TRAVEL REMINDERS

When you are traveling, it is important that you have all the following documents in order, even when taking a brief trip to Mexico or Canada or the islands adjacent to the United States.

1. **Valid Passport with valid visa stamp** in your passport (When you come back to the U.S. your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the anticipated stay); see the section on travelling to Canada, Mexico and the islands adjacent to the U.S. at the bottom of this page for additional information

2. **SEVIS Form I-20/DS-2019 with a signature** from a VISA advisor that will not be older than 6 months by the time you come back to the U.S. You and each member of your family must have a SEVIS I-20 or DS-2019 to return to the U.S.

3. **Evidence of financial support** (your personal bank statement, scholarship letter, etc.)

4. **Proof of Enrollment** (transcript)

****One week after your return, be sure to check that your I-94 entry record is updated and correct.****

**Your Visa Stamp & Applying for a New One**

Remember that a valid visa is necessary to **ENTER** the U.S. (but, if your visa stamp expires while you are here, you are here legally as long as you have a valid passport and an I-20/DS-2019). Therefore, if you have an expired visa stamp and want to travel abroad, you must apply for a new visa in your country. **You cannot renew your visa stamp in the United States.** Bear in mind that you will have to go through an interview and should check the consulate’s web site before leaving the U.S. to verify the procedure and necessary documentation. Visit the web site for the consulate where you will make your application. We suggest you have the following documentation:

- valid passport
- original financial documentation
- all previous and current I-20s/DS-2019s
- official, sealed transcript
- documentation from your academic advisor about what classes you have completed for your degree and what classes remain
- if you have changed to F or J status in the U.S., your I-797 approval notice
- I-901 SEVIS fee receipt (the $200 fee for F-1s and $180 for J-1s)
- Application forms can be downloaded at the following site: [http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/forms.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/forms.html)
- One passport-sized photograph (some consulates may require two photographs)

Unfortunately, it is not guaranteed that the U.S. consulate will renew your visa or even that you will be able to enter the U.S. even after getting the visa, although the likelihood of those two scenarios is very small. Please see the list below for other tips:

1. Be prepared to show ties to your home country.
2. Speak for yourself and be brief; it might help to have a sheet with a bulleted list to explain your situation.
3. Know the program you are studying and how it fits your career plans.
4. Explain what type of documents you are submitting.
5. Remember that the application process might be longer in some countries.
6. If your dependents remain behind, be prepared to explain how they will survive in your absence.

For more information about visas: [http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english.html)

**Automatic Visa Stamp Revalidation—
going to Canada, Mexico and Islands Adjacent to the U.S.**

If you are going to Canada, Mexico and the islands adjacent to the U.S., please verify directly with those countries regarding any visa requirements. If you have an expired U.S. visa stamp, some individuals can travel to these places for less than 30 days with an expired visa and re-enter the U.S. with no complications; this process is called **Automatic Visa Revalidation.** Note that if you apply for a new U.S. visa while in Canada, Mexico, or islands in the Caribbean, you will not be able to return to the U.S. In any visa status if the visa application is denied. If you are planning to make a trip to one of these places and have questions, please e-mail [VISA](mailto:VISA) or make an appointment to speak with your VISA advisor.
Traveling While On Optional Practical Training (Regular & STEM)

If you are entering the U.S. from overseas to resume or begin employment on OPT, be sure to have the following with you:

1. Your Employment Authorization Document (also known as the OPT Card)
2. Proof of employment (letter from your employer and any paystubs)
3. Documents 1-4 listed in the first section at the top of the other side of this sheet
4. If your spouse is traveling alone, she/he needs to have his/her I-20 and copies of your I-20 and EAD

If you have not yet received your EAD, please see an advisor about travel while your application is pending.

ENJOY YOUR TRIP!!!