TRAVEL ADVISORY
Everything you need to know about traveling abroad

What do I need to travel abroad?
- Contact your country’s consulate to determine what travel precautions they suggest.
- Contact the U.S. Department of State website to view travel advisories.
- Make sure your documents are valid and you have a travel signature on your I-20 or DS-2019 that is no older than one year prior to the date you plan to return to the U.S.
- Speak to an international student advisor at ISSS if you have any concerns about travel or if you are not maintaining your F or J status.

What documents do I need to take with me when I travel?
- Passport, visa, Form I-94
- I-20 or DS-2019, signed for travel by an international student advisor within the last year

In addition, we recommend that you carry:
- Official UT transcript (obtained at the Registrar’s Office – Main Building 1)
- Letter of Good Standing, also called “Letter of Enrollment” (obtained at the Registrar’s Office)
- SEVIS fee receipt (if the start date of your initial F-1 program is on or after Sept. 1, 2004)
- Proof of financial support (a personal bank statement, Research Assistant/Teaching Assistant verification letter that includes salary and tuition payment details, or sponsor’s letter and bank statement)
- Documentation of approval to take a reduced course load, if applicable

Do I need to renew my visa if I travel abroad?
If your nonimmigrant visa stamp has expired, you will have to apply for a new visa to reenter the U.S. unless you will be using Automatic Revalidation.
- Please speak with an international student advisor at ISSS before you leave the United States to apply for a visa renewal.

What if I travel to Mexico, Canada or the Caribbean?
If you plan to travel to a country that is contiguous* to the U.S. (but NOT Cuba) and you intend to stay there less than 30 days and will NOT apply for a new U.S. visa, you may reenter the U.S. on an expired visa stamp (this regulation is known as Automatic Visa Revalidation).

*Saint Pierre, Miquelon, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bermuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, The Windward and Leeward Islands, Trinidad, Martinique, or other British, French or Netherlands territories or possessions in, or bordering, the Caribbean Sea.
How does Automatic Visa Revalidation work?
When traveling to a contiguous country, you keep the same I-94 number with you upon exiting the U.S. Tell the immigration official at the port of exit (border) that you intend to stay outside the U.S. for less than 30 days and that your U.S. visa is expired. Make sure to have your I-20 or DS-2019 signed by an immigration advisor at ISSS before you travel and present that document along with your valid passport, form I-94, and expired visa to reenter the U.S. Please note that reentry into the United States through Automatic Visa Revalidation is not guaranteed.

**Please note that citizens of Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria will not be allowed to reenter the U.S. with an expired U.S. visa stamp, even if the trip is to a contiguous country.**

Can I renew my U.S. visa while in Mexico or Canada?
If you are planning to apply for a U.S. visa in Mexico or Canada, please talk to an international student advisor at ISSS before you make arrangements. In general, ISSS does not recommend that third-country nationals apply for a U.S. visa in Mexico or Canada because of lengthy delays due to background/security checks and complications in case of visa denial. If your visa application is denied, you would need to depart directly to your home country to apply for a new visa to reenter the U.S. You may not use Automatic Visa Revalidation if you applied for a visa while abroad.

Do I need a visa to enter Mexico or Canada?
If you are traveling to Mexico, Canada or any country that is not your country of citizenship, you may need a visa to enter that country. The following contacts may be helpful to determine if you need a visa to enter another country:
- Canada: (213) 346-2711 or http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/index.asp
- México: (512) 478-2866 or http://www.sre.gob.mx/austin
- Foreign consular offices in the United States: http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco

For more information
Please refer to our “VISA Information” handout on Forms & Publications Index