

Academic Training

Authorization for paid or unpaid training for J-1 Students Before or After Completion of Study

Academic Training is an immigration benefit for those who have maintained lawful J-1 status. Academic Training is defined as work, training, or experience that is directly related to the student's field of study. It can involve consecutive or simultaneous training, either paid or unpaid, with either U.S. or foreign employers or organizations; but a separate application **MUST** be submitted for each employer and training activity.

Eligibility Requirements

- Your primary reason for being in the United States must be to study rather than to engage in Academic Training.
- You must be in good academic standing.
- The proposed Academic Training must be directly related to the major field of study listed on your DS-2019 form.
- You must receive written approval, in advance, from the Office of International Student Services before doing any Academic Training.

General Guidelines and Limitations

- **You must maintain your valid J-1 status** and apply for DS-2019 extensions as needed while engaged in Academic Training.
- **You must maintain health insurance coverage for yourself and any J-2 dependents** during your entire Academic Training period.
- **Your Academic Training may not exceed 18 months or your full course of study, whichever is shorter.** In other words, if your full course of study is only 6 months, you cannot receive more than 6 months of Academic Training. If your full course of study is 24 months, you cannot receive more than 18 months of academic training. (**NOTE for PhD students:** For post-doctoral training after completion of a PhD degree, the total amount of Academic Training permitted is 36 months.)
- **Academic training is permitted at any period of your program.** You can receive academic training on a part-time or full time basis prior to the completion of your academic program. However, any academic training you receive while enrolled in courses will be subtracted from the total academic training period of time you are allowed.
- **Earning more than one degree does not increase your ability to earn more academic training time.** Regardless of how many degrees you earn, your Academic Training cannot exceed 18 months or your full course of study (except for post-doctoral students).
- **All Academic Training is counted as full-time.** If you do 2 months of part-time Academic Training, that is counted as 2 full months of Academic Training.

(Over)

Academic Training After Completion of Your Studies

- Academic Training after your completion of study will be reduced by any Academic Training you received prior to the completion of your study program.
- Although Academic Training can be either paid or unpaid during your study program, it generally must involve paid employment after completing your study program.
- You must complete the required paperwork and make an appointment to have your Academic Training application processed by the Office of International Student Services at least 2 weeks before the expiration date on your DS-2019, or you will lose your eligibility for post-completion Academic Training.
- You cannot return to the U.S. for Academic Training if you leave the U.S. without first obtaining employment authorization from the Office of International Student Services. If you leave the U.S. before obtaining your employment authorization, you will lose your eligibility for Academic Training and your ability to return to the U.S. as a J-1 student.
- You **MUST** depart the United States within 30 days after completion of any post-completion Academic Training unless you apply for a change of status, if eligible.

The Application Procedure for Academic Training

The Office of International Student Services offers mandatory information sessions regarding Academic Training. Application packets for Academic Training are distributed to all eligible J-1 students who attend the information sessions. Dates, times, and locations of the information sessions are announced via our weekly e-mail messages, our monthly newsletters, and in our Events Calendars on our website. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the office at: (757) 352-4130.

The Academic Application Packet includes the following:

1. Academic Training Application Process Checklist

This page includes specific instructions for you to follow in obtaining all necessary documents in order for Office of International Student Services to process your Academic Training application.

2. Enrollment Certification Request Form. It takes the Registrar's Office approximately 3-5 days to process this request, so please plan accordingly.

3. Academic Training Student Contract.

You are required to answer all questions asked on this form.

4. A SAMPLE Employer's Letter for J-1 Academic Training.

This letter should help your prospective employer write the specific job offer letters, which is required for the Academic Training application.

5. Academic Advisor's Recommendation for Academic Training.

This form will have to be completed by your Academic Advisor or the Dean of your School.

► Please note that the completed application packet, your passport, DS-2019, and I-94 card must be brought to the Office of International Student Services for your Academic Training appointment at least 2 weeks prior to the program end-date on your DS-2019 form, or at least 2 weeks prior to your employment start date, whichever date comes first.