leaves, wood bark, corn stalks and corn shucks, saw dust, and tumbleweed are *prohibited to be used as holiday decorations*. We recommend the use artificial Christmas trees that are labeled as fire resistant or flame retardant. Do not place electric lights on metal artificial trees. Remote spotlights are recommended for use with metal trees to avoid an electrical hazard. When using a cut tree, attempt to find a fresh one with the following characteristics: It is green; Fresh needles are difficult to pull from branches; When bent between your fingers, fresh needles do not break; The trunk is sticky with resin; And when the trunk is bounced on the ground, needles do not shower off. Place a cut Christmas tree away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources that will dry out, creating a fire hazard. After acquiring the cut tree, cut off approximately two inches off the butt of the tree to expose fresh wood for better water absorption. Trim away branches as necessary to set the tree trunk in a base of a sturdy, water-holding stand with wide spread feet. Keep the stand filled with water while the tree is indoors. Place the Christmas tree out of the way of traffic. If the tree is particularly large, secure it to a wall or the ceiling with wires. **Never** use lighted candles on a Christmas tree or near other evergreens. **Never** burn a Christmas tree in a fireplace.

Only use lights that have been identified for indoor use and the bear the label of Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) or Factory Mutual. Before using, check each set of lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Discard damaged sets or repair them before using. Use no more than three sets of holiday lights per extension cord. Light strings should not be attached to walls or molding with staples, tacks, nails or paper tape. Use electrical tape or string them with cup-type hooks. Do not overload electrical outlets. Cube taps are not recommended. Turn off all interior holiday light sets before going to bed or leaving your residence. Lights could short and start a fire.

V. RIC SPOTLIGHT: EXCITING ACTIVITIES COMING FOR SPRING!

The ISO would like to thank RIC for the wonderful activities hosted this fall that celebrate and unite our international community here at UR! It's been a wonderful year and we have much to look forward to for the spring. Stay tuned to our next issue of ISO News for more information on the upcoming RIC events scheduled for next semester!

V. CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT: FINAL UHS FLU CLINIC TODAY!! 4:30 TO 6:00 PM

It's not too late for a flu shot! UHS is serious about flu shots. Get a flu shot now to protect yourself from the flu this winter. UHS is holding a Flu Vaccine Clinic on Wednesday, December 10 (4:30-6:00 p.m. in UHS). Students and their spouses are welcome to come to the clinic. We can bill the \$25 charge to your insurance. The UR student BCBS insurance covers the cost. Please bring your insurance card. If you prefer, you can schedule an appointment at UHS (275-2662). If you have questions about the clinic, e-mail ldudman@uhs.rochester.edu.

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