HELLO SUMMER STUDENTS!

Your Short-Term English course should be winding down, or over, and your fall term is about to begin! Please review the information in this Boletim and be sure that you have made all proper arrangements.

Photo: BSMP grantee Abdallah Seoud, studying at California State University, Long Beach, snapped this picture at Seal Beach, California.

Health Insurance
As a recent change in the collection of health insurance information, you now have the ability to update your health insurance information via the Student Service Portal. All BSMP students must submit current health insurance information, including provider and coverage dates, to IIE via the portal by September 1st.

Reports & Forms
1. Enrollment Report: The deadline for submitting your Enrollment Report was August 4th. If you have not already done so, please upload the report immediately to the Student Service Portal. Please remember to upload your report under the “Enrollment Verification” category or the report will not be received.

2. Bank Authorization (EFT) Form: Please also remember to upload your Bank Authorization (EFT) Form and a copy of a voided check to the Student Service Portal. The form can be found on IIE’s website: http://www.iie.org/Programs/Brazil-Scientific-Mobility/Current-Students/Materials. IIE requires these documents in order to be able to deposit stipends and reimbursement EFTs that are issued throughout your program.

Transfer Travel
If you are transferring to a new institution for your academic study, IIE will contact you with individualized instructions for making transfer travel arrangements. If you do not receive instructions within a week of your fall semester start date, you should contact BrazilEnglishadmission@iie.org. You should not make any travel arrangements / reservations to move to your new university until you receive individualized instructions directly from IIE.

Academic Preparation
IIE has provided you with a few important reminders for course registration and what is expected of you throughout your scholarship. Please see the “Fica Uma Dica: Academic Reminders and Tips for Success” on page 3 of this Boletim.

Academic Training
It is a great time to start thinking about summer 2015! After completing at least one semester of academic coursework, you are expected to participate in a summer Academic Training opportunity (a full-time research activity, internship, or observership).

You will receive log-in information for the IIE Academic Training Website at a later date. For now, you should visit the Career Services Offices on-campus to begin working on your resume and start thinking of potential summer Academic Training opportunities.

Communication with IIE
Your main point of contact is now: BSWB_Fall@iie.org.

Please remember to always include your IIE ID number when sending emails to IIE.

See the back for the "Student of the Month!"
Student of the Month

Congratulations to your peer, Marina, for being selected as the August “Student of the Month!” The writing prompt for this month’s contest was: **What do you love about your field of study? What do you hope to do in the future?**

![Image](image.jpg)

**Name:** Marina Muniz Campelo  
**Field of Study:** Mathematics  
**U.S. Host Institution:** Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
**Institution in Brazil:** Universidade de Sao Paulo

“My major is math education, I’ve always been passionate about math and its secrets, but just in high school I realized that I couldn’t live without teaching people. When someone comes to you with a doubt, you can see in their eyes all the disappointment and also the curiosity. As you can explain and clear it all, their face start shining. It is a feeling that I can’t explain in words, you have to experience it to understand what I’m saying.  

Math is a magical thing which can explain the entire world around us. I wish everyone could see the beauty I see in math. You can find numbers, equations, formulas, patterns in everything you see, from a snail’s shell, which is described by the Fibonacci sequence, to the sound of a violin. Everything is math.  

I became specially interested in math education because of some subjects in high school that I could not understand; why did I have to follow an specific sequence of rules? No one told me why, and I really had to discover that. Why do these rules always work? This motivates me to study and learn how to teach these things and give them meaning, and it is what I would like to do in the future, especially with special needs children. I saw with my own eyes that they can learn with a little bit of attention and patience. That is all they need to reach the sky.”

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Next month’s question-  
*submit your essay and photograph to bswexperience@iie.org by Thursday, September 11:*  
**What’s the most interesting thing about your host institution?**
Maintaining a Full-Time Course Load

As a student with a J-1 visa status, you must be enrolled as a full-time student. This is your J-1 visa regulation requirement. You are expected to enroll in courses that are academically relevant for you, so should avoid filling in your required credits with courses that are not academic (such as badminton, yoga, or photography for students that are not in art and design). When registering for classes, it is your responsibility to check with your academic advisor and/or international student advisor to ensure that the course-load you are enrolled in is (i) defined as full-time status by your U.S. academic host institution; (ii) is appropriate for your aptitude; (iii) consists of at least 75% of credits directly related to your field of study as outlined on the first page of this TOA, with the remainder 25% or less of credits in academic-related coursework; and (iv) meets all institutional requirements and any other minimum academic requirements set forth by your U.S. academic host institution.

Students are only allowed to enroll in academic coursework. Non-academic courses such as physical education, music instruction, arts & crafts are not covered by your scholarship. Online courses are also not permitted.

At most universities, full-time student status requires a minimum of 12 credits, but this credit amount can vary, so check with your International Student Advisor if you have questions about what full-time status is at your institution. If you are considering taking more than 16 credits, you will need to receive approval from IIE and your Academic/International Student Advisor prior to enrolling in more than 16 credits.

Requests to drop below full-time status will only be considered in cases of documented medical necessity or proven English language difficulty. Having a full schedule, or not enough time to participate in activities outside of classwork, is not a valid reason.

During your first term studying in the U.S., we strongly encourage you not to take on too much. You should give yourself time to adjust to the culture and language before taking on very intense course loads. You should consult with your International Student Advisor and Academic Advisor about your course schedule.

Independent Study

You are not allowed to engage in any research projects during your first academic term. However, if you have already completed one semester of full-time academic (non-English) coursework, and you have a GPA of at least a 2.0, you may participate in an independent study if it is: 1) in your field of study; 2) located on-campus; 3) supervised by a professor and 4) fulfilling no more than 25% of your credit load.

Maintaining a Satisfactory Grade Point Average (GPA)

Because you are on a fully funded scholarship program, it is expected that all students will maintain good academic standing. Good academic standing means students will maintain a full-time course load and a minimum GPA of 2.0. Students who fail to meet this requirement are subject to the penalties of their host institution and are in jeopardy of having their scholarship terminated early as determined by CAPES/CNPq.

What Is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is a term you may not be very familiar with but is taken very seriously in U.S. academia. Plagiarism is defined as taking credit for someone else’s work, methods or ideas without their permission or proper acknowledgement. Plagiarism can take form when one student:

- Copies or borrows another student or author’s work without their permission or making a citation
- Cheating or getting assistance on exams
- Paraphrasing someone’s work and not giving credit

Citations should be used to give credit to the original author and to reference facts. When a student plagiarizes, this is seen
as a form of academic dishonesty. If a student is proven to plagiarize there is some form of disciplinary action taken. This could result in an automatic grade of F for an assignment, academic probation or expulsion from the university. Each student must demonstrate academic integrity by being honest at all times. Honesty is fundamental to good scholarship and is consistent with each institution’s codes of conducts.

Ideas are seen as individual property and must always be referenced if these ideas are not your own. It is your responsibility to be aware of the academic integrity, expectations and policies of your institution and to abide by these rules. Whenever in doubt about the parameters of plagiarism and whether or not you are doing something incorrectly, please consult with your professors and advisors for additional guidance.

Add/Drop Period and Course Withdrawals
There is a period during the academic semester (usually within the first 2-3 weeks) during which you are allowed to add or drop a class.

There are proper procedures to successfully and officially add or drop a class during the designated period. Usually, you are not able to add or drop a class by simply emailing or speaking with your professor. Get in touch with your advisor and registrar’s office to learn about these deadlines and the proper way to act within the valid timeframe. Remember you should always maintain full-time status if you are dropping a class.

If you decide you do not wish to take a course after the add/drop period, you will need to withdraw from the course. Withdrawals appear on student transcripts as a grade of “W”. This grade does not factor into your average. Many universities have a cutoff date for withdrawals, and will not allow you to withdraw from a course after that point. If you are having significant problems with a course, you should consult with your Academic Advisor and IIE. It may be acceptable for you to withdraw if you can still maintain full-time status.

Academic Resources on your Campus
The number one thing you should always remember is: do not be afraid to ask for help when you need it!

No one knows everything and you will not be judged for asking questions. Many students feel a sense of pride and trust that they will be able to figure things out on their own. Seek help before there is a problem! There are many resources available on your campus for students to ask for help. Because the resources are already in place, you should use them whenever in doubt.

Office Hours
Teacher relations are very important to your success throughout your academic career. Your professors are people just like you and are often great advisors, mentors, and can write recommendations or offer insight into your prospective fields. The time you spend speaking to a professor might provide academic training opportunities or put you in touch with great people. Every professor provides their students with resources outside of the classroom. The professor will either have office hours or assign their teaching assistant office hours to assist students on a weekly basis. If you go to these office hours, you should go prepared with your questions. Please keep in mind that you are not the only student in the class, so you should be respectful of the teacher’s time and that other students may want to meet with them. Sometimes you can ask a quick question right before or after a lecture if there is a window of time, but be aware of your teacher’s time constraints.

Tutor Center and Writing Lab
Sometimes there are tutoring centers or writing labs on your campus. You learn more about these resources if you need help. Getting a tutor can be a free service as well as using your writing lab for help with an essay.

Study Groups
Study groups are a great option as they provide mutual support to help you get through the difficult classes. Fellow classmates can help motivate you and keep up with the pace of the class. Keep in mind that if you’re working with friends, you should maintain focus and study. Do not get distracted.

A Few More Things to Consider…

Time Management
Be sure to plan ahead and make the best usage of your time. Decide when you will set aside time outside of the classroom to work on projects or prepare for exams. If you don’t do so well on your first test, think about what went wrong. Do you need to dedicate more time to a subject? Are you prioritizing the subjects you need to spend the most time on?

There is a natural tendency to start with what’s easy first. This may seem like a good idea but not the best solution in the long run. By the time you get to the more difficult work, chances are you’ll be mentally exhausted. You should attempt your harder assignments first while your mind is fresh and your energy is high.
**Be Realistic**

You are encouraged to be realistic about your time and know your limitations. For example, if you know it will take 5 hours to work on an assignment, don’t try to do it in 2 hours. Think realistically about how long it will take you to do something. You don’t want to stress yourself out or set yourself up for failure.

Your scholarship requires you to maintain a 2.0 average (in the U.S. GPA system, A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and F=0). CAPES is informed of the academic performance of all students, including those who do not maintain a 2.0, and it is their decision whether or not students will continue the program. If a course is proving to be too difficult for you, you should reach out to your academic advisor immediately. Do not wait to seek assistance as the longer you wait, the fewer options you have.

**Do Not Procrastinate**

You shouldn’t leave your studying until the last minute. Have you ever noticed when you cram for an exam (meaning you wait until the day before/stay up all night to memorize all the information you’ll need to know) you hardly remember anything you studied after the exam is over? Cramming does not support retention.

You should study in chunks. Keep up with the reading assignments, labs and homework. Study for exams over a period of time and not just the day or two before. Taking the time to study will yield better results in the short and long run. Não faça amanhã o que você pode fazer hoje!

**Do Not Skip Class and Avoid Tardiness**

You should always attend your classes and be punctual. The only time class should be missed is if you are sick.

If you are in a situation where you must miss class, you should ask a reliable person to take notes for you or check if you professor’s lecture notes will be online so you don’t fall behind.

**Effective Note Taking and Listening**

There are always classroom cues as to what’s important. If a professor takes the time to write something on the board, speaks louder, changes their tone, repeats a concept several times, is excited about a topic, or even says key words like “this will be important”, you should definitely be paying attention. Have a notebook for each subject and take notes in your classes. It is a good idea to review your notes on a daily basis. If something doesn’t make sense, this is an opportunity for you to visit your professor during their office hours for clarification.

Also, remember to pay attention. Do not get distracted during your lectures by Facebook, texting, or talking to your friends.

**Participate**

Participation is often a part of your grade, especially in smaller classes. You may feel reluctant to speak in front of a group of people, but this gets easier with time. Your participation will keep your interest in the class and your professor will appreciate a student who is engaged in their lecture.

**Have a Good Attitude**

The right frame of mind makes all the difference. Take a minute to think about what motivates you or the purpose of your program. Why are you here in the U.S.? What outcome do you want to achieve?

Seeing the bigger picture helps you understand why you need to go to class, finish your lab assignment, or study on a Friday night when you really don’t want to. You are here to improve yourself, so let that be your motivation and frame the way you study and engage in your classes. Have a positive attitude!

**Stay Healthy**

It is important to take care of your body as well as your brain. This means you should eat right, exercise, and get enough sleep.

College can be stressful at times, so you should always try to maintain a healthy study/life balance. Make the time for an activity you enjoy which releases your stress such as reading, watching your favorite TV show/movie, exercising, etc.

We hope that you have found these tips helpful and can use these to help guide you through your studies. Keep up the hard work and remember that you have advisors on your campuses and IIE to reach out to at any time if you need additional support.

Best of luck with your academic studies!