

TRAVEL AND REENTRY

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Whenever you wish to leave the U.S. temporarily (five months or less) and return to continue studies at Wagner College, you must secure the necessary documents to permit entry to another country and reentry to the U.S. You will probably be allowed to enter your country of citizenship or permanent residence with just your valid passport, but to reenter the U.S. there are certain papers you must have.

You must present to the USCIS officials at your port of entry the following documents:

- ✓ A valid passport with a valid visa
- ✓ Your Form DS-2019 endorsed by the International Student Advisor

ARE YOUR DOCUMENTS VALID?

If your visa has expired, you will need a new one to return to the U.S. This can only be issued in your country. You will need a new Form DS-2019 to renew your visa.

If there has been a substantial change in your situation, such as a change of major or change in financial support, you will need a new Form DS-2019.

If you have applied for employment authorization (EAD), you may not travel until you have received the authorization card and have a job to return to. You will need to show a letter from your employer to reenter the U.S.

HOW IS YOUR FORM DS-2019 ENDORSED?

A week before you plan to travel, submit the following Request for Travel Endorsement to the International Student Advisor. If you need a new request form, you can obtain one at the International Student Advisor office.

HOW TO REENTER THE U.S. AFTER TRAVELING

MAKE SURE YOU DO NOT HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY RETURNING BY HAVING ALL THE DOCUMENTS YOU NEED TO REENTER! CHECK THE LIST BELOW AND MAKE SURE YOU HAVE EVERYTHING READY BEFORE YOU LEAVE.

- A valid passport (unless you are exempt from passport requirements).
- A valid J-1 visa. You must have a valid J-1 visa in your passport. There is one exception to this requirement: if you are maintaining J-1 status and are returning to the U.S. after a trip of less than 30 days to Canada, Mexico, or adjacent islands in the Caribbean, you do not need to have a valid visa to return. Instead of the valid visa, you must have the Form I-94 Departure Record stapled in your passport.

If you entered the U.S. in another nonimmigrant classification and changed your status to J-1, you must obtain an J-1 visa before reentering from any country except a neighboring country. It is not possible to obtain a new visa inside the U.S.

If you need a new J-1 visa to reenter the U.S. after a temporary absence, you will need to get a new Form DS-2019 from the International Student Advisor office and apply for the visa at a U.S. embassy or consular office in your country of permanent residence. To get a new Form DS-2019 you must file an application and submit current evidence of your financial support to the International Student Advisor at least two weeks before your departure.

- A Form DS-2019. Make sure that your program of study is still correct and that the date you are expected to complete your program has not expired. You must have a valid reentry signature on page 3 to reenter. Bring your Form DS-2019 to the International Student Advisor at least three days before your departure.

If you are starting a new degree program, your completion of study date has passed, or you need to get a new visa, you will need to get a new Form DS-2019 from the International Student Advisor. File an application and submit current evidence of financial support at least two weeks before your departure.

- Financial documents. If you are going to apply for a new visa from the American embassy or consulate at home, you will need to have original financial documents, not photocopies.

HOW TO RENEW YOUR STUDENT VISA

In most countries, in order to renew your student visa to the United States to attend Wagner College, you must make an appointment with your nearest American embassy or consulate.

Before you apply for the visa renewal, you should understand the process and rules governing the renewal of a U.S. visa. Please read the following information very carefully and contact the International Student Advisor if you need more information or help.

WHAT ARE THE RULES?

1. *By law, you are seen as someone who plans to remain in the U.S. permanently.* The consul MUST, by U.S. law, believe that you are *not* coming back home when you finish your studies. Student visas are only given to persons who can *convince* the consul that they intend to return permanently to their home country. You convinced the consul once, so the process should be easier the second time!

You should not attempt to renew a visa if you are on authorized J-1 optional practical training after completion of studies since it is harder to convince the consul you will return home.

2. *You must prove that you are making normal full-time progress* toward completing the educational or professional objective that brought you to the U.S. and can still finance it.
3. *Consuls are impersonal when administering laws.* In the U.S., laws are applied equally to all people regardless of status or gender. **DO NOT TRY TO NEGOTIATE OR DISCUSS PERSONAL MATTERS** with the consul.
4. *U.S. Government officials like documents.* Have papers available to submit to the consul that prove why you are qualified to renew your student visa.

ARE YOU PREPARED?

Take either your current Form DS-2019, endorsed for reentry (or if there has been any *significant change* in the information on it, a *new* one), valid passport, and all new evidence of financial support.

1. Be ready to prove that you have been a full time student and are making normal progress toward completing the educational or professional objective that brought you to the U.S. Plan to account for *all* the time since your last visa interview.
 - ✓ Take transcripts from *every* school you have attended in the U.S.
 - ✓ If full-time study is not clear from the transcript, get a letter from the International Student Advisor certifying that you were maintaining your student status.
 - ✓ Did you change your major? Be prepared to describe your career opportunities *back home*.
 - ✓ Did you attend the school that appears on your last student visa? If not, be prepared to explain why not. If the new school was at a higher academic level, emphasize it.
 - ✓ Did you pursue the program of study that was approved during your last visa interview? If not, be prepared to explain why not and how the new program prepares you for a career at home.
2. Be ready to convince the consul that you will return home permanently after you complete your studies. Present papers that can prove that you still have strong ties to your country that will *force* you to return.
 - ✓ Show how you have been making regular trips back home. If you haven't, explain why: going to summer school to finish sooner; family comes to visit here.
 - ✓ If your program of study is in great demand in your country, get a letter from a possible employer saying that they are interested in hiring people with degrees like the one you will earn.
 - ✓ If your family owns a business, take a letter from the bank describing it. If they own property, take the deeds.
3. Do not emphasize any ties you have to the U.S. or to family members in the U.S.
4. Do not talk about working in the U.S. unless you have an assistantship or fellowship or have employment authorization from USCIS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

USCIS requires notification of a change of address within 10 days of that change.

You must complete a USCIS change of address card, available in the International Student Advisor Office, or use the one shown below. Please notify the RO within 5 days so that the form will reach USCIS within 10 days.