J-1 Academic Training
(for Non-degree Exchange Students)

Academic Training is a benefit available to students in J-1 status. This benefit allows authorization for practical experience, employment, or training that is directly related to your program of study as a J-1 student. It is flexible in format and permits students to engage in opportunities (paid or unpaid) both during the program of study (pre-completion) and after the program has been completed (post-completion). At UM-St. Louis, Academic training is allowed on a part-time basis, while school is in session. During the academic year, full-time Academic Training is allowed only during the vacation periods or when required by the program of study. This handout outlines the limitations of Academic Training and the application procedures that J-1 students at UM-St. Louis will need to follow.

Eligibility

To be eligible for Academic Training, you must meet the following criteria.
1. You must be in good J-1 status.
2. You must be in good academic standing (i.e. not on academic probation).
3. Your primary purpose in the U.S. must be to study rather than to engage in employment.
4. The proposed employment must be done with a specific employer or training site, and directly related to the major field of study listed on your form DS-2019.
5. You must be able to provide a specific description of the training opportunity.
6. The proposed employment period cannot be longer than the amount of time spent in full-time study.
7. You must receive written approval in advance from your J-1 program officer in ISSS for the duration of the Academic Training program.
8. If you are an exchange student from one of the University of Missouri-St. Louis’ partner universities then you must request and receive permission from your home university exchange coordinator. Your coordinator must email this permission to your program officer in ISSS and your Study Abroad coordinator at UMSL.
General Limitations

Time limits
Degree seeking J-1 students are permitted up to a maximum of 18 months of Academic Training. This includes all periods of Academic Training, both during the program of study (pre-completion) and after the program of study has been completed (post-completion). Students in non-degree status (i.e. exchange students) are limited to a maximum total stay of 24 months. This 24 month limit includes the period of study and any authorized Academic Training.

Academic Training periods cannot exceed the amount of time you have been engaged in the full course of study. For example, a student who completes his exchange program in four months cannot be authorized for an Academic Training period of five months. Additionally, non-degree students who use all 24 months to complete their J-1 program are not eligible for any post-completion Academic Training.

Academic Credit
Students seeking academic credit for Academic training must work with their UMSL academic department to arrange credit. It is up the UMSL academic unit to determine the eligibility and issue credit for Academic Training.

Students seeking credit for Academic Training during the Fall or Spring semester must contact their UMSL exchange coordinator to determine whether or not the credit will be considered as part of the exchange, or if they must pay for the credit themselves. Summer credit is not covered under any exchange agreements. Students must support themselves financially during the period of the Academic Training.

Authorization Dates
Students who are completing Academic Training as part of a course requirement (internship or practicum courses) are limited to working while enrolled in the course. Authorization periods for such employment will be limited to the start date and end date of the semester during which you are enrolled for the internship course or practicum. Your employment may be authorized for a period outside of these limitations if it is mandated by your degree program or the requirements you are fulfilling. Post completion dates are determined by the end date of your program and the amount of Academic Training time available to you. **Work cannot begin until your Academic Training has been approved and the start date has arrived.**

Post-completion Academic Training

Eligibility
Students who have not used the maximum amount of Academic Training available to them by the end of their program of study are eligible to request post-completion Academic Training. If the training opportunity is unpaid, students must provide proof of sufficient financial support for the duration of the training period. To have access to any post-completion Academic Training, you must submit your request and application materials to your J-1 program officer before the end date printed on your form DS-2019 or the end of your studies, whichever occurs first. Your post-completion Academic Training program must begin no later than 30 days after the end of your program of study.
Travel
If you plan to travel outside of the U.S. after you complete your program of study and re-enter the country for your post-completion Academic Training, you must obtain employment authorization before you leave to avoid difficulties returning to the U.S. You must also request a travel signature from ISSS prior to leaving the U.S. Please allow at least 2 weeks for processing.

To successfully return to the U.S. you must have the following items:
1. a valid passport;
2. a valid J-1 visa (Canadian exchange visitors need their I-901 receipt and not a visa);
3. a valid form DS-2019 signed for re-entry by your J-1 program officer in ISSS; and
4. a valid authorization letter for your Academic Training program.

You should also keep a copy of your employer letter with you as you travel.

Extensions
If you did not request the full balance of Academic Training that is available to you when you applied for your post-completion Academic Training, you are able to extend your training period. You must submit a new request for Academic Training along with the application materials listed in this handout. This must be done prior to the end date of your current post-completion authorization. Your approval letter will detail any remaining Academic Training time that is available to you. If you have used all of your available time with your first post-completion authorization, no extensions can be granted.

After your training is completed
Once your post-completion Academic Training is completed you will have 30 days from the end date on your DS-2019 to leave the country. This date should be the same as the end date of your Academic Training authorization. During these 30 days you have legal presence in the U.S. You cannot however exit the U.S. and re-enter in J-1 status during the 30 day departure preparation period.
During Academic Training

Employment Paperwork

When you begin work, you and your employer must complete Form I-9 to document your identity and U.S. work authorization. Various items serve as acceptable documentation, but you should plan to use your passport, I-94 card, Form DS-2019 and J-1 program officer’s letter authorizing the Academic Training. Your employer, who keeps the I-9, will make copies of the documents you submit and return the originals to you. **Be sure that your original authorization letter remains attached to your DS-2019 and is returned to you.** Form I-9 must be updated any time you receive a renewal of your permission for Academic Training. Be sure to keep all authorization letters and forms DS-2019 issued to you.

Maintenance of J-1 Status

While on Academic Training you must maintain your J-1 status. **Failure to maintain good J-1 status during your Academic Training period will result in the immediate termination of your employment authorization.**

As a J-1 student on Academic Training (pre-completion and post-completion), you are still required to report any changes in your local address to ISSS within 10 days of the change. You are also required to maintain health insurance coverage for yourself and any J-2 dependants that are in the U.S. with you. All academic and employment activity is limited to the primary objective/program of study that is listed on your form DS-2019.

You must maintain a valid form DS-2019, form I-94 (marked D/S) and passport for the duration of your stay in J-1 status. If your form DS-2019 will expire during your period of training, you must apply for an extension **before** the end date listed on your form DS-2019, if you have not yet completed your academic program. If you lose your form I-94 you must apply for a new one immediately.

If your period of pre-completion Academic Training occurs while school is in session you are required to maintain a full-time load of courses.

Special Issues

Health Insurance

**Students on post-completion Academic Training will need to purchase insurance to cover their entire training period.** J-1 students are required to maintain health insurance coverage for themselves and any dependants while they are in J-1 status; this includes all periods of Academic Training. All exchange students whose insurance did not qualify for a waiver are automatically charged for the international student health insurance program each semester that they enroll in courses. Students on post-completion Academic Training will not be charged automatically for health insurance since they are not enrolled in courses, and must enroll manually. Contact ISSS for the necessary forms.

Program Extensions

Students who will need additional time to complete their academic program must request an extension of their form DS-2019. This must be done prior to the expiration date of their current document. Financial support verification will be required for all extensions. The minimum amount of support necessary will be determined by the remaining semesters and credit hours necessary to complete the program.
Academic Training Application Procedure

Complete the Academic Training Authorization request form and follow the steps listed below. **All application materials must be submitted to ISSS at least 2 weeks prior to the requested start date of your training program.**

1. Obtain a letter of offer from your prospective employer. It must include all of the information outlined in the “Sample: Employer Letter to Recommend J-1 Academic Training” (copy attached).

2. Ask your academic program advisor from your home university to complete the “Advisor Recommendation for Academic Training” form (attached). Attach a copy of your employer’s letter to this form for their review. This form must be completed by an advisor in your home university who is familiar with your program of study, and not an advisor at UM-St. Louis.

3. After obtaining the two letters, submit the following items to ISSS:
   a. request for Academic Training authorization;
   b. academic advisor’s recommendation (on the attached form);
   c. letter of offer from the prospective employer;
   d. copy of your DS-2019 (1st page only);
   e. copy of current insurance card or valid proof of insurance;
   f. copy of your passport (photo page and visa page);
   g. copy of your I-94 card (front and back);
   h. social security letter request (only if you will need to apply for a social security number)
   i. proof of financial support (if applying for unpaid post-completion authorization).

4. Request an extension of your DS-2019. **Complete this step only if your DS-2019 will expire during the requested period of time of your authorized Academic Training and you are not yet finished with your academic program.** If you are requesting post-completion Academic Training, this step is not necessary. You will receive an updated DS-2019 with an end date corresponding to the end date of your authorization.

After you have submitted all necessary materials to ISSS, your request will be evaluated to determine if the Academic Training program is warranted and appropriate. If the training is warranted and the employment opportunity is appropriate, you will receive a letter approving your request and authorizing employment during the Academic Training period. This letter must remain attached to your DS-2019 throughout the duration of your employment as proof of your work authorization. Once you have completed your Academic Training be sure to keep the letter as well as all DS-2019s that have been issued to you.

**Part-time & Full-time Authorization**

As degree seeking J-1 students your primary objective is to complete the course of study rather than to be engaged in employment. You are expected to pursue your academic objective on a full-time basis. Academic training authorization for the fall and spring semesters is limited to part-time (no more than 20 hours/week). Full-time authorization for pre-completion Academic Training (40 hours/week) is only allowed during vacation periods (i.e. winter break, summer semester). Post-completion Academic Training can be on a part-time or full-time basis. Part-time and full-time authorization are subtracted from the overall limit at the same rate.
# Request for Academic Training Authorization

Please print clearly and fill in this page completely. Submitting an incomplete form and/or an incomplete application packet will delay the processing of your application.

- **Name:** ___________________________  **Student Number:** ___________________________
- **Email:** ___________________________  **Phone Number:** ___________________________
- **Alternate Email:** __________________  **Degree Level:** __________________________
- **Current Local Address:** _______________________________________________________
  (street address and apt. #)  (city)  (state)  (zip code)

This request is for:
- [ ] Full-time**  [ ] Part-time***
  (20 hrs/wk maximum)
- [ ] Pre-Completion Academic Training
- [ ] Post-Completion Academic Training

First Semester of Enrollment: __________________________

Expected J-1 Completion Date: __________________________

*Number of months requested __________________________

** Dates of employment __/__/____ to __/__/____
  mm  dd  yyyy  mm  dd  yyyy

* Required Field

** Full-time Academic Training authorization is necessary for work that will exceed 20 hours per week. It is only available during the summer semester or during post-completion Academic Training.

*** Part-time Academic Training has a limit of 20 hours per week and is subtracted from the cumulative maximum amount of Academic Training time allowed at the same rate as full-time.

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1. Have you been a full time student since first gaining J-1 status?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

2. Are you in good J-1 status now?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   If no, please explain: __________________________________________

3. Do you have any delayed (DL), EX or Y grades?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   If yes, please list the semester(s) of each DL, EX or Y grade: __________________________

4. Are you currently on academic probation?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

5. Have you ever applied for Academic Training before?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   If yes, please list dates of past authorization(s): __________________________

6. Will you be moving from your current local address within 30 days of your start date?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   If yes, please list your new local address if known: __________________________

7. Do you have any dependents (spouse, children) in the U.S. with you?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

8. Please list the expiration date of your current insurance coverage: __________________________

9. Please list below the employer name, address and phone number from your job offer: __________________________

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By my signature below I certify that I: 1) understand it is my responsibility to report to the Office of International Student & Scholar Services any changes to my legal name, and local address within 10 days of the change; 2) I understand that I am responsible for maintaining my J-1 status while on Academic Training by: working only for the employer listed on my DS-2019 for no more than the maximum hours specified in my authorization letter, maintaining required enrollment during pre-completion training, and maintaining health insurance for myself and any dependents in the U.S. with me; 3) I understand that it is my responsibility to contact my J-1 program officer right away if any of the conditions of my Academic Training change.

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**Signature** ___________  **Date** ___________

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an equal opportunity employer
SAMPLE

Employer Letter to Recommend J-1 Academic Training

Company name and address on letterhead

Date

Student name and address

Dear Student Name,

This letter is to confirm that Company Name is offering you employment as job title in name of department for number months from start date to end date. This employment will serve as “Academic Training” following your academic program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

The goals and objectives of your training program with us will be practical experience in field of study. During your employment with us you will be responsible for (please list or describe job duties associated with the position).

The location of your training program will be (please list the actual employment site including address).

Your training supervisor will be supervisor’s name and title. Her address and telephone number are (list if different from letterhead).

You will be expected to work number of hours per week and you will be paid rate of pay.

Sincerely,

Hiring officer’s name and title

NOTE: Please use company letterhead and be sure to include all of the information and wording contained in this sample letter. If you have any questions regarding employment of J-1 students or the format of this letter, please contact David West in the Office of International Student & Scholar Services, University of Missouri-St. Louis at (314) 516-5525 or westdav@umsl.edu.
Notice to Advisors

J-1 students at UM-St. Louis are only eligible to engage in full-time (40 hrs/week) Academic Training during vacation periods, upon completion of their degree program, or when it is mandated by the requirement that they are fulfilling. (Note: the summer semester is considered a vacation period.) While school is in session (fall and spring semesters) students are eligible for part-time (no more than 20 hrs/week) authorization only. Please complete the ‘Academic Advisor Recommendation’ form and return it to International Student & Scholar Services. The student should provide you with a copy of the employer’s offer letter prior to your completion of this recommendation form.

Mr./Ms. ____________________________, an exchange student at UM-St. Louis studying ____________________________, wants to engage in the Academic Training program described below.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING PROGRAM

Employer ____________________________________________________________________________
Job Title ____________________________________________________________________________
Dates of training ____________________________ to ____________________________ Number of hours per week ________

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAM:

____________________________________________________________________________________

RELATIONSHIP OF TRAINING TO STUDENT’S DEGREE PROGRAM:

____________________________________________________________________________________

WHY THE TRAINING IS AN INTEGRAL OR CRITICAL COMPONENT OF THE STUDENT’S ACADEMIC PROGRAM:

____________________________________________________________________________________

As the student’s Academic Advisor, I have set forth the nature and detail of the Academic Training program. I approve of the amount of time requested as necessary to complete the goals and objectives of the training. With this letter, I recommend that you authorize this student to participate in the Academic Training program described above.

(Name—please print) ____________________________ (Title) ____________________________ (Email Address) ____________________________
(Campus Address) ____________________________ (Phone number) ____________________________
(Signature) ____________________________ (Date) ____________________________

Evaluation by Responsible Officer

I have reviewed this letter and determined that the Academic Training being requested __ is ____ is not warranted. The criteria and time limits set forth in 22 CFR 514.23(f)(3) and (4) ____ are ____ are not satisfied. To ensure the quality of the program, I hereby evaluate the Academic Training (in terms of achieving the stated goals and objectives) as ____ satisfactory ____ unsatisfactory.

David West, J-1 Responsible Officer ____________________________ Date ____________________________