CSUSM Committee for International Research

International Faculty and International Research/Travel Guidance

Informational Item | April 9, 2025 Senate Meeting

Committee for International Research (CIR)

Danielle McMartin (Director, Global Education, Office of Global Education) attended the Committee for International Research (CIR) meeting on March 10 to discuss the uncertainty surrounding travel for folks with varying immigration statuses on our campus. She provided the following information concerning international faculty and faculty who conduct international research.

For those unfamiliar, Danielle serves as the current intermediary between new tenure-track faculty hires, immigration lawyers, and the Provost. She can also connect those who have questions about their status and any related processes with Attorney Lincoln.

Currently, they are advising people to be cautious about travel, especially given the continued layoffs at the Department of State and the reported likely closures of some US Consulates. This would likely cause delays in visa processing times for those who need a new or renewed visa issuance. Potential additional security background checks, within the purview of the Department of State, may also result in additional processing times.

Delays are anticipated in the processing of status changes (e.g., F1/OPT to H1B or permanent residency status). Traveling before the finalized paperwork is in hand could cause delays, particularly upon re-entry to the US. It is recommended that faculty and staff obtain a current letter from Faculty Affairs about their employment status. Consider carrying copies of your initial H1B (or other status approvals) and a copy of any initial letters of approval if your status has changed. Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months after your arrival date at the destination. Automatic visa revalidation at the Canada and Mexico borders is currently unaffected if all paperwork is up to date and you have a copy of your I-94. However, there is a chance that automatic visa revalidation could be canceled, which would require a new visa to return to the US, so please exercise caution. If your family is currently on H4 status and traveling, things may be a bit more confusing, particularly if family members are traveling without the person on H1-B or other status.

Additional considerations: For those with H1B status, it is suggested to be cautious when taking on additional work items that fall outside our normal work or outreach expectations (e.g., honorariums for speaking engagements, travel paid by other campuses), as they could compromise status. Status designation is only for CSUSM, so other earned income could interfere with status.

Please contact Danielle (dmcmarti@csusm.edu) with any questions regarding travel, status applications/timelines, documentation, terminology, or events that may raise concerns about status.

CIR would also like to note that this could affect the ability of faculty to conduct their research, as they may delay research-related travel until guidelines from the university, CSU, or Federal Agencies are clearer. This may cause them to lose state-side funding or fail to meet external funding due dates and guidelines. There is currently no section on the University or CSU websites that provides general travel recommendations (only policy documents) to help individuals navigate their research and travel plans in

conjunction with their immigration status. Although this issue seems to be related only to international travel, a CSUSM faculty member traveling to a conference in the US was already asked for a second form of ID at the San Diego airport after presenting their California Real ID at a TSA checkpoint. Additionally, this may affect progress toward tenure and promotion for some folks.

Related, but with less information, is the potential for a travel ban. It is currently unclear whether people with existing visas will be exempt from the ban or if current green card holders and permanent residents will be exempt (The New York Times). CIR understands this is a wait-and-see-what-happens item. Still, our colleagues would probably appreciate hearing that people are watching this closely and will provide updates should it impact current visa or green card holders. We certainly have faculty whose countries of origin are on the proposed list.

Finally, although the travel ban would primarily affect individuals entering the US, the confusion caused by the changing restrictions and guidelines, as well as the increased timelines, may also impact those planning international research. They should also ensure their passports are valid for at least six months after their arrival date. If traveling to any destination that requires a visa, registration, or other entry process, they should initiate this process as soon as possible.

Tips & Tricks for Avoiding #fieldworkfails

Updated 03.25.2025

Travel and Fieldwork Checklist

1. Consult your AC, department colleagues, and college for department and college-level processes and procedures.

2. Confirm your budget and grant money. Determine whether you will use Stateside/Concur or Corp/grant/AdobeSign. Consult and coordinate with AC. Note fiscal year limitations.
    - File a travel authorization request even if you currently do not have funding. This provides insurance and medical coverage for university business travel. You can also reopen the authorization later for reimbursement if you secure funding within the fiscal year and within the applicable funding restrictions.

3. Start listing possible expenses
    - Airfare
    - Airport Taxis
    - Hotel/accommodations and Per diem (GSA rates for domestic, State Dept for international)
    - Other expenses: visas, registration fees, membership fees, subway tickets, ride-share, etc.
    - Cash Advance for International Research (contact OSP; must have funding at OSP)

4. Other items
    - Defensive Driving Certification
    - Check health insurance coverage
    - Complete request for International Travel Insurance (as needed)
    - Technology (laptop, mobiles, DUO while overseas, etc.)
    - IRB
    - Export Control/Data policies
    - Backup form of ID

5. Submit expense reports within 60 days of return!!!

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Helpful Links and Contacts

Travel:
traveloffice@csusm.edu
https://www.csusm.edu/travel/index.html
Shannon Honour Shaw (Director, Finance & Administrative Services)

Grants:
OGSR: https://www.csusm.edu/gsr/index.html
Katie Desai (Budget & Research Analyst, OGSR + Export Control/EEI)
Melissa Teetzel (Director, Grants and Contracts Development, OGSR)

OSP: https://www.csusm.edu/corp/sponsoredprojects/index.html
Kim Askew (Analyst, Sponsored Projects)

IT and Travel Safety:
https://www.csusm.edu/iits/services/security/travel-safety/index.html
John Humes (Deputy CIO, IITS)
Javier Esparza Pina (Information Security Team Lead)
Jeroen Barendse (Information Security Officer, IITS)

Export Control
Training slides/guidance from SDSU
OGSR Export Control webpage and guidance:
https://www.csusm.edu/research/compliance/export/index.html
IITS Travel Safety & Export Control webpage and guidance:
https://www.csusm.edu/iits/services/security/travel-safety/index.html
CSU
Katie Desai (Budget & Research Analyst, OGSR + Export Control/EEI)

Global Education and Immigration Status:
https://www.csusm.edu/global/about/globaled/index.html
Danielle McMartin (Director, Global Education)

IRB: https:/www.csusm.edu/research/compliance/irb/index.html
CIR: https://www.csusm.edu/research/centers/international/index.html
Faculty Center: https://www.csusm.edu/fc/index.html

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Helpful Tips

1. Plan way ahead.
    a. Talk to Shannon Honour Shaw in Travel if anything is unusual about your trip (e.g., multiple cities/countries or other complicated itineraries). Shannon also knows about travel policies our Dean's Offices do not and can help you to reference the appropriate documents/policies to smooth the travel process.
    b. Pay attention to technology updates and consult with IITS if you believe you will be traveling to a country where technology, data security, and export regulations may pose concerns. IITS's current best practices for what to do before, during, and after travel, as well as how to proceed if devices are lost, stolen, or confiscated.
    c. Work with IRB at least six months in advance. Having a US IRB does not necessarily mean you have similar permissions in the country you are traveling to; a separate process may be required. If you have local colleagues, please consult with them early in the process to ensure that your paperwork is in order.
    d. Depending on where you're traveling/working, you may need to do some or all of the following:
        i. Notify your Dean's Office and/or Department Chair/Program Director, including information on the equipment you're taking and colleagues you're traveling with from our or other campuses
        ii. Submit travel request paperwork (Travel Office)
        iii. Request a "clean" laptop or DUO fob from IITS (depends on location)
        iv. Submit EEI (Electronic Export Information form) (depends on location/equipment)—link on OGSR's Export Control page.
        v. Request travel letters from Michelle Hunt's office (employment/immigration concerns) or Katie Desai (research/equipment concerns)
2. Double-check your travel documents. Ensure your name, birth date, etc., are correct and identical on all documents to avoid travel delays or barred entry.
3. It is a good idea to **bring a backup form of ID** (e.g., Real ID and passport) regardless of travel destination.
4. Before leaving, determine the process for accessing medical care and locate the nearest facility. You may need to pay out of pocket and request reimbursement upon your return.
5. Know how to get a new passport while traveling.
6. Allow extra time for everything (e.g., traffic, public transportation, appointments). Sometimes, less is more on your itinerary. Email and phone calls may not be the business norm everywhere, so plan extra time to visit folks in their offices or make appointments.

7. Carry some local currency in cash. Not all places accept credit or debit cards. Be mindful of ATM fees charged by your home bank and the bank you use abroad, as some can be exorbitant.
8. Trip insurance purchased via an airline, hotel, or other travel website is not reimbursable. The CSU has policies/procedures in place should you have to cancel or postpone travel or are delayed during travel, and these are the result of circumstances beyond your control. Please contact the CSUSM Travel Office with any questions, such as what is required in the business justification documentation for the travel expense report.