

## Academic Training for J-1 Students

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### Overview

Academic training is the name the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program uses for employment training or practical experience related to your field of study. It is fairly flexible and offers a variety of paid and unpaid, full-time or part-time, training or employment situations, with one or more employers, to supplement your academic program in the U.S.

Academic training is available at any stage of your academic program, either while you are enrolled in school or after you complete your academic program, as long as you maintain valid J-1 status, follow the appropriate application and approval procedures, and stay within the stated time limits.

If you are considering academic training, your authorization must be processed before your official academic program completion date. In addition, the academic training/employment must begin **within the first 30 days after** the official academic program completion date.

Official Regulation: "A student may participate in academic training programs during his or her studies, without wages or other remuneration, with the approval of the academic dean or advisor and the Exchange Visitor Program Responsible Officer (RO or ARO). A student may be authorized to participate in academic training for wages or other remuneration during his or her studies or commencing not later than thirty (30) days after completion of his or her studies." (*Source: 22CFR. § 62.23(f)(2)*). The ARO referred to in this regulation is the International Student and Scholar Advisor at the U-M International Center.

### Eligibility Criteria

You are eligible for academic training if all of the following criteria are met:

- You are in the U.S. primarily for study in a full-time academic program.
- You are in good academic standing at your educational institution.
- You must apply before the completion of your academic program.
- You are participating in academic training that is directly related to your major field of study.

- Your employment/training must take place with the specific employer or employers who are noted on the academic training authorization letter.
- You must receive an authorization letter, in advance, for the duration and type of academic training, from a responsible officer or alternate responsible officer at the U-M International Center. This authorization must be processed before the end date on the Form DS-2019 or before the official date of the degree program completion, whichever comes first.
- You have a valid Form DS-2019 that enables you to remain in the U.S. in J-1 student status. You must apply for extensions as needed and in a timely manner.

## **Length of Academic Training**

- Students who complete a degree program are permitted an overall academic training period of 18 months. This includes all academic training, whether before or after completion of studies. Source: 22CFR § 514.23(f)(4)
- The total employment/training period may not exceed the amount of time spent in full course of study. For example, if you are a Masters student who completed a program in 12 months, you are only eligible for 12 months of academic training.
- Completing more than one degree program at the same time does not increase your academic training period.
- Any pre-completion academic training period is deducted from your total allowable academic training period when calculating post-completion academic training.

## **Exceptions to the 18-Month Period 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.
- If you are enrolled in a non-degree program, your stay in the U.S., including academic training, is limited to a total of 24 months. The term of your academic training would then be the time period remaining after you complete your non-degree program.
- A period spent in part-time employment under academic training will count as full-time academic training and will be deducted from the 18 or 36 months of post completion academic training.

## **How to Apply for Academic Training**

To apply for academic training through the U-M International Center you must be sponsored by the University of Michigan. If your sponsor is the [Institute for International Education](#) <sup>[1]</sup> (IIE) or another agency, you must contact your sponsor to process your academic training. To determine your sponsorship, please check section #2 of your Form DS-2019.

1. Have a formal employment offer, written on official stationery (letterhead) from your potential academic training employer. The job offer letter from your employer must include:
  - Your job title
  - A brief description of the goals and objectives of your training or employment
  - Dates and location of training or employment
  - Number of hours per week, salary and benefits
  - Name and title of your training supervisor

2. Obtain a [letter of recommendation](#) [2] from your academic advisor or dean recommending this academic training. You will need to provide him/her with a copy of your employment offer letter. The recommendation letter from your academic advisor or dean must include:
  - The goals and objectives of the specific training program
  - A description of the training program, including all the information listed above
  - How the training relates to your major field of study
  - Why this employment is an integral or critical part of your academic program
  - The length of time necessary to complete the goals and objectives of the academic training
3. Complete an [Academic Training Request Form for J-1 Students](#) [3].
4. Schedule an appointment with an advisor at the U-M International Center. **NOTE:** *Your appointment with the U-M International Center **must occur at least 20 working days before** your official degree completion date or before the end date on your Form DS-2019, whichever is earlier. If you fail to submit your application before your program completion, or before the end date on your Form DS-2019, whichever is earlier, **you will not be eligible** for academic training.*
5. Bring the following documents with you to your appointment:
  - Completed [Academic Training Request Form for J-1 Students](#) [3]
  - Employment offer letter
  - Letter of recommendation from your academic advisor or dean
  - Copies of your current and all previous Forms DS-2019
  - A copy of your passport biographical data page and visa page
  - A copy of paper or print-out of electronic [Form I-94](#) [4] (please click on the link for instructions)
  - Unofficial transcript from Wolverine Access
  - Proof of funding to show how you will support yourself during your academic training (if your academic training is unpaid)
6. If the U-M International Center approves your application, they will issue a new Form DS-2019 authorizing the academic training for the duration you requested. Your employer will be listed on the academic training authorization letter accompanying the new Form DS-2019. The end date on this form is now the end date of your J-1 program. You must apply for an extension of your academic training in a timely manner if you are eligible to and wish to extend your J-1 program beyond that date.

## Travel Outside the U.S.

If you intend to leave the U.S. after you complete your program of study you must obtain academic training authorization from the U-M International Center before you leave. If you do not receive this authorization, you may lose your eligibility for academic training.

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**Source URL:** <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/j1-students/academic-training>

### Links

[1] <https://www.iie.org/>

[2] [https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/j\\_emplacadrng\\_letter.pdf](https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/j_emplacadrng_letter.pdf)

[3] [https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/j\\_acadtraining.pdf](https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/j_acadtraining.pdf)

[4] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/i-94>