



Message from the Director

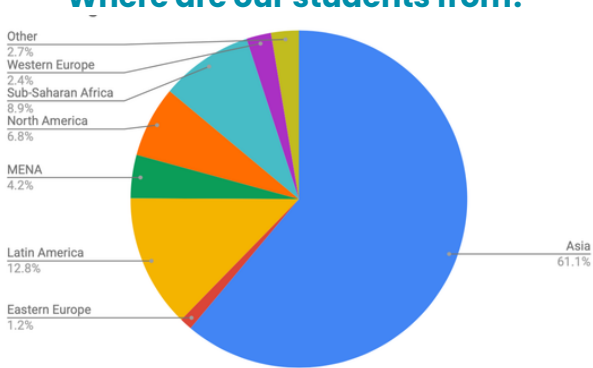


How quickly time passes! Not only are we in a new year with a new term underway, but January is nearly over. My hope for this edition of our quarterly newsletter is that it finds you hopeful in the new year ahead and can provide a brief pause to see what the OISS was up to last term.

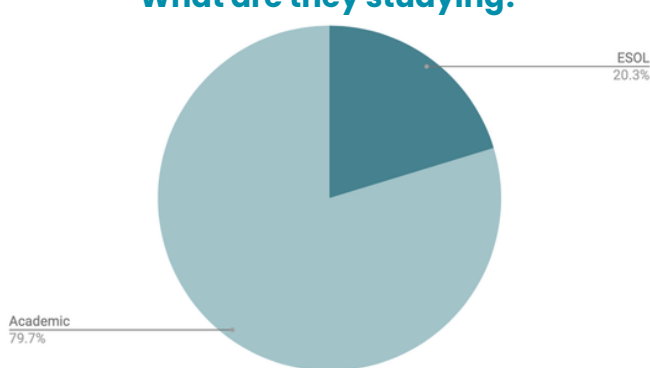
Times continue to be challenging for many of us and our students, but amidst the challenges, really great things are happening that we can celebrate.

Who are our F-1 international students?

Where are our students from?



What are they studying?



This fall, our community was vibrant with **337 students**, including **68 new students**, representing **63 countries** from around the globe! 80% of the students were studying towards an Associate degree and 20% of them were enrolled in the ESOL program.

Vietnam, China, South Korea, Canada, Colombia, and Japan topped the list of sending countries for Fall, adding to our wonderfully diverse community. We're also seeing strong academic momentum this term, with **80% of students enrolled in Academic programs and 20% in ESOL**.

Student Leader Spotlight

Meet **Yeva**, one of PCC's dedicated student leaders! ✨

Originally from Russia, Yeva began her studies at PCC in Fall 2023 and quickly became involved on campus. She serves as a **Student Leader with Student Engagement**, helping plan, host, and organize on-campus events, and also as an **International Orientation Mentor (IOM)**, where she supports and guides new international students during orientation weeks.



Yeva's favorite part of being a student leader is the sense of fulfillment she feels when helping other students find answers to questions she once had herself. She loves connecting students with the resources they need and making PCC feel like home.

Highlights from last term

Our students were busy in the fall creating new memories, making friends, experiencing American culture and sharing their culture with PCC!

🎃 We held our second annual **Halloween party** at Cascade and over 70 students, both international and domestic, attended. Who knew "Gangnam Style" is a party favorite again!

🌍 Students shared their cultures and languages during **International Education Week** held in November. One of the most popular events was Snacks from Around the World. Have you had a Paçoquita?

🛼 The **ice skating** and **pottery making** events were also popular this fall with students making memories with one another.



👉 You can also click on the photos below to read more about PCC's F-1 international students who have been highlighted in our PCC news.



F-1 International Emergency Fund

🍪 The OISS held a bake sale during International Education Week in November to raise funds for our F-1 International Student Emergency Fund.

Thank you so very much to those who donated baked goods and those who stopped by and donated to the F-1 International Student Emergency Fund! It was such a successful fundraiser we are hoping to make it an annual event! Your contributions mean so much to our team and our students!



Why donate?

International students often face significant financial vulnerability. Ineligible for federal financial aid, most scholarships, and many forms of emergency assistance, they have limited options when unexpected expenses arise—such as family job loss, currency fluctuations, rent increases, or car repairs. Visa restrictions require them to maintain full-time enrollment, pay out-of-state tuition, and limit employment to on-campus jobs. As a result, OISS staff frequently encounter students in urgent need with few available resources to provide.

Despite these challenges, international students remain deeply committed to their education and express strong appreciation for the support and kindness of PCC faculty and staff, which plays a critical role in their ability to succeed.

PCC's International Community Spotlight

🌟 Meet **Alegria Mateus**, the OISS's **Recruitment Specialist**! Born and raised in Quito, Ecuador, she pursued her education in the U.S. after attending an American-style bilingual school, wanting to gain the experience of being a student in an American college.



How does your experience help you do your job now?

Part of my job is to help international students learn about PCC and how it may be a good option for them. When interacting with them I often remember my time as an international student in Illinois and try to relate to what they are going through. I think of what were my fears, my challenges, and my feelings about the entire process and try to translate that into answers and solutions for our students. Also English is my second language so I can often suggest modifications to our communication from the lens of a non-english speaker.

Is there anything you want to say to our community?

International students come to the US full of dreams and willing to get the best out of this experience. They come from various backgrounds and have different perspectives which contribute to our classrooms, organizations and community in general. Interacting with international students is an enriching experience.

Are you a former international student? Let us know by emailing oiss@pcc.edu! We would love to share your story.

