J-1 VISA PROCEDURES AND PRE-ARRIVAL INSTRUCTIONS

Welcome and congratulations on your admission to UCLA! You have been admitted as either a regular degree-seeking student at UCLA or as an exchange student through the UCEAP/UCLA Exchange programs. Please refer to the steps below for information on how to apply for your J-1 Visa and requirements you must complete upon arrival at UCLA.

REVIEW YOUR UCLA DS-2019

Look at your biographical information and program dates (item 3) on your UCLA DS-2019. Please contact the Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars (DCISS) immediately if there are any errors on your UCLA DS-2019.

PAY THE SEVIS I-901 Fee

You must pay the SEVIS fee before applying for the J-1 Visa. The SEVIS fee can be paid online at www.FMIfee.com. Print a copy of your payment receipt and have it with you when applying for your J-1 Visa at a U.S. Embassy/Consulate and when entering the U.S.

APPLY FOR A J-1 Visa

If you are outside the U.S. and do not have a valid J-1 Visa, follow the steps below to apply for a J-1 Visa:
1. Fill out the DS-160 Application https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/
2. Schedule an appointment with a U.S. Embassy/Consulate http://www.usembassy.gov/
3. Take your UCLA DS-2019, letter of admission, valid passport, SEVIS fee receipt, MRV (visa application) fee receipt, passport style photos (if applicable), evidence of strong ties to your home country, and financial documents to your visa interview.

If you intend to apply for J-2 visas for your spouse or children, you must provide evidence of their full names, relationship to you, residence, nationality, and DS-2019s. Allow ample time to apply for the visa because the issuance of visas to some individuals could take longer due to security clearances. For more information about the visa application process, please visit http://travel.state.gov

Please Note: Canadian citizens are exempt from the visa application requirement, but must pay the SEVIS fee, and present their DS-2019 and SEVIS fee payment receipt at the port of entry to the U.S.

30-DAY RESTRICTION

Students entering the U.S. on J-1 status using an initial DS-2019 form may enter the U.S. no earlier than 30 days prior to the start date on their UCLA DS-2019. Keep this in mind when planning your travel and housing arrangements. After entering the U.S., you must check-in with DCISS within 30 days after the start date indicated on your DS-2019.

ARRANGE HEALTH INSURANCE

You are required to have health, accident, medical evacuation and repatriation of remains insurance at all times during your stay in the U.S. as a J-1 visa holder. The UCLA UCSHIP plan offered for degree and non-degree students does meet this requirement. Visit www.studenthealth.ucla.edu for more information. You must also have health insurance for any period of time that UCSHIP will not cover during your stay in the U.S. One option is to buy the one month policy from www.uhcsr.com or from www.gatewayplans.com. DCISS does not promote any private insurance plans. We offer this information as a courtesy to the student.

ISTART@UCLA

All newly admitted J-1 degree and non-degree students (e.g. undergraduate, graduate, EAP) are expected to complete iSTART@UCLA. iSTART is made up of components that will help ease your transition to life at UCLA and in Los Angeles. Components of iSTART include: Mandatory Pre-Arrival Orientation, Mandatory Visa Check-In, UCLA Orientation, DCISS Programs and the International Welcome Event. For more information about iSTART@UCLA, please see the back side of this page or visit the DCISS website: www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu

Mandatory J-1 Workshop

All newly admitted J-1 students are required to complete the mandatory J-1 Visa Workshop. This workshop is only offered online through iSTART@UCLA: Pre-Arrival Orientation, where J-1 counselors will review important information on how to maintain your J-1 status at UCLA, apply for J-1 benefits, and request services provided at DCISS. For complete details please visit the DCISS website: www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu

Mandatory Visa Check-In @ DCISS

Upon arrival to UCLA, all newly admitted J-1 students must check-in with DCISS. The mandatory visa check-in requirement can only be completed in person during one of the Visa Check-In Sessions below, a component of iSTART@UCLA:

- August 12 – 12PM to 4PM
- August 26 – 12PM to 4PM
- September 9 – 10AM to 2PM
- September 16 – 10AM to 2PM
- September 20 – 10AM to 2PM
- September 21 – 10AM to 2PM

Please make copies of the following documents AFTER your arrival to the U.S. and bring the copies along with your original passport and DS-2019 and the completed J-1 Check-In Form to ONE of the Visa Check-In Sessions:

- UCLA DS-2019 (Page 1)
- I-94 Admission Record*
- J-1 Visa (except Canadian citizens)
- Passport Photo Page

*Print your I-94 Admission Record at www.cbp.gov/i94 only after arrival to the U.S. If you receive a paper I-94 card instead, make a copy of both front and back sides of the card.

If you are transferring to UCLA from another U.S. school, please also bring your previous school’s DS-2019. For check-in instructions and to access the J-1 Check-in Forms, visit the DCISS website: www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu

Please Note: Failure to check-in with DCISS is a violation of your J-1 status and will affect your legal immigration status in the U.S. DCISS will make efforts to contact you, but it is your responsibility to complete all mandatory components of iSTART@UCLA and check-in. If you fail to check-in with DCISS within 30 days after the start date indicated on your DS-2019, you will automatically fall out of J-1 visa status affecting your ability to enroll in courses and remain in the U.S.