Fall 2018 Pre-arrival Webinar – International Student Employment

Lin: Alright everyone, so we’re going to go ahead get started. Thank you for participating in preliminary webinar for international student employment. This is part of our pre-arrival webinar series for international students.

Lin: So a little bit about the webinar series for those of you who are attending the webinar for the first time. The pre-arrival webinar series is provided to international students. The pre-arrival webinar series will prepare incoming international student to arrange arrival plan for travelling and living in Iowa City and the standard orientation expectations and responsibilities, and with the transition to academics at the University of Iowa. All the webinars will be recorded and posted on our website once we have them transcribed. You can go to the link on here on the slide or it’s just from the website that you register, you will find that our first webinar on graduate student professionalization and support was posted already so for those of you who either missed it or would like to listen to it again, you can always go back to the recording tool and listen to it.

Lin: During the webinar are if you have any technical difficulties, please let us know in the chat function. If you have any questions related to today’s topic, please use the Q and A function to post your questions. We will answer them live at the end.

Lin: If you have not received your I-20 or your DS-2019 yet, you can pay e-Ship-Global fee and then we will mail your documents to you right away. This information is in your pre arrival checklist in iHawk. So you can log into iHawk with your hawkID and password and then you will be able to find this link.

Lin: Some important dates. May 1 is coming up for undergrad admissions acceptance deadline and then for orientations on August 7th to August 10th is the international graduates student orientation and August 12th to August 19th is the international undergraduate student orientation. Orientations are mandatory for international students, so please make sure that you will arrive before orientation starts.

Lin: So I will let our guests introduce themselves first.

Josh: Hi everyone, my name is Josh and I work in the office of student employment here in Iowa.

Pauline: Hi, I’m Pauline Beazer James. I work in the International Student and Scholar Services Office.

Lin: I’m Shuhui Lin, but I go by Lin, my last name. I’m also with the International Student and Scholar Services and I will be mostly managing the check and Q+A at the end.

Lin: So for the session today, we will start with on-campus employment, and then we will talk about off-campus employment for international students and then will as I said, we have live Q+A time at the end. So with that I will give it to Josh.

Josh: Right. So you can see right there - that’s our contact information within the office of student employment. We are actually housed within our office of financial aid here at the University of Iowa. So the phone number you can reach us directly out as well as the email is there for you if you have any questions.
Josh: So I want to break down on our on campus employment a little bit for you. Our international students are eligible for part-time employment on campus, so you’ll focus on the left side of the slide. We also have work study awarded students as well. But you guys will be focused mostly on the part-time variety. So we have anything from 6, anywhere from 6 to 8000 student employees a year depending on the air. It fluctuates a little bit, so if you think about our overall population at the school a lot of our students do work on campus. So there are a lot of opportunities available for you.

Josh: How the pay works. If you have a student job on campus, you’ll get paid biweekly. So every other week the jobs – a good thing about the jobs on campus, especially if you’re trying to acclimate to the University of Iowa campus, the jobs go anywhere from one to 20 hours a week. So 20 hours is the absolute max average weekly hours that you can work and that’s actually a state of Iowa law, so the reason for that is honestly to make sure you’re spending enough time on your class work as well and not overwhelm yourself with work. There are jobs on campus. Like I said, you’ll find a bunch of them between one and 20, but a lot of them are 3, 5, 7, 8 hours a week. So if you wanted to start a little bit slower as far as hours so you can get used to your academic schedule, there are plenty of jobs where you have the opportunity to do that.

Josh: You see the average wage that we pay on campus here with their campus employees in our most frequent ways. So if you’re looking at a student job working 10 hours a week you can kind of go by those to start out, just to give yourself kind of estimate for budgetary purposes. The one thing when we advertise our jobs are employers are going to post exactly what the pay rate is going to be for you.

Josh: So job searching. We have a system here at the university called Hire-a-Hawk. So it’s our online job advertising system. On that system, we post student part time jobs and then also internships in full time jobs. So our office and student employment focuses on the part time jobs, which is probably what you'll be looking for first when you arrive and then we partnered with the Pomerantz Career Center to post internships in full time opportunities as well. The good thing about that is it's all in one location, so you won’t have to jump around to different systems to find the opportunities that you’re looking for. So hopefully you learn the system once and you have a good idea of how to kind of transition from student jobs to your eventual internships in full time job search.

Josh: The one thing we keep you posted on is, if you are enrolled and accepted to the University of Iowa by May 1st date, usually what we do is we take that list and by the beginning of June, you will have it automatically be put into our Hire-a-Hawk system, which means, once you get a University ID and password, you are able to access the Hire-a-Hawk system and start applying for positions. So while the positions won’t start until you actually begin classes, you have a chance to obtain those positions early if you are applying early. So we post jobs on Monday through Friday, year round. The most jobs are available on our campus, usually at the beginning of each semester, but we do post every day throughout the semester. Depending on the time of year will have anywhere from 200 to 700 on campus job postings on our system. Basically what that tells me and what I always tell students who ask what types of jobs are available on campus, my answer is typically pretty much everything you can think of.

Josh: And most of the jobs are going to be advertised on our Hire-a-Hawk system. The key, once you get access to Hire-a-Hawk, is simply figuring out how to get started. While it’s great that you have everything in one place, it also makes for a lot of information at your fingertips there. So we’ve created a
few things to try to make your life a little bit easier when you start utilizing Hire-a-Hawk we have a PDF tutorial as you log into the system on how to search and apply for student employment. My big suggestion to all of you when you're looking for jobs and getting started with Hire-a-Hawk is to pretty much follow that those directions to a T. So it will have a specific step-by-step directions as well as pictures, so you can kind of see what it should look like on your screen. So if you follow that, that's going to really help you learn the system quicker and make sure you're completing the applications and things like that, correctly. There are a few things that you want to do before starting to apply for jobs on Hire-a-Hawk, and one of them is completing and uploading our student employment application. So it's a very basic student employment application that you will fill out. And in that tutorial that I mentioned earlier that's going to have directions on how to do that. About 50 percent of our student jobs on campus require a resume as well. If you have a resume already that's great. You will upload that to Hire-a-Hawk. If you don't, the Pomerantz Career Center Website has a ton of fantastic resources on resume writing, and our office and myself as well, I can help make sure you have a resume that is marketable to our employers. So if you are able to upload a resume that's going to simply increase the number of jobs that you're eligible to apply for, so Hire-a-Hawk is where you going to be doing your job searching pretty much from the first day you start applying until your full time job search.

**Josh:** Our internships in full time jobs are nationwide as well throughout the Continental United States. Our student jobs are focused more on our local campus area. So I'll touch briefly on just I-9 documentation. So basically if an employer hires you and you're going to start working, you have within three days of your start date to submit I-9 documentation. So there are multiple documents that are needed for I-9 documentation, some of them are listed. There's a couple of links there I'd highly recommend taking a look at just as far as information that you need in order to get started to work here on campus here at Iowa.

**Josh:** So I have I spoke earlier a little bit about getting paid every two weeks. You're going to set up with your employer a direct deposit. So whatever bank account you decide that you want to you have your paycheck sent to, that will need to be authorized to your employer. At the time you get hired, they will take you through some of that information. So one of the things that we have found that our students can benefit from, from working on campus, is simply the improved engagement. What I mean by that is it's just feeling like you're part of the community and feeling like you're involved in the campus culture. One of the big things about the Iowa City area is the University makes up such a huge part of it, so there's very little in the Iowa City area even outside of the university that doesn't have heavy student involvement. So you guys are huge part of the culture here as student workers. So hopefully you're able to, with your job, you'll to access and we just become a little bit more aware of some campus resources that we have things that can help you if you are, you know, struggling with time management and study skills, anything like that we have a lot of resources on campus to help you. Working on campus a lot of times can help you just have more information in that regard. One of the things that we really stress to our supervisors on campus who supervise you is they are a big part of your development professionally. So, a lot of our student supervisors become mentors for their students, so that could be an increase in your support network. Frankly, especially for our freshman incoming, it is really beneficial for students to meet some of their peers, develop friendships on campus. So it can help with that social culture transition and help you in development in that area. And then we talked a lot about transferable skills improvement. Basically those are specific skills that employers really want eventually: things like
communication skills, organizational skills, and your ability to manage your time. What we have found is that our student employees do better academically and are retained at a higher rate and graduate at a higher rate. A lot of that is due to their increased ability to manage their time. So if you’re working 10 hours a week you know that’s 10 hours that you aren’t studying, so when it’s time to study, it helps you kind of maintain that structure and discipline as well. So we have seen some great improvement and some terrific numbers from our student employees, even better than their non-working counterparts. So just something to keep in mind if you are a little apprehensive about working and going to school; traditionally we’ve seen that our students who do both actually perform better.

**Josh:** So we do have a lot of resources to help you out. If you’re ever looking for a job and can’t seem to find one or you have trouble with Hire-a-Hawk or trouble with resume writing, we’re here in the office of student employment to help with that, and again, we partner very closely with the Pomerantz career center as well to help you with anything professional development related, job searching related, that type of thing. So you can set up a phone call, you can set up a meeting, I have individual meetings all the time to help people who are looking for jobs. So the resources are there to help you. We do have two student job fairs along every semester and these are not a typical career fair where you might have to dress up in a suit. You don’t have to do that for this. It’s kind of a come-as-you-are, in-between classes type of job fair. In the fall we will have it the first Wednesday they have class and it lasts usually, it’s 11 to 3. Every semester we do it that first one in the fall. That’s when you’re going to see on the slide show there’s more employers attend that, and that’s because the fall is probably when we have the most job postings out there at any given time. So that’s a little about the jobs are going to be out there to be filled. So at that job fair we’ll have anywhere from 30 to 40 campus employers, depending on the year. The cool thing about this fair is probably 7 to 10 of them will have interview tables and do interviews right there, at the job fair. So a lot of students walked out of that job fair with a position. We recommend you take a look at some of what’s out there in the summer, but if you haven’t found anything yet, that fall job fair is terrific.

**Josh:** The spring is in the second week of classes. There’s a few less employers that’ll attend that; at a lot of times they’ll hire in the fall and keep students year-round, but like I said earlier, we do post all year. There’s just a little bit less as far as options go if you wait past the fall. One of the things we do in my office as well is we try to provide professional development opportunities for students, so our office works directly with supervisors on campus who supervise you guys’s student employees, and a lot of those supervisors will send you to our professional development seminars called UI STEP - stands for students to employed professional – these are usually an hour and a half to two hours in length, and most of the time your employers are going to pay you for your time. So we talked a lot about developing a professional mindset, we talked a lot about how you can create great habits in the workplace. What does a top notch employee look like, what are some tips as far as getting there? Then we focus on how do you actually take the experience of learning a student job and translate it into your future careers. So, how can you sell a dining experience, for instance, if you want to go into psychology? There’s transferable skills there, so we talk a lot about that and how you can translate skills over into any career.

**Josh:** Just to kind of finish up as far as options available within student employment. We have our really big organizations and departments on campus; housing and dining, the dining halls are big recreational services, we have our REC center, we have a lot of employees at work there, and the library is huge as well. So we have our three to four really big campus employers that hire lot of students, but we also
have a ton of smaller departments. So, we have nearly 240 departments on campus and almost all of them hire student employees. So there’s a lot of postings on Hire-a-Hawk that will only might be a research lab and they’ll hire one student and that’s it. So, a lot of our departments will hire one to three students, two to five students, that type of thing. So there are a ton of options that are available, so we encourage you to utilize our Hire-a-Hawk resource to check out with those options might be. So if you have any questions on student employment, feel free to type them in the Q+A box and we will take some time to answer those at the end. Now I’ll pass it on to Pauline to discuss off-campus employment.

**Pauline:** Okay, employment regulations for student visas. It’s possible to work both during and after studies, and that’s the exciting thing to consider. The focus of today, however, who’s on F-1 and J-1 regulations. F-1 is for those with I 20 and J-1 is for those with the DS-2019. Please keep in mind that laws vary for employment situations on campus versus off campus employment. During academic program or after graduation the key thing to remember in every employment situation is that you should not work illegally.

**Pauline:** J-1 Academic Training: J-1 Academic training can be authorized during or after studies. For undergrad or master's degree students, the maximum employment is 18 months. For PhD, maximum is 36 months. The application is submitted directly two ISSS and authorization starts on the date after graduation. Actual employment, however must begin within 30 days after graduation.

**Pauline:** F-1 curricular practical training. This is what we call CPT for off campus employment during the program of study. This is a process for students to receive authorization to engage in an off campus internship. It requires enrollment for one full academic year before applying for authorization for CPT employment. The internship must be related to the degree major and it requires continued program enrollment. The internship must provide credit for the student. It requires ISSS authorization before participation in the internship and it involves collaboration with campus career centers to help students find internships.

**Pauline:** CPT statistics at the University of Iowa. More than 230 students during the 2016-2017 academic year participated in CPT internships. Some of the internship providers within Iowa, Aegon, American College Testing better known as a ACT, Whirlpool Corporation, as well as schools and colleges, pharmacies, and even symphony orchestras. Outside Iowa, students participated in internships with Amazon, Apple, General Motors, Siemens, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Deloitte, and major universities and hospitals.

**Pauline:** F-1 optional practical training. This is what we refer to as OPT: off campus employment after graduation. This provides 12 months of post-graduation employment within the US. The employment must be related to the degree received and the application is submitted directly to the US department of Homeland Security for approval. Now, you may hear talk from some friends who have completed degrees before you in the US, you might hear talk of Pre-completion or pre-graduation OPT employment here at the University of Iowa. We typically do post-graduation or post-completion OPT application processing. The application process involves submitting a fee, that’s paid directly to the US department of Homeland Security. The application approval process takes about three months. Students may remain in the US while awaiting approval. There is to be no employment during the waiting period after graduation.
Pauline: ISSS assists with the application process and also with ongoing tracking and reporting during the OPT employment period.

Pauline: OPT STEM extensions. Some areas of areas of study in science, technology, engineering, and math, better known as STEM, those fields may qualify for an additional two years of OPT extension employment. The eligibility is based on specific Classification of Instructional Programs code numbers that are signed by the federal government to all majors of study in the US. You'll hear people talk about the CIP code. It's the CIP code that lets whether you're eligible or not for OPT STEM extensions. The OPT STEM list may be updated by the US Department of Homeland Security periodically based on employment needs.

Pauline: Some examples of OPT STEM extension majors are actuarial science, biochemistry, biological sciences, computer science, educational statistics, most engineering programs, management science, pharmaceutics, and psychology.

Pauline: STEM extensions provide extended practical employment training. The application process is similar to the 12 month OPT application, however, unlike the 12 month STEM application or 12 months application for STEM, STEM extension employers must sign an agreement to pay the employee student a fair wage and have the means to provide student with professional mentoring in the field. This application is quite a bit more extensive and it requires involvement of the employer in the application process.

Pauline: OPT statistics at the University of Iowa. More than 600 students in the 2016-17 academic year participated in OPT and a sampling of the OPT employment providers includes within Iowa include: Transamerica Life Insurance, Wells Fargo, Pearson, and Rockwell Collins. Outside Iowa: Amazon, Apple, Capital One, Citigroup, Fidelity Investments, General Electric, Intel, Tata, and the United States National Institute of Health.

Pauline: The H-1B Visa. This is a limited employment visa for specialty-work fields. Usually have three year term with the option to extend for up to 6 years. The employer must apply on behalf of the employee; it cannot be initiated by the employee alone. Employment is tied to the employer of filing the application, the F1 student seeks H-1B for a longer stay with an employer. Our office does not engage in advising on the H-1B, we do have information available. And we do answer very general questions. But we do not do H-1B advising. That’s left up to the sponsoring H-1B visa employer as well as the immigration attorney that maybe involved in the process.

Pauline: There's a limited number of cap or H-1B visas available in the USA each year; 65,000 or so, with 20,000 of those visas river reserved for students at the masters level or higher. There is cap versus cap exempt cap. Cap is generally for employers that are non-educational institutions. An educational institution would be an example of cap-exempt. There are usually far more applications received than there are available H-1B visas and a lottery system is used by the government to determine which applicants will be selected for processing and approval.

Pauline: April 1 is the first day that H-1B applications can be submitted each year. In 2017, the cap was reached within four days. That gives an idea of the very competitive nature of application for the H-1B Visa. Employers must understand the process and be prepared to file the application on April 1. Recent information shows that there's a 1 in 3 chance of approval.
Pauline: H-1B visa and F-1 OPT; if approved H-1B is not effective until October 1 and students must have other means of legally continuing employment within that period awaiting the start date arrival. Usually it's OPT through the ‘cap gap’ process. Timing is extremely important and requires very important communication with the ISSS office.

Pauline: The typical process for F-1 students interested in US employment. Step one would be a complete your degree in the US. Step two would be to engage in the 12 months OPT employment and for those who have eligible OPT STEM CIP codes, they can apply for the two year OPT STEM extension. The next step would be to have the sponsoring employer submit the H-1B application, and then finally the last step would be a green card.

Pauline: H-1B Visa and J-1 academic training. Certain rules regarding J-1 visas might prevent immediate change to H-1B and because those rules are very complex we're not going to be covering them today. ISSS will provide information after your arrival.

Pauline: Help finding internships and employment. The Pomerantz Career Center is a major resource. Hire-a-Hawk database, peer advising, Career Fairs, International Job Search resources, job search tutoring, resume writing, interviewing, networking and then there's also the resource to find out ‘what can I do with a major in...?’ There are many resources available to the international student.

Pauline: Social security numbers are issued for employment purposes. There’s a specific process that will be explained during orientation. No advance application is allowed. Please keep in mind that there will be a specific date announced during application during orientation for submitting your social security number application. This will be during the second week of classes, but a specific date will be provided. The process will require special letters from the both the employer and the ISSS office.

Pauline: For on campus employment, the job must be started before you apply for the Social Security number. For off campus employment, for CPT, you must apply for the Social Security number on or after the first day of internship employment. For OPT, the USA government has added a new step in the OPT application whereby the student can apply for a social security number as part of the application process.

Pauline: Contact information for more questions. For employment questions, please contact ISS@uiowa.edu. For pre arrival checklist questions or other issues before arrival, please contact isss-orientation@uiowa.edu and you should already have been communicating with our office via the ISSS orientation email.