On-Going Workshops at the International Center

- English Conversation Program
- IC Tax Workshop
- Weekly Travel Sessions for Internationals
- English Development Workshop Series
- Quarterly Scholar Mixer
- Spouse Welcome Reception
- International Coffee Hour
- Volunteer and Leadership

Important Information About Your J Program

Dear New International Scholar:

We at the UCI International Center would like to extend our warmest greetings to you. We are so pleased that you will be a part of the University of California, Irvine, and we are confident that your stay here will be a rewarding, exciting, enjoyable, and memorable one.

By this time, you must have hundreds of questions regarding how to get here and what you do once you have arrived. We will try to answer as many of those questions as possible in this newsletter.

We are looking forward to meeting you and we wish you a safe and pleasant journey to the United States and UCI.

Sincerely,

The International Center Staff

Due to regulations that govern the Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS), it is important to note the information below.

You may enter the U.S. no more than 30 days before the program start date indicated on the SEVIS DS-2019. You must report to the UCI International Center by the program start date on your DS 2019. If you cancel plans to do research or teach at UCI, or postpone your arrival date, you must inform your academic department and the International Center at scech@uci.edu as soon as possible.

Your J-1 program must be validated in SEVIS by the International Center immediately after the start date in section 3 of your DS 2019. If your program is not validated within a timely manner, your SEVIS DS-2019 will become invalid, thus jeopardizing your employment.
Student and Exchange Visitor Information System [SEVIS] Fee and Instructions on How to Pay the SEVIS Fee

As part of the visa application process you are required to pay two separate fees: the visa application fee which is paid to the U.S. Dept. of State and the SEVIS fee which is paid to the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security. The visa application fee is paid at the American Embassy or consulate where you apply for your visa so please follow the specific guidelines of that post for paying that fee. The SEVIS fee can be paid via the Internet or by mail. (Please note that J-2 dependents DO NOT pay a separate SEVIS fee).

Online payment by credit card- The fee will be paid over the Internet by credit card and submission of Form I-901. This can be completed by accessing the SEVIS fee website at http://www.fmjfee.com Payment by check via mail- Two options allow payment by check or money order. Option 1: An internet generated coupon can be printed out after entering basic information at the fee payment website (http://www.fmjfee.com). Mail this coupon along with a check to a lock box address. Option 2: Complete Form I-901 and mail it with a check or money order.

The following information is provided as a guideline to the process of applying for a J visa stamp, you must contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will be applying for the visa for further information and for specific documentation requirements.

- Form DS-2019 - The exchange visitor must complete and sign the bottom portion of the DS-2019.
- If your family is applying for J-2 visas, they will need a DS-2019 issued for J-2 Dependents.
- Evidence of financial ability to meet expenses.
- Evidence of residence abroad and intent to depart the U.S. after completion of the program.
- Valid Passport
- Non-Immigrant Visa Application*
- Photographs
- Visa Fee
- SEVIS Fee $180
- Visa Reciprocity Fee if applicable

The U.S. Embassy or Consulate may require additional documentation:

- You should verify requirements with the embassy or consulate where you will be applying. Upon arrival at the U.S. port of entry, you and your accompanying family members must present a valid passport with visa and Form DS-2019. Be sure to carry all immigrations documents with you on the plane (not in your luggage) as you will need them at the inspection station.
- It is recommended that you also have the following:
  - Evidence of financial resources
  - Letter of invitation from your department
  - Receipt for the SEVIS fee
  - Name and contact information for your department contact and the UCI International Center

If your family is applying for J-2 visas, they will need a DS 2019. The exchange visitor will need a DS 2019. Be sure to carry all immigration documents with you on the plane (not in your luggage) as you will need them at the inspection station.

What You Will Need to Apply for a J Visa

- Photos
- Application
- Valid Passport
- Evidence of financial ability to meet expenses.
- Evidence of residence abroad and intent to depart the U.S. after completion of the program.
- Passport
- SEVIS Fee

It is recommended that you also have:

- Evidence of financial resources
- Letter of invitation from your department
- Receipt for the SEVIS fee
- Name and contact information for your department contact and the UCI International Center

Your Name Should Appear on All Immigration Documents Consistent with the Biographical of Your Passport. Complete the I-94 card using standard US characters. Do not change spellings to reflect sounds of the language of origin.

Health Insurance

Pursuant to Department of State regulations you and your accompanying family members must secure health insurance coverage while in the United States. Besides the fact that health care in the United States is very expensive, willful failure to comply with this requirement will result in the termination of your participation in the Exchange Visitor Program. You will be required to sign a statement to certify that you have chosen an appropriate insurance policy. The U.S. Dept. of State provides specific guidelines on the medical insurance requirements. You can find these requirements on the back of your DS 2019 under section 1(f) and listed below:

- Medical benefits of at least $50,000 per incident
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of $7,500
- Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the exchange visitor to his/her home country in the amount of $10,000
- A deductible not to exceed $500 per incident
Important Information You Need to Know When You Arrive in the U.S. and Irvine

Welcome to Irvine

The University of California, Irvine is located in Orange County and is approximately 50 miles from Los Angeles and about six miles from the Pacific Ocean. Irvine is one of the nation’s largest planned urban communities and is home to a population of over 180,000.

UCI is located in the southwestern part of the city and is bordered on one side by a freshwater marsh reserve and on the other by a small community of apartments, condominiums, and shopping centers. The climate is very mild year-round. Occasionally, there are some high winds, a few days of rain, and an earthquake or two, but that is the extent of the harsh conditions.

When You Arrive

When you exit the plane, you will be directed by airline personnel to the Immigration Station. On a busy day, you may have to wait in line up to an hour before you reach the immigration officer. The officer will ask to see your passport, I-94 card, your SEVIS DS-2019 form, and possibly your proof of funding.

The immigration officer will review these forms and may ask you questions regarding the nature of your stay. This is routine; simply explain where you will be an “Exchange Visitor” conducting research and/or teaching, and for how long. You should also expect to experience US-VISIT’s biometric procedures—digital, inkless finger scans and digital photographs. After inspection, your passport, and your SEVIS DS-2019 form will be stamped with the date you entered the U.S. You will be given back the DS-2019, and passport. Keep these documents in a safe place, together. These documents combined identify your visa status in the U.S.

After you pass through immigration inspections, your luggage will be on a moving carousel in the baggage claim area. There will be luggage carts available for your use to transport your baggage from the carousel to the Customs Desk. Some airports charge a small fee for the use of these carts, so have some U.S. dollars available! At the Customs Desk, show your passport and the customs declaration form which should have been given to you by your flight attendant. The officer may ask you to open your bags for a random check.

Customs regulations do not allow you to bring fresh fruit or plants into the country, so you should leave them at home. Other items that are prohibited or restricted include meats, vegetables, clothing made from skins of endangered species, lottery tickets, obscene articles and publications, weapons, and drugs without a doctor’s prescription. If you have questions concerning U.S. customs regulations, please consult with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your home country.

Hotels and Transportation Near Irvine

Below are some transportation options and hotels where you may wish to stay on your arrival night. If possible, try to make reservations in advance before you leave home. It is best to get a good night’s sleep at a nearby hotel before embarking on your journey to UCI. If you are arriving at any international airport in the U.S., Transportation from Los Angeles (LAX) Airport to UCI

Flyway http://www.lawa.org/welcome_LAX.aspx?id=292

Los Angeles Airport Hotels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Hotel</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Airport Pick-up</th>
<th>Rate*</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travelodge</td>
<td>5547 Century Blvd</td>
<td>Free (24 hrs)</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>(310) 649-4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days Inn</td>
<td>901 Manchester Blvd</td>
<td>Free (7am-11pm)</td>
<td>$69</td>
<td>(310) 649-0800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure Hotel</td>
<td>4200 Century Blvd</td>
<td>Free (24 hrs)</td>
<td>$40.99</td>
<td>(206) 293-0899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Orange County Airport Hotels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Hotel</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Airport Pick-up</th>
<th>Rate*</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atrium Hotel</td>
<td>18700 MacArthur Blvd</td>
<td>Free (7am-11pm)</td>
<td>$84</td>
<td>(949) 832-2270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramada Limited</td>
<td>1880 Superior Ave</td>
<td>Free (7am-11pm)</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>(949) 645-2221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramada Hotel</td>
<td>4545 MacArthur Blvd</td>
<td>Free (7am-11pm)</td>
<td>$719</td>
<td>(949) 933-0575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaQuinta Inn</td>
<td>14972 Sand Canyon</td>
<td>Free (7am-11pm)</td>
<td>$212-5112</td>
<td>(949) 56-1990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What To Do When You Arrive In Irvine

Step-By-Step Instructions

Step 1: Report to the International Center before the start date of your program. Upon your arrival in the US, and before the start date on your DS 2019 (found in section 3), you must check in with the UCI International Center (IC) so that your SEVIS record can be validated. Please complete a CHECK IN FORM (found at http://ic.uci.edu/forms/index.php, NEW SCHOLARS) and make photo copies of the important immigration documents listed below (and those of J-2 dependents) and bring to the IC:

- Biographical page of your passport
- J visa
- DS 2019
- J Orientation receipt (see Step 2 below)

In addition to reporting to the International Center you must contact your Academic Department. After checking in with the IC, you will receive written confirmation of your successful check-in to take to your UCI department to initiate the employment process required for you to have access to UCI facilities and resources.

Step 2: Complete J-1 Scholar Orientation. The US Dept. of State requires that all J scholars be given a J-1 Orientation which is available at the International Center website - http://www.ic.uci.edu/scholars/index.php

When you have completed the orientation, you must print out a receipt which you include when you check in at the IC.

Step 3: Apply for a Social Security Number. You must apply for a Social Security number if you do not have a Social Security number from a previous U.S. visit. Instructions can be found on the IC website at: http://www.ic.uci.edu/forms/SSNinfo.pdf

Social Security Number

As a J-1 visa holder you will need to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN). A Social Security Number is necessary for you to be employed at UCI. You can apply for this number by visiting the nearest Social Security Administration office located at 26051 Acero Road in Mission Viejo, CA. When you apply for a SSN, you will need to provide the following:

- Form DS-2019
- Passport with visa stamp
- I-94
- Invitation Letter from Hiring UCI Department

You can visit the website of the U.S. Social Security Administration at www.ssa.gov/pubs/10120.html for more information about social security numbers.

It takes about 30-45 days from application to receive a social security number.

Obtaining a Driver’s License

If you plan to drive an automobile in California, you must obtain a California Driver’s License. You will need to visit the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to apply for the license. You will be required to take a written test, driving test, and vision test. Cars driven in California must be registered through the DMV. You must have automobile and liability insurance to drive in California. If you do not plan to drive in California, but want an official identification card, you can apply for a California Identification Card from the Department of Motor Vehicles. For more information, visit the California DMV website at http://www.dmv.ca.gov.

California requires that drivers and vehicle owners carry the following minimum monetary limits:

- $15,000 for injury or death of 1 person per accident
- $30,000 for injury or death of 2 or more persons per accident
- $5,000 for property damage per accident

Evidence of financial responsibility must be carried at all times in the vehicle. Most Californians maintain financial responsibility through insurance companies, which provide the policy holder with an identification card as evidence of coverage. The card must state the insurance company’s name and address, the period of coverage and policy number.

Persons operating a vehicle in this state who are unlicensed or have an invalid California or out-of-state driver license are subject to the same financial responsibility laws as valid California licensed drivers.
Important Information You Need to Know About the J Program

The Exchange Visitor Program (J program) is administered by the Department of State (DOS), which designates UCI to sponsor scholars in this visa category for academic-level research and teaching. The J-1 is the most frequently used visa classification for international academic visitors at UCI. Other organizations, such as international or educational programs or foundations, may also act as visa sponsors. The sponsor provides Form DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status) to the applicant. The applicant must then present it to an American Embassy/Consulate to obtain a visa stamp, if abroad, or, to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), if in the United States.

Financial Minimums
Scholars must have enough money to live on during their visit to UCI. Proof of the amount of funding must be provided, since it is the sole basis for determining whether or not the support will be adequate to maintain a minimum standard of living for you and your dependents. In addition, this funding will be noted on the DS-2019, which in turn will be used by a U.S. Embassy or Consulate Official as they decide whether a J-1 visa will be issued. The figures below represent low budgets for one month. Minimum support is $1,600 per month for a J-1 exchange visitor; $450 per month for a dependent. Please note that immigration documents cannot be issued for scholars with inadequate funding.

Financial Minimums [cont.]
Eligibility for J-1 sponsorship is determined by DOS regulations and UCI policy. Non-tenure-track faculty and certain academic and sponsored research staff members qualify for a J-1 visa under UCI’s sponsorship. Minimum qualification is a Bachelor’s degree (or equivalent). A prospective scholar who has been in the United States in J-1 or J-2 status for six months in the twelve month period immediately preceding the desired start date of the appointment is NOT eligible for sponsorship for a new J-1 program in the “Research Scholar” or “Professor” categories. There is an exception to this twelve month bar if the scholar was previously in the United States in the “Short-Term Scholar” category.

The Two-Year Home Country Physical Presence Requirement
Some J-1 visa holders are required to return to their country of nationality or last legal residence for two years before they are eligible for an immigrant visa or an H or L nonimmigrant visa classification. Three criteria determine if a scholar is subject: (1) Funding Source—any direct government funding from either the U.S. government or from the home government during the J-1 program; (2) Exchange Visitor Skills List—If the area of specialization is in short supply in his/her home country, it may be included on the Skills List; and/or (3) Medical Training. Scholars who are subject are not eligible to file a change of status application to any other non-immigrant visa classification with the USCIS.

In some cases, waivers of these requirements are issued by DOS and USCIS. Depending upon the circumstances, waivers can be difficult to obtain. Those who have questions regarding the residence requirement should discuss them with the staff in the International Center: (949) 824-4726.

Change of Program Category
Changes from one J-1 category to another (i.e., “Research Scholar” to “Student”) are very difficult to obtain without making a departure and re-entry to the U.S. A formal request to change category must be made to the Department of State and is granted in very unusual circumstances. Therefore, exchange visitors should not enter the U.S. under one program category with the assumption that you can shift easily to another category after your arrival.

UCI policy requires that all J-1 scholars complete employment paperwork upon arrival at UCI. You will be considered to be either a “with salary” or a “without salary” employee, depending on your individual circumstances. This paperwork is important in order to establish your official status at UCI. Without the completion of this paperwork, you will be unable to receive UCI salary (if applicable), a UCI identification card, a library card, or have access to other university services.

What You Need to Travel
If your visa stamp is still valid, you will re-enter the U.S. with your DS-2019 form. You will need to have a valid signature by an International Center advisor on your DS-2019. This signature is valid for one year. During that one year, you can re-enter the U.S. as many times as you wish, as long as the visa stamp is valid and you have maintained J-1 status. You must submit a TRAVEL FORM to the IC each time you travel outside the U.S.

Applying for a New Visa
If you are planning to re-enter the U.S. and the J-1 visa in your passport has expired, you must apply for a new entry visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. You will be asked to show your DS-2019 form, evidence of funding, and proof of maintaining close ties to your home country. Please read the notice titled “Recommended Documentation for Extending or Extending/Renewing F-1, J-1, or H-1B Visa in Your Home Country” (available at the International Center) for information about other documents you should make available to the Embassy or Consulate.

Program Transfer
A J-1 exchange visitor may transfer to another institution within the five year program limit. For this, your current program sponsor must release your SEVIS record. The new institution will then be able to prepare a Form DS-2019. In most cases, the category of the visitor (i.e., “Research Scholar” or “Professor”), as indicated in section 4 of the DS-2019, must be the same, and so must the Subject/Field Code and the professional activity.

J-2 Dependents
Your dependents can enter or re-enter the U.S. by using the DS-2019 form that was issued for J-2 Dependents. J-2 dependents will need to have a valid travel signature by an International Center advisor. If the J-2 dependent(s) will need to apply for J-2 visas, please be sure that they have proof of financial support and documentation to demonstrate a close connection to home country.

Length of Stay
“Research Scholar” is the most commonly used J-1 category at UCI. The maximum stay in the United States in J-1 scholar visa status is five years. The sponsor provides Form DS-2019 that was issued for J-2 Dependants. J-2 dependents will need to have a valid travel signature by an International Center advisor. If the J-2 dependent(s) will need to apply for J-2 visas, please be sure that they have proof of financial support and documentation to demonstrate a close connection to home country.

Subject/Field Code and the pro-
Occasional Lectures or Consultations at Sites Other Than UCI

Exchange Visitors at UCI are limited by government regulations to employment and affiliation at UCI only, in the area specified on the DS-2019. Occasional lecturing or consulting at other U.S. institutions may be allowed. Approval must be obtained from the program sponsor, which in most cases is the UCI International Center. Circumstances should be discussed with the staff in the International Center prior to committing to such employment in order to ensure that you qualify.

You may be able to obtain permission for “occasional” lectures or “short-term” consultations at another institution. The proposed employment must be directly related to the objectives of your J-1 program, must be incidental to your primary program activities and must not delay the completion of your J-1 program.

If an opportunity like this comes up while you are at UCI, please contact Sheila Cech, scech@uci.edu for information on what it needed to deter-

Employment Authorization For J-2 Dependents

Spouses and children who hold J-2 visas are eligible to apply for permission to work in the U.S. J-2 work authorization is granted primarily to enhance the cultural experience of the dependents in the US and in no way should be considered a means of support for the initial J-1 program. Once the USCIS issues the Employment Authorization Document (EAD), the J-2 may work anywhere and at any level in the US.

Payment

J-1 scholars may receive financial support from a variety of sources: UCI, United States government agencies, your home government, international organizations, a bi-national commission (Fulbright Commission), other organizations (i.e., sabbatical support from your own university), or personal funds. Scholars must enter the United States in J-1 visa status or receive USCIS approval of J-1 status before they are authorized to receive payment or a UCI appointment. You are not permitted to engage in non-UCI employment or consultation or receive payment from a source not stated on your DS-2019, unless authorized to do so in advance by the Exchange Visitor program sponsor (if your DS-2019 was issued by UCI, you must contact the International Center).

Important Phone Numbers

Academic Personnel (949) 824-7275
Cross-Cultural Center (949) 824-7215
Disability Services Center (949) 824-7494
Employee Benefits (949) 824-5197
Faculty & Staff Counseling (949) 824-8355
Gottschalk Medical Plaza (949) 824-8600
Human Resources (949) 824-5216
International Center (949) 824-7249
LGBT Resource Center (949) 824-3277
Dean of Students (949) 824-5181
Payroll (949) 824-6819
UCI Police (non-emergency) (949) 824-5223
Emergency 9-1-1

Important Information About Your J Program

U.S. Tax Information

Taxes will be deducted from salaries, stipends, and scholarships, if the funds are from a U.S. source. Your available income after taxes may be less than anticipated. You may be eligible for a tax treaty between the U.S. and other countries which may exempt earnings from federal taxes.

If there is a tax treaty between your home country and the US, you must complete the appropriate tax treaty forms at the time of your initial employment paperwork with the International Center. You will need to fill out the forms every year to continue eligibility. To be eligible, a Social Security Number is required.

All foreign students, scholars, and spouses are required to report their annual income by filling a tax return between January 1 and April 15 of the following year. Because of legal restrictions on our capacity to advise you about your tax liabilities, UCI staff is not able to answer individual questions regarding your tax situation. The International Center organizes a Tax Workshop with a representative from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) each March to assist with your tax questions. Time and location of this workshop will be available at the International Center website in February of each year.

International Center Staff

Anna Wimberly, Director, acwimber@uci.edu
Christine McCarthy, Assistant Director, Scholar Services, cmccarth@uci.edu
Zara Syed, Assistant Director, Student Services, zayed@uci.edu
Sheila Cech, Scholar Advisor, scech@uci.edu
Mia Navas, Student and Scholar Advisor, mnavas@uci.edu
Archana Sheth, Advising and Programs Assistant, asheth@uci.edu
Ashley Browne, International Center Assistant, abrowne@uci.edu

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