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Applying to Renew an F-1 Visa

Required Documents

Students should contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate they plan to visit for detailed requirements. Below are the basic documents needed to apply for the renewal of an F-1 visa.

- **Active Form I-20** – must be signed for travel by an OIP DSO within one year prior to the re-entry date.
- **Proof of full-time enrollment** – Official transcripts and letter of enrollment from UM Registrar's Office.
- **Proof of current financial support** - financial statements, affidavit of support from sponsor, and/or graduate assistantship or scholarship letter.
- **Valid passport** for a minimum of six months beyond the re-entry date to the U.S.
- Copy of **I-94 card** (front and back) or copy of **I-94 Arrival Page**.
- **Visa application** - form, fees, and photographs (according to Embassy required format).

Applicants with dependents must also provide:

- All immigration documents for F-2 dependents.
- Additional funds are needed for each F-2 dependent, thus the amounts on financial documents will need to be higher.
- Proof of relationship to spouse or children (e.g. marriage and birth certificates).
- If dependents apply for a visa without the presence of the principal F-1 or J-1 student, they need to bring copies of the student's documents.

Steps for Visa Renewal Prior to Leaving the U.S.:

- Students must identify the visa application requirements for the Embassy or Consulate where they plan to apply for a visa renewal. Visit www.usembassy.gov for more information.
- Acquire all documents the Embassy or Consulate need to issue a visa.
- Make a visa appointment.
- Reserve a flight that allows sufficient time to obtain a visa. Certain individuals may be subject to security clearances, which can result in delays of 20 additional business days or more. Students should be aware of the negative effect a delay may have on completing courses when traveling in the middle of a semester.
- Inform an OIP advisor of visa renewal plans a few weeks in advance. The advisor will verify student's records, endorse Form I-20 for travel and issue a visa renewal letter.
- Preparation and organization is important during a visa interview. Students must be mindful that the purpose of a student visa is to study. They must also show they have reasons and plans to return to the home country.

Applying for a Visa Renewal at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate as a Third Country National

- Not all Embassies accept third country visa applicants and the decision to accept applications vary throughout the year. Students must contact the Embassy prior to making travel plans and ensure their application is accepted.
- Canada and Mexico are popular locations for visa renewals and have various locations. Students may visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/nonimmigrants-present-visiting-canada-mexico.html> for locations and information on how to make an appointment. Please note that citizens of countries designated as state sponsors of terrorism are ineligible to apply at an Embassy or Consulate at a U.S. border. The list of countries may be found at <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/c14151.htm>. Students who have violated their immigration status may not be eligible to apply for a renewal at U.S. border sites.
- Students who have applied for a visa renewal in a contiguous territory (Canada, Mexico and Caribbean Islands) and are awaiting a decision (visa has not been issued) may not re-enter the U.S. using the **automatic visa revalidation**. Certain individuals will be subject to a **security clearance** and should expect delays of 20 business days or longer. If the visa application is denied, students **cannot re-enter** the United States until they obtain a new visa from the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in their home country.