

## J-1 Scholar and Academic Department Information

The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) is an official program sponsor for the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program as authorized by the U.S. Department of State. The broad purpose of the J-1 Program is to promote international education and cultural exchange, in order to develop mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries.

Under the Department of State's authorization, UNO is permitted to offer prospective exchange visitors opportunities for study and research. UNO's J-1 program is appropriate for:

- Basic researchers of all academic ranks
- Post-doctoral fellows performing a specified research program
- Full-time academic students seeking a degree from UNO or participating in an established, full-time non-degree program of study as part of an official exchange program with substantial funding beyond personal funds

The Department of State allows UNO's Responsible Officer and Alternate Responsible Officer in International Programs (INPR) to issue DS-2019s for the following J Exchange Visitor categories with departmental approval:

- Professor
- Research Scholar
- Short-term Scholar
- Student (Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate and Non-Degree) – not Internship category

### Overview of J-1 Regulations

UNO undertakes substantial responsibility and liability as an official sponsor of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program, as authorized by the U.S. Department of State. Faculty sponsors/ supervisors also assume considerable responsibility and liability when inviting a foreign scholar to participate in a UNO academic or research program.

For your reference, we have summarized the main points to keep in mind when issuing a J-1 program invitation to a visiting scholar.

**Failure to comply jeopardizes UNO's ability to sponsor the J-1 Program and could result in revocation of J-1 status for the participant and the loss of UNO's J-1 program designation rights.**

- **Insurance Requirement:**
  - **J-1 Scholar Insurance Requirement:** All UNO J-1 participants and dependents must be covered by health, emergency medical evacuation, and repatriation of remains insurance. The U.S. Department of State lists some minimum amounts, but UNO requires additional insurance coverage. Failure to comply with the insurance requirement can lead to termination of the exchange visitor's J-1 status.
  - **J-1 UNO Employees:** All UNO benefits eligible J-1 scholars may be enrolled in health insurance through the benefits program (Blue Cross Blue Shield) but must also pay for an supplemental rider from UNO Health Services to cover unlimited medical evacuation and repatriation to meet Department of State coverage requirements.
  - **J-1 Visiting Scholars (Research and Short-Term):** All visiting scholars who are not employed by UNO are required to purchase the insurance policy offered by UNO (United HealthCare). Waivers for J-2 dependents of scholars may be reviewed but are not guaranteed acceptance. The [UNO Health Services website](#) has information regarding UNO health insurance and costs.
  - **UNO Exchange Students with J Visas:** Please visit the [UNO Health Services website](#) for information regarding UNO health insurance and costs.
- **English Language Requirement:** The exchange visitor must possess sufficient proficiency in the English language, as determined by an objective measurement of English language proficiency, to participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day basis. A sponsor must verify an applicant's English language

proficiency through a recognized English language test, by signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school, or through a documented interview conducted by the sponsor either in-person or by videoconferencing, or by telephone if videoconferencing is not a viable option. (Academic departments can complete the English Proficiency section on the J-1 Scholar Application.)

- **Financial Support Determination for J-1:** The Department of State mandates that all incoming J-1 scholars will have sufficient financial support or funds for the length of their stay. This is to ensure that any exchange visitor does not become a public charge. INPR has determined this amount to be \$1,615 per month or \$19,380 per year.
- **Financial Support for J-2 Dependents:** INPR determines an additional \$6600 per year for a spouse and \$3300 per year for each child is necessary for each dependent under 21 joining the visitor with J-2 dependent status.
- **No Direct Patient Contact:** J-1 participants may not have any direct patient contact or any patient care responsibilities. In this context, “no direct patient care” and “no patient contact” mean that a J-1 participant may not touch patients, nor may they diagnose or prescribe any treatments.
- **Additional Employment:** J-1 participants may not accept any unauthorized employment or additional remuneration for any activity outside of the authorized J program without prior authorization from the program sponsor and INPR.
- **Changing Program Terms:** J-1 participants may not change any aspect of their program terms without ADVANCE APPROVAL from INPR. This includes changes to academic objective, effective dates, department, or insurance coverage.
- **Faculty Agreement:** Faculty, sponsors/supervisors may not authorize any change for any aspect of the J-1 participant’s program, either verbally or in writing. The J-1 participant and UNO faculty sponsor are responsible for understanding and complying with the terms of the program. Representations or statements made by the faculty sponsor do not change the terms of the J-1 program or relieve the participants of their obligations under the terms of the program.
- **Tenured Positions:** J-1 participants may not hold tenured or tenure-track faculty positions.
- **212(e) Requirement:** Most J-1 participants are subject to the two-year home residency requirement, known as 212(e), and may not be eligible to apply for a change of visa status without first completing the requirement of returning to his/her home country for a period of two years, or by obtaining an official waiver of this requirement from the Department of State.
- **12-Month and 24-Months Bars for J visa holders** (See the chart on page 4 regarding Bars.)
- **Transfer to or from UNO:** Once in the U.S., J-1 participants may transfer to other U.S. institutions with the approval of the original sponsoring institution. However, both sponsoring institutions must confirm that the program objective is substantially similar to the original purpose of the J-1 program.

Additional questions regarding J-1 processing or a participant’s visa status should be directed to INPR’s J Responsible Officers at (402) 554-2293. Also, see page 3 for additional instructions.

## **Specific Procedure for J-1 Sponsorship (UNO International Programs)**

1. Sponsoring Department determines that prospective J-1 visitor or employee will be/can be sponsored for J-1 status. Contact INPR with questions about J-1 eligibility.
2. Sponsoring Department determines whether the J-1 should be a Short-Term Scholar or Research Scholar. If total time at UNO will not exceed six months and the scholar is not in the US, then Short-Term would be better. (No extensions are possible for Short-Term Scholars.)
3. Sponsoring Department prepares “J-1 Scholar Application” form found on our website resource list.
4. Sponsoring Department submits Department Request and proof of financial support by email to [larias@unomaha.edu](mailto:larias@unomaha.edu) or [jstahl@unomaha.edu](mailto:jstahl@unomaha.edu) with the subject “New J-1 Scholar Application”.
5. INPR will attain approval from Department of State through the SEVIS system and print Form DS-2019. We will then send the DS-2019 to the student/scholar or department (along with instructions).
6. SEVIS Fee Payment—Sponsoring Department may pay SEVIS Fee at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com). If this is a J-1 transfer, then the SEVIS Fee does not need to be paid (it would have been paid at the start of their current program). If the department will not pay the SEVIS Fee, our office will send an email instructing the visitor with instructions for the SEVIS Fee payment (website address) and also include the SEVIS ID Number, found on the DS-2019 Form. This allows the visitor to arrange payment of the fee prior to receiving the original DS-2019 form, so they can also start arranging their visa interview.
7. After J-1 scholar arrives at UNO, we must be notified so that an advisor can provide orientation to the J scholar and collect immigration documents. Once the scholar has visited Health Services our office will “Activate” the J-1 record in SEVIS. This must be done before the end of the 30-Day Window. If not completed before the end of the 30-day window, we must apply for reinstatement or else the J-1 scholar will be classified by the DOS as a “No Show.” If a J-1 scholar “No Show” is determined to have arrived at UNO, then our J-1 program faces termination. If a J-1 scholar cannot arrive to UNO before the end of the 30-Day Window, contact our office to simply change the beginning date.
  - a. A list of information and documentation required to activate a J-1 record follows:
    - Passport, visa, I-94, and signed DS 2019
    - New address and emails for visitor and dependents
    - Confirmation of Health Services visit (Insurance and Immunization matters)

## Bars on Repeat Participation

Previous Category of J-1 Exchange Visitor (EV) Status	Length of Previous J-1 Program in U.S.	How many months after the date of completion* can an EV begin a new program as a Professor/Research Scholar?
Any J-1 category other than Professor/Research Scholar	More than 6 months	After 12 months
J-1 Research Scholar/Professor	Any amount of time	After 24 months
J-2 Dependent of any J-1 category other than Research Scholar/Professor	More than 6 months	After 12 months
J-2 Dependent of a J-1 Research Scholar/Professor	Any amount of time	After 24 months

\*Completion of program is defined as either the EV's program end date on Form DS-2019 or EVs who are no longer participating in program activities in "Inactive" or "Terminated" status. Countdown of the bars begins the day after the SEVIS status becomes "Inactive" or "Terminated."