Student International Travel

Registering equipment, computer, camera, laptops, etc. prior to traveling

How do I register equipment, computer, camera, laptops, etc. prior to traveling?

You can register any goods with serial numbers at your local Customs and Border Protection (CBP) port of entry, or the port from which you will be departing.

You must physically take the equipment to the office and a CBP Officer will record the description of the item and its serial number on a CBP Form 4457 Certificate of Registration for Personal Effects Taken Abroad. Form 4455 is used to register commercial goods and can be found CBP form 4455.

The CBP Officer will then stamp and sign the form and give it to you to present upon your return. A registration can be used for more than one trip as long as it is for the same equipment.

Note: To determine the requirements for entering a foreign country with these items, you will need to contact the Embassy or Consulate (of the country in question) nearest you.

Prior to leaving the U.S., Utah Valley University also recommends registering with the U.S. Custom and Border Protection (CBP): "To make things easier, you can register certain items with CBP before you depart- including watches, cameras, laptop computers, firearms, and CD players as long as they have serial numbers or other unique, permanent markings. Take the items to the nearest CBP office and request a Certificate of Registration for Personal Effects Taken Abroad (CBP Form 4457). It shows that you had the items with you before leaving the United States and all items listed on it will be allowed duty-free entry. CBP officers must see the item you are registering in order to certify the certificate of registration. You can also register items with CBP at the international airport from which you're departing. Keep the certificate for future trips". For more information, please consult the CBP INFO center.

Finally you must comply with tax systems requirements, for avoiding paying the Value-Added Taxes (VAT) practiced by most of the countries on your items’ value. For eliminating VAT, Utah Valley University may use the ATA Carnet, also known as Merchandise Passport. This carnet is an international customs document that expedites temporary exports into foreign countries. It has the advantage to eliminate VAT and to simplify reentry into the U.S. by serving as a U.S. Customs Registration.

For more tips about traveling overseas with electronic devices, you can consult the Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive guidelines.