

Academic Training for Reciprocal Exchange Students

Reciprocal exchange students are eligible to do academic training as part of their UT academic exchange programs, usually at the end of the semester. The training, whether an internship, employment, or research, must directly relate to the students' academic program undertaken at UT. The purpose of this opportunity is to give students "practical experience in their academic field of study". Guidelines for academic training are established by J-1 visa regulations.

Academic training status cannot exceed the length of time the exchange student was enrolled at UT, and can never exceed 12 months. For example, students completing a nine-month academic program may be authorized to accept an internship of up to nine months; a one semester program would allow for up to four months of academic training.

Students should apply for academic training before the end of the semester, and be authorized for academic training before the expiration date of the DS-2019. Students on academic training are allowed to accept payment, but must have a U.S. social security number to do so. Internships can be located in any U.S. city or state. Extensions and academic training for exchange students are authorized by immigration advisors in The University of Texas at Austin International Office. Students do not apply through the U.S. Immigration Service.

Academic training may be authorized if the employer or supervisor offering an internship or employment provides the student with a dated letter which includes the following:

- **A brief description of program and how the training relates to the student's major field of study at UT**
- **The name and address of the training supervisor, the location of the internship/employment, approximate hours per week, amount of compensation, and dates of the training, both beginning and end date**
- **Signature and title of the training supervisor**

The letter, which must be prepared on business letterhead, can be either faxed to 512-232-4363, or mailed to Kirsten Köster, Study Abroad Office, P.O. Box A, Austin, TX 78713-8901. Since the internship or employment offer must be signed by the person making the academic training offer, email and email attachments are not permissible.

To process a DS-2019 extension (permission to stay in the U.S.) the following are required:

- Letter described above
- Statement or evidence of financial support (\$1250/mo provided by salary or personal funds if salary isn't enough)
- Health insurance for the period of the DS-2019 extension which meets or exceeds J-1 visa regulations
- Passport, I-94, and current DS-2019

At the time academic training is approved and the DS-2019 extension completed, we will provide a letter for the student to give to the employer/supervisor, stating that he/she is legally able to work and/or remain in the U.S. while on a valid University of Texas at Austin immigration document (DS-2019).

Important reminders

- ✚ DS-2019 must be valid for an exchange student to work and stay in the U.S. A valid visa is not needed for an exchange student to **stay** in the U.S. A valid visa is needed only to **enter** the U.S. make certain to discuss travel outside the U.S. with an immigration advisor at the University of Texas at Austin International Office.
- ✚ Students have an automatic 30-day "grace period" to remain in the U.S. after the end date printed on the DS-2019. However, they cannot be employed during this "grace period" or leave and re-enter the U.S.
- ✚ DS-2019s cannot be extended for academic training until the student has successfully completed the required steps specified above
- ✚ To be employed, students must have an U.S. social security number. Students must obtain a letter from the International Office verifying enrollment before applying for a social security number. The UT ID number is not valid for employment purposes
- ✚ Employment on or off campus in a job not related to a student's academic field is not allowed in academic training status
- ✚ Students are responsible for locating a suitable internship. Professors and Career Centers in the College of Liberal Arts, Business, Natural Sciences, Communication, and Engineering and UT Career Exploration Center may be helpful resources.
- ✚ Exchange students have found that employers are more interested in considering them if they are informed that, with required documentation described above, students can be authorized to work/remain in the U.S. on University of Texas at Austin DS-2019 immigration documents