

# Applying to Renew your Student Visa at a U.S. Consulate in Mexico

## For Continuing or Transfer Students

At times your visa will expire before the end of your studies and the question arises if it is necessary to renew it. Here are some frequently asked questions that will take you through the process and help you to determine what you need to do.

### **The visa in my passport is about to expire. Do I need a new one?**

- The visa stamp in your passport is for entry purposes only.
- Once you are in the U.S., your I-20 and I-94 card become the active documents that permit you to remain in the U.S.
- You are allowed to stay for D/S which means “Duration of Status”, in other words, the period of time in which you are maintaining your non-immigrant status.
- The completion date on your I-20 is the expiration date of your status.
- Your I-20 or DS-2019 can be extended at the International Admissions and Student Services (IASS) if necessary, but only if you meet the immigration criteria for an extension.

### **What is Automatic Visa Re-validation?**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has the authority and the responsibility over the admission of travelers to the United States. Under the automatic revalidation provision of immigration law, certain temporary visitors holding expired nonimmigrant visas who seek to return to the U.S. may be admitted at a U.S. port-of-entry by CBP, if they meet certain requirements, including, but not limited to the following:

- Nonimmigrants who departed the United States for brief travel to Canada, Mexico, or an adjacent island (for F and J nonimmigrants) for thirty days or less;
- Nonimmigrants with a valid (unexpired) admission stamp or paper Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record, endorsed by DHS

For more information please visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/automatic-revalidation.html>

### **Where do you recommend that I apply for a new visa?**

- We recommend that you apply for a visa at the U.S. Consulate or Embassy in your home country.
- Most consulates require a personal interview with a consular officer, as well as a collection of biometric identifiers (fingerprints and digital photography).
- It is always advisable to check with the consulate or embassy where you will be applying to determine current application and documentation requirements, as well as processing times.
- To find out about processing times and procedures consult the website of the consulate to which you plan to apply: <http://travel.state.gov>

### **Can I apply in Mexico even if I am not a citizen of that country? (Third Country Nationals)**

#### **Please talk to an advisor in the IASS before attempting this!**

Any third country national (TCN)\* present in the United States and visitors present in Canada or Mexico who wish to apply for a nonimmigrant visa at the U.S. Embassy or Consulates in Mexico, must make an appointment for an interview. U.S. Consulates are located in Ciudad Juarez, Guadalajara, Hermosillo, Matamoros, Merida, Mexico City, Monterrey, Nogales, Nuevo Laredo and Tijuana. Applicants must visit <http://mexico.usvisa-info.com> to obtain information about how to start their application for a U.S. visa at a consular section in Mexico. Applicants will be required to pay their visa application processing fee prior to scheduling an appointment.

Notice: Certain visa applicants may be subject to additional administrative processing. This administrative processing may last weeks, thus delaying visa delivery and the applicant's return to the United States. Every effort will be made to expedite these procedures; however, it is not possible to guarantee completion of this process by a particular date.

### **What do I need to do to apply for a new visa in Mexico?**

1. All applicants are required to make an appointment.
2. Call for a consulate appointment, you must call an appointment service: (do not call the consulate)
  - Calling from Mexico: 52-868-812-6118
  - Calling from the U.S.: 703-439-2310
  - Via internet at <http://mexico.usvisa-info.com>
    - i. Select Country
    - ii. Read "Before You Apply" sectionPlease go to the consulate's website to see specific instructions.
3. To enter the consulate, student applicants must present the following items (check consular website for latest instructions)
  - Valid passport
  - A receipt for the visa application fee from any Scotiabank or Citi Banamex bank
  - A receipt for the \$200 (F-1) SEVIS fee if you are required to pay it; current students or transfer students are not required to pay (talk to your International Student Advisor)
  - Properly completed DS-160 (**Important!!** this form must be **submitted electronically** in advance); if you arrive at the consulate and have not done this you will be sent away  
<http://www.travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/forms/ds-160--online-nonimmigrant-visa-application.html>
  - Your current I-20 signed within the last 6 months
  - Official transcripts from UTRGV in a sealed envelope
  - Banks statements, letters of support
  - Be prepared to offer additional documentation at the request of the Consular officer

### **A word about background and security checks**

Consulates and embassies are more frequently conducting background checks on individuals, resulting in possible delays in visa issuance. Background/security checks are not limited to arrests in the United States, but can also be triggered by certain courses that appear on your transcript, or by your field of study.

If you are subject to a background or security check upon application for a visa renewal in a third country, you will have to remain in that country until the background or security check is completed and the visa is approved before you are allowed to re-enter the U.S.

For general information on non-immigrant visas, please see the Destination USA website:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english.html>

#### **Disclaimer**

All international student users must understand that any information about immigration regulations is subject to change at any time without prior notification. Furthermore, the immigration advisers of the IASS are neither immigration lawyers, nor are they employees of the Department of Homeland Security or Department of State. Your situation is likely to be different from others and will require more accurate information, which may be obtained from your local immigration office, the U.S. consulate or, in the case of international students enrolled at UTRGV from the International Student Advisers at the IASS.