

Preparing for Your Arrival at a U.S. Port of Entry

Careful planning and preparation by international students can ensure a smooth entry into the U.S. at a port of entry. Here are some points that you should remember:

1. Plan your arrival:

As an international student in F-1 status or an exchange visitor in J-1 status, you may not enter the U.S. more than 30 days before the program start date listed on your Form I-20/Form DS-2019. Before leaving your home country, make sure that your passport and nonimmigrant visa are valid for entry into the U.S. Your passport should be valid for at least six months into the future at all times.

2. Carry the following documents:

- Your passport with F-1 visa or J-1 visa
- Form I-20/Form DS-2019 from Wellesley College

In addition, it is strongly recommended that you have the following documentation:

- Receipt for the SEVIS fee (Form I-797)
- Proof of financial support
- Evidence of student status (letter of acceptance, recent tuition receipts, verification of enrollment letter, transcripts)
- Name and contact information for your International Student Advisor, including a 24-hour emergency contact number at the school (*Wellesley College Public Safety 781-283-5555*).

3. Complete your entry paperwork:

You will be provided with Customs Declaration Forms (CF-6059) and an Arrival Departure Record/Form I-94 to complete before you arrive at your initial point of entry to the U.S. When completing the Form I-94, please be sure to print clearly. The address portion should reflect the U.S. address where you will reside not the address of the school or program. You should also use the exact name spelling and format that appears on your passport. ***Name consistency on all U.S. immigration documents will allow for a smooth entrance into the U.S. and easy access to any benefits you may be eligible from U.S. government agencies.***

4. At the port of entry:

- Present the following:
 - Your passport
 - Form I-20/Form DS-2019 from Wellesley College
 - Form I-94
 - Customs Declaration Form (CF-6059)

All visitors entering the U.S. must state their reason for wishing to enter the country. You will also be asked to provide information about your final destination. **It is important that you tell the Officer that you will be a student/exchange visitor at Wellesley College.** Be prepared to include the name and address of the school program where you will enroll.



Once your inspection is successfully completed, the Officer will:

- Stamp your Form I-20/Form DS-2019 for duration of status (“D/S”)
- Stamp your Arrival-Departure Record/Form I-94 for duration of status (“D/S”) and staple it into your passport

It is important that you verify that both your initial Form I-20/Form DS-2019 and your Form I-94 are stamped with your student visa status, F-1 or J-1, and indicates “D/S.”

5. Following admission into the U.S.:

Students/exchange visitors must report to their school within 30 days of the date that appears on the Form I-20/DS-2019 to register for courses or to validate their intended participation. Failure to do so may result in the termination of your SEVIS record.

For comprehensive information on procedures for traveling and arriving in the United States, visit <http://educationusa.state.gov/predeparture/travel/customs.htm>

SECONDARY INSPECTION

If the Officer at the port of entry cannot initially verify your information or you do not have all of the required documentation, you may be directed to an interview area known as “secondary inspection.” Secondary inspection allows inspectors to conduct additional research in order to verify information. In the event that the Officer needs to verify information with your school or program, we strongly advise that you have the name and telephone number of the International Student Advisor at Wellesley College (Karen Zuffante Pabon, 781-283-2082). Failure to provide proper documentation and to comply with entry/exit procedures is cause to refuse the student or exchange visitor admission into the United States.

TEMPORARY ENTRANCE/FORM I-515A

Under certain circumstances, if a student is mostly, but not fully in compliance, he/she may be issued a **Form I-515A**, “Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor.” This form, along with an **Arrival/Departure Record/Form I-94**, authorizes temporary admission into the U.S. and requires the student to take immediate action to submit proper documentation. **If you receive a Form I-515A, please report to Slater International Center at Wellesley College as soon as possible after you enter the U.S. to speak with the International Student Advisor about the procedure for getting your documents corrected.**

US-VISIT

All nonimmigrant visitors holding visas – regardless of race, national origin, or religion – participate in the US-VISIT program, a comprehensive registration system tracking entries to and exits from the U.S. For more information: <http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/usv.shtm>.

NATIONAL SECURITY ENTRY-EXIT REGISTRATION SYSTEM (NSEERS)

Some individuals may be asked to provide additional information under the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS). A packet of information will be available at the port of entry explaining the registration procedure. For more information: <http://www.ice.gov/pi/specialregistration/>.