PREPARING FOR ARRIVAL

BY
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ISSS
International Student & Scholar Services
University of Minnesota
ARRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

Put your Preparation into Action

- Do not attempt to arrive to the U.S. more than 30 days before the program start date listed on your SEVIS I-20 or DS-2019 form. You may be refused entry!
- Keep in mind that sometimes luggage is temporarily misplaced. In order to avoid considerable problems if this happens to you, we recommend packing items you need for 2-3 days in your carry-on luggage (extra clothes, money, prescription medication, eyeglasses, contact lenses, personal toiletry items, etc.)
- Bring a pen. On the airplane, flight attendants will distribute Custom Declaration Forms CF-6059 and Arrival-Departure Record Forms I-94. These must be completed before landing.
- Certain articles are forbidden or restricted to bring into U.S. These include plants, fruits, meats and vegetables. For the most updated list of restricted items, visit US Customs and Boarder Protection Website: www.customs.ustreas.gov

Review of Immigration Documents

When you receive your U.S. nonimmigrant visa at the embassy or consulate in your country, the consular officer will seal your immigration documents in an envelope attached to your passport. Do not open the envelope. Instead, the U.S. immigration inspector at the U.S. port of entry will open the documents. The following documents should be hand-carried with you and never packed in your checked baggage:

- **Passport** (needs to be valid for at least six month beyond the date of your expected stay)
- **SEVIS Form I-20 or DS-2019** (For new students and scholars: US Consular Officer may put your I-20 or DS-2019 in a sealed envelope, sometimes attached to your passport—Do NOT open the envelope! The CBP officer at the US port of entry will open it)
- **Evidence of Financial Resources**
- **Address of where you live in US (not the college address)**
- **Contact information of our office:**

  International Student and Scholar Services  
  University of Minnesota  
  190 Humphrey Ctr., 301 19th Avenue South  
  Minneapolis, MN 55455  
  (612) 626- 7100  
  Open Monday- Friday, 8:00AM-4:30PM (CST)

Some time before your arrival in the United States, the flight attendants will distribute Customs Declaration Forms CF-6059 and Arrival-Departure Record Forms I-94. Fill these out on the plane. You will submit them to the appropriate U.S.
customs and immigration authorities after you land. If you do not understand a form, ask the flight attendant for assistance.

What to Expect at the Airport

Once you have left the airplane, follow the other passengers into the terminal area reserved for incoming passengers. You will be asked to get in line in front of the immigration inspection booths. As you approach, have your passport, I-20 or DS-2019 form, and I-94 (arrival/departure card) ready for inspection by the Custom and Border Patrol (CBP) officer. You are likely to be asked your purpose for entering the United States and your final destination. An appropriate response is “to study” or “to conduct research (or teach, or observe, or train)” at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The CBP officer will process and stamp your I-20 or DS-2019 form and I-94 card and return them to you, take a digital photo and your fingerprints.

After passing through the immigration area, you will collect your baggage and then, with your baggage, pass through customs. A customs inspector will ask you to declare what you have brought into the country, inspect your bags, and review the Customs Declaration Forms CF-6059 you filled out on the airplane. Penalties for concealing declarable items can be very severe, so be honest and make a full declaration.

Items for your personal use may be brought into the United States without paying duty. As a nonresident, you are also allowed to bring in gifts with a total value up to $100 duty free. If the total value of such items exceeds $100, you will need to pay duty.

You must declare the amount of money you have with you, but you do not have to pay duty on it. Money in any amount may be brought into and taken out of the United States, but anyone bringing more than $10,000 into the country must file a report with the U.S. customs official.

Certain articles are forbidden or restricted. These include plants, fruits, meats, vegetables, clothing made from the skins of endangered animals, ivory, lottery tickets, obscene articles or publications, and switchblade knives. Drugs without a doctor’s prescription or narcotics, such as barbiturates, amphetamines, and marijuana, also are strictly prohibited.