



SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of
**International
Programs**

Newsletter

Fall 2024 Issue

A look into
*International
Education Week*

UPDATES ON

Study Abroad

International Student Services

International Partnerships

And more!

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Thanksgiving Message from OIP Director

Dear SVSU International Cardinals,

Time flies! This semester is almost over.

I am so thankful for having this new opportunity to meet you at SVSU in Michigan and serve you as part of the Office of International Programs (OIP) Team. I admire your courage to travel thousands of miles and challenge yourself to encounter unfamiliarity. You left your home behind but are now part of a new home - the Cardinal community, which becomes better because of your presence and diverse contributions.

You might be the one who did a cultural presentation about your home country after 10pm at the International Student Club (ISC) meeting on Tuesday nights.

You might be the one who actively engaged in local community services.

You might be the one who attended the Homecoming parade.

You might be the International Chef who cooked delicious international food and served hundreds of people at the annual International Food Festival.

You might be the one who shared your native cultures at the Global Cultures and Arts event during the annual International Education Week.

You might be the one who is engaged in SVSU clubs, offered excellent campus services, and won competitions.

International Cardinals Stand Out!

I want to thank Dr. Pat Shelley (International Student Advisor) and Louise Chen (International Partnership Coordinator) for their strong leadership in international student and scholar services. The other OIP staff members, Tina Demo (Office Manager), Kal Spencer (Study Abroad Coordinator), and Di Shang (Short-term Program Coordinator) have also done a phenomenal job! OIP services wouldn't be the same without our student assistants' support and diligent work. Thank you very much!



The Office of International Programs (OIP) is dedicated to campus internationalization and promotion of mutual understanding by offering international student services, study abroad programs, and facilitating international partnerships around the world. We are committed to study abroad and international cardinal success and strive to develop the intercultural competences of our students, faculty, and staff by providing resources, guidance, and opportunities for global and community engagement.

OIP is working on a new strategic plan. Our goals are to increase the study abroad participation rate, expand international partnerships, and support International Cardinal Success by continuing good practices and launching a series of new initiatives, including creating a Marketing and a Caring Team Interest Group (TIG). Our services are to help you grow personally, academically, and professionally.

You have a bright future! May you thrive on this friendly Cardinal campus!
Wish you a Warm and Happy Thanksgiving!

Dr. Alice Yang
OIP Director

Study Abroad

2024 Fall Study Abroad Expo

The 2024 Fall Study Abroad Expo took place on Thursday, September 26 in Cardinal Commons. Exhibitors included the faculty leaders for the 8 proposed faculty-led study abroad trips: Nursing in Tanzania, Graphic Design in Tokyo, Nursing and Social Work in Scotland, Nursing in China, Nursing in London, Biology in the Cayman Islands, Management and Marketing in Prague, and Law, Finance, and Accounting in Lisbon. We also welcome two of our partner universities to campus: Edge Hill University from England and John Cabot University from Rome. Students met with our study abroad providers to learn more about programs around the world and discuss scholarships. SVSU study abroad alumni shared their stories from Ireland, Italy, Spain and South Korea. The Office of International Programs gave away prizes including a carry-on suitcase and giftbags full of travel gear. Visitors voted on a travel photo contest and enjoyed candy from around the world. If you would like more information about SVSU's study abroad programs and how to make an appointment with an advisor, visit www.svsu.edu/studyabroad.



Study Abroad Story Slam

On November 13th, travel enthusiasts gathered in the Rhea Miller Recital Hall for the first Study Abroad Story Slam. Students, faculty, and staff took turns at the microphone sharing stories from abroad. Guided by the theme of "happy accidents," storytellers recounted experiences of missed trains, unlikely friendships, and cultural missteps that lead to deeper understanding and friendship. Each story was scored by a panel of judges, and the winner was awarded an SVSU blanket. The event winner, Riley Romer, told a simple story about discovering a park in Busan, South Korea during her summer 2023 study abroad experience at Kyung Hee University. The crowd was pulled in by her description of one of the most peaceful moments of her life. The event was sponsored by International Studies Abroad (ISA), one of SVSU's affiliate study abroad providers. The Office of International Programs looks forward to holding more story slams on campus.

International Partnerships



Prof. Blake Johnson and Prof. Phillip Hanson, Study Abroad Coordinator, Kal Spencer and International Partnership Coordinator, Louise Chen visited UADE (Universidad Argentina de la Empresa) in Buenos Aires, Argentina to start a new Joint Program in Graphic Design. (Pictured left)

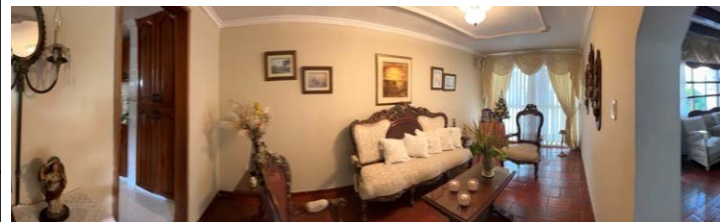
Two OIP staff visited UTB (Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar), Cartagena, Colombia to start a new partnership. Potential outbound study aboard and in-bound/outbound summer program were proposed.



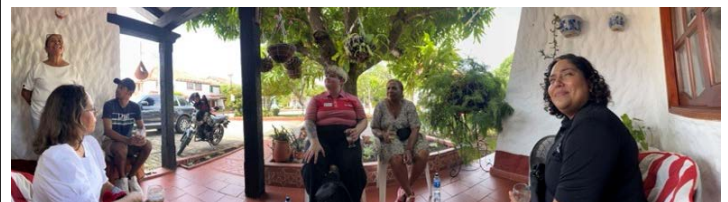
OIP Staff joint the Internation Education Fair at UADE and welcome new Political Science Joint Program students who are joining SVSU in 2025 Winter. Homestay family visit was one of the agenda.



In September 2024, SVSU sent an academic delegation to China to strengthen the international partnerships with Chinese higher education institutions. The delegation was led by Provost Deborah Huntley and included Dr. James Tarr (Dean of the College of Education), Dr. Brian Thomas (Associate Provost), Ju-Yu Chen (International Partnership Coordinator), and Di Shang (Short-Term Program Coordinator). The delegation visited Changchun Normal University (CCNU) campus to welcome the new Cohort of Early Childhood Education Joint Program (2024), promote the 3+1 and 2+2 dual degree programs, and recruit for the Short-Study at SVSU Program. The delegation also visited Shenyang Aerospace University (SAU) to participate in the opening of SVSU and SAU Art Faculty Exhibition and promote the SVSU Programs. In addition, the delegation visited Liaoning University and Shanghai Normal University and signed renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the two institutions.



Fantastic homestay visit for future study abroad students at UTB in the Menga Campus in Cartagena, Colombia.



In November 2024, SVSU signed a new exchange agreement with the University of Wuerzburg (in German Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg), which is a public research university in Würzburg, Germany. The new partnership will offer global learning opportunities for students of both institutions and strengthen the established sister city relationships between Michigan and Germany, including Bay City/Ansbach and Frankenmuth/Gunzenhausen.

International Student Services

International students have participated in several community service projects this fall 2024 semester. These include volunteering at the Japanese Garden and Teahouse and the Mid-Michigan Childrens' Museum. One of our students, Mehran Khaliq from Pakistan, who is studying to become a veterinarian, volunteered over 20 hours at the Amazing Grace Animal Rescue Shelter.

International Student Graduation Reception

On December 11th the OIP will hold a reception for International Students who are graduating this fall. Graduates with special guests, such as their visiting parents, will be introduced, awarded alumni certificates and speak a little about themselves, their experiences at SVSU and their goals.

International Friends and Family Program

The Office of International Programs has been proudly running the Friendly Family Program for years, fostering cultural exchange between international students and community members. This initiative allows students to experience American traditions while sharing their own unique customs, creating a vibrant cultural dialogue. To celebrate and kick off this year's program, we hosted a Friendly Family Reception. The event featured a light brunch and provided an opportunity for matches to meet, review important program details, and begin building connections. The program's success is evident in the long-lasting relationships formed, with many participants staying in touch for years.



International Student Club

Our International Student Club continues to meet every Tuesday evening from 10 to 11 pm and sometimes later. At each meeting students take turns doing presentations about their home countries. Announcements are made about campus wide activities and the students enjoy playing games to get to know one another. Average attendance is around 30 students from

12 different countries. At our Halloween party the attendance was 67 students from 24 countries. Students marched in the Homecoming Parade carrying their flags. The highlight event for this semester was the International Food Festival on November 12th with cuisine from 12 different cultures.



If you ever have the opportunity to visit Pat's office (W230N), be sure to notice the large National Geographic map on which red dots show over 60 countries where international students have come from, blue dots show where students from the U.S. have gone to study abroad, and green dots show the variety of countries where staff members have worked or visited. (Pictured left)

International Student Services

This semester, OIP has planned several key events, including an International Orientation in August to welcome new students and help them adapt and adjust to the new learning environment.

Ninety International Cardinals, visiting scholars, and OIP staff attended the Fall 2024 Cultural Trip to Mackinac Island in North Michigan on Oct. 5. This was the most attended event for cultural immersion. The weather was beautiful. The participants got the chance to learn about the history of the island, visit the famous grand hotel and historical stores, tour the island by bicycle, and enjoy the beautiful views.

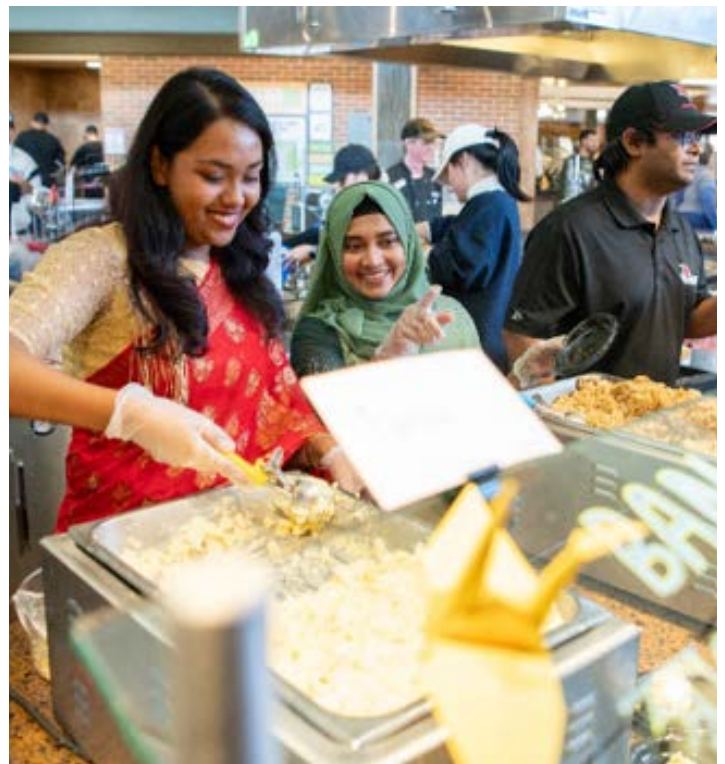
The International Food Festival during the International Education Week is an event almost everyone looks forward to every year. It was a great success again this year. More than 700 people from the SVSU and local community were attracted to the event. The food festival is a great way for international students to share their native food they are used to but is completely new for most domestic students.

The annual International Thanksgiving Day celebration on November 21 was also well attended. In addition to the tra-

ditional Thanksgiving food, Kal Spencer (Study Abroad Coordinator) gave a presentation on the Thanksgiving traditions and helped international students learn more about American culture.

In addition to cultural events, OIP collaborated with the Career Services and organized career development workshops for international students. The sessions covered on-campus job opportunities and application procedure, Curricular Practical Training (CPT), and Optional Practical Training (OPT). OIP also invited an external expert from F-1 Hire to share more internship opportunities and resources for international students.

These events are a mix of academic, cultural, and professional engagement, which enhanced international student experience and fostered community connections.



Short-Term Program: Tokushima Municipal High School

The short-term program brings students from Tokushima Municipal High School to Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) for an immersive cultural and educational experience. From July 22 to July 30, these students engaged in a variety of activities designed to foster cross-cultural understanding and personal growth. At SVSU, they participated in language workshops, interactive classes, and cultural excursions that showcased local traditions and the university environment. This program offers students a valuable opportunity to form lasting friendships, enhance their language skills, and gain insights into American academic and cultural life, enriching their global perspective.



OIP Updates

Monthly Birthday Celebrations

In October 2024, OIP launched monthly birthday celebrations to share the happy moment of each international student born in the same month. The OIP Caring Team prepares birthday cakes, balloons, and flowers for the birthday students. The participants would sing the “Happy Birthday” song in English and other different languages during

the party. The birthday parties help international students feel included and belong.



OIP Updates

Support International Cardinal Success

OIP's application Support International Cardinal Success has recently been selected by the SVSU Foundation Evaluation Committee as an awardee for Foundation Resource Grant - Fall 2024 and has been awarded a grant of \$5,000. OIP will collaborate with the Student Association, the Office of Diversity, and faculty to use the grant on some new initiatives, including cultural competency training sessions for international students, International Cardinal Video Contest, and the International Peer Mentor Program.

SVSU in East Asia- Highlights of International Partnerships

During the annual International Education Week (IEW, Nov. 11 to 15), OIP hosted a series of events and offered international learning opportunities to SVSU students, faculty and staff. Dr. Bob Yien (President of Ming Chuan University – Michigan Location and SVSU Vice President Emeritus for Academic Affairs) was invited to serve as the IEW Keynote Speaker for the event on Nov. 11 (Monday), “SVSU in East Asia – Highlights of International Partnerships”. Dr. Yien shared his insights on the creation of SVSU's longest-running international partnerships in East

Asia. Following his presentation, there was a panel discussion featuring faculty members who have taught abroad, including Dr. Andrea Frederick (PhD, Nursing), Dr. Debbie Lively (PhD, Education), and Phillip Hanson (MFA, Art). President George Grant welcomed the participants and addressed the importance of the continuity of the international partnerships. Dr. Chuan Lee, Chancellor of Ming Chuan University in Taiwan and the Nursing Visiting Scholars at Jinan University in China were also engaged in the event by sharing a video they created in advance for the event.



OIP Updates

International Lecture: Challenges in Dealing with Cultural Diversity

Dr. Youssef Azghari, a Fulbright Visiting Scholar from the Netherlands, delivered an International Lecture on “Challenges in Dealing with Cultural Diversity” to the SVSU community on October 14. He is an expert in intercultural communica-

tion and the author of 8 books on the subject. OIP offers services to international scholars, including Fulbright visiting scholars, and plans to apply for the State Department Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program.



Social Media



[svsuinternationalprograms9675](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsvsuinternationalprograms9675)



[svsu.international](https://www.instagram.com/svsu.international)
[svsustudyabroad](https://www.instagram.com/svsustudyabroad)



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