

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE
TO SUPPORT**



**INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS IN THE U.S.**

**AMID COVID-19 &
ANTI-IMMIGRATION
POLICIES**



DEAR ALLIES,

This guide was developed by APA Division 17 International Section (ICP) in response to the recent COVID-19 and anti-immigration policies. **Please use this guide to continue advocating and supporting international students during this difficult time!**

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WHY

SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS & SCHOLARS?

- International students and scholars improve economy, enrich classrooms, and become great foreign policy assets.
- **The US economy has lost \$11.8 billion and more than 65,000 jobs** due to the continued decline in international student enrollment since 2016.
- **It's time for you to support international students and scholars from xenophobia during this pandemic!**

TAKE ACTION, BECOME ALLIES

Check-in.

Avoid asking, “How are you?”

Instead, ask “How can I support you right now?”
or “Have you been able to find time for rest?”

Communicate.

Urge Congress to Support International
Students & Scholars and Protect OPT

Submit your information ([click here](#)) and send a
sample message to your lawmakers to support
the international community.



Share.

Share this guide with your peers and colleagues and start a conversation. Take the advocacy steps below.

Impact.

Ask members of Congress to make floor statements in support of International Students. Get a sample request letter from here and email to your Member of Congress (to find your representative, [click here](#)).

Educate.

Email and tweet at your Senators and Representative about the dollars, jobs, academic and cultural benefits international students bring to your state.

SHARE INFORMATION: VISA & ACADEMIA

Learn.

- Read the recent U.S. visa and entry restrictions related to COVID-19 congregated & summarized by NAFSA.
- Realize that both the work visa suspension (i.e., H-1B) and the rescinded restrictions on international students have negatively affected the international community.

Stay informed.

Check the latest information on COVID-19 Travel Restrictions by Country, the recent APA webinar & Learn how COVID-19 affects visa status, OPT, H-1B visa, etc.

Advise.

Despite the delays in the U.S. Visa process, advise incoming international students **NOT TO ENTER THE U.S. WITH A TRAVEL VISA**. Doing so may cause serious issues with the legality of their visa status.

Encourage.

Encourage grad students & postdocs to stay on track with their program requirements with the resources below:

- *APA COVID-19 Information & Resources | APA COVID-19*
- *APA Webinars - Staying on Track During a Pandemic | APA Stay-on-Track*
- *National Postdoctoral Association | National PostDoc.org - Check out their resources including International Postdoctoral Survival Guide*

SHARE INFORMATION: FINANCIAL CONCERNS

Check in.

Check in with your students or peers about whether/how their GAship may be impacted if they cannot enter the U.S.

Explore Resources.

Be proactive in identifying and/or creating financial aids or scholarships for international students because these tend to be limited.

Be Aware.



- International students are **not eligible for** the CARES Act Funds, Stimulus Check, Work-Study positions, and other federal funded scholarships (e.g., APA Minority Fellowship).
- Similarly, international scholars (i.e., faculty/staff/employees) are **not eligible for** unemployment benefits and the CARES Act Funds.
- Some international students (e.g., graduate students) **cannot earn their tuition waivers or stipends** because they cannot travel to the U.S.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO CHECK THE GOOGLE DOCS OF THE GUIDES...

Please visit

- **Guide for Allies:**
<https://go.umd.edu/SupportIS>
- **Guide for International Students:**
<https://go.umd.edu/ICPSupport>

UNDERSTAND


VISA

KEYWORDS

TO HELP INT'L

STUDENTS &

SCHOLARS



International students and scholars juggle with numerous documents just to maintain their status and study/work in the U.S. While guiding them to the International Services Offices is a wise decision, it is also imperative that **we all learn some keywords to better understand international students' visa concerns!**



VISA KEYWORDS



F-1 Visa.

- Allows students to attend U.S. schools as a full-time student.
- Most international students in the U.S. hold this visa.
- F-1 students may work on-campus for up to 20 hours a week under certain conditions and restrictions.

M-1 Visa.

Allows students to participate in vocational or other nonacademic programs.



VISA KEYWORDS




J-1 Visa.

J-1 Visa is for work and study related exchange programs.

CPT.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) allows F-1 students to participate in an internship, practicum or cooperative education program. One year of full-time CPT ELIMINATES a student's eligibility for OPT.



VISA KEYWORDS



OPT.

- Optional Practical Training (OPT) provides F-1 students with an opportunity for hands-on work experience related to the academic field of study.
- If students' degrees are considered as qualifying STEM degrees (or if students' degrees have eligible CIP Codes), they can apply for the 24-month STEM OPT extension.



VISA KEYWORDS



H-1B Visa.

A “Work Visa” that allows US companies to employ graduate level workers in specialty occupations.

H-1B Cap Gap Extension.

It allows certain students with pending or approved H-1B petitions to remain in the U.S. in F-1 status until the start date of their approved H-1B employment period, even if the OPT authorization and/or F-1 grace period would have otherwise expired before October 1.



VISA KEYWORDS



Severe Economic Hardship

If international students are suffering a severe economic hardship due to unforeseen changes, they may apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for authorization to work off-campus.

Check in with international student and scholar services on campus and see if they have emergency funds specifically for international students.

