

Diablo Valley College
International Students Handbook

Immigration, health and employment

INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Student Admission and Services (ISAS)

Updated: October 2008

Immigration matters for F-1 student visa

Please note: Important and critical changes in immigration regulations affecting F-1 international students are included in this handbook. Please read it carefully so that you know what your new responsibilities are due to the new laws and the implementation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS.)

It is your responsibility to maintain your F-1 nonimmigrant status while you are in the U.S. The International Student Admission and Services (ISAS) office at Diablo Valley College (DVC) is available to help you understand the various immigration laws and regulations that affect you as an international student in the U.S. If you have any questions about your visa or your status, please see the Designated School Official (DSO), at the ISAS office during drop-in hours. Currently the only two DSO's on the DVC campus are Gloria Zarabozo and Gena Gruber.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS REQUIREMENT

*YOU ARE REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES TO MAINTAIN AN UPDATED ADDRESS WITH THE COLLEGE. YOU MAY **NOT** USE A POST OFFICE BOX. PLEASE COME TO THE ISAS OFFICE TO CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS WHENEVER YOU MOVE. IF YOU FAIL TO DO THIS YOU WILL BE **OUT OF STATUS**. THE DSO'S AT THE ISAS OFFICE WILL UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS WITHIN THE SEVIS SYSTEM.*

THE ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD HAVE WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE ARE:

- **PASSPORT**
- **VISA**
- **FORM I-94 (ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE RECORD)**
- **FORM I-20**

If you are missing any of the above documents or if they are incorrect, please contact the ISAS office.

PASSPORT

Your passport must be valid at all times during your stay in the U.S. For passport renewal, contact your consulate (see list of nearby consulates on page 14). Do not wait until your passport expires!!

FORM I-20

The Form I-20 A-B, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status-For Academic Students, is the document you received from Diablo Valley College when you were officially admitted to our program. You used the Form I-20 to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad or to transfer from the previous school, college or university you were attending in the U.S. The SEVIS I-20 Form has three parts--- Page 1 has all of the information that is put in SEVIS concerning your stay at DVC. Page 2 is the instructions and page 3 is for travel and employment endorsement.

Entrance into the US with Form I-20

Item #5 of the I-20 Form indicates the date you are expected to report to Diablo Valley College to begin your studies. Normally, you may enter the U.S. as early as 30 days before the school reporting date in order to give yourself time to find housing, get oriented to the area, etc. before beginning your studies at DVC. If you are unable to arrive in the U.S. by the reporting date noted on your I-20 Form, it is possible that the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (USICE) will not let you into the US. If you are a transfer student with a transfer SEVIS I-20 you may enter before the 30 day period.

If you are entering the U.S. to attend a school for the first time, the USICE official at your port of entry must stamp your I-20 Form in the upper right-hand corner. This stamp indicates that you have been inspected for admission into the U.S. and have been authorized to attend the school whose name appears on your I-20 Form. Note: you **must** attend the school listed on the I-20 Form you used to enter the United States and, if you do not, you will be in violation of your F-1 status.

Extension of time on your I-20

Your Diablo Valley College I-20 Form indicates that the normal length of study at the community college is two to three years (i.e. it usually takes two to three years to complete programs at DVC). We realize that, occasionally, it may take you more than three years to complete your program at DVC due to various circumstances. If your I-20 is going to expire soon, you may apply to the ISAS for a "program extension" within the last 30 days before the expiration date. If you are granted a program extension, you will be issued a new I-20 Form reflecting the additional time you need to complete your course of study. **If your I-20 Form expires before you have completed your course of study, you will be out of status and you will need to apply to USICE for reinstatement. A DSO cannot grant an extension once the I-20 has expired.**

When you complete your studies in the U.S. and return to your home country you should keep your I-20-IDs from all the schools you have attended in your permanent records---you may need to use them as supporting documents for a future application for a visa.

VISA

Your visa is the multi-colored stamp entered on a page of your passport at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad.

The visa is used to authorize your entry into the U.S. for a certain number of entries until the visa expires. It may be authorized for multiple entries (often indicated on your visa with the letter "M"), or once (single entry, indicated on your visa as "S"), two entries (indicated on your visa as 2 or "two"), etc.

The visa type (F-1, B-2, B-1, M-1) indicates what type of activities you will be pursuing in the United States. An F-1 visa, for example, is used to enter the U.S. to study at an academic or language school; a B-2 visa (visitor for pleasure) is used to enter the U.S. as a tourist.

Expiration of Visa While in the U.S.

Your entry visa may expire while you are in the U.S.---this is okay since your visa must only be valid at the time you enter the U.S. If you leave the U.S. after your visa has expired, however, you must go to a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad to obtain a new visa in order to be able to re-enter the U.S.*. **Note: you cannot obtain a new visa from inside the U.S.**

*Exception: You may travel to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean Islands (except Cuba) for **30 days or less** and re-enter with an endorsed I-20 and a valid passport. However, citizens of Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria cannot travel to Mexico or Canada and re-enter the US without a valid visa. Finally, your F-1 visa may note the name of your school of initial attendance (the school which issued the I-20 Form you presented to the U.S. consular official at the time of your visa application). **This notation is for information purposes only---if you transfer schools after arriving in the U.S., you do not need to have your visa changed to note the name of the new school.**

FORM I-94 (ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE RECORD)

The Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) is the square card attached to your passport by the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (USCBP) official at your port of entry into the U.S. **It is probably the most important immigration document you have because it shows that you have been legally admitted into the U.S. and it identifies your immigration status and your authorized period of stay in the U.S. DON'T LOSE THIS CARD---**it currently costs \$100.00 to get a replacement card from the US Citizen and Immigrations Services (USCIS) and it takes many months to receive.

For most people, the color of the I-94 Form is white. People who are entering the U.S. under the Visa Waiver Program, however, are issued a green I-94 Form.

The Form I-94 contains your unique 11-digit admission number in large bold numbers in the upper left hand corner. When you arrive in the U.S., the USCBP official may write your admission number in the appropriate space on your I-20 Form and will also write this number next to your visa stamp in your passport. When you arrived at your port of entry, the USCBP official should have stamped your Form I-94. The USCBP official's stamp notes the date you entered the U.S. and says, "Admitted (visa status) until (expiration date of authorized period of stay)".

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN F-1 STUDENT VISA AND F-1 STUDENT STATUS

Once you have been admitted to the U.S., you are considered by Diablo Valley College and the various immigration services as having **F-1 status** (not an F-1 visa).

The importance of having a certain visa ends when you leave the airport; for the rest of your stay in the U.S., people will refer to your F-1 status. (Your F-1 visa will probably expire before your F-1 status, which is OK.)

The status designation is usually (but not always) the same as the visa type, such as an F-1 student visa and an F-1 status designation on your I-94, but it is possible to be admitted to the U.S. with a certain visa status, such as a J-1 (exchange visitor) visa status and then

apply to the USCIS for a change of status to F-1 (student). If the USCIS approves such a change, the person will have a J-1 visa stamp in his or her passport but will have an F-1 status designation on his or her new Form I-94.

DURATION OF STATUS

As noted on the Form I-94, F-1 students are admitted to the U.S. until "D/S" ("duration of status"). This means that students **who are maintaining F-1 status** are authorized to stay in the U.S. until:

- The completion of all educational goals at one or various schools, colleges or universities
- The completion of any periods of authorized training

Plus a 60 day grace period following the **successful** completion of the course of study or authorized training. The 60 day grace period is to be used for the following purposes:

- To prepare for departure from the U.S.
- To transfer to another school, college or university
- To change status from F-1 (student) to another nonimmigrant status such as B-2 (tourist)

If you want to travel in the U.S. longer than 60 days after the completion of your course of study, you will need to apply to the USCIS for a change of status from F-1 (student) status to B-2 (tourist) status. Contact the Office of International Student Admission and Services for information about applying to the USCIS for a change of status.

MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS

Although you are not likely to have much direct contact with the various immigration services, you should be fully aware of the primary conditions imposed by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement for you to retain your F-1 status. Violation of any of these conditions could lead to serious trouble in the form of investigations, hearings, or even deportation:

1. You are not permitted to accept employment off campus without prior authorization;
2. You must be a full-time student;
3. If you are transferring from another school or changing level, you must complete the transfer or change of level procedure within 15 days after the start of classes.
4. You must maintain an updated address with the college at all times. A post office box is unacceptable.
5. **You MUST inform the DSO at DVC whenever you are leaving DVC for good. If you are leaving to transfer to another school you must tell us what school that is so that we can release your records. If you are leaving the US and do not plan on returning to DVC you must also tell us that.**

FULL-TIME STATUS

USICE regulations require you to pursue a "full course of study" at Diablo Valley College. A full course of study is defined as at least **12 academic units per semester**. You are

required to see a DSO at the ISAS office before dropping below 12 units regardless of your reasons. **If you do not see a DSO before dropping below 12 units you will be considered immediately out of status. You must check with a DSO to see if you have a valid reason to be below 12 units. If it is your last semester at DVC and you are finishing a program or transferring you are allowed to be below 12 units if you do not NEED 12 to complete your program. HOWEVER, you MUST inform the DSO that it is your last semester.**

FALLING OUT OF STATUS AND REINSTATEMENT TO F-1 STUDENT STATUS

An F-1 student may fall out of status for the following reasons:

- did not pursue a full course of study
- did not complete the transfer of schools or change of level procedure within the 15 days after the start of a new school or program.
- accepted unauthorized off-campus work.
- GPA dropped below a 2.0.
- Did not maintain a current address with the college.

If you fall out of status, you may apply to the USICE for reinstatement. If you feel you are out of status, please go see the DSO, during drop-in hours at the Office of International Student Admission at (925) 685-1230 Ext. 2075. At this time we will explain what your options are regarding being out of status. In some cases, reinstatement is not possible and a student must leave the US and re-enter with a new I-20 and the status starts all over again.

CHANGE OF STATUS

An F-1 student may want to change status to B-2 tourist for the following reason:

- After completion of a program a student would like travel in the U.S. for more than the 60 days grace period authorized by USCIS.

Currently the USCIS is taking 6 months to complete a change of status request.

If the student has received a change of status approval notice from the USCIS and he or she leaves the U.S., the student will need to apply for a visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad to be able to reenter and resume that new status (except when traveling to contiguous territory).

SCHOOL TRANSFER

To be eligible to transfer to another school, college or university you must have maintained your F-1 status. Students who are transferring from another U.S. school, college or university to Diablo Valley College will need to contact the current program they are in to have them release the student records to DVC. If the student is out of status at the previous school, he or she must talk to a DSO at DVC to see what his or her options are for coming to DVC as an F-1 student.

As an F-1 student it is crucial that you are aware of the immigration laws and regulations governing school transfers and it will be **your responsibility** to contact your previous school to have your SEVIS records sent to DVC once we indicate that you have been admitted.

SEVIS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Starting January 30, 2003, all schools who admit international students will be required to report all F-1 students' records directly to the USICE through the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS.) There have been major changes in immigration law resulting in the F-1 students taking much more responsibility for their status. The DVC International Student Admissions and Services office has put together this question and answer sheet to help students understand their responsibility. Here are some questions and answers that we think might help you to understand the changes in the laws that affect you.

Q. What is non-immigrant status and how does an F-1 student maintain it so that they may remain in the US legally?

1) F-1 international students are admitted into the United States by the USCBP for the sole purpose of studying and acquiring a degree or specific knowledge or training. An F-1 student must be a full-time student making regular progress towards their academic goal. At DVC this means, taking 12 units and getting a grade point average above a 2.0 **EVERY** semester. Students must contact a DSO if they feel they cannot do this.

2) An F-1 student cannot work illegally. In all cases they must have approval from the Designated School Official (DSO) or the USCIS. Gloria Zarabozo and Gena Gruber at the ISAS office of DVC are the only two people who are DSOs and who can approve any work. You must also be eligible to work. A student must come to the ISAS office to determine if they are eligible to work. Under no circumstances can an F-1 student work legally without approval.

Q. Under what circumstances can I take fewer than 12 units?

In all cases a student must get permission from the DSO **BEFORE** dropping below 12 units. USICE allows students to drop below 12 units for the following reasons **ONLY** and with **PRIOR** permission from the DSO:

1) Student is having difficulty adjusting to the new educational system. (Only can be used the first semester in school in the United States.)

2) Student is having language difficulties. (Usually only the first semester will this reason be acceptable.)

3) Student has medical problems and proof from a doctor that they should take below 12 units. A student is allowed medical reasons to be below 12 units for a total of two semesters **ONLY**. If a student is sick longer than two semesters for whatever reason they may not be below 12 units and must leave the United States because they are not making regular progress towards their degree. Student must have medical proof (from a doctor, osteopath, psychologist or psychiatrist **ONLY**) for both semesters and must show DSO each semester.

4) It is the student's last semester and he or she needs fewer than 12 units to complete their program. This can include a transfer program if the student is transferring to a 4 year college **ONLY**.

Q. What do I now have to do when I finish a program and I want to transfer or go home?

Now, whenever a student finishes a program or is going to leave for any reason they must let the DSO know. If the student is transferring he or she must let the DSO know to which school they will be transferring to so that the DSO can release the records to the new school. AGAIN, when the student leaves the school for ANY reason they must inform the DSO of that school. **An F-1 student is allowed to remain in the US only 60 days after completing a program or post completion practical training.**

Q. How early can an international student enter the US?

It used to be 90 days before starting a program **now it is only 30 days.** This is for initial entrance to the US. If you have a transfer I-20 you may enter earlier.

Q. What happens if an emergency happens and an international student has to leave the US?

The student should tell the DSO that they must leave. They will be allowed to drop all classes with authorization. They **must leave within 15 days** of when they dropped their classes. College policy dictates that only students dropping during the first two weeks of class are eligible for a refund. This is the case regardless of the reason for leaving. PLEASE NOTE: Short term and late start classes have different deadlines for dropping and receiving a fee refund.

Q. How much time do I have between programs?

An F-1 student must be admitted from one program to another within 60 days of successfully completing a program IF THEY ARE PLANNING ON STAYING IN THE UNITED STATES BETWEEN PROGRAMS. The maximum amount of time a student is allowed to remain in the US in between programs (end of one and start of next) is FIVE MONTHS. For example, if an international student completes a program on February 3, they must start a program by July 3 or they will be considered out of status by USICE

Q. What information do I now need to give to the ISAS office?

International students must include copies of their **I-94s** and **Visas with their applications if they are transfer students.** Students are also required to maintain a current address with ISAS which then gets sent to the USICE.

Q. What does an international student do if they fall out of status?

If a student falls out of status he or she comes to the ISAS office to discuss if REINSTATEMENT to status is a possibility. Reinstatement is when a student writes a letter to USICE and requests that they be reinstated to status once they fall out of status. A student MUST apply for reinstatement within 5 months of falling out of status. **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BE AWARE OF AND TO MAINTAIN HIS OR HER STATUS.** Usually reinstatement is only granted when a student's reason for falling out of status is something that is completely out of their control.

Q. How many online courses can international students now take?

The new law states that international students may take one course or three units of online or distance education per semester while in the United States. Of course, if the student is outside the United States they may take as many as they like.

Q. What if I cannot finish my program by the "program completion date" on my I-20?

If a student is unable to finish a program on time he or she must ask the DSO for an

extension of program. However, if the delay has to do with academic problems such as failing or withdrawing from classes without permission no extension can be given. A student must ask for an extension BEFORE the "program completion date" on the I-20. After that day no extensions can be granted.

INFORMATION REGARDING TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S.

If you are leaving the U.S. on an emergency or on vacation and plan to return to the Diablo Valley College to continue a course of study, you must have your I-20 endorsed (signed) for reentry into the U.S. before you leave. If you fail to do this, you will have trouble reentering the U.S.

The authorization for reentry is the required signature on page 3 of your I-20. You must submit your I-20 at least one week prior to your date of departure to the ISAS office. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE OR WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SIGN IT IN TIME.** If you have to leave immediately and cannot wait please send us the I-20 and we will mail it to your address outside of the US.

The Diablo Valley College designated staff will **not endorse** the back of your I-20 for reentry into the U.S. if 1) you have failed to maintain your status or 2) if you do not intend to return to Diablo Valley College to continue a course of study. If you leave the U.S. to travel abroad and your intention is to return to the U.S. to, for example, travel for pleasure and you do not plan to continue a course of study at the Diablo Valley College or at any other school, college or university in the U.S., you must apply for a B-2 tourist visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy in the country you plan to visit to be able to reenter the United States (unless you already have a B-2 visa in your passport and it has not expired or you qualify to enter the U.S. on the WT visa waiver program).

If you are leaving the U.S. to travel to countries other than your home country, you must contact the nearest consulate of the country you plan to visit (see list of nearby consulates). Consulates may take one or two days to process and issue a visa. When traveling to other countries, make sure you bring with you as many documents as possible to prove citizenship, home residence and most importantly; **proof of financial resources**. These documents may be demanded at the port of entry of the country you plan to visit and upon reentry to the U.S.

TRAVEL TO AND FROM CANADA

ENTRY INTO CANADA

Citizens from certain countries who wish to visit Canada are required to obtain a visitor's visa (tourist visa) from the Canadian Consulate General in Los Angeles:

Immigration Section
Canadian Consulate General
550 S. Hope Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071-2627.
Tel: (213) 346-2700, Fax: (213) 625-7154. Website: www.losangeles.gc.ca

It may take the Canadian Consulate one or two working days to process and issue a visa, but take into consideration that the nearest Canadian Consulate is located in Los Angeles, and if you do not plan to go to Los Angeles personally, it must be done by mail. It may take two weeks to receive the visa, so you must plan ahead. Please note that in some instances the Canadian Consulate in Los Angeles may wish to interview you, in which case you will need to travel to Los Angeles for the interview. So, don't purchase your airline ticket until you receive the visa from the Canadian Consulate. Canada does not require a visa for citizens of certain countries. Call the Canadian Consulate to find out what requirements are necessary for your nationality.

RE-ENTRY INTO THE U.S.

PLEASE NOTE: Students who travel to Canada for a Visa renewal and are denied are NOT allowed re-entry into the US.

F-1 students who visit Canada for 30 days or less, and have maintained a lawful nonimmigrant status in the U.S., and intend to resume that status upon their return, **must keep the I-94 form (the square white card)** and the I-20 ID form when crossing the U.S. border into Canada.

F-1 students returning to the U.S. must show the U.S. Immigration Inspector:

- a valid I-94 form
- a valid passport
- a valid SEVIS I-20 document: either a new one or one that has been endorsed. This endorsement must be requested at the International Student Admission office **at least one week before the student plans to leave the U.S.**

If you are missing any of the above documents, you will have trouble reentering the U.S.

Students from the following countries must also have a valid US visa for re-entry: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria

Since the Inspector may still ask to see evidence of financial support for the total duration of stay in the U.S., it is strongly advised that F-1 students carry such evidence with them.

TRAVEL TO AND FROM MEXICO

ENTRY INTO MEXICO

Mexican tourist cards or visas are required of all persons in order to visit Mexico. Tourist cards or visas are obtained at the Mexican Consulate. Tourist cards are normally processed within one hour; visas could take a little longer. To find out whether or not a tourist card or visa is needed, the documents required to obtain the card or visa and the hours that they are open, contact the Mexican Consulate at 870 Market Street, Suite 528, San Francisco, CA 94102, (415) 392-5554.

RE-ENTRY INTO THE U.S.

PLEASE NOTE: Students who travel to Mexico for a Visa renewal and are denied are NOT allowed re-entry into the US.

F-1 students who visit Mexico for 30 days or less, and have maintained a lawful nonimmigrant status in the U.S., and intend to resume that status upon their return must keep the I-94 form (the square white card) and I-20 form when crossing the U.S. border into Mexico.

F-1 students returning from Mexico to the U.S. must show the U.S. Immigration Inspector:

- a valid I-94 form
- a valid passport
- a valid I-20 document: either a new one or one that has been endorsed (signed). This endorsement must be requested at the International Student Admission Office at least one week before the student plans to leave the U.S.

Students from the following countries must also have a valid US visa for re-entry: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria

Since the Inspector may still ask to see evidence of financial support for the total duration of stay in the U.S., it is strongly advised that F-1 students carry such evidence with you.

AUTOMATIC EXTENSION OF VISAS (REVALIDATION)

PLEASE NOTE: Students who travel to Canada or Mexico for a Visa renewal and are denied are NOT allowed re-entry into the US.

F-1 students with an expired visa may reenter the U.S. as though the visa were still valid if returning after visits not exceeding 30 days to Mexico, Canada, or the Caribbean Islands (except Cuba) provided the F-1 student does the following:

1. has maintained and intends to resume status as an F-1 student in the U.S.;
2. presents a valid Form I-94;
3. presents a SEVIS I-20 endorsed (signed) for reentry;
4. presents a valid passport (unless exempt from passport requirements);
5. applies for readmission within the authorized period of 30 days.

A person who entered the U.S. on a visa other than F-1, but whose status was changed to F-1 status by USCBP (Immigration), may be considered to have the previous visa automatically revalidated and converted to an F-1 visa if he or she meets the conditions stated above.

Automatic extension applies to "nonimmigrant aliens," therefore Mexican nationals returning from Mexico from visits that do not exceed 30 days should also be able to reenter with an automatic extension.

At the present time, "automatic extension of visas" is not applicable for nationals of Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria. Foreign nationals with the designation of 212 (d) (3) (A) (28) have to apply for a waiver of inadmissibility if they do not hold double or multiple-entry, unexpired visas. Questions about this should be directed to the International Student Admission Office several weeks in advance of departure.

WORK AUTHORIZATION RULES FOR F-1 STUDENTS

ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT:

The only requirement is that the student is in F-1 status. F-1 students can only work on the Diablo Valley College campus and must have a form filled out by the DSO indicating they are in-status before they can begin employment. They must also acquire a Social Security number.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT (Students must come see a DSO in order to apply for any of these types of employment.)

ECONOMIC HARDSHIP:

Requirements: 9 academic months in F-1 status.

A student must be able to demonstrate unforeseen severe financial problems. This is very difficult to do.

Approval is granted by USCIS

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING:

Requirements: 9 academic months in F-1 status.

Must be required for program completion or offered as an optional course through Cooperative Education.

The work must be in the student's area of study as indicated on the I-20 form.

Student can be approved for a total of 4 semesters while taking Cooperative Education 170 class.

Approval is granted by ISAS.

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Requirements: 9 months in F-1 status. Practical training is available only to students in college level programs.

Types of Practical Training:

1. Vacation Period Practical Training. A student may work up to 40 hours per week during the summer vacation or during the break between semesters;
2. While school is in session (pre-completion practical training). A student may work up to 20 hours per week while attending a program of study;
3. Post-Completion Practical Training. A student may work up to 40 hours per week after the completion of a program. **Student must apply through the DSO before the end of his or her program or request will be denied by USCIS.**

A student is limited to 12 months full-time practical training per educational level

Approval is granted by USCIS.

Students who believe they are eligible for practical training or work based on economic hardship must see the DSO at the ISAS office for approval of employment request and for information on how to complete the appropriate paperwork. You cannot work on or off campus without approval.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How often should the back of my I-20 be endorsed?

A:Your I-20 should be signed by one of the "designated school officials" at the International Student Admission Office at DVC in order for you to be permitted to reenter the U.S. after you travel outside the U.S. An endorsement is valid for one year, however, it is recommended to have your I-20 signed every time you travel. **Keep in mind that if you remain out of the U.S. for more than 5 months, you will need to request a new I-20 for reentry.**

Q: If the visa stamp in my passport expires while I am in the U.S., must I leave the country to renew it?

A:The visa stamp in your passport is an "entry permit" only, so you need not be concerned if it expires once you have already entered the U.S., unless you plan to travel out of the U.S. and reenter. In that case, you will need to go to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate (preferably in your home country) and apply for a new visa stamp. When you go to the Consulate to apply for the new visa stamp, you must bring with you your endorsed I-20. It must be endorsed on the back by one of the designated school officials at the International Student Admission Office at DVC. It is also recommended that you bring proof that you have the funding to cover your tuition and living expenses.

Q: I have a newly reissued passport. While I am in the United States, is it possible to change my unexpired visa stamp from my old passport to my newly reissued passport?

A:No, it is recommended that you keep both passports and you may use the visa in the old passport. If you leave the U.S., you may get a new visa stamp in your newly issued passport from the U.S. Consulate/Embassy abroad.

Q: I have a newly reissued passport. My old passport has a visa stamp, but my newly reissued passport does not. Can I reenter the United States from a contiguous territory (Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean Islands except Cuba)?

A:Yes, you must carry both your old expired passport and your new reissued passport. You must also have your I-94 card. With all of these documents, reentry from contiguous territory should be possible even with an expired visa stamp in your old passport **if your travel period did not exceed 30 days.**

HEALTH CARE

Getting sick when you are away from home can be a traumatic experience. Being informed about health care in the Diablo Valley College area before getting sick can make the experience a lot less difficult.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Medical care in the United States is extremely costly, so most people have health insurance to cover the high cost of health care. At Diablo Valley College medical insurance is mandatory for all F-1 students. Students will pay the semester premium for mandatory insurance through their registration. The students purchase insurance for the fall semester and for the spring/summer semester. If your first session at DVC is the summer session you will not be required to have insurance until the fall semester. However, it is highly recommended that you purchase some form of medical insurance to cover you during the summer session.

Be sure to carefully read the policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not. The insurance is provided by AETNA International Student Insurance Services. Students can also come into the ISAS office to see Gena Gruber, or to get brochure, claim forms, and assistance in processing their claims.

Use the AETNA website: **www.aetnastudenthealth.com**

A 24 hour advice nurse line is available for students to call anytime they need confidential medical advice: **1-800-556-1555.**

Call doctor's office to make an appointment. Pickup list of doctors at ISAS office or download form: **www.aetna.com/docfind/custom/chickering/**

Prescriptions: **1-800-238-6179** or **www.Aetna.com/docfind/custom/chickering/**

Very important – make sure you have insurance medical card or brochure temporary medical card to take to doctor or hospital to prove you have medical coverage.

Claims, eligibility and coverage questions, please call: 1-866-378-8885 (toll free)

**Aetna Student Health Insurance
P. O. Box 15708
Boston, MA 02215-0014**

The major local hospitals are listed below:

Mt Diablo Medical Center
2540 East St.
Concord
(925) 682-8200

John Muir Medical Center
1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd
Walnut Creek
(925) 939-3000

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center*
2500 Alhambra Ave
Martinez
(925) 370-5000

*This is a county hospital which will accept patients even without insurance.

OTHER HEALTH REFERRAL ORGANIZATIONS (Some of these services may not be covered by your insurance).

Chiropractic Doctor (bone alignment):

- Palmer Alumni Chiropractic Referral (510)-655-7444

There are many Chiropractors in the Bay Area. Please refer to the "yellow pages" in the telephone book

Physicians & Surgeons:

For referrals on Dermatology (skin), Gynecology (women's health issues), Obstetrics (pregnancy), Gastroenterology (stomach) etc. call the following numbers:

- Ask-A-Nurse 1-800-606-2582 (no charge to caller)
- Alameda Contra Costa Medical Association (510) 654-5383
- Physician Line (510) 237-4636

Sexual Orientation & Counseling:

- Gay & Lesbian Switchboard & Counseling Services (510) 841-6224
- Gay Legal Referral Service (415) 621-3900
- Pacific Center for Human Growth (510) 548-2192

Mental Health Referral for Drug Addiction and Depression: 1-800-333-4444 (no charge to caller.)

HIV TESTING, STD DETECTION AND TREATMENT & BIRTH CONTROL

There are places in the Bay Area where you can get confidential or anonymous HIV testing and counseling, detection and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and counseling on birth control. Some of them are:

Contra Costa County Health Services Dept. (925) 313-6770

AIDS Hotline (925)279-4357 (24 hours)

Planned Parenthood (925) 676-0300

Berkeley City Public Health Clinic
830 University Ave., at 6th Street
(510) 644-8571

Berkeley Free Clinic
2339 Durant (Dana)
(510) 644-0425

Asian Health Services
310 8th St., Suite 200
Oakland
(510) 465-3271
(services provided in Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Tagalog, Cambodian & Laotian).

Public Health Clinic
2355 Stanwell Circle
Concord
(510) 646-5260

San Francisco County Sites

AIDS Health Project at UCSF (415) 621-4858

San Francisco City Clinic (415) 487-5500

District Health Center, Clinic #1
3850 17th Street
(415) 487-7500

District Health Center, Clinic #2
1301 Pierce Street
(415) 292-1300

District Health Center, Clinic #3
1525 Silver Avenue
(415) 715-0300

District Health Center, Clinic #4
1490 Mason Street
(415) 705-8500
(Services provided in Chinese)

District Health Center, Clinic #5
1351 24th Avenue
(415) 753-8100
(Services provided in Chinese)

Tom Waddell Clinic
50 Ivy Street
(415) 554-2950 or 554-2940
(Services provided in Spanish)

Mission Neighborhood Health Center
240 Shot well Street
(415) 552-3870
(Services provided in Spanish)

Buena Vista Women's Services
Pregnancy testing & abortion.
1801 Bush Street.
San Francisco
(415) 771-5000

CRISIS INTERVENTION & COUNSELING

**AIDS HOTLINE:
1-800-367-2437 (no charge to caller)**

**DRUG & ALCOHOL ABUSE 24-HOUR HDVC LINE & TREATMENT:
1-800-374-2202 (no charge to caller)**

**CONTRA COSTA SUICIDE PREVENTION & CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTER
(925) 472-0999 (24 HOURS)**

FOR LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES

CALL:

911

No money is necessary when using a public telephone.

Consulates and Other Foreign Government Representatives in California

- *Argentine Consulate General*: 5055 Wilshire Blvd., 2nd Fl., Los Angeles (213) 954-9155
 - *Australian Consulate General*: 1 Bush St., 7th Fl., San Francisco (415) 362-6160
 - *Austria Consulate General*: 41 Sutter St., Suite 207, San Francisco (415) 951-8911
 - *Barbados Consulate General*: 442 Post St., Suite 800, San Francisco (415) 421-8789
 - *Belize Consulate General*: 5825 Sunset Blvd., Suite 206, Hollywood (213) 469-7343
 - *Belgium Consulate General*: 625 3rd St., Suite 400, San Francisco (415) 882-4648
 - *Bolivian Consulate General*: 870 Market St., Suite 575, San Francisco (415) 495-5173
 - *Brazilian Consulate General*: 300 Montgomery St., Suite 1160, San Francisco (415) 981-8170
 - *British Consulate General*: 1 Sansome St., Suite 850, San Francisco (415) 617-1300
 - *Canadian Consulate General*: 550 S. Hope St., Los Angeles (213) 346-2700
 - *Chile Consulate General*: 870 Market St., Suite 1058, San Francisco (415) 982-7662
 - *China Consulate General*: 1450 Laguna St., San Francisco (415) 563-4885 or (415) 563-4857
 - *Colombia Consulate General*: 595 Market St., Suite 2130, San Francisco (415) 495-7195
 - *Costa Rica Consulate General*: 870 Market St., Suite 647, San Francisco (415) 392-8488
 - *Danish Consulate General*: 601 Montgomery St., Suite 400, San Francisco (415) 391-0100
 - *Dominican Consulate General*: 1516 Oak St. Suite 321, Alameda (510) 864-7777
 - *Ecuador Consulate General*: 235 Montgomery St., Suite 944, San Francisco (415) 982-1819
 - *Egyptian Consulate General*: 3001 Pacific Ave., San Francisco (415) 346-9700
 - *El Salvador Consulate General*: 870 Market St., Suite 508, San Francisco (415) 781-7924
 - *Ethiopia Consulate General*: 101 California St., Suite 4725, San Francisco (415) 434-2800
 - *European Union Consulate General* : 44 Montgomery St., San Francisco (415) 288-1990
 - *Finland Consulate General*: 333 Bush St., San Francisco (415) 772-6649
 - *French Consulate General*: 540 Bush St., San Francisco (415) 397-4330
 - *German Consulate General*: 1960 Jackson St., San Francisco (415) 775-1061

- *Greek Consulate General*: 2441 Gough St., San Francisco (415) 775-2102
- *Guatemala Consulate General*: 870 Market St., Suite 667, San Francisco (415) 788-5651
- *Honduras Consulate General*: 870 Market St., Suite 449, San Francisco (415) 392-0076
- *Hungary Consulate General*: 777 Mariners Island Blvd. Suite 575, San Mateo (650) 573-76351
- *Iceland Consulate General*: 9 Broadview Terrace, Orinda (510) 254-0169
- *India Consulate General*: 540 Argüelles Blvd., San Francisco (415) 668-0998
- *Indonesia Consulate General*: 1111 Columbus Ave., San Francisco (415) 474-9571
- *Irish Consulate General*: 655 Montgomery St., San Francisco (415) 392-4214
- *Israel Consulate General*: 456 Montgomery St., 21st Fl., San Francisco (415) 398-8885
- *Italian Consulate General*: 2590 Webster St., San Francisco (415) 931-4924
- *Jamaica Consulate General*: 1001 Portrero Ave. Suite NH1N1, San Francisco (415)206-5717
- *Japan Consulate General*: 50 Fremont St., San Francisco (415) 777-3533
- *Korean Consulate General*: 3500 Clay St., San Francisco (415) 921-2251
- *Luxembourg Consulate General*: 1 Sansome St., San Francisco (415) 788-0816
- *Madagascar Consulate General*: 2299 Piedmont Ave., Berkeley (510) 643-8301
- *Malaysia Consulate General*: 550 S. Hope St., Suite 400, L.A. (213) 892-1238
- *Mexican Consulate General*: 870 Market St., San Francisco (415) 392-5554
- *Monaco Consulate General*: 2643 Union St., San Francisco (415) 346-7766
- *Netherlands Consulate General*: 1 Maritime Plaza, San Francisco (415) 981-6454
- *New Zealand Consulate General*: One Maritime Plaza, Suite 700, San Francisco (415) 399-1255
- *Norwegian Consulate General*: 20 California St., 6th Fl., San Francisco (415) 986-0766
- *Pakistan Consulate General*: 10850 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1100, Los Angeles, (310) 441-5114
- *Panama Consulate General*: 3137 W. Ball Rd. Suite 104, Anaheim (714) 816-1809
- *Papua New Guinea Consulate General*: 1308 Banyon Dr. Fallbrook (760) 731-0436
- *Paraguay Consulate General*: 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1560, Los Angeles (310) 553-8081
- *Peruvian Consulate General*: 870 Market St., Suite 1067, San Francisco (415) 362-5185
- *Philippine Consulate General*: 447 Sutter St., San Francisco (415) 433-6666
- *Polish Consulate General*: 12400 Wilshire Blvd Suite 555, Los Angeles (310) 442-8500

- *Portuguese Consulate General*: 3298 Washington St., San Francisco (415) 346-3400
- *Russian Federation Consulate General*: 2790 Green St., San Francisco (415) 202-9800
- *Spain Consulate General*: 1405 Sutter St., San Francisco (415) 922-2995
- *Sweden Consulate General*: 120 Montgomery St., Suite 2175, San Francisco (415) 788-2631
- *Swiss Consulate General*: 456 Montgomery St., San Francisco (415) 788-2272
- *Thailand Consulate General*: 611 N. Larchmont Blvd. 2nd Floor, Los Angeles (323) 962-9574
- *Taiwan Consulate General*: 555 Montgomery St. Suite 1022, San Francisco (415) 362-7680
- *Taiwan Visitor's Association*: 166 Geary St., Suite 1605, San Francisco (415) 989-8677
- *Tonga Consulate General*: 360 Post St., Suite 604, San Francisco (415) 781-0365
- *Tunisia Consulate General*: 3401 Sacramento St., San Francisco (415) 922-9222
- *Turkish Consulate General*: 4801 Wilshire Blvd., #310, Los Angeles (213) 937-0118
- *Uruguay Consulate General*: 564 Market St. Suite 221, San Francisco (415) 986-5222
- *Venezuela Consulate General*: 311 California St., Suite 620, San Francisco (415) 955-1982

If you need to find a consulate or embassy that is not on the above list and if you cannot locate it through Directory Assistance (try the 510 and 415 area codes), then you can contact the Federal Information number and they can look it up for you. Their number is 1-800-688-9889 (press "9" to talk to a person.)