

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

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A SUMMARY OF THE J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR-STUDENT REGULATIONS

As a J-1 exchange visitor, you are responsible for learning, understanding, and following the U.S. federal laws and regulations governing your visa. This summary is an overview of the *basic* regulations. More information on these rules can be found on our website, or by making an appointment with your ISSS advisor.

CHECK IN: All international exchange visitors must check in on the ISSS website when they arrive in the U.S. to start a new program. See <http://iss.uconn.edu> > Check In.

FORM DS-2019: Your Form DS-2019 must list correct information about you and your exchange program. Don't lose or throw away your Form DS-2019 (even old ones) because you must keep this form throughout your stay in the U.S. You will also need this form any time you travel or renew your visa. If information on your Form DS-2019 will change, check with ISSS first to see if these changes are permitted by the J-1 visa rules.

PASSPORT VALIDITY: Keep your passport valid! Your passport expiration date must be at least 6 months into the future. If you get a new passport, remember to bring a copy to ISSS.

ENTRY STAMP AND I-94 RECORD: Each time you enter the U.S. with your J-1 visa, your entry should be recorded in two places. Make sure that you were admitted correctly in both records. Your entry is first recorded when immigration stamps your passport upon arrival. The stamp should list your date of entry, visa type at entry (J-1 or J-2 for your dependents) and your length of stay (D/S – more on this below). The second place your entry is recorded is online, through the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website. Go to <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/> to print your "I-94" arrival record. This information should also list your arrival date, visa type, and length of stay (D/S). If you entered through a land border, instead of having an online record you are given a little white card in your passport that says "I-94". *Every time you enter the U.S., you must check both places (your passport and your I-94) to make sure you were admitted correctly and bring a copy of your I-94 to ISSS.*

LENGTH OF STAY AND 30 DAY GRACE PERIOD: International students are granted a period of stay of "D/S", which means Duration of Status. Duration of Status means you can stay as long as you need to finish your exchange program, as long as you are following all of the J-1 visa rules. Once you finish your program, you may remain in the U.S. for up to 30 days. This is called your "Grace Period" and it's a time you can use to prepare for departure, travel within the U.S., or apply to be here on a different visa type, if you are eligible. If you leave or finish your program before the program end date listed on your Form DS-2019, you must tell ISSS, and your Form DS-2019 must be updated with this information. If you withdraw from your program, or if you violate the J-1 visa rules, then you may not be eligible for the 30 day grace period.

VISA: The J-1 visa stamp is issued for travel to the U.S. After you have arrived, you do not have to keep a valid J-1 visa in your passport, as it is only needed for *entry* to the U.S. If you leave the U.S. with an expired visa, you will need to renew the visa to reenter. Your visa cannot be renewed within the U.S.

REPORT YOUR ADDRESS: You must update ISSS with your U.S. address when you arrive, and within 10 days of any move (even if you are staying somewhere temporarily). To report your address, log in to StudentAdmin and update the "Current Local" address field. This address must be where you are residing, not a P.O. Box or your academic department address. You must also keep your "Home Country" address current in StudentAdmin. <http://iss.uconn.edu/students/current-students/current-students-update-your-address/>.

INSURANCE: You must maintain insurance for yourself and your dependents that meets the J-1 visa program requirements. See the ISSS webpage for details on these requirements. <http://iss.uconn.edu/medical-insurance/>

STUDY RULES:

• **Complete your program by the program end date listed on your Form DS-2019.** If you cannot finish your program by this date, you must apply for an extension of your Form DS-2019 at least one month before the end date. After the program end date, we cannot extend your Form DS-2019. In order to extend your Form DS-2019, you must meet certain requirements, so if you think you may need an extension then you should make an appointment with your ISSS international advisor well in advance of the program end date to see if you are eligible.

• **Take full time classes toward your degree every semester.** If it is your final semester and you need fewer classes to graduate you don't have to register full-time, but you DO need to get permission from ISSS before the start of the semester.

• **If you are a degree student at UConn, you cannot change majors.** If you want to change degree program levels, talk to your ISSS advisor to see if this is possible.

• **No online courses can count toward your minimum required credits.**

• **Minimum credits each required each semester:**

Undergraduate	12 credits	JD	12 credits
Graduate with G.A.	6 credits	Exchange/Nondegree-Undergrad	12 credits
Graduate NO G.A.	9 credits	Exchange/Nondegree-Grad	9 credits
LLM/SJD	9 credits	UCAELI/ESL	18 Hours/Week

• If you have problems keeping up with the full time course load, talk to your ISSS advisor right away. You may be eligible to take fewer classes if you meet one of the following conditions:

- If you are in your first year of study, and you are having difficulties due to English language, reading requirements or unfamiliarity with the U.S. academic culture
- If you were placed in an inappropriate course for your level of study
- If you have medical reasons that prevent you from studying full time
- **Before you drop any courses below the minimum required credits, you MUST have permission from ISSS. Otherwise you will be in violation of your J-1 exchange visitor visa.**

TRANSFERRING TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL: If you intend to study at a school other than UConn, you must follow procedures to transfer your SEVIS record to your new school to keep your J-1 visa status valid. Always notify your ISSS advisor of your study plans and to check if you are eligible for the SEVIS transfer.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S.: If you leave the U.S. during your program to go home or visit another country, you must make sure your current Form DS-2019 has a travel signature from an ISSS advisor that was signed within the last 12 months in order for you to return. Check the travel signature section on your DS-2019 for the travel signature. **Request your travel signature from ISSS at least 2 weeks before you will leave (except for emergencies) or you may not get it in time for departure.** You must also have an unexpired visa to return from most countries. See <http://iss.uconn.edu> > International Students > Current Students > Travel Requirements for more information.

WORKING: You are eligible to work in on-campus positions with UConn as the employer, but you must have work authorization from ISSS before you start. During the academic semester, you may work up to 20 hours per week, and during your vacation term, you may work more than 20 hours per week. In addition, exchange visitors may apply for authorization from ISSS to work in off-campus positions that are related to their major, or in times of unexpected economic hardship. **Working on- or off-campus without ISSS authorization, or working more than the allowed hours per week, is a violation of the J-1 student visa rules and may result in losing your legal status.**

J-2 DEPENDENTS: Your spouse or children up until age 21 are eligible for J-2 visa status to stay here with you while you study. If you end your J-1 program, your J-2 dependent's status will also end. J-2 visa holders may enroll in school and study full time or part time at the University level or in English language programs. J-2 visa holders may also apply for work authorization from the U.S. government (but may not work without an Employment Authorization Document).

Print Name: _____ **Signature:** _____ **UCONN ID#** _____ **Date:** _____