

JULY 2010 NEWS

ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

As announced in March, the next AG will take place on **Friday, October 15 at 11 a.m.** at CEA's center in the Marais. An agenda with the exact address and ballot for the *conseil* elections will be sent to all current members in September.

2010-11 MEMBERSHIP FORM & DUES

The membership form for the next academic year can be downloaded from the APUAF site (under *How to Join*). Dues are payable by check to APUAF and must be sent before October 15 to the address indicated on the form. If your program's legal status in France has not changed since 2009-10, there is no need to resend proof.

ELECTIONS – CONSEIL d'ADMINISTRATION

Anyone interested in serving on the *conseil* should send a one-paragraph "mini-bio" and a brief statement of how you plan to contribute to APUAF's mission and future development. There are 7 slots and the initial two-year term may be renewed once. The CA meets twice a year, usually in conjunction with the AG. We encourage you to get involved, and we welcome all candidates and new ideas!

UPDATE ON CAMPUS FRANCE, VISA & OFII PROCEDURES

Per the June bulletin, a meeting with representatives from CampusFrance, the Paris *préfecture* (SLU) in charge of student visa issues, and the OFII (immigration office) took place on June 18 in Paris. The two APUAF council members shared the results of the survey conducted in late May regarding ongoing difficulties with the visa application process in the U.S. and procedures related to residence permits (*vignettes de séjour*) in France.

CampusFrance: The CF director in Washington, D.C. has asked us to relay and emphasize the following advice to advisors and students on the U.S. side:

- **Processing time is 3 to 4 weeks** once students have registered on CampusFrance. Students should apply as early as possible. They should note their date of registration, and **wait at least 3 weeks** before contacting CampusFrance about their application status.
- When making inquiries, **students should contact CF via e-mail and specify their CF i.d. number, date of registration on the site and a phone number** where they can be reached. If the matter is urgent, it is best to send a fax.
- If students are unable to reach CF and request urgent assistance from a study abroad advisor, **contact information of CF staff is available to NAFSA and APUAF members via their web sites.** The limited CF staff in D.C. responds to hundreds of e-mails daily and cannot take calls from students.
- **CampusFrance cannot intervene at the consular level** if students have problems when they go for their visa appointment. CF's role is merely to provide updated information on required documents and facilitate the visa appointment.

Consulates: It appears that French consular officials in the U.S. met recently to discuss the idea of standardizing procedures and required documents in order to facilitate and expedite the visa process. It remains to be seen whether all consulates will become more flexible, but we hope the result will be fewer glitches and delays in some cities.

OFII: The “new” visa or VLS-TS (*visa de long séjour valant titre de séjour*) is a **multiple-entry visa** that *combines* two formerly separate documents: student visa + residence permit. In theory, students with a VLS-TS can re-enter France more than once and travel freely on weekends, even prior to receiving their *vignette de séjour* on the day of their physical exam.

In Paris, the OFII plans to set up a platform before fall 2010 in order to allow students (or program staff in the case of a group deposit) to submit their dossier electronically and receive their medical appointment via e-mail. Medical personnel will also be added to deal with the heavy volume of appointments in Paris.

In other cities in France, program staff are advised to contact local OFII headquarters and *préfectures* directly to inquire whether this may happen.

If a student’s file is complete, processing time in Paris between submission of the application and the physical exam is estimated at around 3 weeks. OFII officials told us that a physical can be rescheduled after the date indicated on the *convocation* but not before.

Group deposits: It appears that group deposits will also be doable online although depositing traditional paper files will remain an option. The sooner dossiers are deposited, the better. **Program staff should clearly indicate the files of *one-semester students* and their *departure date* so that these may be processed more quickly** in the event of a backlog. We are hopeful that smaller programs in Paris that don’t currently have an agreement with the *préfecture* for a *dépôt groupé* will eventually have one through the APUAF. A formal request has been made, and we are awaiting the *préfecture’s* response.

Renewals: It is possible for students with a VLS-TS to prolong their stay in France without returning to the U.S., *but* they must submit a request **two months prior to the expiration date** of their residence permit (*titre de séjour*) directly to the *préfecture*.

In Paris, students should go to the prefecture at 92, boulevard Ney where the SLU division (*Service de liaison avec les universités*) handles all student visa issues. Contact information for the SLU is available on the APUAF web site under **Previous News - January 2010**.

Remerciements: Many thanks to the 30 or so programs and colleagues in France and the U.S. who participated in the survey! Results of both surveys were shared with appropriate French officials on both sides of the Atlantic who expressed appreciation for the feedback and suggestions for improving procedures. Merci à toutes et à tous!

The implementation of new visa procedures has been challenging for *everyone*, and this issue is likely to become more complicated in the near future with the introduction of a biometric passport and visa. APUAF will do its best to keep colleagues regularly updated.

BONNES VACANCES! AU PLAISIR DE VOUS REVOIR A LA RENTREE !