



## Travel Outside of the U.S. on an F-1 Visa

### Basic Travel Documents

#### Passport

Your passport is your government's permit for you to leave and re-enter your country. Most passports contain an expiration date. In place of a passport, some students may hold a Certificate of Identity, which is roughly an equivalent to a passport.

Consult with your home country's Consulate or Embassy in the U.S. if you need to renew your passport. Your passport must be valid at all times. You are out of status if you are in the U.S. with an expired passport.

#### Visa

The visa stamp placed in your passport by the U.S. Consular Officer abroad was needed to enter the U.S. The visa shows the latest date on which you can apply to enter this country. It does not show how long you can stay here. It also indicates the type of visa you have, e.g. F-1. American visas are a computer-printed, adhesive-backed piece of paper that is placed on a page in your passport.

When you arrive at your port of entry, the U.S. Immigration Inspector examines your passport, visa, and your Certification of Eligibility (I-20) and determines whether you are admissible to the U.S. The Inspector will then stamp your passport, I-94 and immigration document with the date of entry, type of visa and length of stay. The Inspector will also enter this information into the SEVIS database.

It is necessary to renew your visa only if you plan to leave and re-enter the U.S. after your visa has expired. If it is necessary to renew your visa in order to re-enter the U.S., you may do so by visiting the U.S. Consulate in the country to which you are traveling. It is not possible to renew an F-1 visa while you are within the borders of the U.S. There may be restrictions on obtaining visas in a country other than your home country, so caution is recommended.

#### Form I-94, Departure Record

The I-94 shows that you have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. The physical I-94 is a small, white card usually stapled onto the U.S. visa page of your passport. It contains an eleven-digit identifying numbers (called your admission number), which the Immigration Service uses to keep track of your arrival to and departure from the U.S. The I-94 is usually collected when you leave the U.S. You will receive a new I-94 when you re-enter the U.S. The I-94 you receive may

be electronic. If you do not receive a physical I-94, at the border, visit [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94) to retrieve and print your number. You should deliver a copy of your new I-94 to the Registrar's Office for your file upon return to campus.

There may be a hand-written date in the upper right-hand corner of your I-94. This is your duration of status (D/S). You must either leave the U.S., apply for an extension, or apply for a change of status by that date. If D/S is noted, you will be considered in status as long as you attend school or pursue your exchange visitor program and your I-20 has not expired.

## Extending Your Stay

If your permission to stay in the U.S. is going to expire and you need additional time to complete your program, you may apply for an extension. You must apply for the extension **before**, ideally 30 days before, your stay expires. If you do not apply for the extension before the expiration dates on your I-20, you will be out of status and will have to apply for Reinstatement.

## SEVIS I-20

The three-page SEVIS I-20 is issued by the school for the program and level of study the student is currently pursuing. Page three of the I-20 contains space for electronic recording of extensions, full course enrollment waivers, transfers and employment recommendations, as well as endorsements for travel. The SEVIS I-20 contains a bar code and a unique SEVIS ID number beginning N00----. This number will remain the same for the student throughout his/her stay in the U.S.. Dependents of students are issued their own SEVIS I-20 and their own unique SEVIS ID number.

## Travel Outside of the United States

If you will travel outside the U.S. you should consult with the International Advisor first. Have your passport and I-20 with you when making inquiries about traveling outside the U.S. Please also note the following:

- Your passport must be valid six months beyond the date on which you plan to re-enter the U.S.
- Your visa must be valid for "multiple" entries into the U.S., and must be valid beyond the proposed re-entry date. Exceptions to this rule are for citizens of some countries for short visits to Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean Islands. For such trips you will only need your passport, your endorsed I-20, and a current I-94. In the case of trips to other countries, if the visa is valid for only one entry, or has expired, a new visa can be obtained from the U.S. Consulate in the country you are visiting by presenting your current I-20, evidence of financial support and either your current I-20 and an official transcript. You should allow enough time to obtain a new visa. Personal interviews and security clearances may apply and cause delays in the visa process. There is no guarantee that you will obtain a visa in the country you are visiting; you may be required to travel to your home country for the visa.

- All international students are advised to have their travel documents reviewed by the Registrar's Office. The I-20 must be endorsed by a DSO if you will re-enter the U.S. to continue your program of study.