Introduction

The Office of International Services (OIS) provides immigration advice and services to international students, employees and visitors. OIS also advises academic departments and hiring managers on education and employment-related immigration regulations and procedures. The office is staffed by Alison Roache Jones, Director and Lisa Dahme, Immigration Specialist. You can contact OIS at ois@ohsu.edu.

News and Updates

Travel to Canada-The Canadian Consulate in Seattle will no longer accept in-person appointments for visas to travel to Canada. All visa applications need to be mailed to the consulate and will take approximately 6 weeks to process. To determine if you need a visa to enter Canada or to apply for a Canadian tourist visa please visit their website.

Visa Fees- As of April 13, 2012 immigrant and nonimmigrant visa fees were increased. To find the current visa fees you can visit the Department of State’s website.

Permanent Residency, EB-2 Cut-Off Date-Continued heavy demand for numbers in the Employment Second preference category has required the establishment of a worldwide cut-off date for the month of July. This action has been taken in an
effort to hold number use within the annual numerical limit. Should there be an increase in the current demand pattern, it may be necessary to make this category completely "unavailable" prior to September 30, 2012. The China and India Employment Second preference categories are already "unavailable", and will remain so for the remainder of the fiscal year." The EB2 category is for Members of the Professions Holding Advanced Degrees or Persons of Exceptional Ability. The July 2012 worldwide cut-off date in the EB2 category is 01JAN09.

USCIS Electronic Immigration System (ELIS) - The initial launch of USCIS ELIS in 2012 will allow certain applicants to electronically file to extend or change nonimmigrant status (Form I-539). You can find more information on ELIS on the USCIS website.

New Visa Pilot Program in China- On February 13, 2012, the U.S. State Department launched a new visa pilot program in China that will allow certain visa applicants in the B, C1, D, F, J, M, and O categories whose visas have expired less than 4 years ago (48 months) to renew their visas in the same classification without another interview. For more information visit the consulate's website.

Reminders

Travel Information - Nonimmigrants who are entering the U.S. should have a passport that is valid for at least 6 months past the expiration date of the underlying status document (i.e. H-1B approval notice, DS-2019, I-20, etc.). Otherwise, the I-94 card may be issued with a shorter validity date than the intended period of stay. It is also important to provide OIS with a copy of the I-94 card upon each re-entry to the U.S. so expiration dates can be tracked and checked for accuracy.

Reminder to F-1 Students to Carry Appropriate Travel Documentation- The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) wants to remind students to make sure to carry their I-20s (endorsed for travel within the last year), a valid passport and a valid visa to reenter the U.S. F-1 students traveling without the above documents, will be issued a Form I-515A for an entry period of 30 days. If you receive the I-515A you must respond to SEVP within the 30 day response period with appropriate documentation or your F-1 SEVIS record with be automatically terminated. If you are terminated you will have to apply for reinstatement with U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services.

Visa Revalidation- In general, someone in valid nonimmigrant status may travel to Canada or Mexico for less than 30 days with a valid passport, I-94 and a valid status document (i.e. I-20, DS-2019, H-1B approval notice) even if the passport visa is expired. However, if the person applies for a new visa at the U.S. consulate and it is denied they will not be let back into the U.S. under this provision. Therefore, the person would have to travel to his/her
home country and receive a new visa before reentering the U.S. In fact, the Department of State has advised U.S. consulate officers to collect I-94 cards from individuals who have been denied a visa. The following countries cannot take advantage of visa revalidation: Iran, Syria, Sudan and Cuba.

**I-9 Forms** - Please remember that a new I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification Form, must be completed when an employee’s immigration status is extended or changed. Please see the HR [website](#) for a list of trained preparers that can assist in this process.

**Social Security Numbers** - F-1s and J-1s - please keep in mind that you must check in with OIS prior to applying for a social security card so we can validate your record in SEVIS. Your SEVIS record must be validated at least 48 hours before going to the social security office and you must have been in the U.S. for more than 10 days to allow for port-of-entry arrival data to be entered into the social security administration's database.

**F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)** - Please remember to apply for OPT before you complete your course of study. USCIS is currently taking approximately three months to process applications so please plan accordingly. For additional information or to apply for OPT contact Alison Roache Jones at [roacheja@ohsu.edu](mailto:roacheja@ohsu.edu).

**Change in Employment/Study** - Please contact OIS prior to making any changes in your employment/studies. In many instances, a new petition is required prior to the change.

**Dependent Children** - If you have a child who will be turning 21, he/she will need to either apply for their own immigration status or leave the country prior to their 21st birthday. A child is only allowed to remain in dependent status (H-4, E-3, TD, J-2, F-2, etc.) until the age of 21.

**Passports** - You must keep your passport valid at all times in the U.S. To extend your passport you will need to contact your country’s embassy. For a list of embassies in the U.S., you can visit the following [website](#).

**Check-In Procedures** - J-1’s must check in with OIS within 20 days of the requested start date on the DS-2019, or within 20 days of the port of entry date, whichever is earlier. If a J-1 expects to arrive later than the expected start date on the DS-2019, OIS must be notified so we can update the SEVIS record with the correct start date. We will need copies of your stamped DS-2019, visa, I-94 card, passport identity page, insurance information and local address and phone number upon check-in.

F-1’s must check in upon arrival at OHSU, but no later than 20 days after the requested start date on the I-20. We will need copies of your stamped I-20, visa, I-94 card, passport identity page, and local address and phone number upon check-in.

If the J-1 or F-1 fails to check-in as stated above, their SEVIS record will not be validated. The J-1’s record will be automatically changed to “No Show” and they will be required to leave the U.S. The F-1’s record will be automatically changed to “Terminated” and they will
be required to apply for reinstatement or leave the U.S. This will result in a permanent black mark on the J-1’s or F-1’s immigration record. Providing paperwork to the sponsoring department does not constitute checking in with OIS, unless the department notifies OIS of arrival.

I-94 Cards - Please check to make sure your I-94 card is marked correctly by the U.S. Immigration Officer when you enter the U.S. and supply OIS with a copy once you return. We have been experiencing a lot of I-94 mistakes by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) so please make sure your I-94 is marked correctly when you receive it back from CBP. We have been asked by CBP to remind our international visitors to make sure your name, date of birth, and country of citizenship match your other official travel documents (passports, visa, I-20’s, DS-2019’s, etc.) You should also confirm that the I-94 has your correct status and expiration date, for instance:

- J-1s should have an I-94 card marked J-1, D/S.
- F-1s should have an I-94 card marked F-1, D/S.
- H-1s should have an I-94 card marked H-1B with an expiration date matching the expiration date of the H-1B approval notice. Note: Sometimes the immigration officer will mark the I-94 with an expiration date that is 10 days after the expiration date of the H-1B approval notice. This is okay since the immigration regulations allow the immigration officer at his/her discretion to give you an additional 10 days to leave the U.S. after your employment ends. However, you are not allowed to work after the expiration of your H-1B approval notice. The 10-day period is for you to prepare for your departure from the U.S.

If your I-94 card is not collected upon departure from the U.S. [other than trips of 30 days or less to Canada or Mexico and certain adjacent islands (contact OIS for a list of islands)] you must mail your I-94 card with supporting documentation to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) so your timely departure can be recorded. Otherwise, you could have trouble reentering the U.S., applying for permanent residency, etc. because it could appear that you over-stayed your visit. Click Here for information and CBP’s address.

Travel - F-1 students and J-1 exchange visitors must have their DS-2019s/I-20s signed before traveling in order to reenter the U.S. We recommend that all DS-2019s/I-20s be signed once a year regardless of travel plans. H-1B’s should carry a copy of their original Approval Notice when traveling. You must also have a valid visa and passport.

If you have a change of status application pending, do not travel outside of the United States. If you do travel you will abandon your change of status application and it will not be approved.

Extensions - Request an extension before your current status expires. Extension requests for J-1’s and F-1’s should be submitted to OIS at least 1-2 months prior to expiration of current status, and H-1B’s should be submitted at least 6 months prior to expiration of current status. If you are planning to travel, keep in mind that the approval for your extension must be received prior to returning to the U.S.
**Address Changes** - All non-citizens of the U.S. including U.S. permanent residents are required to update their address with the Department of Homeland Security within 10 days of moving. J-1's and F-1's update their address by notifying OIS of the change so that we can update SEVIS. All other non-citizens need to notify Department of Homeland Security. You can now update your address on-line on the USCIS [website](#). Once you have entered your change of address online you will receive a confirmation number and you should print this as evidence of meeting the change of address requirements.

**Permanent Residency Applications** - Please contact OIS prior to beginning an employment-based permanent residency application. We will provide you a form that needs to be completed and signed before the process can begin, as well as a list of OHSU authorized immigration attorneys.

Please send all job postings, advertisements, etc. to OIS before advertising so it can be sent to the employee's department and Human Resources for approval before advertising begins.

**Workshop/Hand-out Ideas** - Please let us know if you have any ideas for new workshops, hand-outs, etc. that our office can provide.

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**Helpful Information**

**U.S. Consular Offices and Embassies** - For information on the procedures for applying for visas at U.S. consulates and embassies, please visit the following [website](#).

**Foreign Embassies** — For information on applying for a visa or passport renewal for a foreign country please visit the following [website](#).

**Welcome to USA** - For basic information on many immigration topics, such as: how to replace a permanent resident card; how to schedule an appointment with USCIS; how to notify USCIS of an address change; how to obtain a social security number; as well as a lot of other helpful information, please visit the following [website](#).

**Study in the States Website**- The Department of Homeland Security has launched this new [website](#) to assist F-1 students on studying in the U.S. and maintaining F-1 status.
International Handbook - If you would like a copy of our International Handbook please contact us by e-mail.

English Language Learner Program - The Career and Workplace Enhancement Center at OHSU offers English Language Learner classes. For a schedule of classes or more information visit their website

Upcoming Events and Calendar

Holidays - Upcoming holidays recognized at OHSU are:

- **Independence Day**: July 4th
- **Labor Day**: September 3rd