



SLAVIC

BABA YAGA

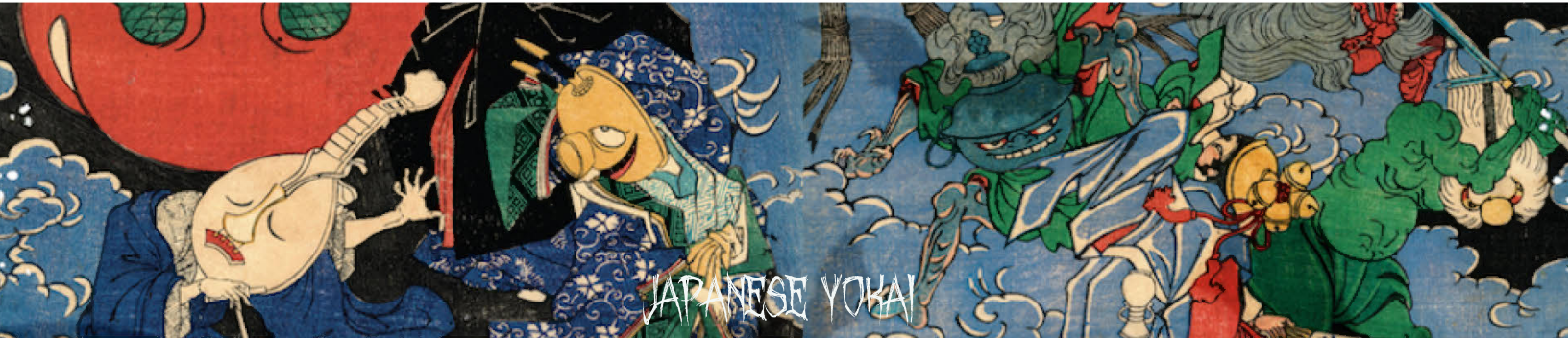


AMERICAN
ANNABELLE



LATIN

N LLORONA



JAPANESE YOKAI



SCANDINAVIAN
TROLL

GloBull
Lens

 **USF World**
International Student Support

**SPOOKY
EDITION**

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celebrating HALLOWEEN around the world

Autumn is here, which means that my most favorite and frightening holiday, Halloween, is also coming soon. Why do I love this holiday? Well, who doesn't love free candy and fun costumes? There has always been a debate about where this celebration comes from since it has different meanings and traditions in various countries. With Halloween just around the corner, let's talk about how it is celebrated in different cultures!

Train or Treat in Japan

Halloween was not really celebrated in Japan until Tokyo Disneyland held its first event in the 2000s, and various places started adopting the tradition. One of the popular places to celebrate this holiday in Japan is, of all places, on trains. Who would have thought that a usually calm place like the train could become one of the most popular spots during Halloween, with parties, competitions, and events held inside them? This is how Halloween is celebrated in Japan.



Día de los Muertos "Day of the Dead"

In Mexico, it is believed that from October 31 to November 2, a portal between the world of the living and the world of the dead is opened. Altars with flowers, food, and photos are made so that loved ones who are no longer with us can see that they are still remembered and that they still have a place at the table. Disney's movie *Coco* does a great job of representing this festivity and how it is believed to take place in the afterlife.



Samhain

In Ireland and Scotland, this holiday is known as Samhain, which translates to “end of summer.” It is a three-day celebration that welcomes the “dark half of the year.” Like Día de los Muertos, it is believed that there is an opening between the spiritual and physical worlds. The Celts believed that, aside from gods and ancestors, fairies also made their presence known at this time, and they were somewhat feared. Offerings were left outside of villages, and people would dress up as animals or monsters to avoid being kidnapped by the fairies. It is believed that from this tradition of dressing up, the custom of Halloween costumes was born, and over time, the celebration’s name was changed to ‘All Hallows Eve,’ eventually becoming Halloween.

A Celtic Holiday



Pangangaluluwa A Filipino Holiday

This Filipino celebration is held on November 1. Children dress in white to blend in as ghosts or souls in limbo, going door-to-door singing and praying. In return, like trick-or-treating, they are given money or kakanin, a Filipino version of rice cakes.

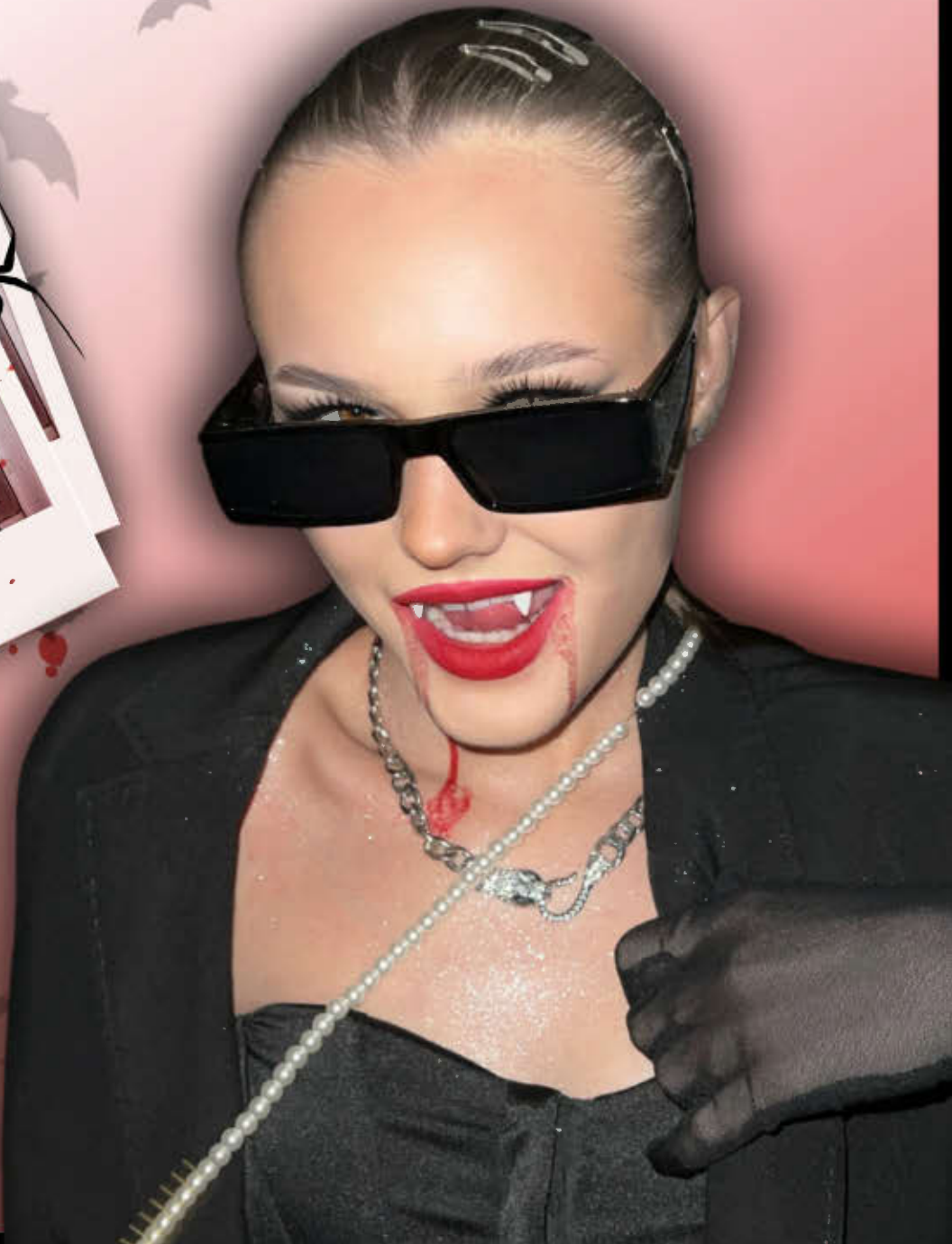
It's interesting to learn the origins of Halloween, and how “universal” it has become with cultures celebrating this holiday differently. Wherever you are in the world, we wish you a happy Halloween!

MUSHA'S

Spooky Season Guide



**HAPPY
HALLOWEEN**



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One of the spookiest times of the year is right around the corner, and you might be wondering how to celebrate Halloween. No worries—I've got you covered! In this article, you'll find exciting activities and places you can visit this October to experience the true American Halloween spirit.

PUMPKIN CARVING – THE ULTIMATE CLASSIC



Pumpkins are an iconic Halloween symbol, with a history of carving them that dates back centuries. If you're curious about why we carve pumpkins, you can check out this fascinating story on the history of pumpkin carving.

Enjoy!

Now, back to the topic at hand: pumpkin carving is a fun activity that you can enjoy with friends or even solo! It's not only creative but also incredibly therapeutic and de-stressing. I've included some inspirational photos here to help you get started. All you'll need is a pumpkin carving kit, a marker, and your imagination!

And don't forget—once you've finished your pumpkin masterpiece, be sure to share your creation on Instagram and tag @usfworld_iss. We'll share your posts, stories, or reels on our account!



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SPOOKY MOVIE MARATHON

Another Halloween tradition I love is a spooky movie marathon. You can either curate a list of horror films you've never seen before or stick to classic Halloween favorites for a nostalgic night. Grab some snacks, invite your friends over, and enjoy a cozy yet terrifying night of horror!

For those who aren't easily scared, here are my top 3 must-watch recommendations:

1. THE CONJURING (3 MOVIES)
2. ANNABELLE (3 MOVIES)
3. THE TAKING OF DEBORAH LOGAN

Disclaimer: These movies are seriously scary, so proceed with caution!



Now, let's move on to one of the most thrilling Halloween experiences: amusement parks! Luckily for us, Florida is home to several parks that go all out for Halloween. One of the top choices is Universal Studios' Halloween Horror Nights in Orlando.

This event runs from September 30 to November 3 and features 10 terrifying haunted houses, including 'A Quiet Place,' 'Insidious: The Further,' and 'Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire.' As you navigate through these parks, you'll also encounter 5 Sinister Scare Zones, adding to the creepy atmosphere. In addition to these attractions, there are live performances and all the regular rides and attractions open for you to enjoy. It's a packed experience, and there's no chance you'll get bored!

My bonus professional Halloween tip to you: Buy your tickets in advance to save money. The closer you get to your desired date, the higher the prices tend to be. Also, be sure to plan ahead to make sure you know where to park and dine!

THEME PARK THRILLS
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS



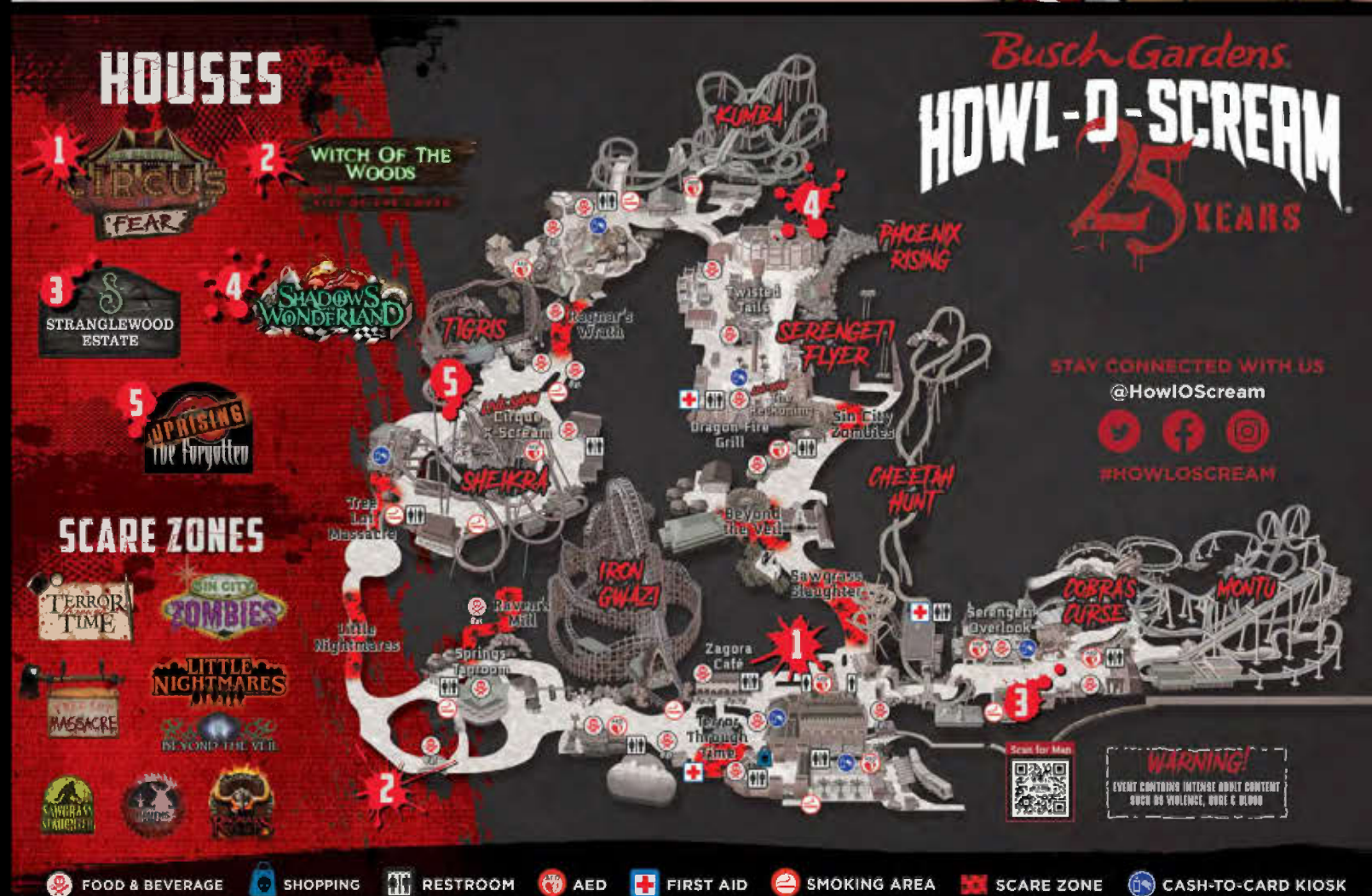
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BUSCH GARDENS HOWL-O-SCREAM

Another fantastic option is Busch Gardens' Howl-O-Scream, conveniently located near USF. Not only is this park easier to get to, but tickets are generally more affordable compared to Universal's event. Running from September 6 to November 2, you've still got time to plan your visit!

Busch Gardens was voted one of the Top 10 Best Halloween Theme Park Events by USA TODAY's 10 Best Reader's Choice Awards. This year, it features 5 haunted houses, 7 scare zones, and a variety of thrilling rides that stay open during the event.

My bonus professional Halloween tip to you: Look for discounts and special promotions! Busch Gardens frequently offers deals that will help you save on tickets.





Whether you're staying at home with friends for a spooky movie marathon or heading out to one of Florida's top Halloween attractions, there are endless ways to get into the Halloween spirit. From pumpkin carving to theme park thrills, these ideas will help you make the most of this spooky season. So, gather some friends, get your costumes ready, and enjoy everything Halloween has to offer this year!



SAFETY-MINDED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS STOP BY B-PASS EVENT!

The B-PASS (Bicycle + Pedestrian, Auto, Scooter and Skateboard) Safety event on September 12 was attended by several undergraduate and graduate international students, helping them to build their knowledge and skills in navigating the Florida roadways.

Because the rules and behaviors of the road vary so widely from country-to-country, the International Student Support (ISS) team prioritizes this event every semester to help keep its students safer. Over the years, B-PASS events have reached hundreds of international students, providing them with invaluable safety tips for driving, biking, walking,

skateboarding and motoring around on their scooters. After attending these events, international students have overwhelmingly indicated that they feel more confident to navigate the Florida roadways safely.

From the September 12 event, 88% of students found the information received at this event to be 'very helpful' with the same percentage expressing greater confidence in remaining safe on the roadways.

Understanding Protocols when Stopped by A Law Enforcement Officer

STATION 3

WHAT TO DO WHEN STOPPED BY A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

DISCUSSION POINTS

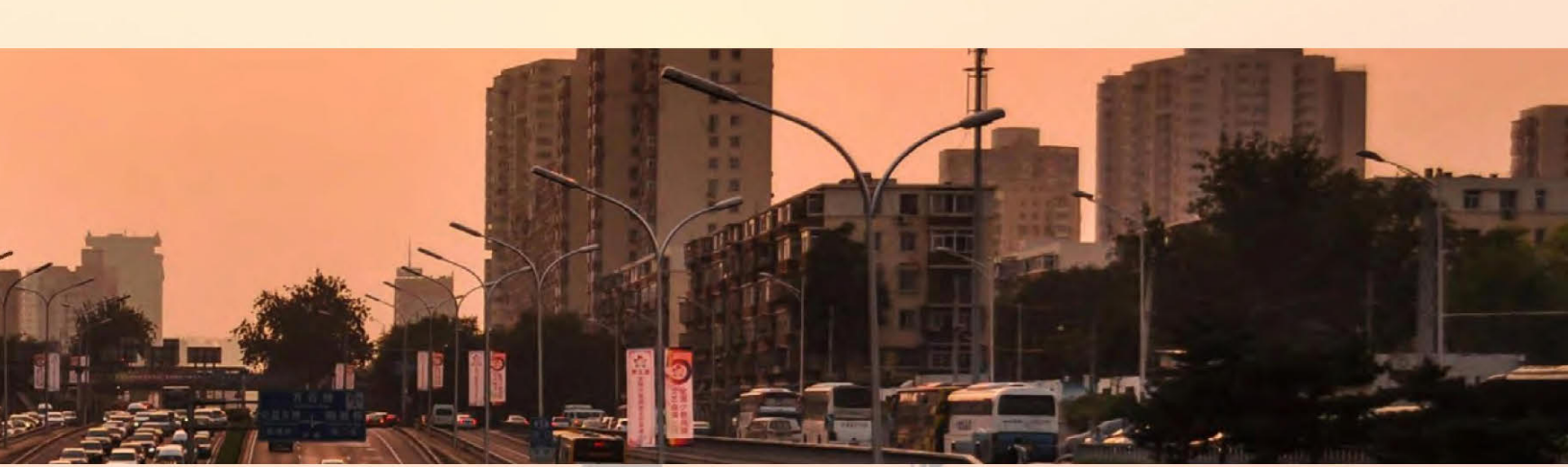
- What are the rights of a driver when stopped by a law enforcement officer?
- What are the responsibilities of a driver when stopped by a law enforcement officer?
- What are the consequences of not following the rules of the road?
- What are the consequences of not following the rules of the road?

WHAT TO DO WHEN A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER STOPS YOU IN YOUR CAR?

- Communicate your actions in advance by telling the officer what you will be doing before you move.
- If requested, you must give the officer your driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance.
- If you are issued a citation, you will be asked to sign it.

Checklist:

- Driver's License
- Vehicle Registration
- Proof of Insurance

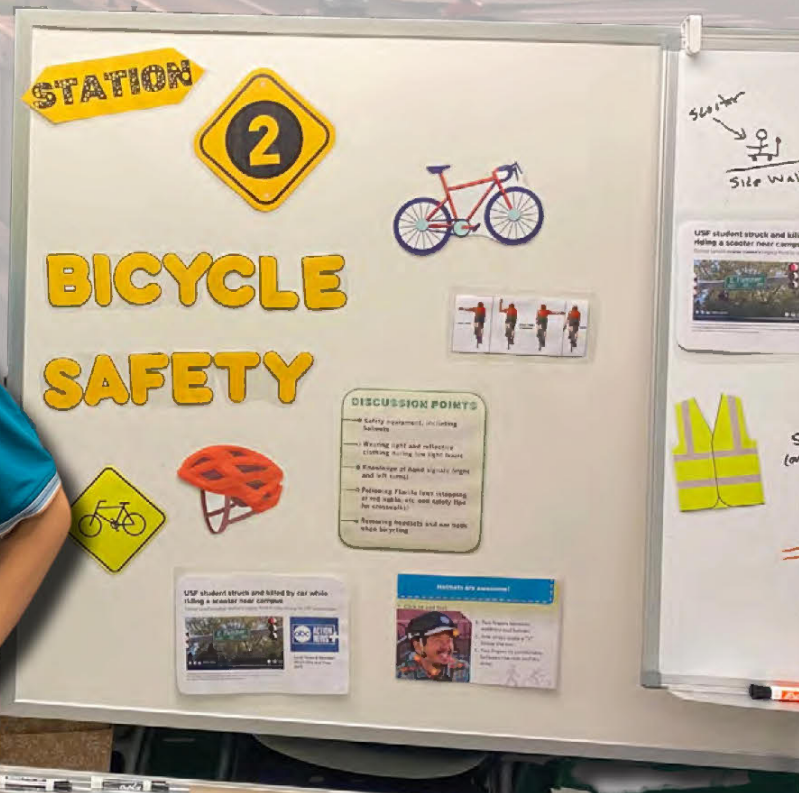


Megabwati Dey, an undergraduate student from Bangladesh majoring in Environmental Engineering, said that she didn't realize that drivers were supposed to remain in their cars when stopped by a police officer. "In Bangladesh, we sometimes get out (to meet the police officer)." Megabwati said that she would also be sure to make eye contact with drivers when using crosswalks. "Even if I have the right to cross, my safety is more important."

Bao Dinh, an undergraduate student from Vietnam majoring in Computer Engineering, said that he didn't realize it was advisable to walk on the left side of the road (facing oncoming traffic) when there were no sidewalks available to walk on. He also agreed with other students that he'd wait for cars to stop before walking onto crosswalks. "I can do everything right, but if I try walking (on a crosswalk) and a car doesn't stop, I can get hurt."

The ISS team is considering conducting one more B-PASS event in late October to reach more students with this important safety information. "We want our students to be safe," said Janna Eveland, Associate Director of the International Student Support team, "and we will continue to have these types of events to help them learn the rules and regulations of Florida's roadways."

Bao Dinh Knows the Importance of Bicycle Safety



Hey Bulls, Get ready for International Education month

Hey, our lovely bulls! November is almost here, which means it's time for one of the most exciting months at USF – International Education Month (IEM)! If you haven't heard about it yet, don't worry, I've got you covered. IEM is our university's unique way of celebrating everything global, which is something you don't want to miss.

WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION MONTH?

International Education Month is USF's extended version of International Education Week, a national initiative by the U.S. Departments of Education and State. Instead of just one week, USF dedicates all of November to celebrating global connections across its Tampa, St. Pete, and Sarasota-Manatee campuses. It's a chance to explore different cultures, join international programs, and discover opportunities like study abroad and global internships.

Whether you're curious about new cultures, networking, or just trying international food, there's something for everyone!

WHO'S INVOLVED?

IEM is for everyone at USF! Organized by USF World, it's a collaboration across colleges, student organizations, and faculty. With students from over 140 countries, IEM helps students by connecting them through shared learning.



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International Student Support

International
Education Month

USF World

WHAT HAPPEN DURING IEM?

IEM will feature some of the following educational activities:

Study Abroad Fairs & Info Sessions: Meet advisors, explore programs, and learn about scholarships to plan your next global adventure.

Cultural Festivals & Showcases: Enjoy food, music, and art from around the world.

International Panels & Guest Speakers: Learn from global experts and alumni about international careers or global issues.

Global Career Workshops: Get tips on building an international career, from working abroad to internships and networking opportunities.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED

Follow USF World on social media for event updates, and check out the full calendar on their website. If you are part of a student organization, find out if they are hosting or participating in any IEM events—you might even be able to help!

WHY YOU SHOULDN'T MISS OUT?

International Education Month is about more than just attending events—it's about expanding your horizons and becoming part of a global community. Whether you're looking to meet new people, learn about different cultures, or get involved with international opportunities, this is your chance. Plus, you'll have fun and maybe even discover new passions or career paths.

So, let's come together this November and make International Education Month a time to celebrate USF's diverse, global spirit! I'll see you at the events—let's explore the world, right here at USF!

Go Bulls!



Looking for an Apartment? Consider the Benefits of Living On-Campus!

Living on-campus is more convenient for students, because all of their classes, dining halls, and grocery store are all within walking distance. Off-campus students who are located further from campus may have to ride on public transport or purchase bicycles, scooters or cars to reach campus or visit their nearest restaurant or grocery store.

Living far from campus is not only inconvenient, but also costly. Scooters and bicycles can cost hundreds of dollars to purchase, while cars can cost thousands. Purchasing a car has the added expense of auto insurance, which is mandatory in the state of Florida. And, if you plan to park on the USF campus, you will also need to buy a parking permit. This all adds up to a lot of money for a student. While many of the public buses are free to use with a valid USF ID card, they are generally considered a slower form of transportation, which is due to their frequent stops.

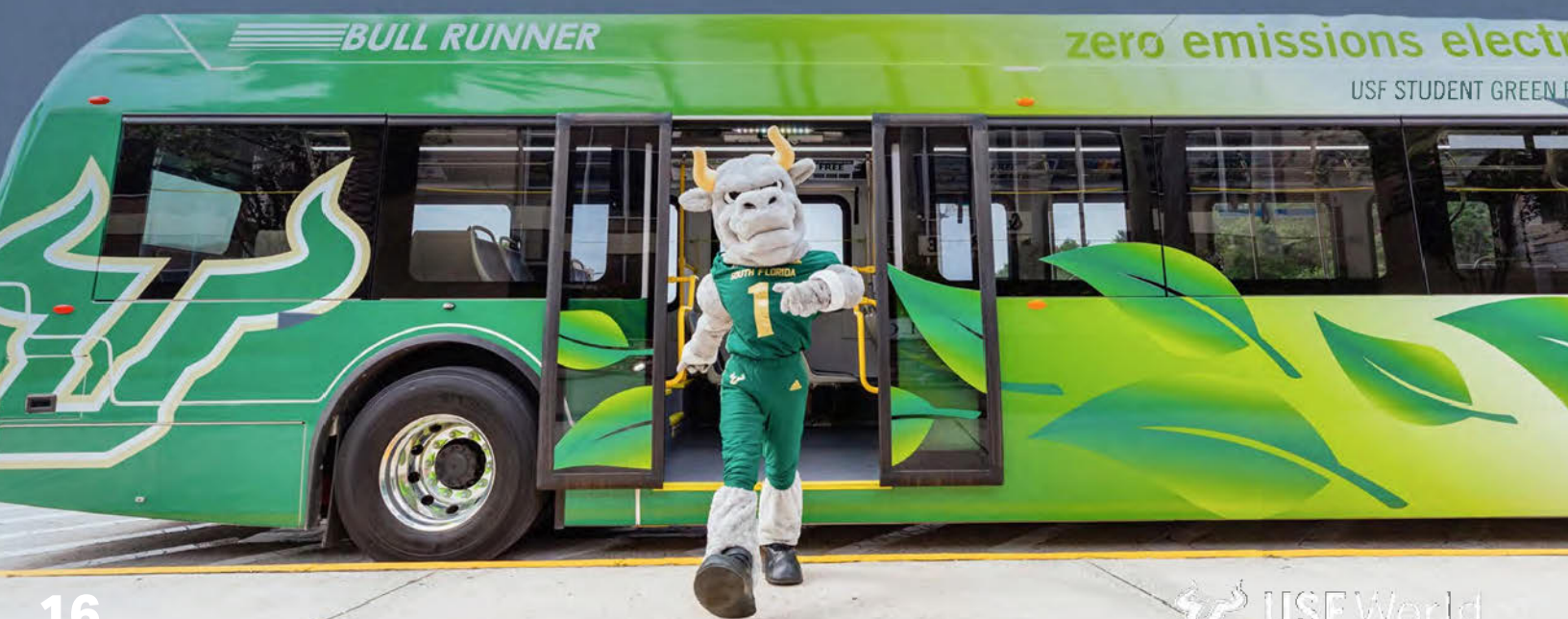
Public buses are also popular with students, meaning that they are often filled to capacity, causing students the inconvenience of having to wait for the next vehicle. When this happens, students can arrive late or even miss their entire class.

Not everyone is a talented chef or baker. For those with subpar cooking abilities, there is the option to purchase a USF meal plan. This is really convenient for on-campus students, who can walk to the Hub or Juniper Dining Hall whenever they want to eat something. For this reason, living on-campus is perfect for those with limited cooking abilities, giving them time to learn how to perfect their culinary skills for a later date. The university offers an added layer of support to those experiencing challenges with their roommates.

For issues with roommates on campus, students can always turn to a trained residential life coordinator with experience in conflict resolution, who will help mediate roommate disputes. This level of support is not provided for students living off-campus, since the building management personnel at apartments may not have the same level of knowledge and experience in conflict resolution.

And, if students need to change apartments because of a roommate conflict, they may be charged a fee to move to another room in the apartment complex. If there are no other rooms available, students may not be allowed to break their leases without expenses and move to a different apartment. It is important to consider the added expenses of utilities when identifying an apartment. For students living on-campus, the costs of electricity/power, water, trash removal and internet are all included with the price of rent. However, some off-campus apartments separate these costs, which means that students can pay an additional \$200-\$400 per month in utility costs.

So, when the time comes for you to consider whether to select an on-campus living accommodation at USF or an off-campus apartment or house, be sure to think about all the potential cost savings and conveniences of living on-campus. It's your choice to make, but we want you to be informed consumers in the apartment market.



Planning to Live Off-Campus? Here are some of the Advantages!

Some students will argue that on-campus apartments are the best possible living arrangements, but I disagree. While there are many benefits to living on-campus, I am going to tell you about some of the comparative advantages of living in an off-campus apartment.

Ability to stay during breaks: Off-campus apartments typically offer 10- or 12-month leases, which means you'd be able to stay in your apartment during the summer and winter breaks. This is very convenient, because you won't have to make special arrangements for yourself and for your property during the break periods.

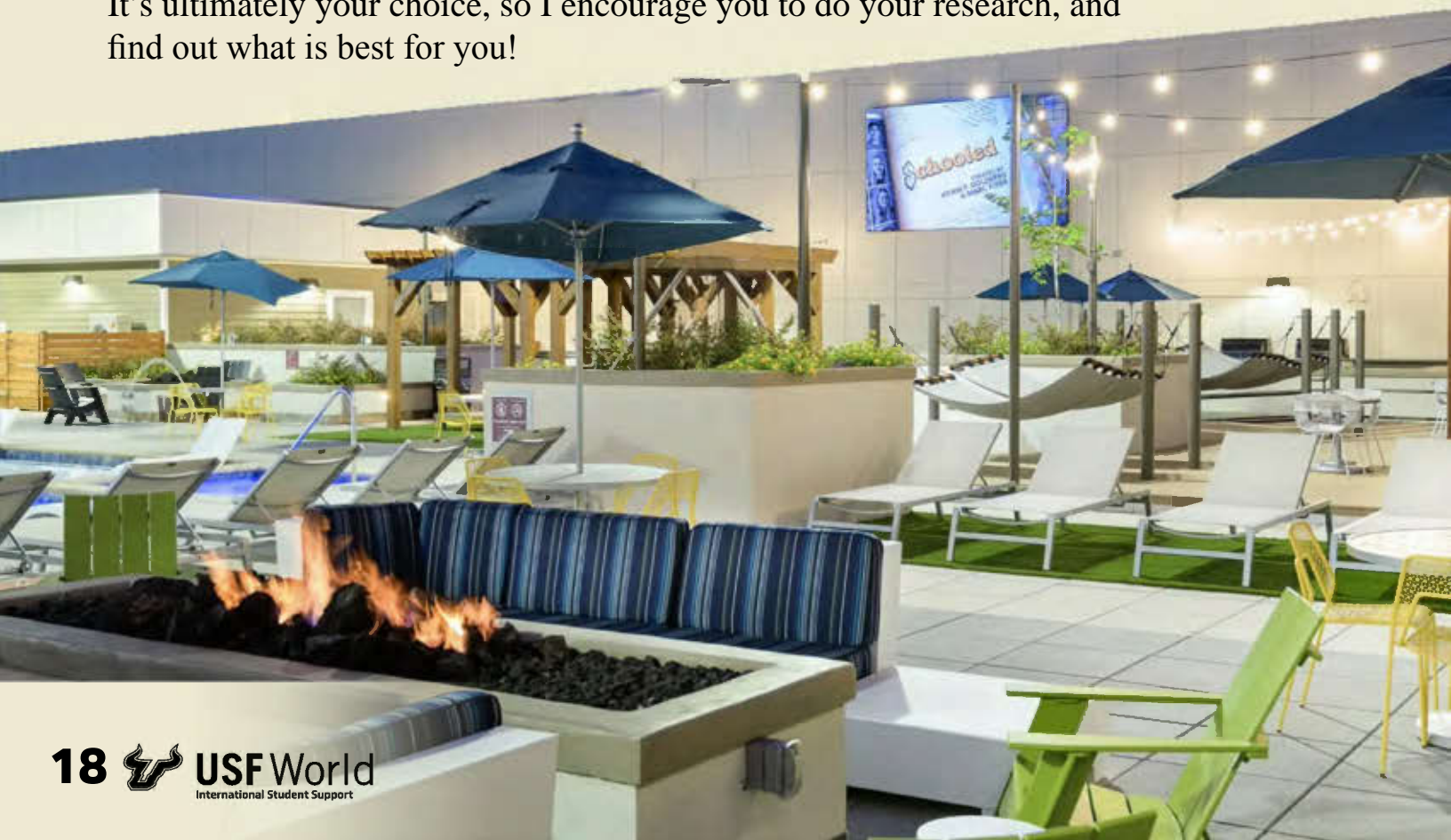
Privacy and space: Living off-campus can be more comfortable because there are more options to secure your own room, and sometimes even your own bathroom, depending on the apartment layout. These apartment style options are much more limited on campus.



Kitchen facilities: Some of the on-campus room styles offer hallway-kitchens, which are shared by many different students. However, in off-campus apartments, students have access to kitchen spaces shared only by their roommates. This means shorter wait times to use the kitchen facilities, and fewer chances that others might take your food. Additionally, off-campus apartments have more storage space to put your kitchen supplies in cabinets and in the refrigerator (no more having to deal with mini fridges!)

Amenities: Some students want a swimming pool, gym, and tennis court at their apartment complexes. Others may want to live in a gated community or have their own personal balcony. Off-campus apartments are different in terms of the types of amenities they offer. However, from my experiences, off-campus apartments offer more amenities. Be sure to research the different apartments thoroughly to learn more about the amenities offered.


Laundry: While sharing a laundry room within your building allows you to clean and dry your clothes, I definitely prefer having an in-unit washer and dryer in my own apartment. This makes life a little easier, not having to drag my laundry basket up-and down the hallway. Additionally, washing and drying your clothes in a coin-operated machine costs a few dollars per basket of laundry. So, if you want more convenience and less cost, consider finding an off-campus apartment that has washing and drying machines within the units. These are just a few of the benefits of living off-campus. It's ultimately your choice, so I encourage you to do your research, and find out what is best for you!



CHECKING IN WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER



We really appreciated the responses we received from those students who responded to our survey, asking their first week of classes. From this survey, the vast majority (95%) said that they were either doing 'Very Good' or 'Just Okay' after their first week. For those indicating that they were not doing so well, we made sure to contact them with an additional follow-up email to link them to valuable campus resources.



The top **three** challenges that students experienced during their first week included:

1. Academic Issues (Understanding their Instructors, Learning the Different Systems such as Canvas, and Keeping up with Assignments)
2. Transportation (the Bull Runner and HART Busses) and Finding their Campus Classes and other Departments
3. Feeling Isolated/Lonely was tied with Learning Time Management Skills

Some of the things that students said helped them the most included:

1. **Google Maps** (for finding their way around campus)
2. **New and old Friends** who provided support during this time, and
3. **University instructors** and **staff members**

Please remember that you have many on-campus resources at USF to help you to cope with such feelings related to loneliness, anxiety, sadness, and culture shock. We will be conducting many engagement activities to help you **connect with other students**, so you don't feel as lonely or isolated. And please remember that the **USF Counseling Center** has assisted thousands of international students over the years to cope with culture shock, test anxieties and other issues.

Please see the link below to the USF Counseling Center:

<https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/counseling-center/>

Your International Student Support team will send you at least two more emails with surveys this semester asking how you are doing. The next survey will come around your mid-terms, and the final check-in email/survey will be sent just before finals' week. This is just one of the ways we try to maintain contact with our international students to help support their well-being at USF.

Until we hear from you again, please stay well and safe.

De-Stress Fest

Medicine for the Mind and Emotions

As the mental pressure of midterms exams creeps in, I often find myself buried under piles of notes and textbooks, drinking more than the daily recommendation of caffeine and determined to finish. After countless hours of studying, I have learned that taking a step back to de-stress can be just as important as studying itself. That is why a week-long event centered around de-stressing activities is not just beneficial, it is crucial.

I have experienced the late-night study sessions that turn frantic because there is so much information to take in and retain, only to realize that I am just exhausting myself. It was not until I started scheduling de-stress activities into my daily routine that I truly understood their value.

I found that - when I prioritize relaxation - by walking outside for an hour, painting, drawing, coloring, or fitting together pieces of a puzzle—my mind clears up. On days when I am feeling overwhelmed, a good break from hours of studying can mean the difference between a successful or failed effort.

One of the best things about taking part in de-stress activities is bonding with other students. Often, I would form study groups in the library and discuss the course materials. This social aspect helped us to laugh about some of the challenges, easing our stress, and gain the general understanding that we are all in the same situation, navigating midterms together. This collective experience not only lightens the mood but also builds a support network that helps us all feel less isolated in our stress.

Your International Student Support (ISS) team will be conducting a week-long De-Stress Fest in the FAO Lobby from November 4-8 from 10am to 5pm, which will include fun, relaxing activities, engaging information, and cool prizes to help you ease your stress.

Some of our activities will include slime making, coloring and painting, puzzles, games, and building their own self-care kits. There will also be many USF departments and student groups at our event, who will show you ways to relax and take a needed break from courses.

This week-long event is more than just a break from studying; it is an essential part of any academic strategy. By embracing relaxation, you will prepare your mind for the challenges ahead and learn how to nurture your well-being. So, as midterms approach, please be ready to unplug and recharge, because we know that a calm mind leads to clearer thinking and better results.





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