II.D.4. Appointment of Non-U.S. Personnel
(Source: Office of International Programs, July 20, 1978; revised, Provost Memorandum, No.81-8, November 3, 1981; revised, Office of International Programs, 1983; revised, 2005)

The University community is enriched by the presence of scholars, short-term visitors, visiting professors and researchers, as well as longer-term and permanent appointees from other countries. In this regard, certain guidelines must be followed with respect to immigration regulations.

The hiring of foreign faculty members at Penn, while usually not difficult, requires careful advance planning. All departments contemplating the hiring of a foreign faculty member should work closely with the Office of International Programs (OIP), which is the officially designated signatory for the University in immigration matters. Please note that other University offices and departments may not authorize outside counsel to represent the University in immigration matters. Ideally, a foreign candidate being interviewed on campus should consult directly with an OIP staff member during the campus visit to explore the visa ramifications of the potential faculty appointment.

A determining factor in employability is the individual’s immigration status, not citizenship. Various non-immigrant visas allow foreign nationals to work in the United States on a temporary basis. Non-immigrant visas (J-1’s, H-1B’s, or occasionally others, depending on circumstances) can also be used for faculty positions that are not tenured from the outset. With the University’s support, the individual can be adjusted to permanent resident status at a later date. Faculty positions that are tenured from the outset require that the individual have permanent resident status prior to taking up the position. This status can take one or more years to obtain. Please note that tenure cannot be awarded to individuals until they have established citizenship or permanent residency. They can be appointed to a tenure-track position, but tenure may be granted by the Board of Trustees only to individuals who have been classified as citizens or permanent residents of the United States. No offer to a foreign national should be made without stating that the offer is contingent on that person’s obtaining the appropriate visa.

Any department wishing to hire a faculty member from another nation should contact the Office of International Programs for assistance with the administrative aspects of the appointment. They can be reached at 3701 Chestnut Street, Suite 1W, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3199. Telephone: (215) 898-4661. Their website is: http://www.upenn.edu/oip/