

**J-1 Academic Training Packet****Purpose of this Packet**

This handout is designed for J-1 students with DS-2019s processed by The University of Arizona. If your DS-2019 was issued by a third party (not The University of Arizona) you will need to consult your program sponsor about Academic Training. This handout explains Academic Training, the name used by the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs J-1 Exchange Program for certain types of study-related employment. It will tell you the conditions that you have to meet in order to qualify for Academic Training, and how to apply. Academic Training is flexible in its format and offers a variety of employment situations to supplement your academic program in the United States. It is available before completion of your program of study as well as afterwards. As long as you stay within the stipulated time limits, it lets you work part-time while classes are in session and full-time during vacation periods; and, under certain circumstances, you may work full time if all you have remaining is thesis or dissertation.

J-1 students may be authorized to engage in academic training prior to their program completion date. This means that during the regular school term, a J-1 student meeting the eligibility requirements could participate in either paid or unpaid training opportunities with a specific employer. The student would still need to maintain full-time course attendance during the regular school terms. Any portion of the academic training used will be subtracted from the overall allotment of 18-months. Part-time academic training is counted as full-time.

The maximum period for academic training is 18-months for students in degree programs, which includes all academic training, whether before or after completion of studies. One exception is that for postdoctoral training after completion of a U.S. degree, the overall limit is 36 months, which is granted in an initial unit of 18 months or less.

**Students in non-degree seeking programs must consult with an International Student Advisor at ISPS to determine eligibility for Academic Training.**

**Conditions****Eligibility**

1. Your primary purpose in the United States must be to study rather than Academic Training.
2. You must be in good academic standing at the school named on your Form DS-2019.
3. The proposed employment must be directly related to your major field of study.
4. Regulations require that you maintain health insurance coverage for yourself and all J-2 dependents throughout your program, including Academic Training.

**Limitations - general**

1. Your employment may be authorized for "the length of time necessary to complete the goals and objectives of the training, provided that the amount of time . . . is approved by [both] the academic dean or advisor and . . . the responsible officer," per the regulations. It may not exceed the period of full course of study or 18 months, whichever is shorter. If you receive a Ph.D., however, your post-doctoral training may last as long as 36 months.
2. Part-time employment for Academic Training counts against the 18 or 36-month limit the same as full-time employment.
3. Earning more than one degree does not increase the amount of time allotted for Academic Training.

**Academic Training Post Program Completion**

1. Academic Training following completion of your program of study must involve **paid** employment. However, some exceptions to this rule may apply – see your international student advisor for more information.
2. You must obtain a written offer of appropriate employment and present a copy to your J-1 Responsible Officer **on or before the ending date of your program (usually your graduation date or the ending date on your DS-2019, whichever comes first)**, or you will **lose eligibility** for Academic Training after completion.

### **Application Process**

1. Obtain a letter of offer from your prospective employer that includes your job title, a brief description of role and responsibilities of your employment, the dates and physical address of the employment, number of hours worked per week, and the name, email address and phone number of your training supervisor. Make sure that your employer's letter includes all of these details or your request cannot be processed.
2. Have your academic advisor complete the Recommendation for J-1 Academic Training form. It must be complete or your request cannot be processed.
3. When your academic advisor's recommendation is ready, you should deliver or send it to your J-1 Responsible Officer, with a copy of the employer's letter attached.
4. Your J-1 Responsible Officer must evaluate the Academic Training program and decide whether it is warranted and appropriate. If so, he or she will issue an authorization letter and new DS2019 annotated with Academic Training.

### **Procedure Checklist**

- Read the accompanying **Academic Training for J-1 Students** information sheet.
- Obtain the Employer's letter offering you the training position directly related to your field of study. Refer to accompanying Sample Employer's letter. The letter must include all of the information on the attached template or it cannot be processed.
- Obtain the faculty advisor or dean's recommendation letter. Refer to the accompanying Academic Advisor's Recommendation for J-1 Academic Training Form.
- Submit the completed documents above with your original Form DS-2019 to International Student Programs and Services (ISPS). An ISPS advisor will review your application and will issue an academic training authorization letter and DS2019 annotated with Academic Training within ten (10) business days after the student submits all required documentation to ISPS. If the application is incomplete or additional information is required, the student will be notified by ISPS, however, this may delay the processing of your request.
- Employers are required to have prospective employees fill out an I-9 form. Documents you will need to show proof of employability include a valid Form DS-2019, Responsible Officer's authorization letter for Academic Training, I-94, valid passport and social security card.

### **Authorization to work**

#### **Social Security Number**

To put you on the payroll, your employer will need your Social Security number, which you can obtain by applying for a Social Security card. Take your passport, I-94 Departure Record card, DS-2019, and your J-1 Responsible Officer's written work authorization to the office of the Social Security Administration. Your Social Security card may be stamped "Valid for Work Only with DHS Authorization."

#### **Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification**

When you begin work, you and your employer must complete Form I-9, which requires you to document your identity and work authorization according to directions on the back of the Form. Of the various items acceptable as documentation, you may find that the most convenient combination is your passport, I-94

Departure Record card, your DS-2019, and your J-1 Responsible Officer's written work authorization. Your employer, who keeps Form I-9, will make copies of the documents you submit, and return the originals to you. Form I-9 must be updated any time that you receive a renewal of your permission for Academic Training.

## **Social Security and Taxes**

### **Social Security taxes**

In general, as a J-1 student 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 purposes (see Internal Revenue Service Publication 519, "U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens.")

### **Federal, state and local taxes**

Unless you qualify under a tax treaty between the United States and your home government, your earnings as a J-1 student will be subject to applicable federal, state and local taxes, and employers are required by law to withhold those taxes from your paychecks. By April 15 you must file a federal income tax return covering the prior calendar year to determine whether you owe more taxes or have a refund coming.

### **A note of caution**

As a J-1 student you are eligible for a variety of work opportunities in the United States, but employment without proper authorization is a serious violation of your status. Remember that before you start any kind of employment, you must first consult your J-1 Responsible Officer, whose written approval is necessary in advance.

**Academic Advisor's Recommendation for J-1 Academic Training**

Must be printed on letterhead

This letter is to recommend the following student for participation in Academic Training.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_, a J-1 student at the University of Arizona would like to engage in the Academic Training program discussed below.

Name of employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical address of place of employment: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Direct Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of hours per week: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of the training: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Goals and objectives of the specific training program:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How does the training relate to the student's major field of study?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why is the training an integral or critical part of the academic program of the exchange visitor student?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I approve of the amount of time requested as necessary to complete the goals and objectives of the training. With this letter I recommend that you authorize this student to participate in the Academic Training program that I have described. I authorize that the training experience is directly related to the student's field of study.

Academic Advisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Advisor's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Advisor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample Employer Letter for J-1 Academic Training**

\*Please note that this letter must be printed on letterhead from your prospective employer and include the following items as in the sample below. Missing information will result in delayed processing of the Academic Training request.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To Whom It May Concern:

I hereby verify that (full name of employee) has been offered a position at (name of company) under the following terms:

Academic Training Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_ Number of hours to work per week \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title \_\_\_\_\_ Salary \_\_\_\_\_

Role and responsibilities of the position: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Supervisor or Human Resources Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date