TRAVEL REMINDERS

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

**Documents Required for Re-Entry in the U.S.**

1. **Valid passport:** Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of re-entry in the U.S.
2. **Valid visa stamp:** See the sections below for additional information.
3. **SEVIS Form I-20/DS-2019 with a signature** from a VISA advisor that will not be older than 6 months by the date you return 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.
4. **Evidence of financial support:** your personal bank statement, scholarship letter, etc. to prove you can afford to live and study in the U.S.
5. **Proof of enrollment:** ODU transcript

***After you return to the U.S., be sure to check that your i-94 entry record is updated and correct.***

Please visit: [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/)

**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, or entered with a visa marked with ‘single entry,’ you are here legally as long as you have a valid passport and a valid I-20/DS-2019).*

1. 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.**
2. Visit the [web site](https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/forms.html) of the consulate where you will make your visa application to verify the procedure and necessary documentation before leaving the U.S.
3. 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: [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)
4. Bear in mind that you will have to go through an interview. 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. We recommend following these tips for visa renewal:
   - Be prepared to show ties to your home country.
   - Speak for yourself and be brief; it might help to have a sheet with a bulleted list to explain your situation.
   - Know the program you are studying and how it fits your career plans.
   - Explain what type of documents you are submitting.
   - Remember that the application process might be longer in some countries.
   - If your dependents remain behind, be prepared to explain how they will survive in your absence.

**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 and the visa application is denied, you will not be able to return to the U.S. in any visa status. If you are planning to make a trip to one of these places and have questions, please e-mail 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 1-5 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.

Useful Tips to Consider

1. Book flights with sufficient layover times. For example, if your Point-of-Entry is at JFK, make sure to have at least 3 hours before your flight to Norfolk.
2. Be prepared to go through secondary or additional processing at the Point-of-Entry.
3. Always double check that you have all necessary documents before your trip, including visas or paperwork needed to enter the country to which you will be travelling.

ENJOY YOUR TRIP!!!