Internships and Academic Seminars

J-1 Visa Guide
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The J-1 Visa Process

We would like to welcome and congratulate you on your acceptance into The Washington Center’s program. These instructions will help you to understand the State Department’s regulations for international students regarding the J-1 Visa.

Please remember that you cannot travel to the U.S. with a tourist visa. It is mandatory that you enter the U.S. with your J-1 Visa sponsored by The Washington Center. Failure to do so will invalidate your participation in the program. Make sure that you understand the following points and be ready to answer questions at your interview at the U.S. Embassy or at the U.S. port of entry.

Tips to Obtain your J-1 Visa

• When attending your J-1 Visa interview, remember you are coming to the U.S. for a “Training Program.” If the officer asks you whether you have come to study or to work, answer that you have come to study.
• Part of this training program is the “on-the-job training” component. This means that you will be placed at an organization or company to learn about U.S. procedures and work environments. However, you will be “learning” and not “working.” Part of the learning experience will include completing research, writing memos and documents and giving presentations. Again, the important aspect is that you are coming to “learn” and “receive training” and NOT to replace a U.S. worker.

Scheduling the J-1 Visa Appointment (non-Canadian)

1. Fill out the DS-160 Nonimmigrant Visa Application: https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/
   If you do not have your housing assignment, you may use TWC’s address as your U.S. address: 1333 16th Street NW, Washington, D.C., 20036
2. Pay the SEVIS Fee by credit or debit card online at www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/
   You may use TWC’s address again if necessary. A SEVIS Fee tutorial is available at the following website https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/i-901-sevis-fee-payment-tutorial
3. Call your local U.S. Consulate or U.S. Embassy and schedule an appointment to obtain a J-1 Visa. You may also be able to schedule the appointment online through your country’s US Embassy website.

Additional fees for booking a J-1 Visa appointment may apply. If you are beginning your TWC program in less than three weeks, please contact your local Embassy and request an expedited J-1 Visa interview appointment.

4. Review the U.S. Embassy website in your country and prepare all of the requested documents to bring to the J-1 Visa interview appointment.

Documents you will need to present include:

• DS-2019 form (sent in visa package).
• DS-7002 form (sent in visa package).
• Your passport, valid for six months past the program end date.
• The TWC acceptance letter.
• The DS-160 confirmation form with your recent 2”X2” picture attached.
• Your SEVIS fee receipt.
• Proof of financial resources: this can include scholarship letters or bank statements indicating that you have the amount of funding indicated on section 5 under “personal funds” of the DS-2019 form. You can use your parents’ bank statements for this purpose. In this case, the statement must be accompanied with a letter indicating that these funds have been allocated to you in order to complete the program at The Washington Center.

• Note: the officer may request to see your school transcript or TOEFL as well.

You may also be asked to present “proof of ties” to your home country to prove that you do not intend to stay in the U.S., this can include proof of home residence, university enrollment, employment, family or a bank account. You can also show your return ticket for the end of the program.

5. For travel to the U.S., keep your DS-2019 form, DS-7002 form and passport with you. You must present these documents at all ports of U.S. entry.
6. Make sure that the immigration officer puts a J-1 Visa stamp on your passport indicating that you are entering with your J-1 Visa.
7. Important Note: I-94 forms are now automated, you can obtain the document at: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/
8. The I-94 is only available after you enter into the U.S.
The J-1 Visa Process (continued)

J-1 Visas for Canadian Students

The U.S. Consulates in Canada are waiving the requirement for a J-1 Visa interview appointment for Canadian passport holders. According to the latest regulations, you can obtain your J-1 Visa stamp on your passport at the port of entry (airport, or border if traveling by car). You can proceed to the U.S. port of entry directly with the following documents:

- DS-2019 and DS-7002 visa forms (sent by The Washington Center in your visa package).
- SEVIS payment confirmation or a copy of the receipt (please refer to the link indicated above to pay the SEVIS fee).
- Form DS-160: complete it online at https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/ and print the confirmation page with the barcode.
- Your passport (valid for at least six months beyond the program end date).
- The Customs Officer may also ask for proof of funds to cover expenses while in the U.S. This can include scholarship letters or bank statements indicating that you have the amount of funding indicated on section 5 under “personal funds” of the DS-2019 Form. You can use your parents’ bank statements for this purpose as well. In this case, the statement must be accompanied with a letter indicating that these funds have been allocated to you in order to complete the program at The Washington Center.
- TWC Acceptance Letter.

If you have any questions, please contact visainfo@twc.edu.
Two-Year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement

Some J-1 Visa exchange visitors may be subject to the “Two-Year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement” or Section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. This requirement is indicated on your J-1 Visa or on your DS-2019 form. If you are subject, you will be required to return to your home country for at least two years (cumulatively) at the end of your exchange visitor program before applying for an H, L or K visa or for immigrant lawful permanent resident status. If you are unable to do so, you will need to waive the two-year requirement.

The intent of the J-1 Visa is to have your home country benefit from your experience as an exchange visitor in the United States. This requirement is intended to prevent a participant from staying longer than necessary for that objective.

You may be subjected to this two-year requirement if any of the following conditions apply:

• If your participation in an exchange program was financed, directly or indirectly, by the United States government or a foreign government for purpose of exchange.
• If the skills that you are coming to develop or exercise are in a field which your “home” government requested be included on the State Department skills list.
• You come to the United States to receive “graduate medical education or training.”

Waiver of the Residency Requirement

An exchange visitor may request that the two-year home country physical presence requirement be waived only on the following bases:

• Statement from the exchange visitor’s home country that it has no objection to the waiver.
• Request for a waiver made by an interested U.S. government agency.
• Exceptional hardship to the U.S. citizen or permanent resident spouse or child of the exchange visitor.
• Fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion.

Important Disclaimer: The Washington Center does not extend the length of the J-1 Visas nor changes the immigration status of our participants after completion of the programs.

Example: intern not subject to 212(e)
**Health Insurance**

The State Department requires that all J-1 exchange visitors have health insurance that covers for sickness or accidents during their entire program period. J-1s who do not maintain this insurance coverage are in violation of State Department regulations and will have their J-1 visa terminated.

In order to comply with these requirements you must certify that you have a valid health insurance policy that includes the following:

- Medical benefits of at least $100,000 per accident or illness.
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of $25,000.
- Expenses associated with the medical evacuation to my home country in the amount of $50,000.
- A deductible not to exceed $500 per accident or illness.

The insurance provider must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- The policy must be underwritten by an insurance corporation with an A.M. Best rating of A- or above;
- A McGraw Hill Financial/Standard & Poor’s claims paying Ability rating of A- or above;
- A Weiss Research, Inc. rating of B+ or above;
- A Moody’s Investor Services rating of A3 or above or
- Backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the exchange visitor’s home country

Accompanying spouses and dependents are required to also be covered by insurance in the amounts set forth above. We recommend that you take extended coverage to make sure that you are covered on the dates of your travel as well as a few days after the completion of your program until you return home.

The Washington Center can recommend local health insurance providers. The policy can be purchased online for approximately $50 per month. For more information, please contact visainfo@twc.edu

**Living Expenses**

Please note that the tuition fee is due as soon as you accept to participate in the program. The housing payment must be paid before you arrive to the United States.

### Estimated Living Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air Travel (estimated)</strong></td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated monthly health insurance expense</strong>:</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daily Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Metro, Meals and Extra)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weekly Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$280.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Metro, Meals and Extra)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome Orientation

The Washington Center organizes an orientation session every semester. More details will be sent to you prior to your arrival in Washington, D.C.

The topics covered during the orientation are:

- Icebreaker Activity.
- Welcome and President's Remarks.
- How to Survive an Internship: Available Community Resources, Life and Customs in the U.S.
- Academic Affairs: General Introduction.
- Financial and Administrative Counseling Session.
- Housing Services Procedures and Tips: Rules, available health care, emergency assistance, important addresses and phone numbers.

- J-1 Visa Orientation (mandatory): Overview and Important Information.
- Meetings with Academic Program Advisors: Each program meets in separate rooms to discuss the program’s goals, objectives, projects and other details.
- Q&A Session.
- Closing Remarks.

Please bring a notebook and dress in business attire.
Tips for a Successful Internship

Tips for Successful Training

- A good attitude is important, be patient and non-judgmental.
- Avoid talking to the media or giving out certain information unless you are given clear guidelines.
- Consider carefully when, how and to whom to assert yourself. Some issues should be resolved by you personally, other issues are best handled by other staff.
- Be careful with whom you share your observations in the office and in whom you confide.
- Be realistic about the types of projects assigned to you.
- Consider the time you need to complete a project and budget accordingly.
- Consider your own capabilities (strengths and weaknesses).
- Consider your interests, expectations and aspirations in light of the work goals.
- If you are having difficulties, ask for help!
- Be aware of the decision-making structure of your organization: to whom should you direct your ideas/concerns?
- Ask to see the organization’s operations manual and/or organization chart.
- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your organization.
- Learn about the organization through support staff, they are a source of information.
- Ask to be included in meetings relevant to your learning needs.
- Take initiatives and be proactive. Take risks that will challenge your thinking and experience.
- Observe co-workers professionally and personally. Adapt the qualities that would benefit you.
- Keep good records and files of your work: Start an address book and keep a copy of everything you think is important and might need again.
- Please remember that the Academic Program Advisor who works with you during the placement process may not be the same person who assists you while in Washington D.C.
Contact Info

If you have any questions or concerns please contact:

**Sasha Gerhardson**
202-238-7918 (direct)
Sasha.Gerhardson@twc.edu

**Luisa Solarte**
202-238-7950 (direct)
Luisa.Solarte@twc.edu

**TWC Phone**
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**TWC Email**
Visas Email: Visainfo@twc.edu
General Email: Internationalinfo@twc.edu
Housing: Housing@twc.edu
Finance: Finance@twc.edu

Please Note
- When leaving a voice mail message please remember to speak clearly and slowly and be sure to leave your phone number even if you believe the person you are calling has the number.
- Your outgoing personal voice mail message should be simple and professional. First impressions may make a difference to the agencies that contact you.
- When sending a fax use a cover sheet, indicating your name and telephone number and recipients’ name. Keep a copy of any materials you attempt to fax.