

Carnegie Mellon University

Office of International Education

5000 Forbes Ave, Cyert Hall Suite 101, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Phone: (412) 268-5231 • Email: oe@andrew.cmu.edu • Web: www.cmu.edu/oe

Applying For A US Visa In Canada

I. EXPLANATION

Applying for a US visa in Canada can be convenient in some circumstances. However, applying for a visa in Canada can also be costly, time consuming, and students/scholars could be denied if they do not have a good reason for applying. Remember that applying for a visa in a country that is not your home country (called a “third” country) can be more difficult than applying at home (see handout entitled, “Applying for a Visa in a Country that Is Not Your Home Country”). Applying for a visa in Canada requires that you plan well in advance of your date of travel. This handout will explain what steps you should take to apply for the US visa in a Canada.

II. CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS

	F-1 or J-1 Students	J-1/H-1B Scholars
1.	Eligibility: You must have been continuously maintaining lawful non-immigrant status during your stay in the US.	Eligibility: You must have been continuously maintaining lawful non-immigrant status during your stay in the US.
2.	Enrollment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently enrolled or planning to enroll for the next academic semester at CMU or Have received an authorization for Optional Practical Training (F-1); students on OPT will need an EAD card and job offer letter or Have received an authorization for Academic Training (J-1); students on AT will need AT authorization letter 	Employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently employed by Carnegie Mellon University or Participating in a Carnegie Mellon hosted J-1 program or activity
3.	Enrollment not at CMU: If you will be enrolling at another US institution when you return to the US, you must use an I-20 or DS-2019 form from that school to apply for the visa. The only exception is if you plan to attend summer classes at another institution, but you will return to CMU for the Fall semester.	Review the <i>Travel Information for J-1 and H-1B Visa Holders</i> handout for additional guidance about applying for a US visa.
4.	Permission to enter Canada: Consult Canadian immigration http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/index.asp to determine if citizens of your country need a visa to enter; if visa required, you must apply by mail or in person.	Permission to enter Canada: Consult Canadian immigration http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/index.asp to determine if citizens of your country need a visa to enter; if visa required, you must apply by mail or in person.
5.	Purpose of visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for a valid US visa to enter another country for a conference or other “official student business;” Time in the home country will be too short to obtain the visa there, or the consulate will be closed, etc; Denial is possible if your reason for applying is to avoid your home country consulate. 	Purpose of visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for a valid US visa to enter another country for a conference or other “official scholar business;” Time in the home country will be too short to obtain the visa there, or the consulate will be closed, etc; Denial is possible if your reason for applying is to avoid your home country consulate.
6.	Funding & Intent: Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the visa officer that you have enough funding to complete your program and that you plan to return to your home country. If you have relatives that are US citizens or permanent residents, this will be more difficult to do.	Sponsorship: Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the visa officer that you have been employed by sponsoring institution, if H-1B; or if J-1, that you have sufficient funding to complete your program and that you plan to return to your home country.

III. PROCESS

STEP 1: Find Out What You Need to Enter Canada

Whether or not you need a visa to enter depends on your country of citizenship and legal permanent residence.

You must check with the Canadian consulate to find out whether or not you need a visa. You can visit

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/index.asp> to find out how to apply.

STEP 2: Contact the US Consulate in Canada to Make an Appointment

You must make an appointment well in advance before you plan to go. Note that appointments are difficult to

obtain during peak travel times. Website for visa information for ALL US consulates in Canada: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/>

STEP 3: Receive the Information the Consulate Sends You and Follow All Instructions

If applying on-line, follow the procedures outlined on the Applicant Summary page. Otherwise, the Consulate will provide detailed instructions about how and where to pay the consular/visa application fees, when and where to go for your appointment, and any information you need to bring with you. At some US consulates in Canada you will need to leave your passport overnight and return when the visa is ready. Or during the on-line appointment process you may need to designate a DHL location to retrieve your documents when the visa is ready.

STEP 4: Check that You Have All the Documents You May Need to Be Granted the Visa

	Students	Scholars
1.	A valid passport	A valid passport
2.	A valid I-20 or DS-2019 from the school you are attending/will attend upon reentry	For J-1: A valid DS-2019 from the school you will be affiliated with upon reentry; For H-1B: I-797 approval notice, copy of LCA and copy of the I-129
3.	A valid signature on page 3 of the I-20 or DS-2019 from an OIE advisor which is <i>fewer than 12 months old</i> . If you are attending a new school upon reentry with a new I-20/DS-2019, you do not need a signature on page 3.	A valid signature on the DS-2019 from the foreign scholar advisor which is <i>less than one year old</i> .
4.	Expired visa (if available)	Expired visa (if available)
5.	Certificate of enrollment letter (from the HUB or your Department) and/or transcripts showing continuous full-time student status	Letter of invitation from person, department, or organization which helps explain the reason you need a visa (if available)
6.	Financial information showing proof of necessary funds to cover all costs of tuition plus expenses. This can be either 1) a letter from your <i>department</i> stating the amount of funding you are receiving or 2) a letter from another <i>financial sponsor</i> stating the amount they are giving you, <i>plus supporting financial documents</i> , such as bank statements or salary statements. <i><Note: if you are using personal funds you must also provide relevant supporting documents. ></i>	Financial information showing proof of necessary funds to cover all costs of living expenses. This can be either 1) a letter from your <i>department</i> stating the amount of funding you are receiving or 2) For J-1 Scholars only, a letter from another <i>financial sponsor</i> stating the amount they are giving you, <i>plus supporting financial documents</i> , such as bank statements or salary statements. <i><Note: if you are using personal funds you must also provide relevant supporting documents. ></i>
7.	If F-1 on OPT, a valid EAD card and job offer	

Visa Denial/Delay. While all of this documentation may not be strictly required, it is safest to bring as much as possible with you. Even with this proof, it is possible that you will be denied the visa or subject to a delay due to security clearance processes. If you are denied due to security reasons, you must remain in Canada until the security process is complete (from 2 to 8 weeks) or return to your home country.

****Contact OIE in case of visa delay or denial in Canada****

Travel to contiguous territory with an expired visa

Pursuant to US regulations (22 CFR 4 1.1 12 and 8 CFR 214.1) **automatic revalidation** applies to expired nonimmigrant visas of aliens who have been out of the US for thirty days or less in contiguous territory (Canada and Mexico, and adjacent islands other than Cuba).

- Nonimmigrants who are eligible to re-enter the US pursuant to the authority of automatic revalidation are not able to benefit from the automatic revalidation process if the nonimmigrant's passport reflects evidence that while in contiguous territory or on an adjacent island the nonimmigrant applied for a new visa and is pending a decision or has been denied a new visa application.
- Currently, nationals of Iran, Syria, Sudan, and Cuba are not eligible for automatic revalidation of an expired visa. Thus, for example, if a citizen of Iran travels to contiguous territory for a day and has an expired visa, but a valid extension approval notice of status; he/she will need to obtain a visa to return to the U.S.
- Automatic revalidation does not apply to the Visa Waiver Program.