

Media Note
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U.S. Extends Visa Validity for Chinese Students and Exchange Visitors

Beginning June 20, 2005, eligible Chinese nationals who wish to study in the United States temporarily as students (F-1), exchange visitors (J-1), or to undertake vocational training (M1) will be issued visas that are valid for 12 months and multiple entries. The previous maximum validity for U.S. visas issued for these purposes was six months and for multiple entries.

The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also agreed to reciprocally issue to U.S. citizens visiting China temporarily as students, exchange visitors or vocational students, visas valid for 12 months and multiple entries.

While the United States and China will in principle issue maximum validity visas to each other's citizens, on a case-by-case basis, each side may limit the period of validity and number of entries as required by law and regulation.

Family members or persons deriving status from the primary student or exchange visitor, receiving F-2, J-2, or M-2 visas, will also be eligible for multiple-entry 12-month validity visas.

The mutual extension of visa reciprocity will be a significant benefit to student and exchange travelers between China and the United States and help facilitate educational exchanges between the two countries. In addition, American citizen students in China will save time and money with longer visa validity. Chinese students studying in the United States receiving longer validity visas will need to visit the U.S. Embassy or Consulates in China less often to renew visas, freeing embassy and consulate resources to adjudicate other visa applications more quickly.

In 2003, the United States issued 21,786 student and exchange visitor visas (F-1, J-1 and M-1 visa categories) to Chinese nationals. In 2004, the United States issued 25,647 student and exchange visitor visas to Chinese nationals.

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