

J-1 Visa Information for Visiting Scholars and Students

The exchange visitor (J) non-immigrant visa category is for individuals approved to participate in work- and study-based exchange visitor programs. The J-1 visa provides countless opportunities for international candidates looking to travel and gain experience in the United States. [Diverse and multifaceted programs](#) enable foreign nationals to come to the U.S. to teach, study, conduct research, demonstrate special skills, or receive on-the-job training for periods ranging from a few weeks to several years.

TYPES OF J-1 VISITORS AT UTC

J-1 [Professors](#) 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 24 months immediately preceding the beginning date of their new program's commencement; AND
- Not have participated in a J visa program for all or part of the 12-month period immediately preceding the start date of the professor or research scholar program UNLESS they meet one of the following exceptions:
 - The participant is currently in a professor or research scholar program and is transferring to another institution in the United States to continue their 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; OR
 - The prior participation was as a short-term scholar.

J-1 [College and University Students](#) must:

- Be financed directly or indirectly by the U.S. government, the government of their home country, or an international organization of which the U.S. is a member by treaty or statute, OR be supported substantially by funding from any source other than personal or family funds;
- Participate according to an agreement between the U.S. government and a foreign government; OR according to a written agreement between American and foreign educational institutions, an American educational institution and a foreign government, or a state or local government in the U.S. and a foreign government; OR as part of a student internship program that will fulfill the educational objectives of the student's degree program in their home country; AND
- Pursue a non-degree program and be enrolled full-time in a prescribed course of study. The maximum duration of a non-degree program is 24 months, inclusive of academic training.

RESPONSIBILITIES, REQUIREMENTS, AND REGULATIONS

General College and Department Responsibilities: Colleges and departments are expected to provide workspace, library and computer access, a UTCID and Mocs Card, and cross-cultural interaction between the J-1 scholar/student and the department's faculty and staff. Departments should refer any concerns about immigration, orientation to the campus and community, insurance, etc. to the Office of International Student and Scholar Services.

Departments hosting a J-1 scholar are also required to:

- Remind the scholar to schedule an orientation session with ISSS within 10 days of their arrival to UTC
- Notify ISSS when the scholar completes their program at UTC
- Notify ISSS if the scholar will not arrive within 30 days of their program's start date

Academic Credentials: The department must ensure that the J-1 scholar/student possesses the appropriate academic credentials to perform the proposed activity. Some programs may require a credential translation and evaluation to comply with accreditation standards and requirements. Scholars should meet with their department chair and dean to discuss if the visiting scholar may need to submit extra academic credentials.

English Proficiency: Colleges and departments must determine that the scholar has English proficiency sufficient to perform the academic activity and function on a day-to-day basis. English proficiency for J-1 scholars from countries where English is not an official language must be evaluated by the department before the Application for Visiting J-1 Scholars may be submitted. Departments may require the submission of scores from a recognized English language proficiency exam, certification from an academic institution or English language school, and/or completion of an interview.

DS-2019 Processing Time: The Application for Visiting J-1 Scholars and all attachments must be submitted at least 120 days before the intended program start date. This allows time for Form DS-2019, the Certificate of Eligibility, to be issued and forwarded to the prospective scholar, who must then apply for an entry visa at a U.S. embassy.

J-1 Visitor Categories: UTC welcomes J-1 scholars who are classified as research scholars, professors, short-term scholars, specialists, and students. The J-1 program exists to facilitate temporary visits to the U.S. for the purpose of studying, teaching, instructing or lecturing, observing, conducting research, consulting, or demonstrating special skills.

Home Residency Requirements: The 24-month home residency requirement (referred to as 212(e) in the U.S. immigration regulations) means that those who come to the U.S. on a J-1 visa may NOT become permanent residents in the U.S., change visa status while in the U.S., or get work- or family- based visa statuses such as H, L, or K until they return to their country of last permanent residence for at least 24 months cumulatively.

For details related to the 24-month home residency requirement, visit [this webpage](#). For information on waiving this requirement, visit [this webpage](#).

Minimum Required Financial Support: J-1 scholars must possess sufficient financial support. J-2 dependents who accompany the J-1 visa holder require additional funding. For the most up-to-date minimum funding amounts required, visit [this webpage](#).

Evidence of Financial Support: If the J-1 scholar's support comes from a source other than UTC, evidence of financial support must be provided. If the scholar is supported by personal funds, an English-language bank statement with funds listed in U.S. dollars must be provided. If the scholar is supported by government or international funds, an official English-language statement with funds listed in U.S. dollars must be provided.

If a J-1 scholar is required to take a class, the documentation providing evidence of financial support must indicate that the funding will cover their tuition. If an academic department is not funding your studies, you will be required to pay out-of-state tuition. Current tuition rates are available on the [Bursar's Office website](#).

Insurance Requirement: Health and accident insurance coverage are mandatory for all J-1 Scholars and their J-2 dependents while they are in the U.S. The Health Insurance Waiver Request Form must be completed before the DS-2019 will be issued.

Curriculum Vitae/Resume: An English-language CV or resume must be attached to the Application for Visiting J-1 Scholars.

Passport: A legible copy of the ID page of the passport for the J-1 scholar and each dependent must be submitted.

For more detailed information on the J-1 exchange visitor program, please visit the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs [website](#).

It is the exchange visitor's responsibility to understand the detailed conditions and requirements of the J visa program. Regulations related to home country residency, the Internal Revenue Service, changing visa status, future visa applications, and other topics may vary depending on the agreement between the U.S. and the visitor's home country. The UTC Office of International Student and Scholar Services is not responsible for the visitor's post-UTC immigration status.

Please note that the University of Tennessee Policy on Visitors Engaged in Research is undergoing revision. For up-to-date information on policy and procedural changes, as well as how they may affect you, please visit [this webpage](#).