

## ACADEMIC TRAINING

### For Student in J-1 Status

“Academic Training” is the name used by the Department of State for certain types of study-related employment. **This applies only to J-1 students.** Certain conditions must be met in order to qualify for “Academic Training,” and the steps to apply follow.

“Academic Training” is flexible in its format and offers a variety of employment opportunities to supplement a J-1 student’s academic program in the United States. It is available both *before* and *after* the completion of an academic program of study. As long as students stay within the stipulated time limits, “Academic Training” allows them to work part-time while classes are in session and full-time during vacation periods; and, under certain circumstances, a student may interrupt study to work full-time, for example while writing a thesis. J-1 students in non-degree programs also are eligible for “Academic Training.”

### Your J-1 Responsible Officer

To qualify for “Academic Training,” students first must obtain approval in writing from their J-1 Responsible Officer, an individual who represents their J-1 sponsor and who issues their Forms DS-2019. S/he must evaluate the proposed employment in terms of a student’s program of study and individual circumstances and then decide whether the employment is appropriate or not. J-1 student visa holders, should contact their Responsible Officer by calling Office of International Programs (request to speak with Bob White or Tim Zacher). For students sponsored by other agencies (i.e. Fulbright Program, LASPAU, ISEP, etc.), they must contact the agencies directly, for only their representatives can approve “Academic Training.”

## Conditions

### Eligibility

1. Student’s primary purpose in the United States must be to study rather than to be employed.
2. Student must be in good academic standing at the school named on the Form DS-2019.
3. The proposed employment must be directly related to a student’s major field of study.
4. Throughout the “Academic Training” period, student must maintain permission to remain in the United States (maintain J-1 student status) and apply for extensions as necessary.
5. Student must maintain health insurance and medical evacuation/repatriation coverage for him/herself and any J-2 dependents through the “Academic Training” period.

### Limitations-general

1. Student’s 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,” to quote the regulations. It may not exceed “the period of full course of study” or 18 months, whichever is shorter.
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 a student’s eligibility for “Academic Training.”

### After completion of a student’s program of study

1. “Academic Training” approved *after* completion of the academic program must be reduced by any *prior* periods of “Academic Training.”
2. Whether the other items in the application are ready or not, a student must obtain a written offer of appropriate employment and present a copy to the J-1 Responsible Officer ***no later than his/her graduation date (degree program) or the last day of final examinations (non-degree program.)***

3. If students plan to leave the United States after completing their programs of study and reenter the country for J-1 “Academic Training,” they must obtain employment authorization and a new Form DS-2019 **before leaving**. If this is not done, there is no basis for being eligible for readmission.

The application

1. A student must obtain a letter of offer from a prospective employer that includes:
  - a) Job title;
  - b) A brief description of the “goals and objectives” of the “Training Program” (i.e. employment);
  - c) The dates and location of the employment;
  - d) The number of hours per week;
  - e) The name and address of the “training supervisor” (quotation from the regulations); and
  - f) The salary amount to be paid must be included to insure that personal living expense obligations can be met. (Proof of funding must be presented to cover living expenses before a new form DS-2019 can be issued.)

All elements must be present in order for the employer’s letter to be acceptable.

2. Employer’s letter must be presented to a student’s academic advisor or dean for use in writing to Appalachian State University’s Responsible Officer recommending the “Academic Training.” According to the text of the regulations, the academic advisor’s letter must set forth:
  - a) Goals and objectives of the specific training programs;
  - b) A description of the training program, including its location, the name and address of the training supervisor, the number of hours per week, and the dates of the training;
  - c) How the training relates to the student’s major field of study; and
  - d) Why the training will serve as an integral or critical part of the student’s academic program.

The academic advisor also must approve the “Academic Training” “for the length of time necessary to complete the goals and objectives of the training.”

3. When the academic advisor’s recommendation is ready, the student should make an appointment with the J-1 Responsible Officer and bring the offer letter, advisor’s letter, passport, I-94 card and DS-2019 to the appointment.
4. The J-1 Responsible Officer must evaluate the “Academic Training” program and decide whether it is warranted and appropriate. If so, a letter of approval will be written that will serve as the official work authorization document. At this same time, an extended DS-2019 should be issued. For “post-doctoral training” periods, the DS-2019 can be granted initially for no more than 18-months and may be extended for up to an additional 18 months.
5. “Academic Training” must be applied for and approved **BEFORE** the end of the J-1 student’s academic program.

## AUTHORIZATION TO WORK

### A Social Security Number

To put you on the payroll, an employer must have your Social Security *number*, which you can obtain by applying for a Social Security card. If you do not already have a Social Security Number, take your passport (if you are Canadian, you may use another form of photo-bearing identification), your I-94 Departure Record card, the Exchange Visitor copy of the DS-2019, and the J-1 Responsible Officer’s written work authorization to an office of the Social Security Administration. Your Social Security card may be stamped “Valid Employment only with INS approval.” In the case of J-1 “Academic Training,” this stamp means that the Social Security card is valid for working *only* if accompanied by a properly completed DS-2019 and a valid I-94 Departure Record card.

### Form I-9, “Employment Eligibility”

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 (or other photo-bearing identification if you are Canadian), I-94 Departure Record card, the Exchange Visitor copy of the DS-2019, and the J-1 Responsible Officer’s written work authorization. Your employer, who keeps the Form I-9 on file, may make copies of the document you submit and should return your original documents to you. Form I-9 is date specific and must be updated any time that you receive a renewal of your permission for “Academic Training.”

## **Social Security and other Taxes**

**Social Security taxes.** In general, as a J-1 student visa holder, 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 can 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 income 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 income taxes, and employers are required by law to withhold those taxes from your paychecks. By April 15 of each year, you must file a federal income tax return and a “Required Statement” covering the prior year to determine whether you owe more taxes or if you have a refund coming.

## **Note of Caution!**

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

# APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of International Education and Development  
238 I.G. Greer Hall  
Boone, NC 28608

Telephone: (828) 262-2046  
Facsimile: (828) 262-4037  
Email: [bestne@appstate.edu](mailto:bestne@appstate.edu) or  
[whitera@appstate.edu](mailto:whitera@appstate.edu)

## REQUEST FOR J-1 ACADEMIC TRAINING

This form must be completed and signed by the student's academic advisor.

According to federal regulations, in order for a J-1 student to engage in academic training, the student **must** have a job offer, and the following information must be provided by the student's academic advisor. Please contact the Office of International Programs with any questions about this form or about J-1 regulations pertaining to academic training.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Advisor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Advisor's Address and Telephone Number

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

Description of Training Program

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

Location of Training Program \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Training Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Training Supervisor

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

Number of Hours per Week Student is Engaged in Training \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Training Program \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe in as much detail the goals and objectives of the specific training program:

Please explain in detail how the training relates to the student's major field of study and why it is an integral or critical part of the student's academic program:

As the academic advisor for the student named above, I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information provided on this form is true and accurate, and I recommend that the requested period of academic training be granted.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_