

VISA UPDATE – BEST PRACTICES

NAFSA
Education Abroad –
Regulatory Practice Committee
Regional Conference 2010



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Working to make government regulations easier to understand and manage

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- Country Coordinators (France, Italy, Spain, UK)
- Consular Liaisons (France, Italy, Spain, UK)
- Country Coordinator At Large (Argentina, Australia, Chile, China)
- Consular Liaison At Large (Brazil)

Working to make government regulations easier to understand and manage

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Regulatory Information

Education Abroad

Education abroad can be made much easier through the help of the documents and services listed below. Financial aid resources, health and safety documents, and important travel paperwork are all compiled here to simplify the study abroad process.

Foreign Visas for U.S. Students

- [EA Visa Updates](#)
- [Foreign entry requirements \(DOS\)](#)
- [Foreign consular offices in the United States \(DOS\)](#)

International Travel Resources

- [DOS International Travel homepage](#)
- [Overseas Security Advisory Council \(OSAC\)](#)
 - [OSAC Study Abroad Safety and Security Seminars](#)
- [Country Specific Information, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings \(DOS\)](#)
- [The World Factbook \(CIA\)](#)

U.S. Services

- [U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide](#)
- [Key officers of U.S. Foreign Service posts](#)
- [U.S. customs restrictions and duty fees](#)
- [U.S. passport services](#)

<http://www.nafsa.org/EAVisas>

NAFSA: Association of International Educators

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Visas For Education Abroad

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The following information is designed to assist education abroad advisers as they guide their students to obtain a student visa to study abroad. NAFSA's EA Consular Affairs Liaison Subcommittee members review these pages regularly for accuracy, but the consulate to which the student applies for a visa may change its procedures. Students and advisers should confirm specific procedures with each relevant consulate.

[Read the latest news on Education Abroad Visas](#)

NAFSA has two EA Visa subcommittees:

- The [Consular Affairs Liaison Subcommittee](#) (46kb) develops relationships with foreign embassies and consulates in the United States to gain visa policy information.
- The [Visa Education Subcommittee](#) (65kb) provides educational resources about the visa application process.

Country-specific Information

France Italy Spain United Kingdom

General Visa FAQs

Keep up-to-date on the latest requirements for acquisition of foreign visas for study abroad.

[Applying for a Student Visa](#)

NAFSA Resources for EA Visas

- [Visa Application Tips](#)
- [EA-RP Committee Update](#)

Report an Issue

IssueNet
www.nafsa.org/issuenet

Help inform NAFSA's practice liaison by sending issues to:

[IssueNet: Report an Issue](#)

Questions

EA professionals: Ask questions of colleagues through the EAKC Network

www.nafsa.org/eavisas

Jason Sanderson
Georgetown University



Regional Liaisons

- Liliane Spenle, Atlanta
- Danielle Dicoscia, Boston
- Janis Halpern, Chicago
- Jane Chandler, Houston
- Adrienne Richart, LA
- Rebecca James, NY
- Jasmine Pilgeram, SF
- TBD: Miami

WHAT'S NEW: FRANCE

- Campus France requires complete admission letters (no contingency approvals), exact program dates, and the name and contact information of the US study abroad advisor.
- Biometric procedures should be fully implemented at all consulates by the end of the calendar year.
- The new long-stay visa application form is now in use at all consulates.
- Many consulates have also modified the supporting documentation they require for long-stay visa applications. Most will now require proof of lodging.
- Students may not leave the Schengen zone until they have received their OFII vignette sticker. Note: Bulgaria, Ireland, Cyprus, Romania & the UK are *not* part of the Schengen zone.

Dianne De Salvo

Central Michigan



Regional Liaisons

- Debbie Miller, Boston
- Rosemary Sands, Chicago
- Dianne De Salvo, Detroit
- Courtney De Vries, Houston
- Sarah Egere, Miami
- Suzanne Shane, New York
- Scott Keller, Philadelphia
- Dana Roson, Los Angeles
- Karen Wardzala*, Washington, DC
- *Country Coordinator as of January 2011

WHAT'S NEW: ITALY

- As of September 1, 2010, U.S. students who study in Italy for up to 90 days do not need to apply for a student visa. International students who are citizens of countries that are exempt from applying for a visitor visa will also no longer need to apply for a study visa for short-term study abroad programs up to 90 days.
- As of April 1, 2010, a new Schengen visa application form is in use.
 - Some consulates are using this new form for long-stay visas
 - Some consulates still use the "old" long-stay visa form
 - Be sure to check the website of your consulate for the correct form to use.
- Housing information:
 - The NY Consulate requires information in the acceptance letter from the host institution/program or the home institution with the student's address in Italy.
 - The Miami Consulate would like the same letter if the information is available. When not available, they will accept a statement that housing will be provided (as in the past).
 - Remaining consulates continue to accept a statement that housing will be provided by the host institution or program.
- Consulates reserve the right to change their requirements and/or request additional information at their discretion.

Ismael Betancourt

Xavier University



Regional Liaisons

- Lee Frankel, Boston
- Roseanne Galegher, Chicago
- Maria Delgado-Librero, DC
- Minita Santizo, Houston
- Angela Perryman*, LA
- Jolie Roetter, NY (rotating off 12/31)
- Open: Miami, San Francisco
- *Country Coordinator as of January 2011

WHAT'S NEW: SPAIN

- Beginning January 2011, FBI background checks will be required for students staying over 6 months. Background checks from local police authorities will no longer be accepted.
- Visa fees will be \$140 as of October 1.
- Some consulates requiring a medical insurance with \$0 deductible.
- Students cannot extend visas while abroad.
- Consular Liaison openings for various cities are now available. More information on NAFSA's website!

Kirsten McKinney
Hollins University



Regional Liaisons

- Bridget Donoghue, LA
- TBD, NY
- Laurence Tuccori, Chicago

WHAT'S NEW: UK

- Two Student Routes:
 - (1) Student Visitor: less than 6 months (no work)
 - (2) Regular Student Visa Under Tier 4
 - General Student in Points Based System (PBS)
 - Tier 4: 28-day rule for proof of funds (continuous)
 - CAS required as of February 2010 (visa letter no longer required)
 - Remember to submit original documents
 - Consulates now have a bit more leeway when reviewing visa applications (not totally black/white)
 - Allow for 6-week minimum processing time; or choose Priority or Premium processing at time of application
- Internships (50% rule/BUNAC)
- No route at this time for teacher training programs that don't include coursework
- Faculty Route: Business Visitor

Kristin Amos-Abanyie
CIEE



Priority Countries:
Argentina
Australia
Chile
China
Brazil: Motumbo Kabesele
Central America: Beth Laux

WHAT'S NEW: OTHER COUNTRIES

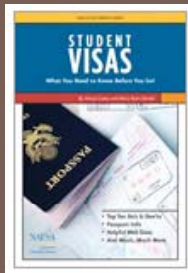
- Priority countries will receive detailed attention, but Kristin's team will try to assist with any inquiry
- Kristin is creating a resource list of colleagues to assist with questions from advisors about student visa questions for her or other countries where US students study. Please send a message to NAFSA's IssueNet if you would be willing to serve on Kristin's resource list!

FBI Clearance

- The Attorney General establishes rules and regulations for individuals to obtain copies of their FBI Identification Record.
- Nearly 25 percent of requests for records are rejected due to insufficient data; (i.e., missing information, illegible fingerprints, incorrect payment)
- It takes approximately ten weeks to process the request. Efforts are being made to reduce this time to eight weeks over the next year.
- Fingerprints should be solicited from any police station or local law enforcement office. There might be limitations on the times when fingerprinting can be done, so students should be sure to contact the station beforehand and potentially schedule an appointment. If possible, the student should ask for 2-3 sets of prints.
- If the consulate requires the FBI record to be authenticated with an apostille stamp, the stamp can be obtained from the FBI itself. The student would simply need to indicate the need for the stamp within the letter of request.
- Additional information can be found at: www.fbi.gov/hq/cjisid/faqs or by contacting FBI Unit Chief, Joey L. Hixenbaugh, at joey.hixenbaugh@ic.fbi.gov

Visa Education – Best Practices

The newest addition in the Education Abroad Series of booklets, *Student Visas, What You Need to Know Before You Go!*



Helps to inform students about the entire student visa process. It provides much-needed information and common sense steps to smooth the visa application process and avoid last minute problems-why they need a student visa, navigating the process, working with the consulate, and the pitfalls to avoid.

Booklet includes top ten do's and don'ts, FAQs, passport info, helpful Web sites, glossary of visa terms, and much more. Available in single copies or packs of 40.

By: Kenya Casey and Mary Ryan Dando, 2008

Your NAFSA Resources

- EA Visas Updates – www.nafsa.org/EaVisas
- IssueNet – www.nafsa.org/IssueNet
- *Note: register for a NAFSA ID and password in advance to facilitate submissions to NAFSA's IssueNet/Get Liaison Help!*

ENSURE CLARITY

No matter what...

Student and staff confusion does not further our mission. Take the time to write down your office's visa policy in your student materials.

Visa Education - Best Practices



Three questions to consider in deciding on a plan:

1. What level of assistance do your students *REALLY* need?
2. What amount of time and resources does your office have to commit to this task?
3. What are the possible benefits and risks.

THANK YOU!

Ismael J. Betancourt, E.M.I.B.
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We are seeking volunteers. Consider getting involved!