Review Your Documents Before Travel

1. Review your passport expiration date.
   
a. You should renew your passport if it has less than six months until expiration.

b. If you are on an H-1B, beware that if your passport expires prior to the end date of your H-1B end date, your I-94, which controls your legal presence in the U.S., will be shortened to your passport end date when you travel back into the U.S. – contact the OIS if this is the case.

2. Review your visa stamp.
   
a. Do you have a visa stamp for your current status classification?

b. What is the expiration date? (Must be valid on your date of re-entry (except when traveling pursuant to Automatic Visa Revalidation))

c. How many entries were you granted? (Most will show “M” for multiple entries, but you should double check before you travel.)
3. Review your visa document

a. F-1, I-20

   i. Enrolled in study? Travel signature is valid one year

   ii. On post-completion or STEM OPT? – Travel signature is valid six months

*This is page two (the back page) of your I-20, the highlighted area is where you need the travel signature from the OIS.*
b. J-1, DS-2019

i. Travel signature is valid one year

The highlighted area is where you get a travel signature from the OIS
c. **H-1B, I-797**

i. You may collect the full original from OIS before travel to facilitate visa renewal and re-entry
4. Always look-up your I-94 upon return.
   a. Your I-94 admission record in CBP’s electronic system is the official document that controls your immigration status and length of stay in the U.S. – always check it when you return to ensure your immigration status is correct (i.e. F-1, J-1, H-1B) and the “admit until date” is accurate. Contact OIS if incorrect.
   b. Note, all individuals in F-1 and J-1 status should have “D/S” as the “admit until date”. D/S means duration of status and refers to the end date on your I-20 or DS-2019 and any applicable grace period.
   c. H-1Bs beware! If your passport expires prior to the end date of your H-1B end date, your I-94, which controls your legal presence in the U.S., will be shortened to your passport end date when you travel back into the U.S. – contact the OIS if this is the case. Also, you may notice your I-94 “admit until date” is 10 days longer than your H-1B expiration date; this is a discretionary grace period, you may not work during that time.

Sample I-94