Preparing International Students for International Internships: Regulatory Considerations

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Agenda

- COVID-19 updates
- Interning outside of the U.S.
- How to get a visa
- How to re-enter the U.S.
- Resources
- Questions
COVID-19 Updates

- On March 11, President Schlissel announced that all U-M international nonessential travel is suspended until at least April 21.
  - This led to a U-M Global Travel Suspension
- In addition, all Winter and Spring term U-M education abroad programs have been altered or suspended (Summer term study abroad programs are TBD)
- Many non-UM affiliated programs are also being altered/suspended and are pulling students out on an individual basis
- President Schlissel’s announcement does not apply to independent/personal travel, but we strongly discourage international travel until the travel suspension is lifted
- On March 19, the U.S. State Department issued a Global Level 4 Health Advisory -- Do Not Travel
- This information can change at any moment
Here are several University and federal resources that will be useful if your students are still planning to travel:

- COVID-19 updates from U-M
- UM Travel Registry (Register your travel with the University)
- Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (Register your travel with the State Department)
- UM Travel Abroad Health Insurance
- UHS COVID-19 Information (Includes Travel Information)
- CDC COVID-19 Travel Information
- Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Dashboard

If students purchase a flight, encourage them to also consider Cancel for Any Reason Travel Insurance
Interning Outside of the U.S.

- Placement programs
  - Company streamlines the process of providing a student with an internship (for a fee)
  - Students may have visa support
- Self-arranged programs
  - Students find/organize internship themselves
  - Students are on their own to get visa
- Most internships are unpaid (due to visa restrictions)
Introduction to Internship Visas

- Every country has different rules
- It is ever-changing
- There may not be an internship visa, but there could be variations of volunteer, work, co-op, business, or tourist visa
- Depending on the region, students may get different answers from different consulates
- The word “internships” might mean different things in different countries, which affects getting accurate information
- **For these reasons, it is extremely difficult to advise students on visas**
  - We don’t have all the answers, but we can offer tips and resources from our own experience
Student Visa vs. Internship Visa

- Students may not be eligible for a student visa if they are not enrolled as a student at a local university.
- Student visas have clear rules and processes.
- Very few countries have visas specifically for internships.
- Internship visas fall into grey areas because of paid vs. unpaid opportunities and to what extent they are integrated into the student's curriculum.
- As always, visas are determined by the passport that the student holds.
General Considerations

- Unpaid vs. paid internships
  - In some countries, paid internships are not possible.
  - In most cases, a paid experience will require applying for a separate category of visa.
- Duration of experience matters: over or under 90 days
- Stand-alone internship or an internship alongside/after a study abroad experience
- Terminology used by the Embassy/Consulate to describe the experience
  - Students should mirror this language in applications
  - For some countries, such as South Africa, students should not use the word “internship” in their applications.
- Country of citizenship
- College enrollment status and whether or not the internship is required for your degree program
- Age (sometimes)
  - Some work-authorization programs geared towards students have upper age limits
Research-based Internships ... It Depends!

- Research often falls into a gray area.
- Dependent on duration and country of citizenship
- Sometimes, countries have specific research or internship visas - especially for stays longer than 90 days.
Some countries offer work authorization programs for internships during study or short-term work after graduation. They tend to function in one of two ways:

- They enable students to get a work permit in advance and then look for a job on site, and in some cases may also help you locate a job.
- They provide students with a work permit after they secure a position.

Eligibility varies by program:

- Age, duration, timing, country of citizenship, and type of work may all be considerations.
Examples of Work Permit/Authorization Programs

- Australia Work and Holiday Visa
- **BUNAC** - Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Intern in Britain program
- International Experience Canada (IEC)
- **New Zealand Working Holiday Program**
- Work & Travel Ireland - Ireland
- Cultural Vistas - **Germany**
- **SWAP** - (for Canadian citizens) - Australia, Austria, Germany, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, & the UK

*Eligibility dependent on country of citizenship!*
General Requirements for Re-entry to the U.S. in F-1/J1 Status

- Original Passport, valid for at least 6 months on the day that the student re-enters the U.S.
- A valid F-1 or J-1 visa stamp in their passport (except for Canadians)
- Currently valid original I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1) with a recent signature
  - Signature must be less than one year old on the day they will re-enter the U.S.
  - If a student needs to request a new travel signature, refer them to the [I-20](#) or [DS-2019](#) Travel Signature Drop-Off forms
General Requirements for Re-entry to the U.S. in F-1/J1 Status

- Other potential documents:
  - Copies of financial documentation
  - Student Transcript
  - J-1 students on academic training (AT) should bring evidence of their AT position and their AT authorization letter
- For more information, refer the student to the International Center’s website and Immigration and Customs Enforcement SEVIS FAQs.
- If a student still has questions, encourage them to speak with an International Student Advisor (icenter@umich.edu)
Resources

- Each country’s consulate/embassy will have their own visa website with required documents, etc.
  - Honorary Consulates vs. General Consulates - honorary consulates DO NOT issue visas
- The International Center has walk-in Education Abroad Advising
  - Currently by appointment only!
- A student’s program provider and/or internship organization may provide support
Resources

- These are documents often required for visas that can be obtained through U-M:
  - **No Objection Letter** - completed by students’ academic advisor or the head of their academic department
  - **Proof of enrollment** (enrollment verification) - Office of the Registrar
  - **Travel Abroad Health Insurance** - students can get it through U-M!
  - **Flight Itinerary/Reservation** - talk to the consulate/embassy about their specific requirements
    - Consider using a travel agent
Questions?

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