



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

Dear Congressperson/Senator,

We, the leaders, members, and supporters of the higher education community are writing to bring to your attention the shortcomings of the current revalidation process for class F visas, and how this is disrupting scholarship and impeding research in the United States. The current process requires students and international scholars to renew their academic visas abroad. This process imposes an undue financial and logistical burden on the members from our international community of students and scholars. We request the expansion of the domestic visa revalidation program to include F-type visas in the list of visa types eligible for domestic visa revalidation. This will allow international students and scholars to renew their visas domestically within the U.S., prior to traveling abroad.

Most students entering the United States on F-type visas are admitted under “duration of status”. This legally allows them to stay in the United States if their Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status-For Academic and Language Students is valid, notwithstanding the expiry of their visas. However, if their visas have expired and they need to leave the country to travel to an international conference or perform research abroad, students must get their visas renewed to re-enter into the U.S. Most non-immigrant visas, including class F visas, must be renewed at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate office abroad, and the Department of State recommends but does not require that applicants apply in their home country. The inability to renew the student visa within the states affect the international student community as well as the United States in several ways. Some of them are listed below in addition to the real feedback from international graduate students in the Appendix I.

The Logistical Burdens: This process is problematic as students still experience substantial delays in the order of months when renewing their visas since there is no guarantee of the maximum processing time for visa renewal. This absence of students from universities to revalidate their visas abroad impacts not only their academic careers but also has implications on their teaching and research duties in several ways:

- The absence of international graduate students stalls the pace and advancement of cutting-edge U.S. based research being carried out at universities.
- Since international graduate students also serve as teaching assistants, and instructors for various courses offered by the universities, their absence in order to renew their visas abroad is detrimental to students in their classes.
- The cumbersome process and the uncertainties associated with visa renewal abroad hinder international students from taking up research opportunities that require them to travel abroad to work with their collaborators. These lost opportunities significantly impede the progress of their research groups, putting them at a disadvantage as compared to their international counterparts.

The Financial Burdens: Students are required to travel to their home country to renew their visas which can often cost several hundred to thousand dollars and leading to several complications:

- The financial and logistical burdens of traveling abroad for visa renewal makes students forgo international travel to present their U.S. based research at international forums and conferences.
- These hardships also make students forgo international travel to visit their families back home, which in turn causes emotional distress to the students. This affects their mental health and has a negative influence on their productivity, and that of their research groups.

For these reasons among others, we urge your office to expand the current visa revalidation process to allow international students the opportunity to renew their visas within the U.S., prior to their travel, rather than at an office abroad. The Secure Borders and Open Doors Advisory Committee convened by the Departments of Homeland Security and State made a similar recommendation in a report in 2008.¹ In light of the above, we request the following specific actions:

- Restore the domestic reissuance of visas program that is currently under suspension [69 FR 35121].
- Introduce all necessary capabilities like biometrics screening and in-person interviews to process class F visa applications domestically, within the U.S.
- Add class F visas to the list of eligible visas for the domestic reissuance program. Amend 22 CFR Part 41.111(b) by adding “F” visas to those categories of visas that the Department of State can reissue in the United States. The revised 22 CFR Part 41.111(b)(2)(i) text would read as follows: “(i) Are currently maintaining status in the E, F, H, I, L, O, or P nonimmigrant category;” (The 2001 regulatory change [66 FR 12737] that added O and P visas classifications to the list of eligible visas for revalidation in the U.S. could be used as a template to add class F visas.)

Domestic renewal of visas may be implemented while upholding the security standards that are in place at the consulates abroad, and by following the provisions proposed in the 2008 report. We propose the enforcement of the same screening process currently in place abroad to be brought to the U.S. Benefits of restoring the domestic reissuance program and expanding it to incorporate class F visas are as follows:

Promoting the Progress of Federally Funded Research: Currently, international students funded by federal research dollars are hindered from conducting and representing high caliber U.S. research on the international stage because of problems associated with visa renewal.²

Attracting the World’s Best and Brightest: In 2015-2016, over 1 million international students were studying in the U.S.³. Between 2001 and 2014, the U.S. share of the “global market” of international students has declined by 21%.³ Talented foreign students are being enticed to study in other countries with more attractive student visa policies.^{2,4}

Saving Time and Money for International Students: Allowing domestic renewal of F-type visas would circumvent the unnecessary time and financial burden currently required for students to renew their academic student visas.² Without these additional hardships, international students would be able to contribute more to the U.S. economy. According to NAFSA, in the 2014-2015 academic year, foreign students and their families supported 370,000 U.S. jobs and contributed nearly \$30.8 billion to the U.S. economy.⁴

Reducing Bureaucratic Burden and Cost: Streamlining the process by allowing domestic revalidation visas would reduce duplication of bureaucratic effort between overseas and domestic offices, thereby also reducing associated costs. The ability to domestically renew visas for students who have maintained their official status with the universities will also reduce associated workload and costs incurred by universities.

¹ Secure Borders and Open Doors Report, Secure Borders and Open Doors Advisory Committee, Departments of State and Homeland Security. Available from: https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/hsac_SBODACreport508-compliant_version2.pdf

² Policy Implications of International Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars in the United States. Available from: <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/11289/policy-implications-of-international-graduate-students-and-postdoctoral-scholars-in-the-united-states>

³ Atlas of Student Mobility, Institute of International Education. Available from: <https://www.iie.org/projectatlas>

⁴ The Economic Benefit of International Students, 2015-2016, NAFSA. Available from: http://www.nafsa.org/Policy_and_Advocacy/Policy_Resources/Policy_Trends_and_Data/NAFSA_International_Student_Economic_Value_Tool/

We believe that the benefits of a domestic renewal program would be well worth the effort for implementing it and that the process of renewing student visas would be more efficient. Thus, we urge the U.S. government to establish a program that would allow international students the opportunity to renew their visas within the U.S.

Finally, we thank you for your continued efforts to support international students studying in the United States. We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

National Association of Graduate-Professional Students, United States
Graduate and Professional Student Association, Arizona State University
Association of Students and Postdocs at Brookhaven National Laboratory
Graduate Student Council, California Institute of Technology
Graduate Student Assembly, Carnegie Mellon University
Graduate Student Association, Central Washington University
Graduate Student Association, Colorado School of Mines
Graduate Student Advisory Council, Columbia University
Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, Cornell University
Graduate and Professional Student Council, Duke University
Graduate and Professional Student Association, East Tennessee State University
Graduate Student Advisory Council, Eastern Illinois University
Graduate Student Association, Grand Valley State University
Graduate Student Senate, Kent State University
Graduate Student Senate, Lehigh University
Graduate Student Council, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Graduate Student Advisory Council, North Carolina A&T State University
Graduate Student Government, Northern Arizona University
Graduate Student Association, New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury
Graduate Student Senate, Ohio University
Graduate and Professional Student Government Association, Oklahoma State University
Graduate Student Organization, Stony Brook University
Graduate Student Organization, Syracuse University
Graduate Student Association, Texas A&M University-Commerce
Graduate Student Council, Texas Woman's University
Graduate Council, The Ohio State University
Graduate Student Council, Tufts University
Graduate Student Association, University at Albany
Graduate and Professional Student Council, University of Arizona
Graduate Student Council, University of Arkansas
Graduate Student Association, University of California, Davis
Associated Graduate Students, University of California, Irvine
Graduate Student Association, University of California, San Diego
Graduate Student Association, University of Central Florida
Graduate Student Governance Association, University of Cincinnati
United Government of Graduate Students, University of Colorado, Boulder
Graduate Student Congress, University of Kentucky
Graduate Student Association, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Graduate Professional Council, University of Missouri
Graduate Student Assembly, University of Nebraska, Lincoln
Graduate Student Association, University of Nevada, Reno
Graduate Student Council, University of North Texas

Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, University of Pennsylvania
Graduate Student Association, University of South Carolina
Graduate Student Government, University of Southern California
Graduate Student Association, University of Toledo
Graduate Student Association, University of Virginia
Graduate Student Senate and Graduate Professional Council, Wash University in St. Louis
Graduate and Professional Students Association, Washington State University
Graduate and Professional Student Senate, West Virginia University
Graduate Student Association, Western Michigan University
Student Advocates for Graduate Education
Graduate Student Association, North Carolina State University

Appendix I

Following are the response from graduate students to the question: "How does the current visa revalidation process affect you? List the problems (if any) that you faced."

"Delay my project"

"My visa expires next year, after which I won't be allowed to go back home without renewing it. The problem is, I have to renew it at home which makes my case counter-productive and I may face a situation where I may be back home to renew my visa, but get denied, jeopardizing my chances to complete my degree program."

"I could not travel outside of US for conference and meetings."

"I am a graduate student pursuing PhD degree in chemistry department. I am allowed to stay in America as a student from 2016 to 2022 according to my I-20. However, my visa is always one year, which means if I go back to China after my visa expires, I have to renew my visa there. VO will check my application again for 20 days or even longer and give me another one-year one. It is not cost effective and time consuming. Besides that, after visa expiration, it is not convenient for me to attend international meeting in another country."

"I was stuck in India for almost 2 months. It hampered my research progress, course work and delayed all manuscript submission."

"I was issued an F1 visa in 2017 for only 2 years (until July 2019). I am a graduate PhD student at UMass Amherst, therefore the proposed completion of my degree will only be in 2023. I was surprised to have received a 2 year visa for a 5 year program! I need to travel back to India in the summer of 2019 to renew my F1 visa, and this process can take up to 3 months. And since all my work involves my presence in the laboratory, my potential absence for up to 3 months would be a great waste of time and money not only for me, but also for my professor and therefore the university."

"The current process has prevented from going to any conferences abroad when my visa expires."

"I have personally never faced this problem, but i know several people who have. If the visa goes through 221g processing during revalidation (likely if it happened the first time) processing often takes 4-6 weeks. I know graduate students who have lost 1-2 weeks of pay due to the extended processing time as we only get 3 weeks of paid vacation each year."

"Termination of current project because remote work is not always permitted. Getting additional scrutiny by the HR to support remote work and the need to travel. Also there is a chance that the visa could be rejected that forbids reentry into USA despite valid work authorizations."

"My F1 visa is only valid for 1 year. Every time I go back to my country and visit families, I have to spent at least two days to renew my visa first, because the application center is far from my hometown. Also, the visa application status takes usually at least three weeks, which means every time I go back I must have at least one month taken off. That's generally not possible for graduate students who work in research labs. So myself and a lot friends have to combine holidays from two years and then go home. Can you imagine visit family only once in two years??? that's so hard and tough for international students."

"I need to factor in additional travel time and travel budget to get my visa renewed when I visit home, especially when I already have limited vacation days from my day job."

"I initially got a Single Entry F1 Visa. If I leave the US I will not be able to come back. if I want to get my VISA renewed I need to travel to outside of US and have an appointment at a US embassy.

I will not be able to come back to the country and continue my studies, unless my VISA gets accepted. The administrative process of acquiring a VISA was more than 3 months in my last experience. Some universities will not tolerate that much leave of absence."""

"I have to travel back to my home country, and visa processing usually takes between two to eight months."

"My visa is F1 single entrance and I could not visit my family until I finish my program or if I go back I need to apply for visa again. regarding travel ban, My family cannot come to visit me."

"Currently many of the international students from my home country of Iran receive one time entry F1 visas. This means that many of them will need to stay in US and not visit their families back home until the end of their education. They avoid travelling back home to make sure no sudden pause or denial of visa makes reentry for them hard or impossible."

"I cannot see my family until I finish my education"

"I didn't see my family from when I came to US 3 years ago. Also I can not leave the country to visit them myself."

"1. I could not go out of the country to visit family and friends for 2 years, this has effect on the quality of my life and my studies (such as anxiety, depression, and restlessness). Moreover, my mother is diagnosed with the Motor Neuron Disease (MND) which patient lose control of the muscles and in the final stages it is a terminating disease. Dealing and accepting her illness and not being able to see her in two years was terribly hard for me.

2. I don't have the opportunity to attend the conferences out of the United States, and this will effect my research as a graduate student, since I will not be able to present my work at the well-known conferences and venues, meet other researchers and collaborate with them.

3. Recently, for getting drivers license you should have valid visa for one year, this effect the students which are on single entry visa.

4. Current visa re-validation process is stressful due to the fact that it takes months to get your new visa and this causes delays in your studies and research."""

"My current visa expires every year and to have it renewed, I have to go back to China, submit the application, wait for 3-4 weeks, then come back to the US. This process really limits my freedom to travel internationally, say to go to a academic meeting held in Europe or go back to china to visit my family. I just cannot afford leaving my project (which requires bench works in the lab) behind for 30 days. I also think it is unfair for my school and professor to pay my tuition fee & wage while I am away from the lab."

"I am pursuing my PhD at University of virginia. My current visa is only validated for 1 year and it takes 1 month to renew. so If I want to keep my visa updated, I need to go back to china every year for at least 1 month within my 5 years of PhD study, which is impossible for me and will significantly delay completion of my thesis work if I do so. But if I don't do it, I will be restricted to go abroad for conferences or simply go visiting families outside US, because I need a validated visa for re-entry."

"I only have three weeks vacation every year, and if I go back my country to revalidate my visa, it takes more than 5 weeks to get it issued normally. My advisor would be mad at me if I can't come back on time. If I can renew my visa in US, it will be great because in that case, I can come back to work on time if I go back my country for vacation."

"missing conferences, not seeing family for 5 yrs now. Couldn't attend my dad's funeral."

"Missing opportunities to attend conferences, not being able to visit family for so long, not being able to attend my father's funeral..."

"only one year validation makes going home troublesome. Also going abroad for academic meeting is almost impossible since I always need to renew visa"

"I have to go back China to renew my visa which is really unconvincing when I go outside of USA to attend international meetings."

"My visa expired, and if I want to visit any other country outside of US, I have to go back to China to renew, which takes about 2 months. And I haven't come back to my hometown for two years, probably 5 years if I can not renew my visa within US."

"Need to be renewed out of states."

"I usually have to wait for a month or so for administrative process, which means I must stop the work I am doing for a long time."

"I have to go back to my country to renew the visa which affect my research process in the lab. Also I need to wait a long time to get the visa (more than one month). My visa is just a year long. I can't come back to US when I visit the other country after my visa is expired."

"I am afraid to go our of US for any conference or to visit my family. There is travel ban that my family cannot come and visit me. It feels like I am in prison to do my PhD."

"I came to America from Iran 2 years ago. My visa was single entry so it expired once I entered. I am paying for my studies here, so I can not risk my studies and the money we spent to go back to Iran and end up with no visa after all. My mom has fallen very seriously ill in the last years, but I had no chance to go visit her and she was rejected the visa to come see me after the travel ban was issued. She misses me a lot and I really want to go home, but I also need to think about my education. If I could revalidate my visa in US and then go, I'd go without thinking of what would happen if I cannot come back and finish my studies."

"Only one-year visa makes me have to waste up to two months at home for renewing."

"I am not able to leave the US for either visiting my family or attending a conference since it is undeterministic how long the revalidation process would take."

"It costs me more than one month to revalid my visa when I go home and cannot come back to do my work in time."

"Have to wait weeks in China for revalidation before I can be back to my University"

"The time period for visa revalidation in India for PhDs is atleast a month. Due to this long current visa revalidation process, I am unable to go back to my country to visit my family and compelled to prioritize finishing up my experiments. This has caused a lot of distress and affected my research productivity and mental health as well."

"I have single entry visa, and I can not go back to my country to visit my family. It makes me depressed that I know I should live here for my PhD without visiting my family. I also can not go outside the US for academical conferences, and I avoid publishing papers in conferences that are held outside the US."

"I cannot visit my parents for many years because going back to Iran and applying for a new visa is too risky and in most of the time the embassy reject to give a new visa."

"I only have one year visa for my 6 years Ph. D. So every year I come back to China, I have to re-validate it again. It at least needs one month for me. If it expires and I want to make a short stay (for example, family marriage), it is impossible. So far I have renewed my visa twice. Not to mention it costs me \$500, every time I am so worried I may not come back in time to attend my school. Even though I renew my visa, I still only get 1 year visa every time. The recent visa policy (1 year visa) bothers me a lot. I would greatly appreciate if I can get 5 years visa."

"Has to travel back to China to revalidate visa which is time and money consuming."

"Going back to my country represents a financial burden, stress, and research delay. Most of the grants and research are of government interest, so I don't know why they would like to delay them."

"I have to ask at least one month off every year to renew my visa, during which all my lab work has to be stopped. I can't attend overseas meeting because that needs one additional month for me to go back to China, otherwise I won't be able to come back to US if my visa expires. In China, I have to renew my visa in Beijing with all the people applying for a visa, that means I need to make an appointment several months ago, with huge trouble added to my schedule."

"The whole process takes long time(about 1 month) to be revalidated in my home country (my hometown is far from the visa application/interview locations), I have multiple children living with me in US. So I can not travel back to my home country in the past four years of study in terms of the time and financial burden. Let alone the potential risk of being checked while reapplying the visa. Because of the visa expiration , I can not plan international travel for academic conferences or networking etc."

"I am graduating in 1 year, I have no time to re-validate. I also hate the fact that it take time and money to travel and get new visa. Like last time, I paid \$200 for a new visa, and it only last 4 month!"

"Visa lasts for 1 year, can't continue it in USA"

"To revalidate my visa, I need to go back to China, but it usually takes about 4 weeks for me to know if I can renew my visa, which then may make it impossible for me to come back to campus on time for the new semester."

"The time delay and cost to the US embassy"

"Couldn't travel abroad for conferences; Couldn't visit family regularly"

"I have only one-year visa but my program is a five-year one. Every time I come back China I have to reapply for the new visa, which takes more than a month. Also, I can hardly attend any conferences abroad due to my visa status."

"I went for a Christmas break in December 2015, 6 months before the end of my visa. Because of the short visiting time and free time around Christmas, I did not apply for a renewal. Later in 2016, my grandmother died and I did not go for her funeral. If I did, I would have had to stay at least 2 weeks to have my visa re-validated and I did not have that much time because of studies. The same thing happened 2 weeks ago, when my grandfather died. Because we are in the middle of submitting the article and I am finishing writing my dissertation, I cannot leave US for longer than a week. Revalidation within US would definitely help."

"The current visa revalidation puts a strain on flight costs as well as time costs. Flying back home is not cheap and a short visit, after about 18hrs of sitting on a plane, just for visa revalidation is not the best economic decision. Another challenge is that it is not always guaranteed that the planned trip to Africa will match the available visa interview dates and processing time, or fit the schedule of our school break. These challenges therefore delay visa revalidation, reduce the frequency of visiting family back home and also hamper opportunities to travel abroad for research collaborations and international conferences."

"I can't go back to my home country!!"

"1) The visa processing takes a long time (around 2-3 months on average). Also, there is no guarantee about this time. If I quit the US, it is not clear when I would be able to come back and continue my studies. This is a major risk that I never took in 4 years of my studies. Being apart from my family for a long time is one consequence of this limitation. 2) We don't have US embassy in our country, so if I want to request a visa, I need to go to another country which might require another visa. 3) The visa problem inhibits me from attending international conferences."

"Having to incur the expense of traveling to home country to renew visa"

"When current visa expires or about to expire, have to face the trouble to come back and redo the visa interview. The visa revalidation can be as long as 2-3 month, which seriously affects lots of things. Some students can't take the risk to go back home, and have to be away from their family for several years."

"The current visa revalidation process has been one of the most stressful and anxiety-inducing facets of my life. Since I changed my student status to F1 in the US, my legal status in this country is under the issuance of an I-94 paper form. However, by law, this places me in an unfortunate situation; in order for me to travel anywhere outside of the US, I have to re-apply and be issued a new visa outside of the US in order to gain re-admission into the US. This and foremost, this is costly and can entail a potentially lengthy stay abroad given the time associated with application for re-entry into the US. As a PhD Candidate in the fourth year of my graduate studies, this creates a deeply impractical (and nearly impossible) situation for me. It also limits the number of opportunities that I can capitalize on as a graduate student since many of our conferences and workshops are abroad. Besides the fact such an undertaking would have to be completed under the structure of foreign government systems that would take me time to become familiar with, the outcome is not guaranteed; in other words, by leaving the country for legitimate reasons, I run the risk of visa application denial and might be unable to come back into the country. I simply cannot fathom the logic behind these circumstances. Imagine you want to go to visit your family and the potential cost of it is you getting denied the privilege of returning to your career, ambitions, and daily life as you know it, not to mention being unable to finish your graduate degree. What would it feel like for you to have to figure out what to do with your life when all prospects are unnecessarily stripped from you, to start from scratch unexpectedly and have a clear path in life taken away from you? Needless to say, this is a loss in more ways than one as you would also effectively lose the prior years that you put into your studies and research. This situation is particularly devastating to me as my mother (currently residing in Vietnam) was recently diagnosed with stage 3 liver cancer. It has been the hardest decision of all for me to stay in this country and complete my studies instead of going home to be there with my mother during such a trying time for my family."

"It is basically a gambling for me to go out and request visa. Due to high chance of rejection I decided to not leave the country for whole program which is at least four years. Also due to travel ban my family could not visit me which is very hard for me because my father is old and I am worry about him."

"Have to go back to my home country for VISA extension, which shows my research progress"

"Due to the recent travel ban, this becomes the fourth year that I haven't been able to visit my family. The risk of losing my PhD degree half way through my program is too high for me to risk leaving the US and coming back. In addition, since there is not US embassy in Iran, I would need to travel to a different country in order to request a Visa. This is a huge financial burden that prevents me from leaving the US."

"Every time I went back home for a short travel, I need to take a at least 4 weeks break. Because every time I apply visa in my home country, I always got checked which takes that long."

"I need to visit my family during holidays. So this process causes extreme inconvenience to me."

"Mostly inconvenient as revalidation needs to be done outside the US"

"I have to travel back to China for about 20 hours"

"I cannot leave U.S. for international meeting during the semester."

"I need to go back to China to renew my visa every year"

"The process may become administrative process which will cost more time."

"I have to renew my F1 visa every year since it is only valid for one year. This will greatly waste my time because I am forced to stay out of my lab in US for at least one month to get a revalidated visa, otherwise I cannot get back in time after attending conference in other countries or visiting my family when I need to."

"I want to go back on holiday."

"1, The major problem is the very long visa application time during administrative processing. I understand the importance of administrative processing and would like to participate in the process. However, it took me 6 and 8 weeks during my two visa revalidation experiences. 6-8 weeks are a very long time period: I cannot continue my PhD research; also, my research assistanship was temporarily terminated. If the visa revalidation within US is allowed, all these problems could be solved. 2, Other problems include the financial cost and inconvenience to travel abroad when visa is expired."

"I have a family with 2 small kids under the age 6, it is not only financial burden for me to travel with kids but also stressful on many levels. Given very hectic schedule at school, planning and traveling with kids is a pain."

"I can only revalidate my visa at my home country. And such process always cost more than one month (if I was checked). As a Ph. D student, this is really time-consuming and bring potential risk for my study. This is my fourth year and I have never been back to China ever. I really missed my family and friends, but I was afraid of the visa issue."

"My visa only lasts for 1 year. If I leave the US, I have to get a new visa and this is a costly and lengthy process in Brazil. Therefore, I haven't been back to my home country in years."

"1) Administrative processing time was too long for our major which made me late for school; 2) Visa effective time is too limited (one year) so that I am not able to attend any international conference when my visa is expired; 3) Waste of time and money: each time when we re-validate our visa, we need to plan a long time in advance and pay a lot of money for booking flights and so."

"I have to come to other countries to renew my visa, but since when I study in US, I need a valid US visa to access to other countries, the only one choice for me is to come back to China. Normally, I need to spend one month or more time to renew the visa, which influences my research since in China I cannot access the materials such as Google docs or Google scholar."

"I cannot leave to attend any foreign conferences. I cannot visit my family (My family cannot come here to visit me because of the travel ban)."

"I will have to leave the US for revalidation which might not be possible considering my course work and other opportunities."

"When I visit my parents in China or attend a conference outside US, I need to apply for visa and typically it will be checked. This check process takes weeks or sometimes even months. It brings many inconveniences. Financial cost is another issue."

"Being a graduate student I have a F-1 visa, which I received for one year. It definitely does not cover the duration of a graduate program and restrict me from any travel abroad including visiting international conferences and my family. Of course, in a certain desperate situation I will apply for the visa revalidation abroad to enter the U.S and continue my studies, but in the current political situation it creates a lot of obstacles for me. First of all, there is only one U.S. Consulate left in Russia, and it's extremely overbooked. Secondly, the whole process of visa application is extremely long in time. For example, to get my F-1 I have applied in October 2017, had the interview in November 2017, and received the visa only in February 2018, which caused me to be late for the beginning of a spring semester."

"my visa is only validate for 1 year which means i have to go outside of USA and spend 1 or 2 months to renew it due to complex process of visa application. In order to save time for research, i have to give up my plan to go aboard or visit my family. Also, i am not able to attend international conference due to expired VISA which make me feel very inconvenient."

"My F1 visa only valid for one year, so I need to go back to China to update my visa if I plan to attend a conference outside of the US. The application is time-consuming and costs a lot of money which I can't afford."

"I have stayed in US for 6 years without being able to visit my home-country and attend any international conferences. I entered US in 2012 and worked for 2 years as a research associate. Meanwhile, I was admitted as a student and started my PhD program in 2014. My advisor wanted me to start working on my research project as soon as possible, so I applied for visa status change to F1 in US, without leaving the country and getting a new visa. Currently I have F1 visa status, but if leave US, I'll need to apply for a visa. Since I didn't have F1 visa in the past, the procedure is more complicated than just renewal of F1 visa, and there is a chance that the application may be rejected and the time that I already spent on my PhD program will be lost. Moreover, the typical time for getting a visa is about 2-3 month since a background check is required. Such long interruption would negatively affect my PhD program."

"It needs very long time to revalidation, approximately one month. However, most of the time , I only have a two-week vacation."

"It would be troublesome if later on I need to attend a conference outside USA with my expired visa."

"my visa is available for only one year"

"working/studying schedule conflict, financial burden"

"It need too much time."

"I had to fly back to China to renew my visa after attending a conference in Europe."

"If I renew my visa, I probably have to wait least three weeks. Waiting for one month is the most common situation. We don't have that much long vacations, so often we're just not expected to go back to avoid visa issues."

"I have a single entry visa and unfortunately for the last two years I have not been able to leave USA. My research lab also attending conferences at different countries and because of this I am not able to attend any of those."

"It is difficult to leave without a definite return date in the middle of academic deadlines as well as experiments!"

"Each time I went back I need to wait for about 1 month and a half for the revalidation of my VISA. This baffles the progress of my research. Besides, I need to buy my flight ticket after the revalidation being accomplished, which makes it necessarily more expensive than if it could be planned before my trip."

"Financial Burden"

"I have to travel to my home country every time I need to renew visa. It not only is very expensive for me to travel back and forth, but issuance of a new visa takes a very long time. I have been issued the US F-1 visa 3 times, and every time I had to wait between 2-3 months for the security clearance and the visa. This long wait for visa adversely affect my study, research and my career. It also adversely affects the various US government funded research projects I am involved with due to my absence."

"I won't be able to move around, i can just expect meeting my gf in the US, not almost anywhere else in this world"

"I'm currently holding a 1-year F-1 Visa but I'd like to go home before my Visa expires."

"First, it restricts me from attending many important international conferences to communicate with collaborators in other countries and facilitate my research progress after my visa expires. Second, the one-year-only visa is obvious not suitable for a five-year-PhD program. Third, the long administration process almost required every time I tried to renew my visa not only makes my academic activities inconvenient (I got my last renewed visa only three weeks before my conference in Italy, leaving an extremely limited time for applying the visa for Italy), but also brings unreasonable problems for me and my family (My grandmother died last fall semester and my grandfather was in terrible health condition, being afraid that my research progress would be suspended for at least 40 days due to the administration process, I had to quit my plan to visit my grandfather and I never know if that would be a lifelong pity for me)"

"I did not go home for six years."