

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

for INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



**JANUARY 25, 2024**

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### **REDUCED CREDIT/COURSE LOAD – SPRING 2024 DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9**

To maintain legal status, all F-1 and J-1 students must pursue a full course of study. This means being registered for a full credit load (12 credits for undergraduates and 9 credits for graduate students). There are cases, however, in which regulations consider a student pursuing a full course of study even when they have NOT registered for a full credit load. For example, undergraduates who only need 1 or 2 classes to complete their program, or graduate students who have completed all coursework but are still conducting thesis or dissertation research may be considered full-time even though not registered for 9 credits.

IF YOU WILL BE REGISTERED FOR LESS THAN A FULL-TIME CREDIT LOAD IN spring 2024, you MUST submit a "Reduced Credit/Course Load" form to ISSS (International Student & Scholar Services) using the [RGlobal portal](#). You need approval from our office for less than full-time enrollment in any semester. The form can be completed online and will require your graduate program director/academic dean's approval. Please review the ISSS [website](#) for instructions and information about the process to submit this form.

Please check the University's academic calendar for the appropriate add/drop dates, for the last date to drop classes without a "W" grade:

[Undergraduate Registration Calendar](#)

[Graduate Registration Calendar](#)

Bear in mind that it takes 5-7 business days to process the form after receipt and we cannot guarantee timely processing of forms received after the deadline. This could mean loss of legal status and you will need to leave the country or apply for a reinstatement process with the government.

NOTE: Please carefully review the [ISSS website](#) for online course guidance. F-1 and J-1 students are not allowed to take more than 3 credits/1 online course towards their full-course of study requirement.

**SPRING 2024 INSURANCE EXEMPTION REQUEST & WAIVER DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9  
STUDENTS WITH A TA/GA APPOINTMENT**

Students with full TA/GA appointments who are enrolled in benefits through University Human Resources DO NOT need to contact our office to request a waiver of the student health insurance premium. You only need to submit your enrollment paperwork through Human Resources at the start of your appointment. Once Human Resources processes your insurance enrollment paperwork, we will receive your coverage information and will then process your waiver.

**ALL OTHER F-1 AND J-1 STUDENTS MUST EITHER ENROLL OR WAIVE:**

***STEPS TO COMPLETE HEALTH INSURANCE ENROLLMENT – DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9***

- Register for classes. Wait 3 business days after registering for classes to complete the enrollment form at [universityhealthplans.com](https://universityhealthplans.com).
- Change your International address to a U.S. mailing address, visit [my.rutgers.edu/portal](https://my.rutgers.edu/portal). You may do this once you are registered for classes.
- Add your email address, visit [my.rutgers.edu/portal](https://my.rutgers.edu/portal). You may do this once you are registered.
- Three days after registering for classes, go to [universityhealthplans.com](https://universityhealthplans.com) to complete the enrollment form. You will receive a confirmation number on the screen and to your Rutgers email, once you have successfully submitted the enrollment form.
- Wait 4 days after receiving your enrollment confirmation number, go to [University Health Plans, Inc.](https://universityhealthplans.com) On the left navigation bar, select "Log into my account." You may then create an account, log in, and print your card.

**OR**

***STEPS TO WAIVE THE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE FOR STUDENTS IN F-1 or J-1 VISA STATUS  
- DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9***

F-1 and J-1 students on a Rutgers sponsorship who have insurance coverage other than the student insurance plan that is charged on their term bills need to request a waiver of that insurance premium by following the exemption request process outlined below. Please note that Rutgers sponsored international students cannot waive the student insurance plan through the United Healthcare website; it must be done through the [RGlobal portal](#).

Please complete the following steps to request the waiver:

- Review supporting documents you will need to provide or address to complete the exemption, all supporting documents must confirm that your coverage meets every one of [the University's health insurance requirements](#).
- Apply for the insurance waiver by completing the form available through our [RGlobal Student Services Portal](#) on the ISSS website.
- Submit the form and any supporting documents to the ISSS by the deadline to opt out of the university's student insurance plan and have the premium removed from the term.

**\*\*Important Note: Students on another institution's visa sponsorship** who are registered for a full-time course load and hold coverage other than the student insurance plan will need to waive their student insurance premium by following the [online waiver instructions](#).

### **ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT**

International students in F-1 and J-1 status may work on-campus at Rutgers while pursuing their studies. You will need some paperwork from ISSS before you can begin working on-campus. All international students must follow these steps before beginning any on-campus workshop:

- Review the detailed information and instructions on the ISSS [website](#)
- Complete the Staying in Legal Status Workshop via the [RGlobal portal](#)
- Complete the On-Campus Employment Workshop via the [RGlobal portal](#)
- Request the necessary forms/letters via the [RGlobal portal](#) before beginning on-campus employment

### **EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

As F-1/J-1 students, it is your responsibility to know the rules and laws governing your legal status, including the regulations regarding off-campus internships or any off-campus employment. You do not need to wait until you have a job interview to find out what those rules are.

Review the [CPT](#) and [OPT](#) webpages for important information about how to complete the online workshops and consider joining an upcoming Off-Campus Employment Chat session (dates and times posted on the [Advising Services webpage](#)) or an upcoming in-person workshop:

[CPT/OPT 101 – February 8, 2024](#)

[Drop-in OPT Q&A – February 28, 2024](#)

[CPT/OPT 101 – March 28, 2024](#)

[Drop-In OPT Q&A – April 11, 2024](#)

F-1 and J-1 international students sponsored by Rutgers have permission to work on-campus while pursuing their studies and maintaining their legal status. Please refer to our webpage on [On-Campus Employment](#) for information about steps for F-1 and J-1 students to begin working on-campus. The [On-Campus Employment workshop](#) may also be accessed through the [RGlobal portal](#).

Keep in mind that employment is defined as any type of service or activity normally performed in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, food, or any other benefit. Examples of employment include internships (paid or unpaid), co-op experiences, volunteer work, and conference attendance and honorariums. Whenever in doubt about any employment opportunity, always consult with ISSS through our [advising services](#) for guidance. More information about employment for international students can be found on the ISSS [website](#).

### **SCAM ALERT & FBI PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

We have been made aware of scams targeting unsuspecting international students and scholars. These fraudulent schemes have become increasingly sophisticated, oftentimes with an apparently government phone number appearing on your caller ID, or the caller knowing a lot of your personal information. Frequent scam attempts involve emails in which a student is offered a job by a Rutgers professor whose email address has been spoofed. Please remember that on-campus job employers will never ask a student to connect with an employer via text, and they will never require bank details or other personal information.

Please pay particular attention to a recent [FBI Public Service Announcement](#) about criminal actors impersonating Chinese police officers, who are targeting Chinese students studying in the United States. We urge all international students to review the [PSA](#) and take note of recommendations to protect yourselves against such fraudulent schemes.

As is true anywhere in the world, there are people who attempt to take advantage of international students and scholars, but with a little knowledge you can learn how to identify a scam and avoid falling victim to the scheme. Please refer to the ISSS website for more [tips to avoid scams](#), as well as a list of helpful [resources](#) regarding scams and fraud.

### **REMINDER ABOUT OPT APPLICATIONS**

While the USCIS deadline for post-completion OPT applications is 60 days following degree completion, it can take 3-4 months for USCIS to process the applications. All students applying

for post-completion OPT must complete the Post-Completion OPT Workshop on the [RGlobal portal](#). F-1 students who will be getting January 2024 degrees and who plan to apply for post-completion OPT should plan to submit an OPT application as soon as possible.

## **PEER MENTOR OPPORTUNITIES**

### **RU-FIT PEER LEADER POSITIONS**

RU-FIT peer leaders are rising juniors and seniors with campus resource expertise and the desire to help international students in their transition to university. The position offers a \$1,500 stipend. Applications are due by February 26. For more information or to request an application email [ias-global@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:ias-global@global.rutgers.edu).

### **LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITY (LLC) PEER MENTORS**

The peer mentor experience provides a hands-on opportunity to demonstrate the ability to build community, act as a campus resource, make connections with faculty and staff, and positively contribute to the success of their peers. Benefits include priority housing, field trips, and academic and leadership opportunities. This is a paid position for 6 hours/week. Peer mentors must live on campus on the floor/building of the respective [Living-Learning community \(LLC\)](#) and have a demonstrated interest in the theme of the community. [Click here to learn more about becoming a Peer Mentor.](#)

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **WELLNESS WORKSHOPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

ISSS and CAPS will host three in-person, interactive [Wellness Workshops](#) this spring that will support students by providing a safe space to discuss various concerns and to help you connect with each other. All events are free and open to all international students. Seats are limited, so register today at [go.rutgers.edu/wellness2024](https://go.rutgers.edu/wellness2024).

### **SPRING WELCOME WEEK**

Tuesday, January 16 – Wednesday, January 31

The [Spring Welcome Week](#) contains programs and events designed for Scarlet Knights to find connections and community, navigate campus, participate in traditional events, and prepare for the upcoming semester. These opportunities are open to all students, as we welcome our new and returning Scarlet Knights back to campus. For more information, visit <https://transition.rutgers.edu/students/welcome-week>.

### **SPRING CAREER & INTERNSHIP MEGA FAIR**

Thursday, February 1 & Friday, February 2, 2024

11:30am-3:30pm EST

Jersey Mike's Arena, 83 Rockafeller Rd, Piscataway, NJ 08854

Join this in-person event to network with employers to discuss full-time, part-time, and internship opportunities from a wide variety of fields. The [Spring Career and Internship Mega](#)

[Fair](#) is hosted by the Office of Career Exploration and Success and is open to Rutgers University (New Brunswick, Camden, Newark, and RBHS) students and alumni from all academic disciplines. For more information, visit <https://careers.rutgers.edu/career-fairs>.

### **SHOPPING SHUTTLE**

Rutgers Global – ISSS arranges shopping shuttles to local stores throughout the semester so students can purchase groceries and other living essentials. You should sign up to reserve your spot on the shuttle; International students and scholars who have signed up will be given preference to ride on the shuttle.

[Click here for more information and to sign up for the shuttle.](#)

Best wishes,  
Rutgers Global – ISSS

This periodic update from the Rutgers Global – International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office provides you with important information regarding your legal status, upcoming programs, and useful resources. Previous updates can be found on our [Email Notices page](#).

These notices are automatically sent to all nonimmigrant students enrolled at Rutgers–New Brunswick and Rutgers–Biomedical and Health Sciences. Most messages, however, apply only to F-1 and J-1 students. We label most messages to facilitate your identification of which messages may apply to you personally. All F-1 and J-1 students on Rutgers' visa sponsorships must know the information provided in these notices and follow reminders and instructions that apply to their own situations.

This is NOT a subscription email list. These notices are sent periodically to an automatically generated list. If you are a permanent resident or citizen of the U.S and should not be receiving these notices, please contact ISSS:

#### **New Brunswick**

848-932-7015

[iss-students@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:iss-students@global.rutgers.edu)

#### **RBHS**

973-972-6138

[iss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:iss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu)