Explanation of Immigration Documents

**DS-2019 Form**

The DS-2019 form is the paper document which represents the J-1 and J-2 Exchange Visitor status AND allows a scholar to legally remain inside the U.S. during the time specified on it. A scholar must always keep the DS-2019 form valid by applying for program extension. Remaining in the U.S. and continuing to work on an expired DS-2019 form would constitute a violation of immigration status. Here is an example of what a DS-2019 form looks like:

**Passport**

The passport is a universal form of identification that is issued by the person’s country of citizenship. It is needed for travel outside a person’s home country. Here is an example of what a U.S. Passport looks like:

The following illustrations in this Handbook do not necessarily reflect the actual size of the documents:

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Updated on 8/27/2008
I-94 Card
It is on the plane that you complete I-94 card (or Arrival/Departure card). You will receive a small, portion of the form. This card is given to you when you enter the U.S., and taken away when you leave the U.S. It’s how immigration tracks the arrival/departure of international visitors. Here is an example of what an I-94 card looks like:

U.S. Visa Stamp
The U.S. visa stamp in your passport is an "Entrance" stamp. A scholar needs to have the valid U.S. visa stamp in conjunction with a valid immigration document (in this case, the DS-2019 form). Once inside the U.S., the U.S. visa stamp does not affect your immigration status. It only becomes relevant when you travel OUTSIDE U.S. borders, because it would have to be valid for re-entry to the U.S. If it is expired and you travel, you would need to get it renewed before returning to the U.S. Here is an example of a U.S. Visa stamp: