

**UCLA**

***Dashew Center***

*for International Students & Scholars*



**J-1 Student Visa**

**Regulation Guidelines**

## J-1 VISA RELATED DOCUMENTS

### *Department of Homeland Security (DHS)*

The Department of Homeland Security oversees three agencies relevant to your visa status in the U.S.:

- **Customs and Border Protection (CBP)** is responsible for immigration and customs inspections at U.S. ports of entry.
- **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** is responsible for granting immigration and citizenship benefits, such as employment authorization, permanent residency petitions, and processing requests such as the replacement of immigration documents.
- **Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)** is responsible for maintaining the Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), conducting immigration investigations, detentions and removals (deportation).

### *J-1 Visa*

An entry permit issued by a U.S. Embassy or Consulate for international students (Canadian citizens exempt) to enter the U.S. on J-1 status to engage in full-time studies at a U.S. institution. You are only required to have a valid J-1 Visa when entering the U.S. from abroad. For more information about the J-1 Visa, please visit [j1visa.state.gov](http://j1visa.state.gov). You may remain in the U.S. beyond your J-1 Visa expiration date as long as you maintain valid J-1 status and continuous full-time enrollment.

### *SEVIS DS-2019*

A Certificate of Eligibility issued by a U.S. institution allowing international, admitted degree or exchange students to request a J-1 Visa from a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Your DS-2019 contains information such as your major, degree objective, program start and end dates and other personal information relevant to your J-1 status, which must be kept up-to-date at all times. Your DS-2019 must be valid at all times during your studies at UCLA.

## ***I-94 Admission Record***

The I-94 Admission Record, issued by CBP, documents your arrival and lawful entry to the U.S. The I-94 Admission Record could be issued either electronically or as a paper card.

*Electronic I-94: Retrieve and print online from CBP at [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94)*

Your I-94 should indicate your admission to the U.S. for the duration of status, abbreviated as “D/S”, which stands for the period that a J-1 student will be pursuing a full course of study or engaging in authorized Academic Training. The I-94 is required to request for state and federal benefits, such as a Social Security Number (SSN) or Driver License.

## **J-1 STATUS REQUIREMENTS**



### ***Mandatory Visa Check-In***

Newly-admitted UCLA J-1 degree and exchange students must check-in with DCISS upon their arrival to UCLA. Failure to check-in will result in the termination of your J-1 status. You are required to submit the following documents to DCISS during a designated check-in session:

- Copy of UCLA DS-2019
- Copy of I-94 Admission Record
- Copy of J-1 Visa (*Canadian citizens exempt*)
- Copy of Most Recent U.S. Entry Stamp Inside Passport
- Copy of Passport Photo page

### ***Mandatory J-1 Visa Workshop***

All newly-admitted UCLA J-1 students must also complete a J-1 visa workshop. This online workshop will cover important information on J-1 status requirements, responsibilities and eligibility for J-1 benefits.



## Address, Phone Number, and E-mail Reporting

J-1 students are required to have a valid local address, overseas address, U.S. phone number, and e-mail recorded in MyUCLA at all times during their studies at UCLA. Failure to maintain valid up-to-date contact information may result in the termination of J-1 status by DHS.

Log on to [www.my.ucla.edu](http://www.my.ucla.edu) and click on 'Settings', then click on 'Official Email/Address/Phone' to update your contact information as follows:

- **E-mail Address:** an e-mail address that you check regularly. E-mail is the primary method of communication DCISS will use to contact you.
- **Mailing Address:** your local, residential address within the Los Angeles area. This address cannot be an address outside the U.S. or California, an academic department or office address, or a post office box address.
- **Permanent Address:** your residential address in your home country. This address cannot be a U.S. address or an academic department address.
- **Primary Phone Number:** your valid U.S. telephone number. Input a 10-digit phone number only. No special characters or parentheses (Example: 3109876543)

## Enrollment

To maintain J-1 status, you are required to pursue a full course of study and make normal academic progress towards completion of your degree or exchange program. Summer enrollment is optional for continuing degree students.

- **Undergraduate Students:** minimum of **12 units** each quarter
- **Graduate Students:** minimum of **8 units** each quarter  
(some degree programs may require more units for academic purposes, please check with your academic department for further information)

## Reduced Course Load (RCL)

J-1 students may only drop below full-time enrollment if they meet one of the criteria below. You must receive approval from DCISS before dropping below full-time enrollment. Please contact DCISS for more details.

- Academic Difficulty (*can only be used once*)
- Illness or Medical Condition



## ***Leave of Absence (LOA)***

If you would like to take time off to return to your home country during the academic quarters for personal reasons, you must contact DCISS to request for a personal leave of absence approval prior to your planned departure from UCLA. A leave of absence from UCLA will have an impact on your visa status, please schedule an appointment with DCISS in advance to review and understand leave of absence eligibility, timelines, restrictions, exit and re-entry requirements, and complete details on visa status implications.

## ***Travel Abroad***

To re-enter the U.S. on J-1 status after a short trip abroad, you must present the following original documents at the port of entry:

- Valid Passport (*for at least 6 months into the future*)
- Valid J-1 Visa (*Canadian citizens exempt*)
- Valid UCLA DS-2019 endorsed for travel by DCISS (*each signature is valid for only **12 months** or the duration of your program; whichever is less*).

## ***Automatic Visa Revalidation for J-1 Students***

Automatic visa revalidation allows J-1 students to enter the U.S from Canada, Mexico, or one of the adjacent islands to the U.S. (other than Cuba) on an expired J-1 visa if the trip does not exceed **30 days**. You must have a valid UCLA DS-2019 endorsed for travel by DCISS, a valid passport, and an expired J-1 Visa to be eligible. (Students with a Paper I-94 Card must retain their original I-94 Card when departing the U.S. to be eligible for re-entry with automatic visa revalidation.)

*Please Note: Automatic visa revalidation is not available to all J-1 students.*

## ***DS-2019 Extension***

If you are unable to complete your program by the end date on your UCLA DS-2019, you must request for an extension of your DS-2019 from DCISS at least 2 weeks before it expires. Failure to request a DS-2019 Extension in a timely manner will result in the termination of your J-1 status.

## **EMPLOYMENT ON J-1 STATUS**

J-1 students are allowed to work in the U.S. with proper authorization from DCISS. There are two types of employment available to J-1 students:

- **On-Campus Employment**
- **Academic Training**

### ***On-Campus Employment***

J-1 students may work on-campus part-time (up to 20 hours per week) during the academic year and full-time (more than 20 hours per week) during summer and winter vacations. On-campus employment may include teaching or research assistantships, reader positions, campus library positions or campus food/dining services.

In order to begin employment, students must be in good academic standing and obtain on-campus work authorization from DCISS prior to their employment start date. Work authorization is authorized for maximum of one year. If you wish to continue employment after one year, you must request for an extension of your work authorization within a month of the end date. Please visit the DCISS website for more details.

### ***Academic Training***

J-1 students may engage in paid or unpaid employment on or off-campus directly related to their field of study during or after completion of their studies and provided certain requirements are met:

- **Academic Training for Exchange Students** - Eligible for up to 9 months of post-completion Academic Training or the duration of program, whichever is less. Prior authorization from DCISS is required. Please visit the DCISS website for more details.
- **Academic Training for Degree Students**—Bachelors and Masters students are eligible for up to 18 months of pre or post-completion Academic Training, or the duration of the program, whichever is less. Doctorate (Ph.D) students are eligible for up to 36 months or the duration of program, whichever is less. Prior authorization from DCISS is required. Please visit the DCISS website for details.

## COMPLETION OF STUDY

### *Grace Period*

Upon completion of your degree program or Academic Training, you are allowed a **30-day** grace period to prepare for your departure from the U.S., or transfer to another academic program.

## UCLA CAMPUS RESOURCES

**Ashe Student Health Center** | 310-825-4073 | [www.studenthealth.ucla.edu](http://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu)  
**Bruin Resource Center (BRC)** | 310-825-3945 | [www.brc.ucla.edu](http://www.brc.ucla.edu)  
**Counseling & Psychological Services** | 310-825-0768 | [www.counseling.ucla.edu](http://www.counseling.ucla.edu)  
**Graduate Student Resource Center** | 310-267-4805 | [www.gsrc.ucla.edu](http://www.gsrc.ucla.edu)  
**International Education Office (IEO)** | 310-825-4995 | [www.ieo.ucla.edu](http://www.ieo.ucla.edu)  
**Office of the Deans of Students** | 310-825-3871 | [www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu](http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu)  
**Office of Residential Life (ORL)** | 310-825-3401 | [www.orl.ucla.edu](http://www.orl.ucla.edu)  
**Office for Students With Disabilities (OSD)** | 310-825-1501 | [www.osd.ucla.edu](http://www.osd.ucla.edu)  
**Student Legal Services** | 310-825-9894 | [www.studentlegal.ucla.edu](http://www.studentlegal.ucla.edu)  
**UC Police Department (UCPD)** | 310-825-1491 | [www.ucpd.ucla.edu](http://www.ucpd.ucla.edu)  
**UCLA Career Center** | 310-206-1915 | [www.career.ucla.edu](http://www.career.ucla.edu)  
**UCLA Undergraduate Writing Center** | 310-206-1145 | [www.wp.ucla.edu](http://www.wp.ucla.edu)



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417 Charles E. Young Drive West  
Los Angeles, California, 90095  
DCISSJ1Unit@saonet.ucla.edu  
310-825-1681 | M-F 8:30AM-5PM PST**

**[www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu](http://www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu)**