



**INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**  
JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

# **J-1 Scholar Handbook**

## **INTERNATIONAL HOUSE & PROGRAMS**

For more information about Jacksonville State University and  
Contact information visit  
[www.jsu.edu/international](http://www.jsu.edu/international)

## **Exchange Visitor: J-1 Scholars**

The exchange of professors and research scholars promotes the exchange of ideas, research, mutual enrichment and linkages between research and academic institutions in the United States and foreign countries.

### **Professor and Research Scholar:**

The Professor category is for a foreign national who enters the United State for the primary purpose of teaching, lecturing, observing or consulting at accredited post-secondary academic institutions, museums, libraries or similar types of institutions. A professor may also conduct research, unless disallowed by the sponsoring organization.

The Researcher category is for a foreign national who enters the United States for the primary purpose of conducting research, observing or consulting in connection with research projects at research institutions, corporate research facilities, museums, libraries, post-secondary accredited academic institutions, or similar types of institutions. A research scholar may also teach or lecture, unless disallowed by the sponsor. The research scholar or professor's appointment to a position shall be temporary, even if the position itself is permanent.

Incidental lectures or short-term consultations are permitted with the approval of the responsible officer so long as they are directly related to the objectives of the participant's program, and do not delay the exchange program's completion date.

The maximum duration of the program may not exceed 5 years and the minimum duration is 3 weeks.

## Eligibility Criteria:

Professor and Research Scholars must:

- Not be a candidate for a tenure track position
- Not have participated in and completed a professor or research scholar program within the last 24 months preceding the beginning date of their new program's commencement
- Not have participated in a J-Visa program for all or part of the 12-month period immediately preceding the start date of a professor or research scholar program unless he or she meet one of the following exceptions:
  - The participant is currently in a professor/research scholar program and is transferring to another institution in the United States to continue his or her current J-1 program.
  - The participant's prior physical presence in the U.S. on a J-visa program was less than six months in duration; and
  - The prior participation was as a short-term scholar.

## Responsibilities of Sponsoring Department

Before Arrival:

- **Identify and select** a designated host within the department. This individual will be the primary point of contact for the exchange scholar and International House & programs.
- **Selection of Prospective Exchange Scholars:** Screen and select qualified foreign nationals to further education, research and exchange initiatives; document that the program fits the prospective exchange scholar's background, needs, and experience.
  - Academic Credentials (copies)
  - Resume
- **Language Proficiency:** The department will need to verify that participants have the education and credentials necessary to carry out the activity for which they are entering the United States and that they have sufficient proficiency in the English language to function in an English-speaking environment.
- **Department Proposal:** Sponsoring department must complete [Department proposal](#)
- **Scholar Application:** Assist selected Scholars to complete the [J-1 Scholar/Researcher Application form](#)
- **Offer/Invitation Letter:** Sponsoring department must issue offer/invitation letter with details on appointment date and activities exchange scholars will be participating in.
- **Logistics:** The department will need to determine the needs of the individual, and whether those needs can be met. This may include:

- Access to classroom facilities associated with the research, time with faculty, access to materials, etc.
- Office space, office supplies, etc.
- On-campus/off-campus housing,
- Access to library, gym, and other offices on campus
- Transportation to and from the airport and transportation within Jacksonville

After Arrival:

- **Official Reporting:** Ensure the exchange scholar checks in with the Office of the International House & Programs with required travel documents immediately upon their arrival.
- **Departmental Orientation:** Sponsoring department must make sure that Exchange Scholars are officially introduced to the department, colleges and local community.
- **Access:** Sponsoring department must help Exchange scholar obtain ID cards, official emails, access to computer/office space, internet as agreed prior to their arrival.
- **Monitor:** Monitor the visitor's stay in the United States, ensure that they are progressing in the work being performed or the research being conducted; any changes in the work being performed or research being conducted must be reported to the International House & Programs
- **Cultural immersion:** Ensure that they are involved in cross-cultural programs where they can learn about the United States and its people.
- **Completing/Ending the program:** Department must inform the Office of the International House and program at least 2 weeks prior to the completion of the exchange program so that the SEVIS record is updated as completed before the end date listed on their DS-2019.

The J-1 scholar must be provided with information on the kind of assistance JSU can and cannot provide before the J-1 scholar accepts the offer and arrive on campus to avoid any issues that can affect the University.

### **Responsibilities of J-1 Scholar**

J-1 Scholars are responsible to learn, understand and comply with the immigration regulation that pertains to their J-1 visa category. Failure to do so will be considered as violation of their J-1 visa status. Following are the list of some basic rules and regulation J-1 scholars must comply with:

**VISA Refusal:** J-1 Scholars must return the original DS-2019 if they are unable to obtain J-1 visa.

**Late Arrival:** J-1 Scholars must request change of program start date on their DS-2019 if they are not able to report to JSU on the stated date on their current document.

**Official Reporting & Check-In:** Exchange Visitors cannot arrive more than **30 days** before program start date on DS-2019. J-1 Scholars must report to the International House & Programs immediately upon their arrival. **They must bring:**

- Passport
- I-94
- DS-2019
- Offer Letter from department

J-1 scholars must report following within 2-3 days of their arrival:

- Proof of Insurance (must be covered for the duration indicated on DS 2019) [https://www.isoa.org/Jacksonville State University](https://www.isoa.org/Jacksonville_State_University)
- Email address
- Physical address in U.S
- Telephone number

Proof of insurance coverage must be uploaded on the International Student and Scholar portal.

Email address, Physical address and telephone number must be updated on the International Student and Scholar portal.

**Completing the program:** J-1 Scholars must depart the United States within 30 days of the expiration of the Form DS-2019 or program end date, whichever is earlier, unless they have applied for a change of status.

**Departure before program completion:** J-1 Scholars must inform the Office of the International House & Programs if they plan to leave JSU before the program ends. They must also inform if their J-2 dependents are returning home before the expiration date on DS-2019.

**24 months' bar on repeat participation:** J-1 Scholars are subject to a 24 months' bar on repeat participation in these categories.

**Full participation in pre-approved program:** J-1 Scholars must fully participate in the JSU's academic program for which they have been approved.

**Report Any of the following changes:** J-1 Scholars must notify the International House & programs in event of following changes:

- Change in the academic program
- Change in the program dates
- Change in physical address and telephone number

**2 Year Home Residency Requirement:** Being subject to this rule has three major effects on the exchange visitor's future U.S. immigration options. Until a subject exchange visitor either complies with or is granted a waiver of the two-year requirement, he or she:

- Is not eligible to obtain an H or L visa at a U.S. consulate.
- Is not eligible for lawful permanent resident status.
- Is not eligible to change status from J to any other nonimmigrant status from within the U.S., except to A (diplomatic) or G (employee of an International Organization) status. In most cases, USCIS will also not approve a change from J-2 to J-1 or vice versa.

An exchange visitor who is subject to this rule may still leave the U.S. and apply for a new visa category other than H or L. For example, an exchange visitor may leave the U.S. and apply for an F-1 visa overseas even though they may not change status to F-1 within the U.S. Entering the U.S. with a new visa, however, does not relieve the exchange visitor of the obligation to fulfill the two-year requirement at a later date.

**Travel Signature:** J-1 Scholars are required to get the travel signature on their DS-2019 forms by the Office of the International House and Programs anytime they travel outside of the country.

**DS 2019 extensions:** J-1 Scholars must apply for an extension before the expiration date on DS-2019 if they intend to extend their stay in JSU.

**Maintain Adequate Health Insurance:** J-1 Scholars must maintain adequate health insurance for themselves and any dependents in J-2 status throughout their stay in the United States. This insurance must meet the requirements set forth by the Department of State.

(a) Minimum Insurance Coverage – Insurance shall cover:

- (1) medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per person per accident or illness
- (2) repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000
- (3) expenses associated with medical evacuation in the amount of \$50,000.
- (4) a deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness/

(b) Additional Terms – An insurance policy secured to meet the benefits requirements must be underwritten by an insurance corporation with one of the following ratings:

- (1) an A.M. Best rating of "A-" or above
- (2) an Insurance Solvency International, Ltd. (ISI) rating of "A-I" or above
- (3) a Standard and Poor's Claims Paying Ability rating of "A-" or above
- (4) a Weiss Research, Inc. rating of B+ or above.

OR the policy must be backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the exchange visitor's home country.

(c) Maintenance of Insurance – Willful failure on J-1 Scholar's part to maintain the required insurance throughout their stay in the United States will result in the termination of their exchange program.

(d) Other important information- The University is required to document compliance with these health insurance regulations. You will need to upload confirmation from your insurance provider in English that confirms that your health insurance policy meets ALL the stated requirements.

You do not need health insurance to apply for a J-1 visa or to receive J-1 status upon admission to the U.S., however, you must have insurance coverage effective on the start date listed on your DS-2019 form. You must maintain health insurance coverage for the entire duration of your program.

The J-1 status health insurance requirement includes every J-2 dependent with you in the U.S. Both you (the J-1 visitor) and each of your J-2 dependents must be covered by health insurance as described above.

Many insurance companies offer a health insurance policy that will meet the stated requirements. We do not endorse any specific company for our J-1 scholars as long as the health insurance policy meets the requirements set by the Department of State.

**Report Abuse or Exploitation** – If J-1 Scholars are mistreated and/or their rights are violated, and their sponsor is not providing the help they need, they must contact the Department of State for assistance:

Visa Emergency Hotline: 1-866-283-9090. \*

This line is for use by exchange visitors and third parties in the case of urgent situations.

\*A Department of State representative is available 24 hours a day.

Regular Communications or questions: [jvisas@state.gov](mailto:jvisas@state.gov)

This e-mail address is to communicate non-emergency issues, questions, and concerns.