

F-1 Travel Abroad During Degree Program

An F-1 student may travel abroad for a period of five months or less and return to U.S. for continued attendance at Goucher College.

What do I need to have with me in order to re-enter?

The following is a list of items you should be able to present at the Port of Entry upon your return to the U.S.

Required:

- Your current I-20 signed for travel
- Your passport valid for at least six months in the future at the time of your re-entry
- A valid visa, unless you are a Canadian citizen (Please see the handout Understanding the F-1 visa for more information if your visa will need to be renewed prior to your re-entry.)

Recommended:

- All previously-issued I-20's
- Your most recent transcript
- Your next semester's schedule
- Documentary evidence of your financial ability to afford your education
- Proof of intent to leave the US upon completion of your degree
- Any work authorization you may have

What if I will be out of the U.S. for more than five months?

Please see the handout Leave of Absence or Withdrawal for what is needed in order to return.

How often should I have my I-20 signed?

While the back of the I-20 indicates that signatures are valid for one year, it is wise to get a signature during the semester prior to your travel. This is a more cautious approach, but one recommended by many.

What about travel to Canada, Mexico and the adjacent islands?

If you have maintained legal F-1 status and you want to travel as a tourist for 30 days or less to Canada, Mexico or the adjacent islands other than Cuba, you may do so on an expired visa. Please discuss your situation with the Office of Global Education prior to leaving. Students who apply for a U.S. visa in Canada, Mexico, or adjacent islands and citizens of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Sudan, North Korea, and Cuba are not eligible for the "automatic revalidation" benefit.