



Arriving in the U.S.

What will happen in the airport after I land in the U.S.?

1. When you arrive in the United States, your documents will be checked and processed by an official from the USCIS:

- Be sure to keep your airline ticket, boarding pass and immigration documents handy as you may be asked to show them several times.
- This experience can be rather alarming because you may be asked many questions; often, these questions are not asked in a very polite manner.
- You will be digitally photographed and fingerprinted as well.
- When the USCIS official has completed this "inspection," you will receive back your passport together with the I-20 or IAP-66.

2. You will also receive a small white card called an I-94, "Arrival/Departure Record of Stay Permit."

- This form is very important since it officially determines how long an international student can remain in the U.S.
- Students on F-1 and J-1 visas, usually have their I-94 stamped "D/S" (Duration of Status) which means the student can remain in this country for the length of time required to complete his/her studies as long as the student follows all of the regulations of the student visa.
- The eleven-digit number written on your I-94 is your DHS-USCIS admission number, which is used by the DHS-USCIS to monitor your entry into and departure from the U.S.

3. Before leaving the inspection area, be sure that you have received a stamp in your passport and on your I-20 and that your I-94 has been endorsed **with "F-1 D/S"** - not "B-2".

4. Please see a U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement Fact Sheet entitled ["Arriving at a U.S. Port of Entry - What a Student Can Expect"](#) for more information about arriving to the U.S. in F-1 student status.

5. Remember: All of these documents are very important!!

- They should always be with you when you travel, and even while you are in Potsdam you should carry your passport, I-94 and I-20 with you at all times.
- When you arrive in Potsdam go to the IEP offices to have page 3 of your I-20 signed.
- It should be signed every six months or at least once a year to show that you are still a registered student at SUNY Potsdam.