F-1 Travel Document Checklist

- Valid, unexpired (Section #5) Form I-20 - also referred to as “Certificate of Eligibility for Non-Immigrant Student Status” - with an OISS signature on the bottom of page 2. The OISS signature should not be older than 12 months, and can be used for multiple entries.
- F-2 dependents must have their own I-20 forms meeting the same criteria above.
- Valid F-1 or F-2 visa from a U.S. embassy (except for Canadian citizens who are not required to have a visa).
- Valid passport (see note below).
- There are additional documents needed to travel after graduation using F-1 OPT [1].

Passports

All international students, scholars and family members planning to depart from the U.S. and return after a temporary absence must have a valid passport in order to exit the U.S. The passport must also be valid for a minimum of six months into the future at the time of re-entry to the U.S. Some countries have an agreement with the U.S. that automatically extends passport validity for 6 months [2], for U.S. entry purposes only.

Visas

Except for Canadian citizens, all international students will also need to have a valid F-1 visa in their passport issued by a U.S. embassy or consulate. F-1 visas cannot be obtained or renewed inside the U.S.

General Guidance for Traveling and Re-entering the U.S. [3]

Source URL: https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/f-1-students/traveling-in-f-1-status

Links:
[1] https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/f-1-students/employment/optional-practical-training/traveling-on-opt-after-graduation