Documents to Have On-Hand

When you arrive in the U.S. you will go through an immigration inspection. You will need to present the following items to a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) official:

- **Valid Passport** (including Canadian citizens) - the passport must be valid at least for 6 months at the time of admission.
- **Valid U.S. Visa** (Canadian students do not need a visa, but you will need evidence of funding [1].)
- **Your Immigration Document** (for example an I-20 for F-1 status, a DS-2019 for J-1 status, an I-797 approval notice for H-1B)
- **Receipt from the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) fee** if you are an F or J visa holder
- **Copy of your admissions letter and proof of funds** (while you may not be asked for it, it is advisable for students also to have these documents as well.)

Before you depart the customs area, look at your passport before you leave the immigration check point. Make sure you have the small ink entry stamp (see sample at right) with your visa classification and expiration date (“D/S” if you are F-1 or J-1) handwritten. If you do not have a stamp, or see a wrong visa classification written, request that the CBP officer give you a correct stamp. You may need to go to the Differed Inspection section of the airport.

As soon as you have access to a computer please look-up your I-94 record [2] to make sure it is accurate, and print, or save a copy on your device.

Secondary Inspection

Most Yale students and scholars will clear U.S. immigration after your documents are reviewed by a CBP officer. However, a few may be referred to another officer to verify your student status or for additional questioning. This is referred to as “secondary inspection [3]”. Although a referral to secondary inspection can be intimidating and make your feel anxious, there is usually little cause for alarm. It can, however, take you an hour or two to complete the inspections process.

If the CBP officer has questions that can be answered by OISS ask the officer if they would like to call OISS for confirmation. During office hours, you can call your adviser directly [4] or the general office number, (203) 432-2305. After hours call the Yale Police Department at (203) 432-4400 who will immediately call the OISS director or associate director.