

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

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J-1 ACADEMIC TRAINING GUIDELINES

This handout is intended for J-1 students participating in an exchange program with a Form DS-2019 issued by the University of Connecticut. If you are a J-1 student with a DS-2019 issued by an agency or institution other than UConn, you must contact your program sponsor to gain instructions and authorization for Academic Training. See item #2 of your DS-2019 to identify your J-1 program sponsor.

WHAT IS ACADEMIC TRAINING?

Academic Training may be approved for J-1 students to apply knowledge and skills learned at school to a practical work experience off campus. It includes employment training, internships or work related to your field of study at UConn. Academic Training is available under the following conditions as long as both you and your training opportunity meet all eligibility criteria.

Academic Training...

- is available before or after completion of studies (pre-completion vs. post-completion).
- can be part-time (up to 20 hours per week) when school is in session, or full-time during official school breaks or full-time after completion of program.
- can be authorized for both paid and unpaid internships or jobs, as long as the position is related to the your field of study and integral to your exchange program.

APPROVAL FROM YOUR J-1 RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (RO)/ALTERNATE RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (ARO)

To apply for “Academic Training” you must first submit to International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) your Academic Training application form and required support documents at least 2 weeks before the start date of your internship/training. ISSS will issue a letter authorizing your Academic Training, and you will also receive an updated Form DS-2019 listing your Academic Training site and dates of activity. ISSS will process your application only when it has all required information and documents.

The Academic Training authorization is employment/internship site specific and date specific. In case you have multiple trainings at the same time, your AT authorization letter must include authorizations for each training activity.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

You are eligible for Academic Training if all of the following criteria are met:

- You have J-1 visa status
- You are in the U.S. primarily for study in a full-time academic degree program or non-degree exchange program. UCAELI students are not eligible for Academic Training.
- You are in good academic standing (cannot be on academic probation or suspension)
- You have a specific employment/internship/training offer that is directly related to your major field of study at the time of application.
- Post-completion Academic Training employment must begin within 30 days after your program completion date.
- Your Academic Training position may not be a tenure track position (if teaching).

WHEN TO APPLY FOR ACADEMIC TRAINING

You may only begin working on Academic Training after receiving your Academic Training authorization in hand. For pre-completion AT, you must submit your application at least 2 weeks prior to your anticipated start date. For post-completion Academic Training, you must submit the application for Academic Training to ISSS **at least 2 weeks before the completion date of your academic program or DS-2019 end date, whichever comes first.** "Completion" date is defined as follows:

- **Undergraduates** - the official last day of the semester you are graduating
- **Graduates** – the day degree requirements are fulfilled, such as passing final exams or filing your dissertation with the Graduate School
- **Study Abroad/Exchange Students** – the official last day of the final academic semester of your program.

You must obtain Academic Training authorization prior to your DS-2019 program end date. Academic Training cannot be authorized after this date.

LENGTH OF ACADEMIC TRAINING

- Students in degree programs are permitted an overall maximum Academic Training period of 18 cumulative months. However, your Academic Training cannot exceed the time spent in your degree program, so if you study in a 12 month degree program you will be eligible for 12 months of Academic Training. This counts all Academic Training completed during different degree programs, whether before or after completion of studies, paid or unpaid, full-time or part-time.
- Students who complete a doctoral degree program are eligible for an additional 18 months of Academic Training authorization, for a maximum total of 36 months.
- Time spent on post-completion Academic Training is counted from the day after you complete your program, even if your actual Academic Training position starts later. In other words, your program end date, including post-completion Academic Training time, cannot go beyond 18/36 after you complete the degree program.
- Part-time academic training deducts the same amount of time from your permitted Academic Training duration as full-time Academic Training.
- Non-degree students (e.g. exchange students): Your Academic Training duration may not exceed the length of your program of study. Additionally, your total J-1 program duration, including any time spent in Academic Training, may not exceed 24 months. This could impact the amount of post-completion Academic Training you may undertake.

Exceptions to the 18-Month Limit

There are exceptions to the 18-month time limit, if you meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Your degree program requires a training period longer than 18 months.
- After completing a Ph.D. program, you are eligible for an additional 18 months of post-doctoral training, for a total of 36 months of academic training (inclusive of any AT used prior to degree completion).

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR UCONN-SPONSORED STUDENTS

What to submit?

1. Completed "J-1 Academic Training Application Form (IS 217)
2. Formal employment (internship) offer, written on official letterhead from your potential Academic Training employer. The job offer letter from your employer must include:
 - Your job title
 - Specific start date and end date and location (address) of training or employment
 - Number of hours per week, salary and benefits

- Name, title, phone #, and email address of your training supervisor
- 3. Enrollment certification for the entire time at UConn – issued by the UConn Registrar..
- 4. If applying for post-completion Academic Training, and the position is unpaid, proof of funding (e.g. bank statements) to show how you will support yourself during your Academic Training. The document must:
 - show enough funding to meet the estimated living expenses that UConn requires to issue a Form DS-2019. Please refer to the ISSS website for most current information.
 - be original and in English
 - have been issued within last 4 months
 - If funding is provided by a family member, that person must write a letter of sponsorship to accompany their bank statement
- 5. Completed Section B of “J-1/J-2 Exchange Visitor Medical Insurance Requirements” (ISSS 224)
- 6. Payment receipt of 12-Month OPT/AT Processing Fee for students apply for post-completion Academic Training. Pay online at https://secure.touchnet.com/C21646_ustores/web/index.jsp?

If ISSS approves your application, an RO/ARO will issue a new DS-2019 authorizing the Academic Training for the duration you requested. Your employer will be listed on an Academic Training authorization letter accompanying the new DS-2019. If your Academic Training occurs after completing your academic studies, the end date of your Academic Training becomes the new end date of your J-1 exchange program. You must apply for an extension of your Academic Training in a timely manner if your training offer is extended. The Academic Training extension request requires the same documents listed above.

TRAVEL ABROAD AND REENTRY

A valid travel signature on your DS-2019 and a valid visa stamp are required to reenter the U.S. while on Academic Training. Consult with your international advisor at ISSS for more information about travel on Academic Training.

HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Students using Academic Training must continue to maintain health insurance that meets the U.S. Department of State requirements for J-1 students and their dependents that are in the U.S. for the entire length of stay, including during Academic Training after completion of your program. Required coverages for students and their dependents are as follows:

- \$100,000 per accident of illness
- Deductible of no more than \$500
- Medical evacuation up to \$50,000 and repatriation up to \$25,000. You are responsible to ensure that your chosen plan meets these requirements.

Failure to maintain this insurance requirement constitutes a VIOLATION OF STATUS.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS

Employment without proper authorization is a serious violation of your status. Remember that before you start any kind of employment, you must first consult with an ISSS advisor, whose written approval is necessary in advance.