

## J-1 Academic Training Information

### **What is Academic Training (AT)?**

Academic Training is an opportunity for J-1 students to get experience in their field of study by engaging in employment or volunteer work which is related to their major or program of study. A J-1 student (Exchange Visitor) may participate in paid or unpaid, part-time or full-time academic training programs during or after his or her studies. AT is designed to round out a student's academic studies by giving an opportunity for practical experience.

The AT application must be completed and approved before the "program end date" on the DS-2019, therefore it is important to plan and apply early. Approval must be granted by the "Responsible Officer" in writing before applying for a social security card or starting AT. If your DS-2019 form was issued by WOU, the "Responsible Officer" is an International Student Advisor. If it was issued by another institution or agency, contact that organization to determine your eligibility for AT. Once approved, a new DS-2019 with the AT dates will be issued.

### **How long is AT?**

The time given for Academic Training cannot exceed the amount of time spent in full course of study. For example, if you were a student at WOU for a 9 month exchange program, you would only be allowed 9 months of AT. For students in a degree program (or who have been studying for over 18 months), the maximum amount of time allowed for AT is 18 months.

### **When can I do AT?**

Academic Training may be authorized either during or after completion of your studies. Part-time and full-time AT is counted at the same rate. There are two types of academic training:

- ◆ Pre-Completion Academic Training is during studies with or without wages or remuneration. The student must continue to take a full course load, but may participate in part-time, under twenty hours a week, AT as long as it does not interfere with studies or affect the student's academic standing.
- ◆ Post-Completion Academic Training employment needs to be secured before the DS-2019 program end date (with a firm job letter) and must begin about 30 days after the completion of studies. This training may be full time (up to 40 hours a week) for wages or other pay.

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

You are eligible for academic training if you meet the following requirements:

- You must have a valid DS-2019 and have maintained J-1 student status.
- You are in the U.S. primarily for study in a full-time academic program.
- You are in good academic standing.
- You must apply before the end of your academic program or the end date on your DS-2019, whichever comes first.
- You must not have been approved for the 212(e) two month home residency requirement waiver.
- You must maintain health insurance coverage for yourself and any J-2 dependents throughout your Academic Training and the J program or your immigration record will be canceled and you will fall out of status.

### **When do I apply?**

The Academic Training application should be submitted before the end date on your DS-2019 in order to extend the J-1 program for AT. After the end date has passed, it will not be possible to apply for AT.

### **How do I apply?**

To apply for approval for Academic Training, you must follow these steps:

- Obtain a job offer from the prospective employer or volunteer site. The letter must be on official letterhead and provide the following information:
  - Your name and offered job title,
  - A brief description of the goals and objectives of your training or employment,
  - Dates and location (address) of training,
  - Number of hours per week expected to work,
  - Training supervisor's full name, title, contact information (address, phone, email), and signature.
- You must bring the job offer letter, and meet with your academic advisor or department head. They will need to use the information on the job offer letter to fill out the attached "Academic Advisor's Academic Training Certification" form.
- Submit the Academic Training application, a copy of the job offer letter, and the Academic Advisor's AT certification form to the Responsible Officer (international student advisor) in the Office of International Education and Development.

The J-1 Responsible Officer will review the application and decide whether or not the AT is warranted and appropriate. If so, the student will be issued a letter of approval and a new DS-2019 with the AT dates noted. You may not begin work until you have received the new DS-2019 and authorization.

- **Social Security Number:** After receiving a letter of approval for AT and DS-2019, you may apply to get a Social Security Number. Please see the student employment form for more information on applying.
- **Travel:** If you plan to travel before starting Academic Training, make sure that all documentation is complete and approved. You will need to carry your job offer letter, and AT approval letter when traveling or when renewing your U.S. visa abroad.

### **Continuing Health Insurance:**

- **Academic Training (AT)** students are required by US immigration law to have health insurance at all times during their J program in the United States. AT students will need to remember to send an e-mail to the OIED [global@wou.edu](mailto:global@wou.edu) at the beginning of EVERY academic term during Academic Training. The bill will need to be paid at the WOU cashiers office or through the WolfWeb.