



Instructions for FGCU Departments to Host Foreign National Exchange Visitors

Overview of the J-1 Scholar/ Exchange Visitor Program

The Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) of the US Department of State was originally established through the “Fulbright-Hays Act” of 1961. The US Department of State has designated Florida Gulf Coast University as an Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor. The purpose of Florida Gulf Coast University’s exchange visitor program is to facilitate exchange of knowledge and foster greater cultural understanding between citizens of the US and other nations. Ideally this will be achieved through a reciprocation of foreign nationals coming to the FGCU and US citizens from FGCU going abroad. The program should mutually benefit participants through collaborative cultural and educational exchange in academic study, teaching, research, sharing of expertise, professional networking, social engagement, and exposure to the host community. The FGCU Exchange Visitor Program is administered through the International Services Office. Only the International Services Office is designated the authorization to officially invite exchange visitors, communicate with the Department of State on behalf of FGCU, advise on immigration and program regulations and to submit required reports.

This program may be used by departments to host Research Scholars, Professors, Short-Term Scholars or Specialists who are affiliated with a FGCU approved partnership/ international agreement, or representatives of an organization abroad. Persons participating in this program are classified as J-1 Scholars. This immigration status is appropriate for a person to teach or conduct research at FGCU, coming directly from his/her home country and planning to return to his/her home country after completion of the exchange project. In most cases exchange scholars should have advanced degrees and meet certain other criteria. Refer to the “[Exchange Visitor/Scholars Categories, Eligibility and Related Requirements](#)” document, for details.

General Department Responsibilities

Hosting an exchange visitor/ scholar can be very rewarding, in the professional collaborations and through the personal relationships and cultural exchange that result from this very unique opportunities for both parties. Departments should be very well prepared to commit the time and resources required to support this program.

University departments wishing to host a J-1 scholar must identify a department faculty or staff member to serve as the primary host. This person serves as the liaison to the International Services Office and to the scholar. The department host will communicate with the International Services Office throughout the exchange visitor process and participate in monitoring and reporting requirements. The host will initiate the formal invitation (visa paperwork) through the International Services Office and work with the

prospective scholar to verify eligibility to participate in the program, outline a program objective, prepare documents and complete all required forms. They will also make arrangements to facilitate the needs of the scholar (ie: travel/ arrival to FGCU, housing, office space, access to university resources, integrate the scholar into the department, assist them to meet program requirements, encourage involvement in local US cultural activities, etc.). In addition, the host will supervise the scholar's program objective and provide a summary to the International Services Office at the completion of the program, or as requested. They also must notify the International Services of certain events or activities affecting the scholar, or the overall Exchange Visitor Program status at FGCU.

Health Insurance Requirement

All J-1 scholars (and their dependents) are required by the US Department of State regulations to maintain adequate health insurance coverage while participating in the exchange program (beginning at entry to the US). FGCU offers the required health insurance (for purchase), or scholar's may present another acceptable insurance, if approved by the International Services Office in advance of their arrival. Information on this insurance and the requirement, will be provided to the scholar prior to arriving in the US. A scholar's willful failure to maintain adequate health insurance may result in immediate termination from the exchange program. The host department is expected to assist the scholar to meet the insurance requirement at all times.

Procedures for Obtaining J-1 Scholar status:

A prospective J-1 Scholar must apply for a J-1 visa at a US consulate/visa office outside the US (generally in the home country). The applicant must first be issued a DS- 2019 form by Florida Gulf Coast University International Services Office (exception: Canadian citizens do not need the J-1 visa, but do need the DS-2019 form to present at US port of entry).

FGCU departments desiring to host a J-1 Scholar must formally request a DS-2019 issuance from the International Services Office. (submit the "Request for DS-2019 form at least 90 days prior to the expected start date for the J-1 scholar). To complete this process the department host will need to obtain specific information from or about the prospective scholar, develop a program objective, ensure that the prospective scholar meets eligibility requirements, determine funding sources to support this exchange, make various arrangements for the scholar to successfully engage in and complete the exchange program. Specific procedures are detailed below. The following documents must be completed as part of the DS-2019 request process. Please read all informational materials and complete and submit all forms as indicated.

Checklist of informational documents

- Exchange Visitor/Scholar Eligibility, Categories and Related Requirements
- Two-Year Physical Presence Requirement
- Exchange Visitor Insurance Requirement
- Estimated Costs (for Professors, Researchers, Scholars, Specialists)
- Housing for Exchange Visitors

Checklist of forms to be submitted to request DS-2019

- DS-2019 Request Form- Instructions (1 page)
- DS-2019 Request Form - Part A (5 pages) (Host department to complete)
- Exchange Visitor Profile (DS-2019 Request Form- Part B) (2 pages)
(Host department/ or exchange visitor to complete)
- J-1 Insurance Notification Form (2 pages)
- Sickness and Accident Insurance Verification Form (1 page)
(note: this form is to be completed by the exchange visitor in preparation for their arrival to FGCU and does not need to be submitted with the initial department request to sponsor the exchange visitor)
- J-1 Health Insurance Verification Form (2 pages) * (note: Exchange Visitor to complete after DS-2019 is issued)

Issuance of DS-2019 Immigration Forms

After receiving the completed DS-2019 request form and all other required documents from the requesting department, the International Services Office will determine if the DS-2019 can be issued. (Please remember to submit the request 90 days prior to the scholar's arrival date). In- complete requests may cause delays in this process and could affect the start date of the scholar. If the request is approved, the International Services Office will issue the DS-2019 along with Pre-Arrival Information, and deliver it to the host department. The host department should then proceed to deliver this packet to the scholar (highly recommended to use FED EX or other international courier service).

Preparations and Responsibilities of Host Department Before J-1 Scholar Arrival

Once the formal invitation (DS- 2019) to your exchange visitor/scholar is issued, the International Services Office will advise the hosting department representative of additional steps to prepare both the department and the visitor for their arrival to FGCU. The department will need to communicate to the visitor such things as: professional obligations, department requirements, assigning a department host/ counterpart, health

insurance, housing needs, whether or not other family members will accompany the visitor, information on local resources, and travel arrangements and arrival coordination.

Other Specific Responsibilities of Department Host

Make necessary arrangements to assist scholar in fulfilling the health insurance requirement.

Schedule registration appointment with the International Services office for the Exchange Visitor during his/her first day on campus.

If the exchange visitor will be receiving remuneration from FGCU, he/she must complete payroll sign-on paperwork at the Human Resources Department prior to the first day of employment.

Supervise Exchange Visitor's program objectives, and provide summary to International Services office when program completed (or ask requested).

Notify the International Services office when the scholar completes his/her program, terminates his/her employment, or is absent from FGCU for more than 30 days, and/or leaves FGCU.

Questions & Additional Information

Please direct all questions to Elaine Hozdik, FGCU Responsible Officer, regarding these materials and the FGCU Exchange Visitor Program.

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