

Vacation and Travel

For International Students

Per Immigration Regulations

Index:

1. Vacation
 - a. During Official School Breaks
 - b. Not During Official School Breaks
2. Travel
 - a. Leaving the US
 - b. Entry into Another Country
 - c. Returning to the US
3. Automatic Visa Revalidation

Vacation

During Official School Breaks

-Students are eligible to “take-off” from class for vacation only during official school breaks, or for only a few days if approved by the academic advisor, the student’s professors, and the Office of International Education. During this time, students may travel inside or outside the US. For information about travel outside the US, please see below.

-Students who travel inside the US are not required to have their I-20/DS-2019 and passports, students however are encouraged to take these documents in case of an emergency. Students must ensure they do not lose their documents.

-Students are required to return to TTU at the end of the break and be registered in a full course of study.

Not During Official School Breaks

-Students are **not** eligible to take vacation inside the US if it is not during an official school break or unless authorized by the academic advisor, the student’s professors, and the Office of International Education.

-Students who leave the US not during an official school break must review the information in the section “Authorized Early Withdrawal”.

Travel

Leaving the United States

-Students who leave the US will need a valid passport. They should also have their I-20 signed for travel on page 3 by the Office of International Education.

-Students must give their white I-94 card (the one given upon entry to the US) to Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) or to the airline when leaving the US (unless traveling to Mexico, Canada, or an adjacent island. See Automatic Extension of Visa Validity below). CBP or the airline should take the I-94 card automatically.

-Students who do not have the I-94 card (for example it was lost) must apply for a new I-94 card inside the US. This process takes months and there is an application fee. Failure to provide the I-94 card upon leaving the US can prevent the students from being allowed to return to the US.

Entry into Another Country

-Students must understand the entry requirements to enter a country that is not their home country before leaving the US. Students must visit the website of that country's embassy for further information.

Returning to the United States

-Student can potentially have difficulties when they return to the US by Customs and Border Patrol officials. Students must listen to any instruction provided by a CBP officer.

-Students must have the below documents when reentering the US:

1. Have the original and most updated I-20.
 - a. Students can confirm with the Office of International Education which I-20 is the most updated.
 - b. Must be signed on page 3 by an appropriate staff member in the Office of International Education. The signature is valid for 12 months, but students on OPT should have a signature less than 5 months.

2. Have a valid passport with six months of validity upon reentry. Students who need to renew their passport must contact their government for further information.

3. Have a valid US visa.
 - a. There are no current regulations requiring the visa to have a certain amount of valid days remaining upon reentry.
 - b. If the visa is expired, students must receive a new one at the US embassy in their home country. Students may attempt to apply for a visa in another country but there are risks. Being denied a visa in one country can lead to a denial of the visa in the home country.
 - c. Visas are not issued in the US.

4. Receive a new I-94 card.
 - a. Students must make sure they receive a new I-94 card when reentering the US and/or a stamp in their passport (unless doing Automatic Visa Revalidation).

Office of International Education
Tennessee Technology University

5. (If on Post-Completion OPT or STEM-Extension OPT) The Employment Authorization Card (EAD card). If the EAD card is not yet approved upon re-entry, students can use the original I-797 Receipt Notice.
6. (If on Post-Completion OPT or STEM-Extension OPT) original signed letter of employment
7. Provide additional documents.
 - a. This includes evidence of financial support documents and transcripts. This is not required but can be useful.

Automatic Visa Revalidation

-Eligible students in F-1 and J-1 status who have an expired stamped visa in their passport are eligible to return to the United States with the expired stamped visa after a visit of 30 days or less to either: Canada, Mexico, or an approved adjacent Caribbean Island. Students must do the following:

1. Present the expired visa to a CBP officer. If students have the expired visa in an old (expired) passport, the student will need to bring the old passport with them as well as the current valid passport.
2. Do not turn in the white I-94 card when leaving the US. Students will need to present this card to a CBP officer upon their return to the US.

*At all times, a student is responsible to maintain their own immigration status.

*The above information is susceptible to change.

*The above information is not an exhaustive list pertaining to Vacation and Travel information.

*For additional information, students can visit: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/index.htm>

*At all times students are responsible for properly informing the Office of International Education of their immigration status and academic status (as pertaining to immigration matters).