



Polishing the Diamonds until They Shine: The Road to Send International Students Abroad Again

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Overview

- Importance of Session - Advising/Tracking
- How different offices track the students
 - Rice University
 - Texas A&M University
 - Tulsa University
- Affects on Health Insurance
 - Rice University
 - Texas A&M University
- Affects on Immigration Status
 - Rice University
 - Texas A&M University
- International Student's Experience
- Questions

Increased Importance for the Topic

- Emphasis Student Visa Holders (F & J)
- Increased number of Students - Rice increased to 300 international undergrads this semester
- Importance of Advising International students on Options - They can go abroad!!
- Many Offices are Unprepared
- Increase Communication Between S/A and ISS



Different Types of Education Abroad

- Study Abroad
 - Rice approved programs - Provider vs Exchange
 - Non-Rice approved programs
 - Summer Programs
 - Faculty lead programs
- Work Abroad & Internships
 - Timing of which semester to work abroad - Summer
 - Language acquisition
 - For Credit?



Scholarships

Not Eligible

- Federal Funding

Eligible

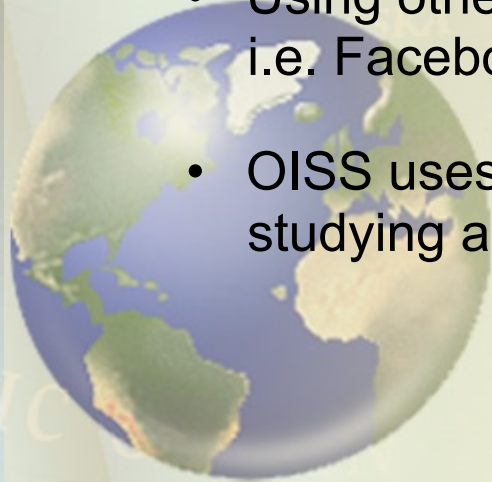
- Rice Scholarships
- Other Private Funding
 - Third-party Provider
 - Financial Aid
 - Scholarships
 - Private Scholarships

Summer Scholarship Eligibility



Tracking Rice Internationals Studying Abroad

- Open lines of communication between the two offices
- Third-party Provider, Partner Universities, & StudioAbroad
- Double check stories from students
- If OIP does a site visit where an international student is studying, an update is given to OISS
- Using other forms of communication to check in on the student—
i.e. Facebook
- OISS uses custom fields in FSAAtlas to run reports on all int'l's studying abroad





Information on F-1 Internationals Studying Abroad

Office of International Students & Scholars

Revised February 2, 2009

Studying abroad as an international student requires some extra consideration and paperwork to ensure the compliance of all regulations. For F-1 students, it is important to note that there is a requirement for students to be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester (fall and spring only) in order to maintain their legal status in the United States. Doing a study abroad while on an F-1 visa may impact your future work authorization, so we encourage you to speak to an OISS advisor before making any decisions.

Things to consider:

Timing

Summer registration is not required for F-1 students, so this may be the perfect time to do a session abroad. Fall and spring semesters are also an option, but must be discussed with an OISS advisor to ensure that your F-1 visa status will be maintained. If you fail to maintain your F-1 visa status, you may have to reapply for a visa, pay a new SEVIS fee, and you may jeopardize your CPT and OPT work authorization for when you return.

Type of Program

As an international student participating on a Rice University-approved study abroad program for a fall or spring semester, you will be enrolled as a full-time student, and will be registered in 12 credit hours of "Away 100" credit, in order that you may legally maintain your F-1 status. If you have a valid visa stamp, you would not need to go to another visa interview to reenter the US. Be aware of the date that your US visa stamp for your F-1 student visa expires. If it expires before you return to the US, you will need to go for another visa interview.

Visa requirements

You are responsible for any visa requirements that may exist for entering a third country. Some countries have restrictions based upon country of citizenship and/or your current visa status. It is important to check what specific regulations relate to your case based upon your home country and your status in the United States. Also, be sure to have a valid travel signature on your I-20 so that you can reenter after you complete your study abroad.

Before you plan your study abroad program, please make an appointment to visit your OISS advisor (call 713-348-6095). It is your responsibility to understand the requirements of your particular circumstances for maintaining legal F-1 status. After having met with your OISS advisor, you may then schedule an appointment with a study abroad advisor in the Office of International Programs (call 713-348-5836).



Different Types of Education Abroad at Texas A&M

- A&M Faculty Led Programs
 - University organized
 - Take A&M residency courses
- A&M Reciprocal Exchanges
 - University sponsored study at partner institutions
 - Receive A&M residency credit
- Transfer Credit (Non-A&M Programs)
 - Programs through a U.S. or a foreign company or university/college
- Research, Internship, and Volunteering
 - A&M in-absentia course or can be non-credit bearing
 - Transfer credit for students receiving credit from their sponsor organization

Tracking Texas A&M Internationals Studying Abroad

- Study Abroad Programs Office
 - Are you an international student? Question on application
 - Int'l Student Status Check Form required as part of their program application
 - Int'l students are tagged in our application system
 - We encourage students to work on obtaining necessary visas early on and discuss potential issues
 - Onus is on student to take necessary steps to maintain immigration status while outside the U.S.
 - Depending on program, either on site staff or A&M faculty monitor student's progress/experience



Texas A&M University
Study Abroad Programs Office
1st Floor Bizzell Hall West, 3262 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-3262

Study Abroad Programs International Student Status Check Form

Purpose:

The purpose of this form is to certify that international and sponsored students have met with their advisor in the Office of International Student Services (ISS) or the Office of Sponsored Student Programs (SSP) respectively to confirm their U.S. immigration status during their study abroad program. ISS is located on the 1st floor of Bizzell Hall East. SSP is located in Bizzell Hall West, room 361.

Deadline:

This form must be completed by the program application deadline listed on the Texas A&M Study Abroad website. **If the deadline has already passed, please note that you must turn in this form at least one week prior to your program departure date.**

Instructions:

- 1) Before meeting with an advisor in either ISS or SSP, please complete **Section I** and then print out the form.
- 2) During the meeting with either an ISS or SSP advisor, please complete **Section II** and have the advisor complete **Section III**. **Note: ONLY Sponsored Students should be following up with the SSP office.**
- 3) Afterwards, submit the completed form to the respective study abroad advisor for your program. Should you have any further questions the Study Abroad Programs Office can be reached at (979) 845-0544.

Section I: Student Information

Last/Family Name: First/Given Name:

UIN#: Non-Immigrant Visa Type (e.g. F1): Classification (e.g., U1, G7):

Study Abroad Program Type: Program Name:

Study Abroad Term (e.g. Spring): Year: Intended Program Length:

Section II: Student Acknowledgement

I, the undersigned, confirm that I have met with an advisor in the Office of International Student Services (ISS) or the Office of Sponsored Student Programs (SSP) to discuss my legal status while studying abroad. My advisor has determined the following:

- Yes Yes, I am in compliance with my visa requirements for my destination countries and will be in good status for the duration of my program country.
- No No, I am not in compliance with my visa requirements for my destination countries. Therefore, it is my responsibility to work with my advisor in ISS or SSP who will assist me in preparing the necessary paperwork for leaving and reentering the United States. Furthermore, I realize that if I neglect to contact ISS or SSP and fail to complete the appropriate documentation, I may neither be able to reenter the United States to continue my studies at Texas A&M, nor gain certain benefits, such as work authorization.

Student's Signature Date (mm/dd/yyyy) Student's E-mail Address

Section III: ISS or SSP Advisor Acknowledgement

My signature below certifies that I have reviewed the student's case and advised the student of any potential problems that may arise regarding his/her immigration status.

Advisor's Name (print) Advisor's Signature Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Print Form

University of Tulsa Tracking

- Study Abroad recruitment
- Study Abroad info-sessions and advising
- Study Abroad approval process: working in collaboration with ISS
- Students enrolled full time in study abroad place holder courses
- We get confirmation of enrollment and current address with program provider/exchange partner

MAJOR BARRIERS

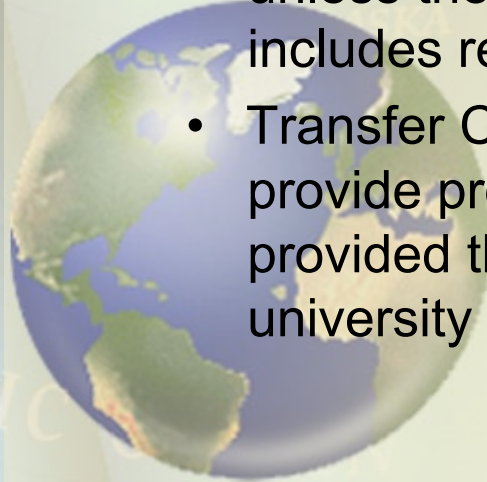
- Most students are sponsored by companies or government – sponsors may not approve study abroad
- More flexibility if students pay themselves

How it affects Health Insurance

- Students who go on OIP approved programs remain enrolled at Rice as full-time students - 12 hours AWAY100 courses, so insurance remains unchanged
- Students on the Rice Plan are covered for up to \$10,000 for medical evacuation and \$7500 for repatriation, but are encouraged to purchase a supplemental plan
 - Participation Agreement
 - ISIC Cards
- Students who go on non-Rice approved programs bear responsibility

Health Insurance

- ISS Requirements
 - Out of the country – do not have to have for immigration purposes
- SAPO health insurance requirements
 - Faculty-Led; we purchase HTH and it is built in to the program cost
 - Reciprocal Exchanges; students are required to purchase HTH unless their host institution insurance is compulsory AND includes repatriation of remains and medical evacuation
 - Transfer Credit/Research/Internship/Volunteer: Students must provide proof of insurance coverage. The coverage is either provided through their program or they buy HTH through our university group policy plan.



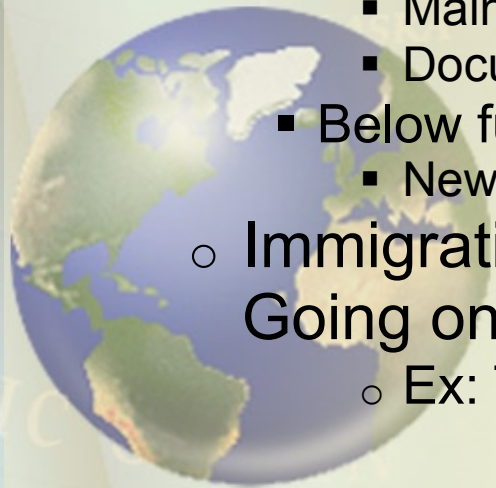
Immigration Regulations

- 5 month rule
- http://travel.state.gov/visa/laws/telegrams/telegrams_2780.html
 - 1. Some students depart the United States for extended periods of time for activities related to their course of study, such as field research. Schools are expected to maintain those students in an active SEVIS status. Since these students continue to maintain their student status while overseas, their F-1 visas are not considered to be invalid after an absence of more than five months.
 - 2. If not enrolled
 - Over 5 months – need to apply for a new SEVIS number and new visa
 - Less than 5 months – interpretation to school
 - Rice
 - TAMU
- SEVIS II – who knows???



Immigration Regulations – Texas A&M University

- International Student Services
 - Review their record
 - Discuss with the students what their plans are
 - How long will you be gone
 - Will you be enrolled
 - Have you enrolled with Study Abroad Programs
 - Discuss with the students options
 - Full time enrollment
 - Maintaining visa status
 - Documents signed for travel
 - Below full time enrollment
 - New Entry , New SEVIS number
 - Immigration Status Review for International Students Going on Study Abroad Form
 - Ex: TAMU - Q



International Student Services
Texas A&M University
1st Floor Bizzell Hall East, 1226 TEXAS A&M, College Station TX 77843-1226
Phone (979)845-1824, Fax (979)862-4633, E-mail ISS@tamu.edu



Immigration Status Review for International Students Going on Study Abroad

Purpose of Form: The purpose of this form is to certify that the student has met with an ISS advisor to confirm that his/her immigration status, as of the date on the form, should not prevent them from re-entering the United States at the end of their stay abroad. The student is made aware that changes occurring after the completion of the form may impact his/her immigration status and that they need to keep both ISS and the Study Abroad Office informed of any changes.

Immigration Status Review

Student Name/UID: _____

Major, Expected Graduation Date: _____

Passport Country: _____

Passport Expiry Date: _____

Visa Expiry Date, # of entries: _____

I-20 Expiry Date, Travel Signature: _____

Date of Departure from the US: _____

Dates of Study Abroad Program: _____

Date of planned re-entry to US: _____

Plans for OPT/CPT? Explain: _____

ISS Advisor Name: _____

Advisor Comments: _____

I have reviewed the student's case and have advised the student of potential problems that may arise regarding his/her immigration status. The student has been advised of potential repercussions associated with being out of the U.S. for more than 5 months (if applicable).

_____ International Student Services _____ Date: _____

I certify that I have met with the above-named ISS advisor and that the information I have provided is correct as of this date. If any of this information changes, I will notify the Study Abroad office and ISS immediately.

_____ Student _____ Date: _____

S:\T - ISS\FORMS, Handouts & Letters\Travel\Study Abroad Advising Sheet Last Updated: 08/2009 by KDT
"State law requires that you be informed of the following: (1) you are entitled to request to be informed about the information about yourself collected by use of this form (with a few exceptions as provided by law); (2) you are entitled to receive and review that information; and (3) you are entitled to have the information corrected at no charge to you."

Immigration Regulations - Rice

Option #1 for Studying Abroad

- **Go on a Rice approved program**
 - Student remains enrolled fulltime in Rice credit hours
 - Student is able to maintain F-1 status by being enrolled fulltime
 - Student does not have to withdraw from the university (fall & spring semesters only), therefore no extra reinstatement fees
 - Credit is easily transferable
 - Student's Practical Training capabilities are not impacted as long as student
 - has spent at least one full academic term enrolled in a full course of study at Rice
 - prior to studying abroad

Immigration Regulations - Rice

Option #2 for Studying Abroad

- Go on a non-Rice approved program for five months or less
 - Student's I-20 will be terminated for authorized early withdrawal
 - Student's I-20 is data fixed to become active again in SEVIS
 - Student re-enters on original SEVIS number and practical training is not impacted
- OR
 - Student's session dates can be changed to reflect semester abroad as semester of break (i.e. if student is enrolled fulltime in summer, will study abroad in the fall and will return in January)
 - Student will retain original I-20 and it will remain SEVIS Active
 - Student re-enters on original SEVIS number and practical training is not impacted
 - If student does not re-enter within 5 months, a SEVIS termination for "Absent from Country for 5 Months" can be used

Immigration Regulations - Rice

Option #3 for Studying Abroad

- Go on a non-Rice approved program for five months or more
 - SEVIS record will be terminated based on “Authorized Early Withdrawal”
 - Student will need to re-apply to university (and pay all fees)
 - Student will receive a new I-20 with new SEVIS number and go for a new visa interview even if current F-1 visa has not expired
 - Practical training “clock” will be reset and the student must be in fulltime student status for one academic year before practical training can be authorized



A look at the student experience

- Pre-departure advising:
 - Be patient! Be helpful! Students have different needs (Passport, visas, health forms, emergency contacts...)
 - Study Abroad and ISS office need to communicate well!
 - Help students manage expectations
- On site support:
 - Student may be treated differently than others in the group
 - Student may be having a different experience than the rest of the group
 - Emergency services may not be the same
 - Immigration control may delay group



REAP

(Rice Experiences Advertised to Prospects)

- Allows student-to-student interactions
- Students are rewarded with an honorarium of \$125 and a certificate of appreciation
- Increases visibility of Rice
- Gives the students a leadership role as an “ambassador”
- Contacts made at host institutions can be used for other site visits by members of the Rice community
- Provides students with a chance to hone their presentation skills

Questions??

