

J-1 Responsibilities

Purpose. This handout is designed specifically for the use of students in J-1 status. Upon reading this information, you should have a basic understanding of some of the most important obligations you have in relation to regulations of the U.S. Department of State (DOS) and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS). You will not, however, gain an understanding of the actual procedures which must be followed in order to fulfill your responsibilities. Consultation with and assistance from your Program Sponsor, defined below, and/or staff of the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS), IC 125, is necessary to comply with many duties. **Failure to comply may result in a loss of status and deportation.**

DEFINITIONS

1. **“Program Sponsor”:** Your Program Sponsor is the organization, agency or institution listed in Item #2 of your *FORM DS-2019*. The Program Sponsor has certain legal responsibilities for your status and activities in the U.S.
2. **“Program Objective”:** Your Program Objective, or the purpose for which you came to the U.S., is described in Item #4 of your *Form DS-2019*. It is usually not possible for an Exchange Visitor to change Program Objective once in the United States.

IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

1. **Note:** You must have your passport (unless you are exempt from passport requirements), *FORM DS-2019* and *Form I-94* kept in a safe place at all times. If you are traveling outside of the New Orleans metropolitan area, you should carry your passport, *Form DS-2019* and *Form I-94*.
2. **Passport:** You must maintain the validity of your passport at all times (unless you are exempt from passport requirements).
3. **Lost Passport:** If you lose your passport, you must immediately consult with OISS staff and take steps to have it replaced as soon as possible.
4. **FORM DS-2019:** You must read and clearly understand the material on the back of your pink copy of Form DS-2019.
5. **Lost DS-2019:** If you lose Form DS-2019, you must immediately contact your Program Sponsor and/or OISS for assistance in replacing this form.

REGISTRATION, ATTENDANCE AND COURSE LOAD REQUIREMENTS

1. **Registration and Attendance:** You must register for a full program of study and attend the school which CIS has authorized you to attend. Undergraduate students must register for a minimum of 12 semester hours. Graduate students must register for a minimum of 9 semester hours with or without an assistantship or fellowship.
2. **Vacation:** You must engage in study during each available school term except summer terms.
3. **Reduction in Course Load:** You must engage in a full program of study unless (1) you will complete your studies by the end of that school term; or (2) you are engaging in authorized academic training; or (3) you are participating in a non-degree program of up to 24 months in length; or (4) your Program Sponsor has approved, in advance, a reduction due to academic difficulty or a medical condition.

EMPLOYMENT

1. **Important:** You must not be employed in any capacity unless (a) the specific employment and salary are listed in Item #5 on your DS-2019 or (b) the specific employment is authorized in writing in advance by your J-1 Program Sponsor. If employment authorization is granted, the nature, amount and duration of work must be in accordance with that which the Program Sponsor has authorized and in no case may exceed 20 hours per week while school is in session.
2. **Employment Due to Economic Necessity:** While you have the right to request that your Program Sponsor authorize employment off campus if you experience urgent financial need, you must not be employed without having written permission.
3. **Academic Training Employment:**

- a. **Definition:** Academic Training is work which is directly related to your major field of study, which is engaged in during or after completion of your program of study, and which may take place anywhere in the U.S. for up to 18 months or 36 months upon completion of the doctorate.
- b. **Application and Authorization:** You must make application and be granted written authorization for Academic Training before beginning employment.

ADDRESS NOTIFICATION

You are required to notify Immigration of your physical, street mailing address (not a P.O. Box). You may do this by notifying the OISS 10 days of changing your address. Please note that you can also update your mailing address on Webstar.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S.

1. **Returning to the Same School:** You must consult, in advance, with your Program Sponsor and/or OISS regarding travel authorization and needed documentation.
2. **Returning to a Different School:** You must consult, in advance, with your Program Sponsor and/or OISS regarding your proposed change of school. If the change is permissible, you must obtain a new and complete *FORM DS-2019* from your Program Sponsor or new school before you attempt to reenter the U.S.

COURSE WORK AT OR TRANSFER TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL

1. **Temporary Study at a Different School:** If you wish to complete your program of study at UNO but want to temporarily study at a different school, you must consult with your Program Sponsor and/or OISS to determine if any special procedures must be followed to authorize this study.
2. **Transfer to Another School:** If you wish to cease study at UNO and transfer to a different school, you must consult with your Program Sponsor or designee before you transfer and, if approved, follow proper transfer procedures.

LENGTH OF TIME YOU MAY REMAIN IN THE UNITED STATES:

1. **Limitation:** The specific authorized period of stay in this country expires when you have completed your Program Objective.
2. **Extension of Limitation:** If it is necessary for you to remain in the U.S. beyond the date written on your *DS-2019* in order to complete your Program Objective, you must contact your Program Sponsor and/or OISS 60 days before that date to request "extension of stay", which is an extension of CIS permission for you to remain in this country.

CHANGE OF ACADEMIC LEVEL

If you are nearing completion of requirements for one academic degree or certificate and wish to continue study for a higher degree (i.e., bachelor's level to master's level) or another certificate, you must consult with your Program Sponsor and/or OISS in order to determine if continued study is permissible and, if so, the procedures to follow in order to accomplish this.

THE TWO-YEAR HOME COUNTRY PHYSICAL PRESENCE REQUIREMENT

Many J-1 students have the responsibility, after completion of their Program Objective, to return to their home countries for a period of two years before they will be allowed to reenter the U.S. in certain types of Immigration status. Your Program Sponsor and/or OISS staff can advise you regarding the applicability of this requirement to your particular situation.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

You are required to purchase and maintain insurance which covers you and all dependents for sickness or accident during the period of participation in the Sponsor's Program. Please consult with your Program Sponsor or OISS staff regarding acceptable levels of insurance coverage.