The following information is applicable to F-1 and J-1 visa holders planning to visit their home country or any country (except Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean Islands).

- As an F or J visa holder you are required to always maintain a valid and unexpired passport.
- If you are visiting a country other than your home country, you also must make sure that you have all of the documents or visit visa required by the country that you are intending to visit.
- Make sure that you have a valid, unexpired F-1 or J-1 entry visa in your passport. If you do not, you must follow the instructions below for visa renewal.
- Go to a U.S. consulate or embassy (while outside of the United States) to obtain an F-1 or J-1 entry visa. Contact the American Consulate or embassy in your home country or country in which you are planning to visit to inquire about obtaining visas to enter the United States. You can also visit the website of the U.S. consulates to obtain information and forms. The consulate link is available at www.intl.ucf.edu.
- Find out whether you need an appointment, how long it takes to get a visa and which documents they will want to see.
- Reserve a flight that allows sufficient time for you to obtain a visa. Additional new security checks are in place for certain individuals, which can result in delays of 20 additional business days or more.
- The required documents vary from country to country so please inquire at the American Consulate in the country you plan to visit before you leave the United States to determine whether they will allow you to apply for a visa, the specific documents required and the length of time needed for visa processing.
- Let an ISC adviser know at least a few weeks in advance that you are planning to travel and will apply for a new visa. The adviser will check your records, endorse your I-20 or DS-2019 for travel abroad and will issue a travel letter.
- If the adviser determines that you are out of status, they will not recommend travel as you many not be able to obtain a visa without obtaining reinstatement to F-1 or J-1 within the United States.

Documents Needed to Apply for the Renewal of an F-1 or J-1 Visa

Students will need the following documents to apply for the renewal of their F-1 or J-1 visa. It is the F-1 or J-1 visa holder's responsibility to collect and take all these documents with them while traveling abroad with the intention of applying for the renewal visa:

1. An unexpired and valid I-20 or DS-2019 with a travel authorization signature from an adviser at the International Services Center.
2. A travel letter issued by an adviser at the ISC stating that they will be applying for the renewal visa and have maintained their F-1 or J-1 status.
3. A valid and unexpired passport.
4. Financial documents (assistantship/fellowship letters/ bank statement/ or affidavit of support, whichever is applicable).
5. A copy of their current transcripts.
6. A copy of their registration receipt (if enrolled for the upcoming semester).
7. A UCF ID card.
8. A copy of their I-94 card.
9. Immigration documents for their F-2 or J-2 dependents (if applicable). Additional funds are needed for each F-2 or J-2 dependent so an additional bank statement or financial document may be necessary.

Special Name Checks by the U.S. Department of State for Some Visa Holders

Effective November 13, 2001, certain nonimmigrant visa applicants will be subject to an additional name check clearance procedure before being issued a nonimmigrant visa. The name check clearance involves the Department of State (DOS) sending the visa applicant’s name to be checked against information in various databases. DOS expects the extra screening to take up to 20 additional business days.

According to DOS the following individuals may be subject to this additional name check:

- Male (some women have been subject).
- Between the ages of 16 and 45.
- From one of the following countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen. Some reports suggest that citizens of Bangladesh, Turkey and other countries appear to have been subjected to the name check as well.

This security check process is time consuming. It’s recommended that F and J visa holders from the above countries do not travel abroad unless they have enough time for the application and approval of the visa.