



## J-1 International Scholar Program

In order to come to The University of Southern Mississippi as an international scholar, you must be invited, hired, or appointed by a department, office, school, college, or institute of the university for the purposes of study, long-term or short-term research, teaching, or training. There are several different categories within the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program for scholars, including:

- Research Scholars
- Short-term Scholars
- Professors

The J-1 Exchange Visitor Program is a temporary, nonimmigrant program. This visa category should not be used by departments or internationals for permanent employment positions or to seek Permanent Residency.

The purpose of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program is to “increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges.” The Department of State issues J-1 visas and oversees regulatory and administrative aspects of the J Visa Exchange Visitor Program.

### Eligibility Requirements

- Intent to pursue appropriate activity
- Intent to return to home country
- Sufficient funding for entirety of program
- Appropriate background for program activity
- Adequate English proficiency

### Duration of Stay and Employment

#### J-1 Research Scholar/Professor

- 5-year maximum stay to engage in research and/or teaching
- Cannot be a candidate for or hold a tenured position
- Must have a specific objective
- 12-24 month ban could prevent J-1 Research Scholars/Professors from receiving sponsorship, if they have previously held a J-1 visa; this includes J-2 dependents

#### J-1 Short-Term Scholar

- 6-month maximum
- Permitted to participate in conferences, workshops, seminars etc. if stated on Form DS-2019
- Must have specific objective
- 12-24 month bar does not apply to Short-Term Scholars

#### J-1 Specialist

- 12-month maximum
- Must be expert in field of specialized knowledge or skill
- Cannot fill permanent or long-term position of employment
- Objective must be to observe, consult or demonstrate special skills

## Financial Support Required

Host departments must verify the scholar will have sufficient funding for the entire length of their stay. The minimum amount of financial support for a scholar is \$1,000. If the department is funding part, or all, of the scholar's stay this must be detailed in the application. These amounts should include funding for housing, meals, health insurance, etc. as seen below.

Expense	Per Month	Annual Cost
<b>Housing (One – Two Bedroom Apartment)</b>	\$400 - \$900	\$4,800 - \$10,800
<b>Utilities (Electricity, Gas, Water, Sewer, Garbage)</b>	\$115 - \$250	\$1,380 - \$3,000
<b>Phone/Cell Phone</b>	\$45 - \$75	\$540 - \$900
<b>Health Insurance</b>	\$40 – 170	\$480 - \$2,040
<b>Groceries</b>	\$300 - \$500	\$1,200 - \$1,800
<b>Miscellaneous (Public Transit, Clothing, Bedding, Etc.)</b>	\$100 - \$150	\$1,200 - \$1,800
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$1,000 - \$2,045</b>	<b>\$12,000 - \$24,540</b>

## SEVIS and Visa Fees

Prospective scholars are required to pay the SEVIS fee and associated visa fees in order to obtain their J-1 visa and enter the United States.

### SEVIS Fee

The SEVIS fee is payable by going to [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com). If the scholar needs assistance with paying the I-901 fee, they can contact International Student and Scholar Services for further instructions.

### Visa Fees

Visa fees are separate from the SEVIS fee. Fee amounts can vary, please check the Department of State website for additional details and exact fees <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/fees/fees-visa-services.html>. Scholars should consult the website of the specific embassy or consulate where they will apply for their J-1 visa for additional information.

## Medical Insurance

Federal regulations require all J-1 Exchange Visitors to maintain minimum health insurance for themselves and any dependents who may accompany them during their stay in the United States.

- Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per person per accident/illness
- Repatriation of remains of at least \$25,000
- Expenses associated with Medical Evacuation in the amount of \$50,000
- Deductible of no more than \$500

## Medical Insurance (continued)

Willful failure on the part of the scholar to maintain the required insurance will result in the termination of their exchange program. Scholars may purchase insurance meeting these requirements on their own and provide proof to International Student and Scholar Services when they arrive or they can request to be added to the comprehensive insurance plan designed for The University of Southern Mississippi's students and scholars. If International Student and Scholar Services does not receive proof of coverage or a request for the comprehensive insurance plan within five (5) days, the scholar will be enrolled in the comprehensive insurance plan by the Director of International Student and Scholar Services.

## Application Steps

### Instructions to the Scholar Applicant

The Scholar Applicant should complete Sections 1-3 of the application and sign the statement at the end of Section 3. The Scholar Applicant should then submit the form and supporting documents to the Sponsoring Department at The University of Southern Mississippi.

### Supporting Documents

- Copy of biographical page of applicant's passport
- Financial support documents reflecting a minimum available amount of \$12,000
- Completed Background Check Forms
- Proof of English Proficiency through one of the following:
  - Certification by language test taken in past two (2) years, recognized by The University of Southern Mississippi graduate admissions. A copy of the test score must be provided. (e.g. TOEFL – 71 or higher, IELTS – 6 band or higher)
  - Certification by an American academic institution or English language school verifying the Exchange Visitor possesses the English proficiency to function daily within the position and local community, issued on letterhead in English within the past one (1) year, including a signature from a school official. A copy of the letter must be provided.
  - Certification by an interviewer from The University of Southern Mississippi through an interview with the prospective Exchange Visitor's English proficiency in accordance with 22 CFR 62.10(a)(2). If an interview is needed, please contact International Student and Scholar Services for additional information.

### Instructions for Department

The Sponsoring Department should complete Section 4 of the application and provide the appropriate signatures from the Faculty Sponsor, Department Chair, and Dean of the appropriate College. Once the department has received all documents from the Intern Applicant, the Sponsoring Department should forward ALL documents to International Student and Scholar Services for processing. Without this information, the Form DS-2019 cannot be properly completed. Any incomplete forms will be returned.

If any additional information is needed, International Student and Scholar Services will contact the Sponsoring Department. Once processing is complete, International Student and Scholar Services will notify the department to either send someone to pick up the immigration documents or that the documents have been shipped (at departmental expense).

### International Student and Scholar Services Processing

After receiving all documents from the sponsoring department, International Student and Scholar Services will process the DS-2019 Forms for the Scholar and all J-2 dependents in SEVIS.

Along with the DS-2019 Forms, International Student and Scholar Services will prepare a packet for the J-1 Scholar, which will include the departmental appointment/offer letter, an invitation letter from International Student and Scholar Services, in addition to more information about the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program.

### Processing Time

Please allow for 7-10 business days for International Student and Scholar Services to process and prepare all supporting documents.



**SECTION 2: DEPENDENT FAMILY INFORMATION (FOR SPOUSE AND CHILDREN'S J-2 DS-2019)**

IF YOU REQUIRE DOCUMENTS FOR YOUR SPOUSE OR DEPENDENT CHILDREN, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION.

**FAMILY FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** To bring a spouse or any children, a J-1 Student Intern must show financial support above the minimum of \$12,000 per year (\$1,000/ month). Financial Support of \$6,000 per year (\$500/ month) must be shown for each J-2 dependent.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- DS-2019 documents can be issued only to a dependent spouse and to unmarried, dependent children under 21 years of age. Married children and children over 21 years old cannot be issued a J-2 DS-2019 and cannot hold J-2 status.
- The Dept of State requires J-1 and J-2 DS-2019's to be issued at the same time, prior to the J-1's visa appointment at a US Embassy or Consulate.

<b>Spouse's Information</b>	Full Name of Spouse: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Family/Last Name (Surname)</span> <span>Given Name (First)</span> <span>Middle Name (if any)</span> </div> City of Birth: _____ Country of Birth: _____ Country of Citizenship: _____ Country of Permanent Residence: _____ Date of Birth: (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ Spouse's Gender : <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
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<b>Child's Information</b>	Full Name of Child (required): _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Family/Last Name (Surname)</span> <span>Given Name (First)</span> <span>Middle Name (if any)</span> </div> City of Birth: _____ Country of Birth: _____ Country of Citizenship: _____ Country of Permanent Residence: _____ Date of Birth: (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ Child's Gender : <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
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For additional children, please copy this section and submit as a separate page with the above requested information.

**SECTION 3: FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

If self-funded or externally funded, the minimum funding requirement for a scholar is \$1,000 per month (\$12,000 per year) and \$500 per month (\$6,000 per year) for each accompanying dependent. Funding must be arranged prior to issuance of a DS-2019 form. No additional funding from The University of Southern Mississippi should be expected after arrival.

If funds are from an organization, grant, or government support, please attach a signed copy of any letters of award or sponsorship. If on personal funds, please attach a bank statement not more than 6 months old. **Proof of funding must accompany this form.**

SOURCES OF FUNDS	NAME OF SOURCE OF FUNDING	ASSURED SUPPORT (IN US DOLLARS)
1. The University of Southern Mississippi		\$
2. International Organization		\$
3. Scholar's Government		\$
4. Personal/Family Funds		\$
5. Other Source		\$

**REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION TO BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM**

- Copy of Passport Biographical Page (For yourself and any accompanying dependents)
- Copy of Proof of Financial Support or Bank Statement (if **not** being funded by The University of Southern Mississippi) or letter from dean or academic advisor at home institution authorizing employment at The University of Southern Mississippi (if employed by USM)
- Copy of Proof of English Language Proficiency (either letter from English language instructor, TOEFL Score, or IELTS Score)

**NOTE: If currently inside the United States, please include copy/Scan of current/ most recent Visa Stamp, I-94 Card, and current/previous DS-2019's, I-20's, I-797 Approval Notices (for yourself and any accompanying dependents).**

**I certify that the above information is correct and complete, and that I shall notify the University of any change in my personal information or research plans.**

Scholars's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLAR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



**SECTION 4: DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL FOR J-1 SPONSORSHIP TO BE COMPLETED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI SPONSORING DEPARTMENT**

Name of J-1 Scholar: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Intended J-1 Sponsorship: \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_  
month day year month day year

Title of Position at The University of Southern Mississippi: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Sponsor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrative Contact/ Office Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrative Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing below, we attest that we will comply with the following departmental/college responsibilities in hosting a J-1 Intern:**

1. The department acknowledges and agrees to conform to the J-1 program requirements and prohibitions established by federal law 22 CFR § 62.23 (please see page 1 of this packet).
2. The department will have the scholar make an appointment to check in with International Student and Scholar Services within five (5) days of arrival to fulfill the government's reporting requirements.
3. If an extension of program is necessary, the department will provide an updated appointment letter and proof of any additional funding two weeks prior to the current program end date.
4. If the scholar does not come to The University of Southern Mississippi as expected or will be delayed in arriving, the department will inform the International Student and Scholar Services as soon as possible so his/her documents can be updated.
5. If the scholar ends his/her participation in the program more than 30 days earlier than the expected appointment date, the department will inform International Student and Scholar Services so his/her immigration record can be updated as required by law.
6. Upon completion or termination of appointment, the department will inform International Student and Scholar Services of the scholar's departure date by either email or formal letter.
7. The department understands International Student and Scholar Services does not provide assistance in making housing arrangements.

**Required Signatures:**

Faculty Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of College: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING PREFERENCES**

- Department picks up and sends immigration documents to intern applicant.  
 ISSS sends documents at departmental expense. Please provide Fed Ex account number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Besides this request to host a scholar, scholar applicants must complete and return the Background Check forms with the Application and Supporting Documents. Additionally, departments must complete an Affiliate Data Form in order to give the visiting scholar access to campus facilities. These additional forms should also be submitted to International Student and Scholar Services.**

SCHOLAR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## Affiliate Data Form

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Effective Date of Action: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Initial Last

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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Department #: \_\_\_\_\_ Department Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Box: \_\_\_\_\_ Department Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Does employee need a Picture ID?  Yes  NoReason for Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Approvals:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Budget Authority or Principle Investigator Date Human Resources Date

Instructions: If you keep a copy for your records you must black-out the sensitive data such as social security number and date of birth.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

To: Employees with Conditional Offers of Employment

Re: Background Checks

All offers of employment or participation in any activity involving minors in a University sponsored program with The University of Southern Mississippi are contingent on successful completion of a background check.

An individual may not begin with the University until the background check has been completed and they have been cleared to begin.

- Sign and return included forms. (Background Check Form, Authorization to Release Information Form, and Vehicle Use Agreement)
- **Original** signatures are required.
- Return forms to the hiring department in a sealed envelope either in person or via mail (fax and scanned forms will not be accepted).
- Failure to provide consent, return of the forms in a timely manner, or providing the required information will result in the withdrawal of any offer of employment and/or ability to participate in University sponsored programs which include minors.

For questions contact [Crystal.Bowler@usm.edu](mailto:Crystal.Bowler@usm.edu)  
University of Southern Mississippi  
Department of Human Resources

Attn: Crystal Bowler



## Department of Human Resources

# Background Check Form: disclose and sign

### Background Check Statement:

All offers of employment or participation in any activity involving minors in a University sponsored program with The University of Southern Mississippi are contingent on a background check. The University of Southern Mississippi requires a background check for the following individuals: 1) new employees in any position; 2) any employee, student, or volunteer affiliated with The University of Southern Mississippi who will be working with or in programs involving children, 3) Affiliates with access to University systems or who are on campus.

An offer of employment from The University of Southern Mississippi for any position, or the ability to participate in any program involving children as a University employee, student or volunteer, is contingent on the receipt and evaluation of the background check report. Failure to provide consent or the required information will result in the withdrawal of any offer of employment, or as applicable, in the immediate termination of my participation as a University employee, student or volunteer in any program involving children.

Following the initial hire in any position with the University, or as applicable, the receipt of the first acceptable background check report that supports participation in any program involving children, the University may obtain follow-up background check reports at any time during the course of employment with the University in any position, or as applicable, participation as an employee, student or volunteer in any program involving children. Revocation of this consent, in writing, shall constitute a "for cause" basis for the immediate termination of employment in any position with The University of Southern Mississippi or the immediate termination of my participation as an employee, student or volunteer with any program involving children.

State law prohibits the employment of any person who has been convicted or pled guilty in any court of any felony in which public funds were unlawfully taken, obtained or misappropriated in the abuse or misuse of the person's office or employment or money coming into the person's hands by virtue of the person's office or employment.

All individuals described in this document must complete the Criminal History Disclosure and Authorization to Release Information and must have clearance from Human Resources before they can begin. If unreported convictions are revealed in the criminal history check, the offer of employment and/or participation will be withdrawn and, if employed, the individual will be separated from employment, unless the individual provides evidence that the report is in error. The decision to reject or separate an individual with an unreported conviction is solely at the discretion of The University of Southern Mississippi.

## Background Check Form (page 2)

### Criminal History Disclosure:

Have you ever been convicted\* of a crime other than a minor traffic violation?

Yes      No

If yes, you must disclose for each offense: date, charge, type or offense, city & state, disposition.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Charge</b>	<b>Type</b> (felony, misdemeanor)	<b>City/State</b>	<b>Disposition</b> (guilty, conditional dismissal)

(If additional space is needed, include the information below.)

I have carefully read and understand this background check statement and certify that the information provided is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\* Convicted means you were declared guilty by a judge or you pleaded guilty in court. A conviction may have even taken place if you did not pay a fine or spend time in jail or in prison. A conviction could have been for either a misdemeanor or a felony. For USM purposes, driving while under the influence, driving on a suspended license, reckless driving, leaving the scene of an accident, and vehicular homicide are not minor traffic violations and must be declared (whether the result is a ticket or a more severe penalty). Minor traffic violations that result in tickets do not need to be declared. A criminal history investigation is done on each new employee, and/or participant and any relationship with the University is conditional, subject to the findings of a criminal history investigation. Answering yes to this question does not automatically disqualify you for employment; however, information obtained from the investigation will be used in the employment review process.



