



WEEKLY UPDATE – Dec. 5

International Travel Considerations and Reminders

As you wrap up your fall courses, please make sure you have the most current travel information and feel confident in what you need for departing and re-entering the U.S. If you are already outside of the U.S. or decide to travel home this winter, please read the information below for guidance on what to expect and what documents you need. As always, please **email our office** with any questions or concerns. Wishing you the best of luck as you prepare for your final exams!

TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

It's important to be mindful of the travel restrictions of countries you enter or pass through. Travel requirements can change, so please do your research before you travel.

The U.S. requires all individuals, who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents, traveling to the U.S. to be vaccinated against COVID-19. All WHO or U.S. FDA-approved vaccines will be accepted. **View acceptable vaccination documentation here** and keep it accessible at all times when traveling. There will be some exceptions to the vaccination requirement for youth under the age of 18, those with medical conditions, and those traveling from countries where vaccines are limited. The vaccination requirement will replace the regional travel restrictions.

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR TRAVEL

Do you have a valid travel signature on your most recent I-20? Before you request a new travel signature, be sure to log into your **MyISSS account** and view your most recent I-20. Note that travel signatures can be found on page 2 of your I-20 and they are valid for one year from issuance (six months for students on OPT). If you already have an I-20 with a valid travel signature in your MyISSS account, you can return to your record, download, print, and sign this document. Students are issued new I-20s for many request types including CPT, OPT, and reduced course load (RCL). Please review all of the requests in your profile to find your most recent I-20. Reference the **MyISSS Student Handbook** for additional information related to navigating the student portal.

Get a Travel Signature by Submitting a Request for an I-20 Reprint: If you do not have a valid travel signature on your most recent I-20, you can request one from our office by **submitting a request via MyISSS**. Note that our office processing time is 10 business days, and once we complete a travel signature request, we will upload a new I-20 onto your account. From there, you can download, print, and sign your document and carry it with you when you travel. Please keep the processing timeline in mind as you plan for your upcoming travel. Note that students need a valid travel signature to re-enter the U.S., but you **do not need it to leave the U.S.**

Required Documents for Travel: All international students leaving the U.S. need to be in possession of the following upon reentry:

- Valid I-20/DS-2019 with a current travel signature from within the last year (Travel signatures should be valid within six months for students on OPT).
- Valid passport from your home country that is valid more than six months into the future.
- Valid U.S. F-1 or J-1 visa stamp in your passport (except for Canadian nationals).
- Download and print **this travel letter** that confirms you will be able to meet the U.S. government guidelines during the COVID emergency.
- SEVIS I-901 fee receipt that matches your current I-20/DS-2019 SEVIS ID number; you can **print a new one here** if needed.
- EAD card and a letter confirming your employment if you are on post-completion OPT.
- COVID-19 vaccination and testing are currently required (see the Travel Consideration section above for further information).

Additional Items to Carry with You and Present if Requested:

- Transcripts showing you have been a full-time student and are enrolled for the current or next academic term. If you need to request updated transcripts, you may do so by visiting **USF's Transcripts web page**.
- Proof of finances, which can be a bank statement or letter showing that you have funds to cover your stay and tuition while in the U.S.
- Enrollment verification requested from the registrar.

Custom and Border Protection (CBP) Search Procedures: When you arrive in the U.S. from any international destination, you may encounter more strict inspection procedures. CBP is legally allowed to search any item you are bringing into the U.S. This includes turning on and asking you to log in to your email, social media, and other items on your laptops and personal devices. You can read more about these search procedures on this **CBP information sheet**. Keep in mind that it is always best to be polite and tell the truth if you are questioned by CBP.

Renewing Your U.S. Student Visa: If your student visa (or visa you are studying on) will expire before you plan to return to the U.S., you need to renew it. The visa renewal application is much like the initial visa application and in almost all cases will require you to apply in person and sit for an interview. Please check for visa processing times and book your appointment early. Other information about the visa application process can be found on the **ISSS website** and on the **U.S. Department of State website**.

If you need to renew your visa because it is expiring, you will want to make your visa appointment right away. Visa appointments are still limited in some countries. You should contact your local consulate for more details about when they plan to reopen and when visa appointments will become available. In some cases, a student can request an expedited visa appointment if there is not one available before the next required term. Please keep checking for visa updates on the **ISSS web page**.



OPT Reminders

Students on OPT are eligible to purchase the USF student health plan each semester for up to one academic year. To determine eligibility, please **submit a request** to voluntarily purchase the USF student health plan. For questions **contact Health Promotion Services**.



USF Graduation

Congratulations to the upcoming fall 2022 grads! Commencement ceremonies will be held in person at a reduced capacity and streamed virtually on **USF's website**, **YouTube**, and **Facebook**. Please note that guests are required to have a ticket in order to come to campus. **Learn more »**



IEW Recap

From job success strategies and friendly soccer matches to international receptions and mental health workshops, this year's International Education Week (IEW) did not disappoint. Thank you to all who attended, participated in, and hosted IEW events this year.

We are encouraged by your enthusiasm and look forward to celebrating again next year!



Preparing for Finals

The Learning Center would like to invite you to the upcoming virtual "Preparing for Finals" workshops on Monday, Dec. 5, from 2–3 p.m., and Wednesday, Dec. 7, 5:30–6:30 p.m. PST. Topics include structured study time, finding focus/academic mindset, test-taking and exam preparation strategies, and much more!

Learn more »

ISSS OFFICE RESOURCES

Requesting a Document from ISSS?

If you are requesting an immigration document or letter from our office, remember that we request **10 business days** to process requests. Make sure you plan accordingly so you have enough time to receive your document before you need it. All ISSS requests should be submitted through the **MyISSS student portal** (select the home icon, site home, and then requests on the left-hand menu). You can view our **MyISSS Student Handbook** for assistance with your submission.

Adviser Appointments and Workshops

Appointments can be made online. Please visit the **ISSS website** to schedule an appointment. Appointments are still booked in 15-minute increments. To schedule a workshop, select workshops from the first menu option in our scheduler. Students must complete an OPT workshop before applying for OPT.

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