

# Renewing a Visa

If your F-1 or J-1 visa has expired, you only need to obtain a new visa if you plan to travel outside of the U.S. and return to resume your studies or practical/academic training. A visa is necessary for **entry only**. You will need to apply for a new visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy outside of the U.S., as it is not possible to renew an F-1 or J-1 visa from within the U.S. You will need to research the visa application and issuance procedures as they may have changed since you last obtained a visa.

## For your visa appointment you should prepare the following:

- **Recent travel signature on your Form I-20 or DS-2019**—Slater International Center recommends that your signature be no more than 6 months old when you are traveling to renew your visa.
- **Official transcript**—this can be obtained at the Registrar's Office
- **Original funding documents**—either a personal bank statement or letter of funding from your sponsor. The original bank statement should be in your name or be accompanied by an original letter of support from the person whose name is on the statement. If Wellesley College is your funding source, it is recommended that you get a letter written on Wellesley letterhead that details your funding. If you have already paid tuition for next semester, you may wish to obtain a statement that indicates this from Student Financial Services. These documents should be less than one year old.
- **SEVIS fee**—proof of payment. Visit the ICE website for more information <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq3.htm#Toc81222004>
- If you have graduated and are participating in Post-Completion Optional Practical Training, you must show **proof that you have a job in the U.S.** to which you will return. It is recommended that you provide your EAD and a letter from your employer verifying that you are currently employed.
- The following visa application forms, which can be obtained from any U.S. Consulate or Embassy:
  - **Form DS-156, Application for Nonimmigrant Visa**
  - **Form DS-157, Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application** (Generally required of all male applicants between the ages of 16-45. Check with the U.S. Consulate or Embassy where you are applying for additional requirements.)
  - **Form DS-158, Contact Information and Work History for Nonimmigrant Visa Applicant**
- **Application fee**—check with the Consulate for the current fee amount and how it must be paid.
- **One photograph**—2 inches square [51 x 51mm], showing full face, without head covering, and against a light background.
- **Passport**—valid at least 6 months into the future.
- **Schedule an appointment for your visa interview**—you should contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad where you will be renewing your non-immigrant visa to schedule an appointment.

## Automatic Visa Revalidation: For Short Trips to Canada, Mexico or Adjacent Islands\*

Students who are in valid immigration status are allowed to re-enter the U.S. with an expired visa if they travel to Canada, Mexico or adjacent islands (except Cuba) for less than 30 days. Simply retain your form I-94 card upon entry into Canada or Mexico and tell the border official that you are taking advantage of the "automatic visa revalidation" option available to F-1 and J-1 visa holders. To return to the U.S. you will need your signed form DS-2019, a valid passport, and Form I-94. Currently, this benefit does not apply to citizens of Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria.

*\*Adjacent Islands: Anguilla, Antigua, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Barbuda, Bermuda, Bonaire, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, Marie-Galante, Martinique, Miquelon, Montserrat, Saba, St. Barthelemy, St. Christopher, St. Eustatius, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Pierre, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks, Caicos Island and other British, French and Netherlands territory or possessions bordering on the Caribbean Sea.*

## To Apply for a Visa in Canada or Mexico

Third-country nationals (TCNs) may attempt to obtain a visa in Canada or Mexico. To schedule an appointment at a U.S. Consulate in Canada visit <http://www.nvars.com>. A major credit card is required to pay for the application fee. To schedule an appointment at a U.S. Consulate in Mexico visit <http://www.usvisa->

[mexico.com](http://mexico.com). Additional information on the system can be obtained from the State Department's Consular Services web site at <http://travel.state.gov>

***Note: If you apply for and are denied a visa in Canada/Mexico, you may not re-enter the U.S. on the Automatic Visa Revalidation regulations. You will be required to travel elsewhere (most likely your home country) to apply for the U.S. visa before returning to the U.S.***