

# Pre-Arrival Instructions and J-1 Visa Procedures

Dear Student,

Congratulations on your admission to UCLA! On behalf of the Dashew Center, we are excited to welcome you to the university! In preparation for your arrival to the United States, it is important that you read through the following information to ensure a smooth transition to your program at UCLA.

## Step 1: Review Your UCLA DS-2019

Review your biographical information and program dates (Item 3) on your UCLA DS-2019 Form. Contact us immediately if there are any errors on your DS-2019.

## Step 2: Pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security requires all prospective J-1 students to pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee before a U.S. Embassy or Consulate can issue you a visa. The SEVIS fee can be paid online at [www.FMJfee.com](http://www.FMJfee.com). Print a copy of your payment receipt and have it with you when applying for your J-1 Visa at a U.S. Embassy/Consulate and when entering the U.S.

## Step 3: Apply for a J-1 Visa

- Pay the DS-160 / MRV (visa application) fee and schedule your visa appointment with a U.S. Embassy/Consulate online at [ceac.state.gov](http://ceac.state.gov)
- Take your UCLA DS-2019, letter of admission, valid passport, I-901 SEVIS fee receipt, MRV/DS-160 (visa application) fee receipt, passport style photos, evidence of strong ties to your home country, and financial documents to your visa interview appointment.
- Wait for the U.S. Embassy/Consulate to issue your J-1 Visa.
- For more information about the visa application process or to check the current visa wait time, please visit <https://travel.state.gov>
- If applicable, apply for J-2 dependent visas for your spouse or children.

## Step 4: Entry to the U.S.: 30-Day Restriction

- Students entering the U.S. on J-1 status using an initial DS-2019 form may not enter earlier than 30 days before the start date on their UCLA DS-2019. Keep this in mind when planning your travel and housing arrangements.

## Step 5: Mandatory iSTART@UCLA and J-1 Visa Check-In

iSTART is our international student orientation that consists of two parts:

- Online Orientation Modules
- Online Post-Arrival J-1 Visa Check-in

Please continue reading on the back of this page for more detailed information from the Dashew Center. Failure to complete the online orientation and the online Post-Arrival J-1 Visa Check-in will result in the termination of your SEVIS record.

We know you may have questions along the way and our dedicated staff is ready to assist you via email or our virtual services. Please continue reading on the next page for the required next steps.

Sincerely,

The Dashew Center



## iSTART @ UCLA

iSTART is the mandatory international student orientation built to help you transition to life at UCLA and understand how to maintain your J-1 visa status. **There is a \$59 fee for iSTART@UCLA that will be charged to your BruinBill account.** This fee covers the Online Post-Arrival J-1 Visa Check-in Application, the online orientation modules, and access to our programs. You will receive more information on iSTART@UCLA via email closer to your program start date.

Please note, all of the mandatory components must be completed by the end of week 2 of your first quarter, or a hold will be placed on your UCLA record. If the hold is placed, it cannot be removed until you successfully complete the online orientation modules and the online Post-Arrival J-1 Visa Check-in.

## MANDATORY ONLINE J-1 VISA CHECK-IN

All newly admitted J-1 students must complete the Online Post-Arrival J-1 Visa Check-in Application to validate their J-1 status. This must be completed by the end of week 2 of your first quarter at UCLA. DCISS will send you an email within 30 days before the quarter start date with a link to the J-1 Visa Check-in Application. The application will prompt you to upload the following documents:

- Page 1 of your UCLA DS-2019
- I-94 Admission Record
- J-1 Visa (not applicable to Canadian citizens)
- Most recent U.S. entry stamp inside your passport
- Passport Photo Page

Please Note: If you do not complete the orientation and J-1 Visa Check-In requirement, a HOLD will be placed on your UCLA student record which will affect your ability to enroll in classes and restrict your access to University student services. Failing to meet these requirements may also result in the termination of your J-1 visa status.