



Advice for International Pre-College Students

Who is this advice for?

For non-US citizens participating in the following summer pre-college non-credit programs at Boston University:

- Summer Challenge (two weeks)
- Academic Immersion (AIM) (three weeks)

These short-term, non-credit programs are designed for high school students and do not qualify for F-1 immigration student sponsorship. The US Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) suggests that students engaged in avocational/recreational study may apply for entry in visitor status.

Incidental, short-term courses are permitted under in visitor status (see [9 FAM 402.5-5\(I\)\(3\)-\(4\)](#)) Please find two updated citations from the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) below.

9 FAM 402.2-4(A) (U) Visitors for Pleasure (6) (U) Short Course of Avocational/Recreational Study: Applicants coming to the United States primarily for tourism, who also incidentally will engage in a short course of study during their visit; or, applicants whose primary purpose of travel is avocational/recreational study. See [9 FAM 402.2-4\(B\)\(9\)](#) and [9 FAM 402.5-5\(I\)\(3\)](#).

There are two ways to prepare for your entry to the US as a visitor. You may apply for a [B-2 visitor visa](#) at an embassy or consulate in your home country or register your travel through the [Electronic System for Travel Authorization \(ESTA\)](#) to enter under a visa waiver if you are eligible.

Best Practices

Before You Arrive

For those attending non-credit programs:

- Always check travel updates before traveling
- Clean your social media
- If the participant is traveling alone
 - Bring a signed letter from your parent or guardian explaining who you are, that you are participating in a camp at Boston University, your overall travel plan, and your parents' contact information.
 - Check with your airline ahead of time about options they may have for escorting minors through customs processes.

On Campus

Program participants should carry your [US immigration documents](#) on your person at all times. Many students prefer keeping digital copies on a cell phone to safeguard their documents, but federal regulations require you to have the following documents in your possession to document your lawful status to be in the US. During your program at BU, be sure to **always** carry:

- A printed copy of your visa documentation.
- A printed copy of your enrollment confirmation letter.
- Your passport, which must be valid at least six months into the future.

When entering the US at a land border or airport to attend the program, be prepared to show to US Customs and Border Protection your immigration documents including your passport, visa or ESTA documentation, and a printed copy of your Boston University Summer Pre-College enrollment confirmation letter. Have back-ups on your mobile device as well.

How Boston University works with the US federal government regarding inquiries on international students

The Boston University Police Department (BUPD) does not enforce US federal immigration law and will never ask an individual about their immigration status. Moreover, personally identifiable information from student education records, as well as other personal information, is protected by various state and federal privacy laws.

If a law enforcement official approaches you or a fellow community member on campus:
Ask the official to wait somewhere appropriate while you or a member of the Summer High School programs staff contacts BUPD at 617-353-2121.

For More Information

We encourage students and families to refer to advice and recommendations from their own governmental agencies regarding best practices for safe travel to the US and what to expect upon entry.