

12/07/2017

Issue I

ISO Dependent Newsletter

Grant Opportunities for Women from Other Countries:

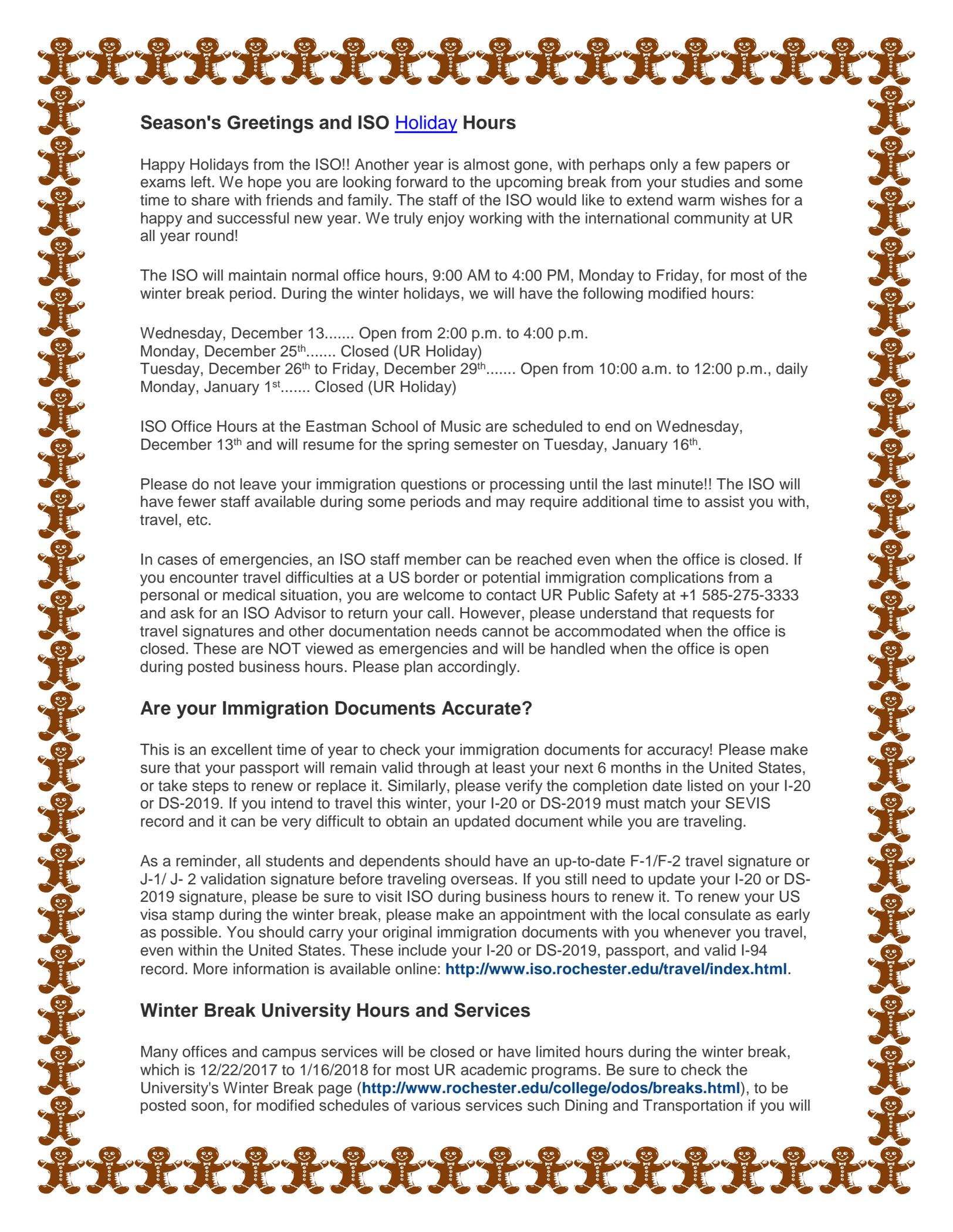
Margaret McNamara Education Grants (**MMEG**), established in 1981, "provide grants to women from developing countries to help further their education and strengthen their leadership skills to improve the lives of women and children in developing countries." The MMEG US/Canada grant program offers scholarships to women from other countries who are completing degrees in the United States or Canada and who are committed to improving the wellbeing of women and children in developing countries. Students must be at least 25 years old at time of application and a national from an **eligible country**. In the past, individual MMEG Scholarships of up to \$15,000 have been awarded in the US/Canada program. For complete information about the MMEG US/Canada grant program, scholarship eligibility, online application instructions and deadlines, please see the organization's website: <http://www.mmeg.org/apply/>. The application process is open now and available until January 15, 2018. You may submit questions about this grant by email to mmeg.ur.canada@gmail.com.

Rochester on Campus Intensive English Program:

University of Rochester ONCAMPUS, part of Cambridge Education Group is offering opportunities to coincide with the fall 2017 semester for international students and dependents to practice and refine advanced practical English skills. Their Intensive English Program offers modules on: US study skills, academic speaking and listening, academic writing, academic reading, and creative and critical thinking. Participants interested in the program can choose which modules they want to take. For current F-2 dependents and others without full-time study permissions, you may want to consult with ISO before completing registration. Fees apply. Additional information may be found online: <http://www.rochester.edu/global/programs/iep/>.

Updates to ISO Website and Database:

A much-needed and long-overdue facelift has been published to the ISO website. Be sure to check out our new look! Please note that some of our pages will have moved or been restructured to make the information more accessible and readable. If you have any ISO pages specifically bookmarked, you will want to verify if they are still working. If you have trouble navigating the comparable information on our new site, please let us know so we can point you in the right direction. Additionally, the ISO is preparing to launch a new database that will require a brief office closure to allow for systems migration and training. This is currently scheduled for late January and we will have more information available in the new year. We hope you will find these upgrades to be as valuable as we do!



Season's Greetings and ISO [Holiday](#) Hours

Happy Holidays from the ISO!! Another year is almost gone, with perhaps only a few papers or exams left. We hope you are looking forward to the upcoming break from your studies and some time to share with friends and family. The staff of the ISO would like to extend warm wishes for a happy and successful new year. We truly enjoy working with the international community at UR all year round!

The ISO will maintain normal office hours, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday to Friday, for most of the winter break period. During the winter holidays, we will have the following modified hours:

Wednesday, December 13..... Open from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Monday, December 25th..... Closed (UR Holiday)

Tuesday, December 26th to Friday, December 29th..... Open from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., daily

Monday, January 1st..... Closed (UR Holiday)

ISO Office Hours at the Eastman School of Music are scheduled to end on Wednesday, December 13th and will resume for the spring semester on Tuesday, January 16th.

Please do not leave your immigration questions or processing until the last minute!! The ISO will have fewer staff available during some periods and may require additional time to assist you with, travel, etc.

In cases of emergencies, an ISO staff member can be reached even when the office is closed. If you encounter travel difficulties at a US border or potential immigration complications from a personal or medical situation, you are welcome to contact UR Public Safety at +1 585-275-3333 and ask for an ISO Advisor to return your call. However, please understand that requests for travel signatures and other documentation needs cannot be accommodated when the office is closed. These are NOT viewed as emergencies and will be handled when the office is open during posted business hours. Please plan accordingly.

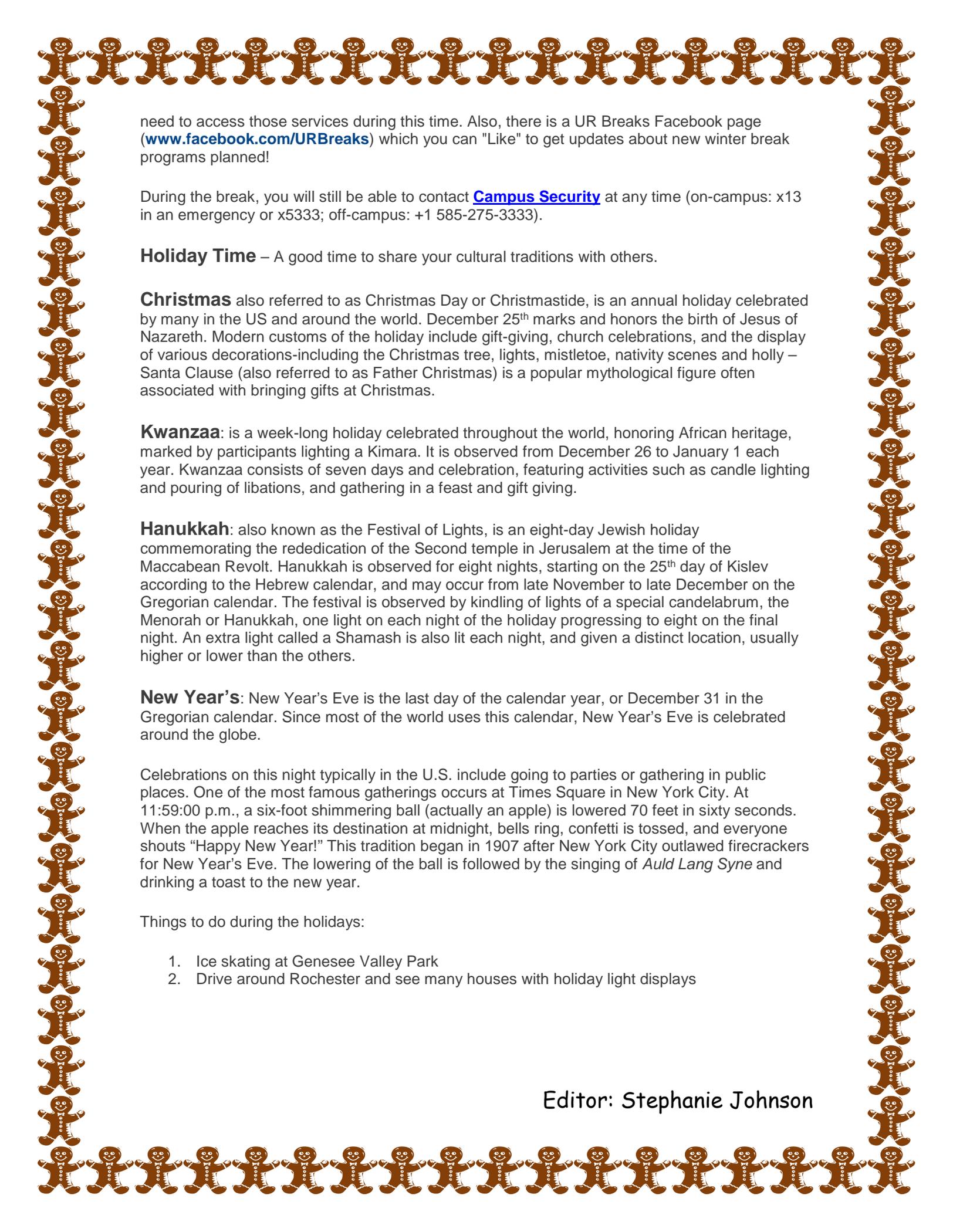
Are your Immigration Documents Accurate?

This is an excellent time of year to check your immigration documents for accuracy! Please make sure that your passport will remain valid through at least your next 6 months in the United States, or take steps to renew or replace it. Similarly, please verify the completion date listed on your I-20 or DS-2019. If you intend to travel this winter, your I-20 or DS-2019 must match your SEVIS record and it can be very difficult to obtain an updated document while you are traveling.

As a reminder, all students and dependents should have an up-to-date F-1/F-2 travel signature or J-1/ J-2 validation signature before traveling overseas. If you still need to update your I-20 or DS-2019 signature, please be sure to visit ISO during business hours to renew it. To renew your US visa stamp during the winter break, please make an appointment with the local consulate as early as possible. You should carry your original immigration documents with you whenever you travel, even within the United States. These include your I-20 or DS-2019, passport, and valid I-94 record. More information is available online: <http://www.iso.rochester.edu/travel/index.html>.

Winter Break University Hours and Services

Many offices and campus services will be closed or have limited hours during the winter break, which is 12/22/2017 to 1/16/2018 for most UR academic programs. Be sure to check the University's Winter Break page (<http://www.rochester.edu/college/odos/breaks.html>), to be posted soon, for modified schedules of various services such Dining and Transportation if you will



need to access those services during this time. Also, there is a UR Breaks Facebook page (www.facebook.com/URBreaks) which you can "Like" to get updates about new winter break programs planned!

During the break, you will still be able to contact [Campus Security](#) at any time (on-campus: x13 in an emergency or x5333; off-campus: +1 585-275-3333).

Holiday Time – A good time to share your cultural traditions with others.

Christmas also referred to as Christmas Day or Christmastide, is an annual holiday celebrated by many in the US and around the world. December 25th marks and honors the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Modern customs of the holiday include gift-giving, church celebrations, and the display of various decorations-including the Christmas tree, lights, mistletoe, nativity scenes and holly – Santa Clause (also referred to as Father Christmas) is a popular mythological figure often associated with bringing gifts at Christmas.

Kwanzaa: is a week-long holiday celebrated throughout the world, honoring African heritage, marked by participants lighting a Kimara. It is observed from December 26 to January 1 each year. Kwanzaa consists of seven days and celebration, featuring activities such as candle lighting and pouring of libations, and gathering in a feast and gift giving.

Hanukkah: also known as the Festival of Lights, is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Second temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt. Hanukkah is observed for eight nights, starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, and may occur from late November to late December on the Gregorian calendar. The festival is observed by kindling of lights of a special candelabrum, the Menorah or Hanukkah, one light on each night of the holiday progressing to eight on the final night. An extra light called a Shamash is also lit each night, and given a distinct location, usually higher or lower than the others.

New Year's: New Year's Eve is the last day of the calendar year, or December 31 in the Gregorian calendar. Since most of the world uses this calendar, New Year's Eve is celebrated around the globe.

Celebrations on this night typically in the U.S. include going to parties or gathering in public places. One of the most famous gatherings occurs at Times Square in New York City. At 11:59:00 p.m., a six-foot shimmering ball (actually an apple) is lowered 70 feet in sixty seconds. When the apple reaches its destination at midnight, bells ring, confetti is tossed, and everyone shouts "Happy New Year!" This tradition began in 1907 after New York City outlawed firecrackers for New Year's Eve. The lowering of the ball is followed by the singing of *Auld Lang Syne* and drinking a toast to the new year.

Things to do during the holidays:

1. Ice skating at Genesee Valley Park
2. Drive around Rochester and see many houses with holiday light displays

Editor: Stephanie Johnson