

Academic Training for Students on J-1 Visas

Immigration regulations allow for the authorization of paid or unpaid training, work, or internships directly related to a J-1 student's major field of study as indicated on the DS-2019, when appropriate, provided authorization is received from International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) for each employer and activity in advance of engaging in the activity, and maximum participation time limits are not exceeded [22 C.F.R. § 62.23 (f)].

- If the University of Colorado Boulder is not the sponsor of the J-1 student's visa, then the J-1 student must contact their J-1 program sponsor (e.g. Fulbright, LASPAU, etc.) directly for academic training authorization procedures.

Eligibility Requirements

- ☐ The J-1 student's primary purpose for being in the U.S. is to study, not to participate in academic training
- ☐ The J-1 student is in good academic standing at the University of Colorado Boulder
- ☐ The proposed training/employment is directly related to the J-1 student's major field of study indicated on the DS-2019
- ☐ The J-1 student has not exceeded the maximum participation limit indicated in 22 C.F.R. § 62.23 (f)
- ☐ The J-1 student has not engaged in training/employment without first receiving ISSS authorization
- ☐ The J-1 student and accompanying J-2 dependents (if applicable) have maintained and will continue to maintain comprehensive medical insurance and evacuation and repatriation coverage that meet U.S. government minimum requirements (22 CFR 62.14).

Maximum Participation Limits

Earning more than one degree will not increase the maximum participation limit for academic training. Any academic training authorized during the academic program will be subtracted from the maximum participation limit.

Non-Degree, Undergraduate, or Pre-Doctoral Academic Training

Academic training cannot exceed 18 months (inclusive of any prior academic training in the U.S.) or the period of the full course of study in the U.S., whichever is less.

Post-Doctoral Training

Academic training cannot exceed a total of 36 months (inclusive of any prior academic training in the U.S.) or the period of full course of study in the U.S., whichever is less.

When to Request Academic Training

J-1 students can engage in academic training during the academic program or after completing the program as long as they have not exceeded the maximum participation limit and the academic training experience is authorized no later than 30 days after the program completion date.

Post-Completion Academic Training

Post-completion academic training (occurring after program completion) must be authorized within 30 days of the program completion date.

- Any time during the 30 days following the program completion date for which a student does not have an academic training authorization will be subtracted from the maximum participation time limit.

Complete academic training requests should be submitted no later than 21 days after the program completion date in order to allow sufficient time for processing.

- It is recommended that students submit a complete academic training request prior to program completion.

Students applying for post-completion academic training who plan to depart the U.S. after completing their program and re-enter to engage in academic training, must obtain academic training authorization prior to departing the U.S.

Academic Training Request Process

Typical ISSS processing is 2-5 business days from the time a complete request is submitted. Please plan accordingly.

- ☐ Obtain an [offer letter](#) on letterhead from your prospective employer that includes the following:
 - Job title
 - Start date and end date of work/training
 - Number of hours of work/training per week
 - Salary (if applicable)
 - Location of the training/employment
 - A brief description of the “goals and objectives” of the “academic training program”
 - Three goals are required.
 - At the end of the Academic Training, the student and training supervisor are required to evaluate the training program based on the goals indicated in the offer letter.
 - Name, address, title, and contact information for the “training supervisor”
 - Signature of the supervisor or an official with signatory authority and date signed
- ☐ Ask your CU academic advisor to complete the [Academic Advisor Academic Training Recommendation Form](#)
- ☐ Submit the [Academic Training Request Form](#) (electronically via DocuSign) (Access [Form Example](#))
 - You must upload your offer letter and *Academic Advisor Academic Training Recommendation Form*
 - If any part of your academic training will occur after your degree completion, you must also provide a new *Insurance Compliance Form* (available in the MyISSS portal) and financial support documentation indicating adequate funding until the end of the academic training experience.
 - If you will participate in paid academic training, you can upload your offer letter with salary information in the “Financial Support Documentation” section of the request form. If your salary will not cover your living expenses, also upload additional financial support documentation (e.g., bank statement).

ISSS will evaluate the academic training program for its relevance to your degree program. If ISSS approves the request, ISSS will write a letter of approval, authorize the academic training in SEVIS, and issue a new DS-2019 documenting the academic training authorization.

- Keep both the ISSS academic training authorization letter and the new DS-2019 for your records and to present to your employer for I-9 purposes.

Maintaining J-1 Status While Authorized for Academic Training

An academic training authorization is employer and date-specific. A student may engage in multiple academic training experiences provided the request and approval procedures are followed for each employer. Students engaging in academic training must actively pursue the academic training program goals and objectives with the specified employer throughout the entirety of the authorization and apply for academic training extensions in a timely manner, if applicable. J-1 students and, if applicable, accompanying J-2 dependents, must also continue

to maintain comprehensive medical insurance and evacuation and repatriation coverage that meet U.S. government minimum requirements (22 CFR 62.14) for the duration of the academic training authorization.

Required Academic Training Evaluation

Regulations require the University to evaluate the academic training program [22 C.F.R. § 62.23 (f)(6)]. Accordingly, J-1 students who participate in academic training and their training supervisor must complete the [Academic Training Evaluation Form](#). The student and training supervisor will evaluate the training program based on the training goals and objectives stated in the academic training request materials. Students should initiate the evaluation three weeks prior to completing academic training.

- [Academic Training Evaluation Form Example](#)

Employment-Related Matters

Social Security Number (SSN)

If you do not already have a SSN, you can [apply for a SSN](#) after receiving your ISSS authorization letter and new DS-2019 that documents the academic training.

- You may begin academic training before you obtain an SSN, but to pay you, most employers require that you provide a Social Security Number.
 - Access [Employer Responsibilities when Hiring Foreign Workers](#) for additional information

Bring the following documents with you to the [Social Security Administration Office](#) to apply for a SSN:

- Valid passport
- Valid [I-94](#) (electronic or paper)
- DS-2019 with academic training authorization
- Academic training authorization letter from ISSS
- Offer letter from your employer
- One additional form of photo identification (e.g., BuffOne card)

I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification Process

You and your employer must complete the [Form I-9](#) within three days of your employment start date. A Form I-9 is used to verify the identity and employment eligibility of all individuals, U.S. citizens and non-citizens, hired for employment in the U.S. As part of the process, you will be asked to present evidence of your identity and employment authorization (valid passport, valid I-94 arrival record, DS-2019 with academic training authorization, and the ISSS letter authorizing academic training). Your I-9 must be updated any time your academic training is extended.

Social Security and Medicare Taxes

In general, as a student in J-1 status, you will be exempt from Social Security (F.I.C.A.) taxes for your first five years in the United States, as long as you continue to declare non-resident status for tax.

Federal, State, and Local Taxes

Unless you qualify under a tax treaty between the United States and your home government, your earnings as a student in J-1 status will be subject to applicable federal, state and local taxes, and employers are required by law to withhold those taxes from your paycheck. By April 15th of each year, you must file a federal and, if applicable, state income tax return for the previous year's earnings. Please see the ISSS website for [more information about filing tax returns](#).