



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK 2008 – 2009



Welcome to Nazarene Theological Seminary! We are delighted that you have chosen NTS for this phase of your ministerial preparation. We think you will find the Seminary community to be a place of academic rigor, spiritual enlightenment and healthy social interaction.

New experiences in a new environment can challenge even the most seasoned travelers among us. This handbook is intended to answer some of the practical questions that come along with adjusting to life in Kansas City. Of course, we can't cover every question in this brief document, but we have attempted to make it as comprehensive as possible. Any input you can add during your time here will continue to help us provide the most accurate and updated information for future students.

If you have any questions regarding travel, work, applications for special circumstances, please don't hesitate to stop by the International Student Services Advisor's office or to contact us by phone or e-mail.

Blessings,

Karen Keefer
International Student Services Advisor
816-268-5423
kekeef@nts.edu

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Introduction

Every student who enters the United States on a Student Visa is ultimately responsible for maintaining all legal issues regarding their visit. Nazarene Theological Seminary does not determine the regulations by which your status is maintained, but you could consider NTS as an intercessor for you. However, you will need to inform yourself about relevant issues to your particular situation (family status, employment options, travel regulations etc). **Visas, passports, employment authorization and all other documentation or legal status issues must be properly applied for by you and maintained at all times.**

During your time as a student at NTS, you are legally a visitor. This may mean that full access to United States Government support services may be limited or that restrictions may prohibit the privileges given to a U.S. citizen. Most of these restrictions will be imposed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Each government program will have its own terms and regulations so please become as familiar as you can with your own process.

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may at any time request full documentation from you and Nazarene Theological Seminary, so it is best to have a folder with originals used for all official business as well as a back up copy.

Glossary of Common Terms

F-1 Academic Students enter the United States to pursue a full course of study at one of the following types of Department of Homeland Security-approved academic institutions in the United States:

- Established college or university
- Seminary
- Conservatory
- Academic high school (or, for F-3 students, elementary school)
- Language Training Program

Attendance at a public elementary school or a publicly funded adult education program is prohibited. Study at a public secondary school is time-limited and requires reimbursement to the local educational agency.

Visa Categories: Foreign citizens who wish to stay in the United States temporarily—whether for tourism, business, study, or medical reasons—must generally have a visa issued by the U.S. Department of State. To obtain a visa, or more information on this topic, contact the American Embassy or American Consulate in your country of residence. There are two categories of U.S. visas: immigrant and nonimmigrant. Most of the students at NTS are Non-Immigrant.

Non-Immigrant Visa

Nonimmigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States on a temporary basis.

Immigrant Visa

An immigrant visa is issued to a foreign national who intends to live and work permanently in the United States. In most cases, a relative or employer sponsors the individual by filing an application with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Port of Entry:

When you cross most borders through public transportation, most nations will have a way of controlling access. At a U.S. Port of Entry there will usually be Department of Homeland Security officers who will check to make sure you have all of the proper documentation for entry. It is vital to properly prepare for this encounter, as access to the country may be denied and you can be deported immediately without the proper documentation.

CBP: U.S. Customs and Border Protection was created in 2003, by combining the U.S. Customs Service, Immigration Inspection Service, Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service and the U.S. Border Patrol into one border agency.

DHS: Department of Homeland Security is the parent agency of CBP and was also created in 2003, after the 9/11 attacks on the United States. This Government Department defines or influences most of the travel and security regulations imposed on domestic and international residence of the United States.

PDSO/DSO:

Primary Designated School Official/Designated School Official. These are the representatives on your campus who are legally authorized to sign your I-20 or other applications made to various U.S. Government agencies. Common forms/applications would include **Change of Status, Transfer to another University, Reduced Course Load Application etc.** The current list of PDSO/DSO's for NTS are:

Karen Keefer – International Student Services Advisor
 Jay Sandbloom – Director of Admissions
 Dr. D. Martin Butler – Dean for Administration

While all of the persons above are legally able to sign documentation, Karen Keefer will have the best understanding of your current situation. Please defer all initial requests for assistance to kekefer@nts.edu or call (816) 268-5423. You must report to the International Student Services Advisor within 15 days of the report date shown on your I-20 to register active status in SEVIS.

Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS):

SEVIS is a networked computer system set up in the United States to track information on non-immigrant international students and scholars attending school in the U.S.

The SEVIS requires authorized educational institutions, such as universities, laboratories, non-profit organizations and secondary schools, to monitor international students and scholars and maintain their records. The SEVIS can only be accessed by the Designated School Officials (DSOs), who are authorized by the Department of Homeland Security to utilize the system. The DSOs must keep records of any "reportable events" on international students and scholars, such as arrival/departure, school transfer, no-show, leave of absence, extension/termination of educational program, change of major, change of academic level, dependent/family information and work authorization among others. International students and scholars who violate their visa requirements become subject to investigation by the officials of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and possible removal (deportation) from the United States

EAD:

Employment Authorization Document or EAD serves as proof to employers that an individual is authorized to work in the United States. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is now issuing a new version of the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) or Form I-766. This currently takes about three months after the application to process, so please apply early to avoid a delay in employment.

Social Security Number:

A Social Security Number or SSN, as it is commonly abbreviated, refers to a unique identification number used primarily for taxation. Any person who works in the United States is subject to federal and local taxes and must have a SSN or Taxpayer Identification Number. Detailed instructions to obtain a SSN are included later in this handbook.

Arrival-Departure Record (I-94 Form):

The Arrival-Departure Record (Form I-94) shows the date you arrived in the United States and the “Admitted Until” date, the date when your authorized period of stay expires. You will receive a blank I-94 Form from a CBP Officer upon arrival in the United States. This will be at a U.S. port-of-entry at a land border, airport or seaport.

You will need to replace your portion of the I-94 Form, if it is lost, stolen or mutilated. If you are applying for an extension of stay or change of status, you will need to be issued an I-94 Form, if you were not issued this document when you first entered the country. See the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Website for information on how to file for a replacement Form I-94.

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=e5d95d4c6608e010VgnVCM1000000ecd190aRCRD>

Living Considerations

Where is NTS located?

We are located just off highway 71 in Kansas City, MO. We are amidst a neighborhood that provides many opportunities for cross-cultural ministry experience and orientation. Most of our students live and work within a 30 minute driving radius.

What is Kansas City like?

Kansas City is a sprawling metro area in Middle-America. When in Kansas City, MO or Kansas City, KS you are never far from numerous opportunities to enjoy its rich culture and heritage. Nicknamed the "Heart of America," Kansas City is a diverse city with historic urban neighborhoods and new developments. For more information about what KC has to offer, check out www.experiencekc.com.

Where will I live?

Our students live throughout the Kansas City Metro area. Kansas City is a diverse city with a variety of neighborhoods and communities; deciding where you will be living is an inevitable part of the transition to NTS. NTS does not offer student housing, but we do maintain a housing availability list at <http://www.nts.edu/housing-in-kansas-city1> on our website connecting students to roommates, houses and apartments.

Rental costs vary from \$200 per month to rent a room in someone's home to \$800 or more per month to rent an apartment or house in the suburbs. It will depend on the size and location of accommodations you wish to rent.

Temporary accommodations for your first two nights in Kansas City are offered at King Conference Center on the Nazarene Theological Seminary campus. Any additional nights are charged at \$52 per night.

Kansas City Area Utilities:

ELECTRICITY

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

Serves Kansas City, KS

(913) 573-9190 or (913) 573-9000

INDEPENDENCE POWER AND LIGHT DEPARTMENT

Serves Independence

(816) 325-7930

KANSAS CITY POWER AND LIGHT CO.

The area's largest electric utility

(816) 471-5275

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE CO.

Serves northern Platte, western and northern Clay, southern Ray and western and central Jackson counties

1-800-303-0752

GAS

KANSAS GAS SERVICE

Serves parts of Johnson, Wyandotte and Leavenworth counties
1-800-794-4780

MISSOURI GAS ENERGY

Serves Jackson, Platte (except Platte City), Clay, Ray and Cass counties
(816) 756-5252

WATER

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

Serves city of Kansas City, Kan., and parts of Wyandotte County
(See Electricity listing)

INDEPENDENCE WATER DEPARTMENT

Serves Independence
(816) 325-7930

KANSAS CITY WATER SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Serves Kansas City, MO
(816) 513-1400

WATER DISTRICT # I OF JOHNSON COUNTY

Serves most of Johnson County
(913) 895-1800 in Olathe call (913) 782-2600

LOCAL TELEPHONE SERVICE

AT&T

for new residential service
1-877-213-1057

BIRCH TELECOM

(888) 772-4724

Electrical Devices and Appliances in the United States:

The electrical current used for small appliances in the U.S. is 100-115 volts, 60 cycles.
Adapters/transformers may be needed for appliances that you bring from your country.

Simple instructions for how to make an International phone call

From any phone that can make international calls...

Dial the **international calling number** (011 from the US), then the **country code**, then the **city code**, then the **phone number**.

Sample Living Expenses in Kansas City:

Hamburger, coke and fries	\$3.50-\$7.00
A can of Coke	\$0.65-\$1.00
32-load laundry detergent	\$4.99-\$7.00
1 gallon of milk	\$2.50-\$3.50
A loaf of bread	\$1.50-\$3.00
Cup of coffee	\$1.50-\$5.00
1 Pizza (8 slices)	\$6.00-\$12.00

Weather in Kansas City:

Surrounded by gently rolling terrain, Kansas City is located near the geographical center of the United States. It is situated on the south bank of the Missouri River at the Missouri-Kansas state line. The climate is modified continental, with frequent and rapid fluctuations in weather during early spring. Summer is characterized by warm days and mild nights; fall days are mild and the nights cool. Winter is cold with the heaviest snowfall coming late in the season. In the summer temperatures can occasionally reach 100 degrees Fahrenheit and in the winter temperatures can occasionally drop below 0 degrees Fahrenheit. You should plan your wardrobe for changing seasons, but additional clothes may be purchased upon arrival. To see the weather forecast, visit <http://www.weather.com/> and look up Kansas City, MO.

Health Care:

All students are encouraged to have hospitalization insurance coverage. The Seminary does not provide health insurance but has brochures available in the Business Office.

In the U.S., most illnesses are treated by a general or family doctor. If your general doctor is unable to heal you, he/she will refer you to a specialist.

Primary care clinics provide outpatient services for people with little or no insurance. Cost ranges from free to an amount the family can pay based on income.

Kansas City Free Health Clinic (www.kcfree.org) offers FREE adult, adolescent, family, gynecology and family planning, dermatology, mental health, dentistry and HIV services.

Locations:

3515 Broadway	5119 E. 24th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111	Kansas City, MO 64127
Phone: 816-753-5144	816-753-5144 ext. 350

Cost: free to all in Missouri and Kansas

Other local health care resources:

Johnson County Health Department (<http://health.jocogov.org/>)

Olathe Clinic: 11875 S. Sunset Drive, Suite 300

Phone: 913-894-2525

Mission Clinic: 6000 Lamar, Suite 140

Phone: 913-826-1200

Jackson County Health Department (www.jacohd.org/links.php)

Independence: 313 S. Liberty

Phone: 816-404-6415

Wyandotte County Health Department (www.wycokck.org/departments/public_health)

Kansas City, KS: 619 Ann Ave.

Phone: 913-321-4803

The greater Kansas City area has over 20 hospitals, several of which have national and even international reputations.

Nazarene Churches:

To find a list of Nazarene churches on the Kansas City district, follow this link:

<http://www.kcdistrict.org/churches.php>

Financial Information

Opening a Bank Account:

U.S. financial institutions are required to verify the identity of every individual who opens a bank account. In compliance with federal regulations, all banks operating in the United States have established Customer Identification Programs (CIPs) that they are to follow for anyone who seeks to open an account. The following minimal information that the banks must obtain from you before allowing you to open an account are:

- Your name
- Your date of birth
- Your street address – no P.O. Box
- An identification number

An identification number can be one or more of the following:

- A taxpayer identification number (see discussion below);
- passport number and country of issuance;
- alien identification card number; or
- number and country of issuance of any other government-issued document evidencing nationality or residence and bearing a photograph or similar safeguard.

It is important to remember that banks establish their own CIPs and may ask for additional documentation than is described above because they are ultimately responsible for establishing the identity of their customers.

Documents you should take with you to open your account:

- Your unexpired passport
- Your I-94 card
- Your I-20
- Any secondary form of identification you may have
- Letter from the International Student Services Advisor

To assist you, the International Student Services Advisor may provide you with a letter to the bank confirming your status at Nazarene Theological Seminary and asking for their assistance in opening your account.

Exchanging Money:

You may have your money electronically wired to a local bank in the U.S. after you arrive and set up a bank account. In this case, you should bring enough money to cover your first month's expenses AND your first semester tuition, books, insurance plus the expenses of setting up housing. DO NOT underestimate the amount of money needed. DO NOT carry a large amount of cash. In Kansas City it may be difficult to exchange money from your currency to U.S. dollars. Your local bank may not offer this service or there may be a fee. Bring your money in traveler's checks or get a bankcard to withdraw cash from an automatic teller machine (ATM).

US Money:

Paper currency is used for amounts of \$1 or more, and coins are used for amounts under \$1. The most common coins and the various dollar denominations:

Coin	Figure on Front	Value (Cents)	Value (Dollars)	Color
Penny	Lincoln	1 cent	0.01 dollars	Copper
Nickel	Jefferson	5 cents	0.05 dollars	Silver
Dime	Roosevelt	10 cents	0.10 dollars	Silver
Quarter	Washington	25 cents	0.25 dollars	Silver
Half Dollar	Kennedy	50 cents	0.50 dollars	Silver
Dollar	Anthony	100 cents	1.00 dollars	Silver

Denomination	Portrait on Front	Illustration on Back
\$1.00	George Washington	Great Seal of the United States
\$2.00	Thomas Jefferson	Declaration of Independence
\$5.00	Abraham Lincoln	Lincoln Memorial
\$10.00	Alexander Hamilton	US Treasury Building
\$20.00	Andrew Jackson	White House
\$50.00	Ulysses S. Grant	US Capitol Building
\$100.00	Benjamin Franklin	Independence Hall

Income Tax

Income earned in the United States is usually subject to any federal, state, or local income regulations that apply.

Filing deadline: Annual filing for taxes is mandated each year by April 15th. If the student was present in the U.S. for any day during the tax year, the student must file.

Miscellaneous Tax Information: Please note that the NTS staff does not provide tax advice and students should refer individual questions to a specialist in international taxation.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) publishes a number of helpful information/instruction booklets, which are available through the IRS Tax Payer Assistance Service (toll free call 1-800-829-3676). You may find a copy of the following forms at your local public library or www.irs.ustreas.gov.

IRS Publication 519 US Tax Guide for Aliens;
IRS Publication 520 Scholarships & Fellowships;
IRS Publication 597 U.S./Canada Tax Treaty;
IRS Publication 901 U.S. Tax Treaties;
IRS Form 104ONR Nonresident Alien Tax Return;
IRS Form 104ONR-EZ Nonresident Alien Tax Return;
IRS Form 8843 Statement for Exempt Individuals.

Transportation:

Airport Information:

You will need to fly into Kansas City International Airport (Airport Code – MCI). The ride from the airport to Nazarene Theological Seminary is approximately one hour. You are encouraged to arrange shuttle service to reserve a ride before you arrive in Kansas City. No transportation is provided by NTS.

Shuttle Services:

Super Shuttle - Please call 816-243-5000 or 1-800-243-6383 or e-mail at: info@kctg.com

Approximate cost \$49

If you take a taxi from the airport, it is very expensive, so you may want to share it with several people in order to reduce the cost. Before entering a taxi, establish the estimated cost with the driver. It's customary to tip the driver 15% of your charge.

Automobile:

Most international students find that life is easier in Kansas City with a personal car since there is no on-campus housing and limited public transportation. Some international students buy used cars during their stay in Kansas City, then sell them to other students or a used car dealership before they return to their home country.

How to Obtain Driver's License:

A driver's license can be issued to nonresidents of the United States. To apply for the driver's license you will need to observe the following steps.

WHAT TO TAKE:

- Valid Passport containing an I-551 stamp
- Current I-20
- Original I-94 Card
- School record/transcript or copy of current schedule
- Most recent bank statement or utility bill within last 30 days

WHAT YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO DO:

- A vision screening to determine if you can see well enough to drive. If you wear glasses or contacts to pass the test, you must wear these corrective lenses whenever you are operating a motor vehicle.
- A road sign recognition test. This will determine if you understand the meaning of various traffic signs.
- A written exam. This multiple choice test covers licensing and vehicle registration laws, rules of the road, and practices for safe driving. You can prepare for the exam by reviewing the state's Driver Guide. You may want to take a practice test before you take the real one.
- A driving test. You will take this test in your own vehicle, accompanied by an examiner from the State Highway Patrol. He or she will ask you to identify the vehicle's controls and inspect the vehicle to see if it is safe to drive. You'll also be tested on your ability to park, back, turn, and enter or exit an intersection.

You will obtain a driver’s license for the state in which you live. Take your proof of identity to your written test and to your driving test.

DO NOT DRIVE YOURSELF TO THE TESTING CENTER!

Missouri Offices	Kansas Office
Kansas City 615 E. 13th St Kansas City, MO 64106	Mission 6507 Johnson Drive Mission, KS 66202
Independence 16643 E 23rd St Independence MO 64055	
Raytown 6138 Raytown Trafficway Raytown, MO 64133	

It will take up to 6 weeks to receive a driver’s license, but you will be issued a temporary license when you meet the requirements.

Both Kansas and Missouri require a Social Security Number for a driver's license only of people who have been assigned one or are eligible for one. Therefore, applicants without a Social Security Number must submit an affidavit or certify that they have either never been issued an SSN or are ineligible for one.

Employment

On-Campus Work Authorization: First year students are not permitted to work off campus, but may work for Nazarene Theological Seminary if employment is available and offered. Below is a list of employment status options as well as their requirements that may be held by a student.

Part Time Employment: defined as 20 hours or less during the regular school semester

1. You must be in good academic standing and immigration status.
2. You may work only on the Nazarene Theological Seminary campus.
3. To maintain eligibility to work during vacation terms, students must be registered full-time for the next academic term.
4. Work is limited to 20 hours/week during the academic term (full-time during breaks and vacations).
5. Employment eligibility ends after completion of studies except for employment authorized under practical training or if the student has been issued an I-20 to begin a new program at NTS.

Curricular Practical Training

1. You must be in good academic standing and immigration status.
2. You must have been a full-time student for a minimum of one academic year unless the respective academic program requires an internship or practicum prior to the one year being reached.
3. CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT) is an opportunity for international students in F-1 status to participate in professional, temporary employment such as an internship, co-op program, practicum or similar situation, which is undertaken prior to the completion of studies. *The training must be an integral part of the established curriculum.*
4. Employment may be either full-time (over 20 hours a week) or part-time (20 hours or less a week).
5. Work is authorized by a Nazarene Theological Seminary DSO.
6. No application fee is required.
7. If CPT exceeds 12 months full-time, the 12 month OPT benefit for the respective degree level will be forfeited.

Optional Practical Training

1. You must be in good academic standing and immigration status.
2. Employment must be directly related to student's academic field of study and commensurate with student's educational level.
3. Employment limited to 12 months of full-time employment.
4. Full-time employment is available A) after completion of all course work except thesis (or equivalent) or

dissertation; or B) after graduation.

5. Does not require a job offer to apply.

6. The application for full-time OPT must be received by the immigration service before the student completes his or her course of study. Please plan ahead.

7. Requires a \$340 application fee.

8. Work is authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) on an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and approval may take 3-4 months to obtain.

Economic Hardship Employment (available only to those who have experienced unforeseen financial circumstances beyond the student's control)

1. You must be in good academic standing and immigration status.

2. You must have been a full-time student for a minimum of one academic year.

3. You must establish need caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond your control.

4. You must have made a "good faith" effort to locate on-campus employment, and need to show that the available on-campus employment is insufficient to meet the need.

5. Work is limited to 20 hours/week during the academic term (full-time during breaks and vacations).

6. Work authorization is granted in one year intervals by the immigration service on an EAD and is renewable if need still exists and student is maintaining status and academic standing.

7. Requires a \$340 application fee.

Application for a Social Security Number

A Social Security Number or SSN, as it is commonly abbreviated, refers to a unique identification number used primarily for taxation. Any person who works in the United States is subject to federal and local taxes and must have a SSN or Taxpayer Identification Number.

In general, only noncitizens who have permission to work from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) can apply for a Social Security number. To apply for a Social Security number:

1. Complete an Application For A Social Security Card (Form SS-5); and
2. Gather original documents proving your:
 - Immigration Status;
 - Work eligibility;
 - Age; and
 - Identity.

Immigration status: To prove your U.S. immigration status, you must show the Social Security Office your current U.S. immigration document, I-94, Arrival/Departure Record, issued to you when you arrived in the United States. You also must show your I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.

Work eligibility: If you are eligible to work on campus, you must provide a letter from your designated school official that identifies your employer and the type of work you are, or will be, doing. Your supervisor must sign and date the letter. The letter must describe:

- Your job
- Your employment start date
- The number of hours you are, or will be, working
- Your supervisor's name and telephone number

If you are authorized to work in curricular practical training, you must provide your Form I-20 with the employment page (page 3) completed and signed by your school's designated school official.

If you are authorized to work off campus, you must provide the *Employment Authorization Document* (I-766 or I-688B) you received from DHS.

Age: You must present your birth certificate if you have it or can easily obtain it. If not, the Social Security Administration can consider other documents, such as your passport or a document issued by DHS, to prove your age.

Identity: The Social Security Administration can accept only certain documents as proof of identity. An acceptable document must be current (not expired) and show your name, identifying information and preferably a recent photograph. Social Security will ask to see your current U.S. immigration documents. Acceptable immigration documents include your;

- I-94 with your unexpired foreign passport; or
- Work permit card from DHS (I-766 or I-688B).

3. Take your completed application and original documents to your local Social Security office.

All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. The Social Security Administration cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents. The Social Security Administration also cannot accept a receipt showing you applied for the document. The Social Security Administration may use one document for two purposes. For example, they may use your DHS work permit as proof of both work eligibility and identity. However, you must provide at least two separate documents.

The Social Security Administration will mail your number and card as soon as they verify your documents with DHS. While you wait for your Social Security number, your employer can use a letter from the Social Security Administration stating that you applied for a number. Your employer can use your DHS documents as proof of your authorization to work in the United States. Employers can find more information on the Internet at www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/hiring.htm

Getting to a Social Security Administration Office

This office is probably the most convenient for Nazarene Theological Seminary students:

Address: 6320 Euclid

Kansas City, MO 64132

Hours: 9:00am to 4:00pm, Monday through Friday.

Getting There: The office is located 2 within walking distance of the Nazarene Theological Seminary campus.

Note: you are free to apply for a Social Security Number or a Social Security Number denial letter at any SSA office.

What can you do if you need a number for tax purposes?

If you need a number for tax purposes and you are not authorized to work in the U.S., you can apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Visit IRS in person or call the IRS toll-free number, 1-800-TAXFORM (1-800-829-3676), and request Form W-7, Application for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number.

Do you need a Social Security number for other government services?

Lawfully admitted noncitizens can get many benefits and services without having a Social Security number. You do not need a number to purchase savings bonds, conduct business with a bank, register for school or apply for educational tests, obtain private health insurance, apply for school lunch programs or apply for subsidized housing.

Contacting Social Security

For more information, visit their website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call toll-free 1-800-772-1213 (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778). The Social Security Administration can answer specific questions and provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day.

The Social Security Administration treats all calls confidentially and wants to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. For this purpose a Social Security representative may monitor some telephone calls.

It will take approximately 4 weeks for the SSA to process your application. If it has been more than 4 weeks since you applied, you should visit or call the office where you applied to check on the status of your request.

Exiting the United States

CONTINUING STUDENTS:

Continuing students who are going to travel outside of the United States must see the International Student Services Advisor to obtain an endorsement from the DSO. The endorsement will be made on page 3 of the SEVIS Form I-20.

When you leave the country, you should give the I-94 Form to your airline or ship representative. If you are departing over a land border, give it to a Canadian or Mexican immigration inspector. The I-94 Form that has been approved by a CBP Officer proves that you arrived in the country legally and that you have not stayed beyond the period of your authorized stay.

Be sure to turn in the I-94 Form to the proper authorities on departure. This returned portion of the form proves you did not violate U.S. laws by staying in the country too long. It is proof that you obeyed U.S. immigration laws, which is essential if you want to return to the United States at a future date as an immigrant or nonimmigrant.

When returning to the United States, a continuing student/exchange visitor must present a valid SEVIS Form I-20 with the DSO signature showing that the student is active and in good standing with the school or program.