Traveling to the U.S.

Whether you are traveling to the U.S. for the first time or re-entering, please review the information below carefully. At a minimum, you will need a valid passport, valid visa (except Canadian citizens) and a valid immigration document. Click the box below for details about your specific immigration status. If you have questions or concerns, check with your OISS adviser [1] before you make travel plans. If you had a difficult time entering or re-entering the U.S., please let us know [2].

You can find detailed information below regarding what documents you need to carry with you, what you need to be aware of when entering the U.S., and what the I-94 record is and why it is important.

Information Specific to Visa Category

J-1 Scholars

J-1 Travel Document Checklist

- Valid DS-2019 (not expired in Section #3) with OISS signature in the Travel Validation section at bottom. The OISS signature should not be older than 12 months and is valid for multiple entries to the U.S. If you need a new signature, please submit a request in OISS Connect [3].
- J-2 dependents must have their own valid DS-2019 forms
- Valid J-1 or J-2 visa from a U.S. embassy (except for Canadian citizens who are not required to have a visa)
- Valid passport (for at least 6 months in the future)
- Appointment or offer letter from Yale
  - If Yale University is not your J-1 program sponsor, please contact them directly (e.g. Fulbright)


H-1B Scholars


H-1B Travel Document Checklist

- Valid I-797 Approval Notice for Yale University
- Copy of all supporting documents issued to you in the OISS approval package (Form I-797 approval notice, I-129, and the Labor Condition application)
- Copy of paystubs from Yale for the most recent three months
- If you were subject to the J-1/J-2 two-year home-residency requirement prior to obtaining H-1B, bring a copy of your Form I-612 Waiver Approval issued by USCIS.


International travel with H-1B status can be complicated. See Traveling in H-1B Status [5] for more details. Besides the guidelines on that page, it is recommended that you check with your adviser [1] before you travel if you have any questions about your situation.
Transit Visas When Changing Planes

If your travel plans require a change of planes in a third country, you must check to see if you need a transit visa. Some countries (including the U.S.) require an entry or transit visa, even if you are only changing planes and resuming your travels during a short time frame. Before purchasing your ticket, make certain you are aware of any travel requirements or restrictions.

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Arriving in the U.S.: Immigration Inspection

What to expect during U.S. immigration inspection, and documents to have with you.
I-94 Record

What is the I-94 record and why it is important?
Current Travel Guidance

Advice for traveling, such as preparing for your travel, restrictions, and possible issues.

Source URL: https://oiss.yale.edu/travel-visas/for-scholars/traveling-to-the-us

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