Whether you are from a different country, state or even born and raised in Chicago, you are very welcome to join ISO! The International Student Organization opens its doors to everyone regardless of ethnicity, academic background, and fields of interest. It’s a chance to be yourself, find new inspiration, and promote your own culture as well as others.

ISO is a family made up of both international and domestic students with a sole purpose of helping each other to fully embrace our college experience and promote cultural exchange on campus.

Besides promoting our members and friends the opportunity to show off their own compelling facets of culture, we have also sponsored events and other organizations that aim to heighten awareness of world affairs and culture. Among some of our sponsoring and collaborative initiatives is the documentary premiere “Darfur Now,” “Bone making party” (in support of the One Million Bones project), and our most recent partnership with MOSTRA (Brazilian films festival that promotes the country’s culture and social challenges).

In addition to setting up events that celebrate diversity and spread the word about other cultures and ethnicities, ISO also produces a e-newsletter featuring current students statements and artwork, as well as other important and relevant content that help to maintain that our members informed, entertained and engaged.

Helping to put all this together and making sure that all ISO members find a home away from home, is the ISO e-board and advisor.

If you are interested in getting more involved with our events and the "behind the scenes" and join us, or even if you have any suggestions and feedback for the us, Drop us some lines!

internationalstudentorganization@loop.colum.edu
ISO TRADITIONAL MEETINGS

Every Friday @5:30 - MCA, ISO members get together for wrap up the week, relax, have some fun, learn and engage with other cultures.

Our meetings provide a safe and joyful atmosphere where members can express themselves and share their perfect way of having fun. Each Friday the E-board brings a different activity and/or event proposition making the meetings enthusiastic, friendly and very relaxing after a whole week of classes. Throughout the year ISO gets the members together on field trips to Chicago’s most iconic attractions, game and movie nights, as well as “cultural workshops”.

Among one of our most popular meetings we have game night, gingerbread house building, and thrifty shopping...just to mention a few of the ways you can have some fun after a week of class.

As for learning and engaging with different cultures, some of the ISO meetings provide workshops about iconic facts, habits and/or holidays of the many different cultures that are among us, like the Noruz celebration, Chinese new year, and carnival to mention a few.

ISO E-NEWSLETTER

ISO e-newsletter highlights important campus facts, showcases student artwork, fun facts and articles as well as ISO and other around campus events.

The content is opened to public contributions, which makes this a great opportunity for students to circulate their work and give it a buzz as well as contributing and getting involved with the ISO and Columbia community. Please feel free to contact us at our email in case you would like to participate.
Having spent the last ten years studying and exploring greater Eurasia, Rikki Brown found her way to Columbia College Chicago and into the role of International Student & Scholar Coordinator. After completing her BA in Russian Studies and teaching English in Astrakhan as a Fulbright recipient, she relocated to Istanbul to learn Turkish. Falling in love with the country, she decided to stay and found a job as an English language teacher at a high school in Ankara. Two years later, tearful departing that lovely land, she returned to the United States to pursue her Master’s degree. After serving as a fellow for the U.S.-Russian Social Expertise Exchange, with a focus on Youth & Education, Rikki started a Masters of Arts Program in Social Sciences at the University of Chicago. Upon completion of her thesis, which apropos focused on the cults of personality of Vladimir Putin and Recep Tayyip Erdogan as portrayed in the West, she arrived at Columbia College Chicago.

Outside of Columbia, Rikki is also greatly invested in the food and beverage industry. Her mother’s restaurant is ironically named “Turk’s” - no relation to the country, just an eclectic nickname for the original owner - imagine how much she capitalized on that story while in Turkey. Now, she spends some of her free time at Heritage Restaurant & Caviar Bar, which focuses on Eastern European gastronomy, and is also studying for her sommelier certification. Yes, she greatly enjoys fancily swirling her wine.

Most of all, she’s extremely excited to be part of such a vibrant team of educators, mentors, and influencers, and she looks forward to working closely with her colleagues to build relationships with the international students in order to help them better acclimate to their surroundings and enjoy all the amazing things Columbia and the City of Chicago have to offer!
Our events are a mix of informative workshops, presentations and fun, entertaining field trips and gatherings. Every semester the Office of International Students Affairs and the International Students Organization plan to put together these events with the goal of enriching and enhancing your college experience. Keep these in mind, stop by and join in. All events are open to Columbia College students and friends.

New International Student Mixer

At the start of every semester the International Student & Scholar Services and the International Student Organization hold a new and returning student mixer. Enjoy some great food, music and entertainment as you get to meet other Columbia College Chicago students from different parts of the world. Our students name this as one of their favorite events, because it provides opportunity to mingle with their peers and meet new people.

Annual Pumpkin Picking Field Trip and Carving Contest

Every fall, students take a field trip to a nearby farm to pick pumpkins and apples. The ISO spends the day at the farm enjoying food, entertainment and haunted houses & corn mazes. After picking the perfect pumpkins, the ISO holds a carving contest to crown the best and most creative jack-o-lantern.
"ISO brings a great opportunity for students to engage with both Columbia and the Chicago community. Being abroad in a different country with a different culture was a lot easier and welcoming with me participating in ISO meetings/events, I’m always meeting new friends and learning about other cultures...”

Bruna Jeremias

"ISO is a great place for me to have fun. People there are nice and are willing to hear different opinions. I don’t feel nervous to talk with ISO members when I make grammar mistakes, because they have more patience compared to the outside world and are willing to offer helps. They encourage me a lot. They make me feel I am being in home because all of them are sincere. With the help of ISO, I pull through the most difficult time and get improved quickly. Now I become more confident...”

Zihuan Ma

"It is good to be a part of an organization in which people come together to explore different cultures and meet people from all over the world. A place of mutual respect, constant learning and definitely the beginning of many friendships."

Heloisa Carramate

Thanksgiving Celebration Dinner

ISO in partnership with ISSS host a dinner celebration commemorating the thanksgiving holiday. Stop by and enjoy some turkey, mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie and the warm company of ISO & ISSS peers.

International Education Month

In November, Columbia College Chicago & ISO join the rest of the world in celebrating international Education Week which highlights the importance of education that expands beyond our boundaries. In the past, events have included film screenings, panel discussions and guest speakers, these events take place throughout campus.

World Enigma: Student Art Showcase

This is an annual multimedia exhibition and showcase featuring work by creative Columbia’s international students, members of the International Student Organization and "friends" of the International Student Organization! International students, through their art, have the power to show a side of themselves that is sometimes not associated with this population, while also showing the diversity within this group.

“Let’s talk issues” Workshop

The “Let’s talk issues” Workshop, held throughout the year, are designed to provide Information on different issues and offers tips on making the most of your college experience in the United States. Some Workshops have discussed Culture Shock, Employment for international Students and time management strategies.