



## REGULATORY INFORMATION

Regulations pertaining to entry to the USA, stay in the USA, and work authorization in the USA can be confusing and can change without much warning. The staff at the International Center is prepared to help with questions about regulations and procedures.

It is important that international students and scholars understand their rights and responsibilities, especially in the areas of maintaining status, employment authorization, and international travel. Speak with an advisor at the International Center BEFORE taking any action. Do **NOT** go to the San Diego Bureau of the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (CIS) with your questions.

## PASSPORT

Passport and related documents should be carried at all times. There are checkpoints between San Diego and Los Angeles and in East San Diego and Imperial counties. Students and scholars may be asked to show their documents at these check points.

It is the responsibility of all international students or scholars to note the expiration date of their passport and apply for a renewal at their country's consulate while in the USA. To contact foreign consulates, or to find out how to apply for visas and passports, please go to:

<http://www.embassyworld.com>

## VISA

A visa is a stamp which is issued by a US embassy or consulate overseas and placed in a passport. It is important **ONLY FOR ENTRY** into the USA. If international students or scholars travel outside the USA, they must have valid visas to reenter. **Please check with the International Center before traveling.**

To apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa, international students and scholars must present an I-20 or DS-2019, with evidence of financial support, to the US embassy or consulate abroad. The consular officer will ask for proof of intention to return to the home country after completion of program of study.

The visa stamp in the passport indicates a specific date of expiration. This expiration date determines only the last day in which the student or scholar may enter the USA and does not affect how long they can stay in the USA.

Citizens of Canada or the British Overseas Territory of Bermuda citizens do not need visas to enter the USA.

## I-94 STATUS CARD (ARRIVAL-DEPARTURE CARD)

At the port of entry to the USA, the inspector will issue a small white card called the "Arrival-Departure Record" (Form I-94). The I-94 card should indicate admission in F-1 or J-1 status. Everyone entering the USA in F-1 or J-1 status should receive a notation of "D/S" (Duration of Status). This means that the international students and scholars will be able to remain in the USA pursuing their program of study until the end date shown on their I-20 or DS-2019s. F-1 students get an additional 60-day grace period after completing their studies. J-1 Exchange Visitors get a 30-day grace period. If an F-1 or J-1 student or scholar has a specific date of departure noted on the I-94, it must be corrected immediately. Contact the International Center for procedures to obtain D/S status.

When leaving the USA, the I-94 card will be taken and a new one will be issued upon reentry (See page 6 for short trips to Canada and Mexico).

## CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY FORM I-20 OR DS-2019

The I-20 is the form used to apply for an "F" Student visa; the DS-2019 is the form used to apply for a "J" Exchange Visitor visa. International students and scholars must have valid I-20 or DS-2019s at all times during their stay in the USA. If the students or scholars travel outside the USA, they must also have a valid signature from the International Center on their I-20 or DS-2019 in order to return to the USA. The International Center asks for at least 30 days to process an extension of your I-20 or DS-2019. So please apply early.



## FAMILY MEMBERS

Legal spouses and unmarried children under 21 should apply for F-2 or J-2 visas to accompany the F-1 Student or J-1 Exchange Visitor to the USA. They will need their I-20 or DS-2019 form from the International Center and evidence of financial resources. If the dependents would like to come after the F-1 or J-1 has arrived the F-1 or J-1 may request the appropriate documents from the International Center.

Family members in F-2 status may not work in the USA under any circumstances. Also, F-2 family members are never permitted to enroll full-time in a course of study.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

The staff at the International Center can help you with questions you have about your documents. Many informational materials are also available at the International Student and Scholar Office website at:

<http://ucsd.edu/center/isso>

## TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE USA

### TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

After a temporary absence from the USA, you must present certain documents to reenter.

#### F-1 students must have the following:

- Valid passport
- Valid F-1 visa stamp in the passport
- Current signature on page 3 of the Form I-20 (obtained from the International Center).
- Recent transcript of grades if the student has attended school in the USA.
- Proof of financial support.

#### J-1 scholars or students must have the following:

- Valid passport
- Valid J-1 visa stamp in the passport
- Current signature on the Form DS-2019 (obtained from the International Center or from the program sponsor, if not UCSD).

## F-2 AND J-2 DEPENDENTS

Dependents in F-2 or J-2 status must also have valid passports and visas. They must also have separate valid I-20s or DS-2019s, with valid travel signatures, which can be requested from the International Center.

## CITIZENS OF CANADA OR THE BRITISH OVERSEAS TERRITORY OF BERMUDA

Citizens of Canada or the British Overseas Territory of Bermuda do not need to obtain a visa to enter the USA. They must, however, obtain an I-94 card at the port of entry to the USA and carry all of the other appropriate documents with them, including a valid I-20 or DS-2019.

## VISAS TO OTHER COUNTRIES

To travel outside the USA to a country other than the your home country, an entry visa may be required. Call that country's embassy or consulate in the USA for information or go to:

<http://www.embassy.org>

<http://www.embassyworld.com>

## EXPIRED VISAS

If international students and scholars are traveling outside the USA and their visa has expired, (or if they have changed status while in the USA), they will need to apply for a new visa at a US embassy or consulate abroad in order to reenter the USA. Please be aware that due to procedural changes at US consulates abroad, applying for a visa can take several weeks.



### APPLYING FOR A SECOND US VISA

To apply for a second visa, the international student or scholar will need to take a valid Form I-20 or DS-2019 and evidence of financial support to the US consulate. Students need to take their ID card, transcripts and other evidence that they plan to continue their enrollment. Scholars need to take a brief letter from their academic department confirming that they are expected to return to UCSD. The US consulate or embassy will not issue a new visa unless it is satisfied that visitors have a residence in his or her home country which they have no intention of abandoning.

Before applying for a visa, please prepare yourself by consulting the website for the US embassy you will be visiting. Go to <http://www.embassyworld.com> and find the embassy or consulate that you will be visiting. Go to the *Nonimmigrant Visa* section and make sure to follow the instructions. Many people are denied visas when they are unprepared.

**Note:** International students and scholars may have difficulty getting a visa from a US embassy or consulate in a country other than their own.

For security reasons, nationals of certain countries may be issued visas only after a security check has been completed, often taking 3 - 6 weeks. In addition, students and scholars whose area of study or research is deemed by the US Department of Homeland Security to be "sensitive" to the interests of the USA may also encounter delays because of security checks. Disciplines such as nuclear technology, chemical and biotechnology engineering, and advanced computer and microelectronic technology as well as a broad range of engineering and physical sciences are included on the "Technology Alert List." Students and scholars in these fields should expect delays in obtaining visas at consulates abroad.

### APPLYING FOR A US VISA IN CANADA OR MEXICO

International students and scholars who are not citizens of Canada or Mexico, but wish to apply for visas at US consulate offices in Canada or Mexico should refer to "Applying for a US Visa in Canada or Mexico," available at:

[http://ucsd.edu/center/pdfs/visa\\_in\\_CA\\_&\\_Mex.pdf](http://ucsd.edu/center/pdfs/visa_in_CA_&_Mex.pdf)

Please consider the delays that security checks may cause.

### SHORT TRIPS TO MEXICO OR CANADA

For short trips less than 30 days to Mexico, Canada, or adjacent islands, a valid I-20 or DS-2019 with a current travel signature and Form I-94, (white card marked D/S), must also be presented when reentering the USA.

The student or scholar should keep the I-94 card when exiting the USA at the border or the airport if s/he is only going to Canada or Mexico for less than 30 days. Contact the Canadian Consulate at (213) 346-2700 or [http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/los\\_angeles](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/los_angeles). Contact the Mexican Consular Services at (619) 231-8414, <http://portal.sre.gob.mx/usa/> before traveling to those countries to find out their entry requirements and restrictions.

### TRAVEL TO LOS ANGELES – CAUTION

When driving from San Diego to Los Angeles, students and scholars should carry their passport and other related documents. They may be stopped when passing through the USCIS checkpoint at San Clemente on the Interstate 5, or near Rainbow on the Interstate 15.