University of Southern Maine
Exchange Visitor (J-1) Category Definitions

Federal regulations define certain “categories” of eligibility for J-1 exchange visitor status. The Office of International Programs at USM has governmental approval to sponsor exchange visitors in the following categories: (1) Short Term Scholar (2) Research Scholar (3) Professor (4) Student & Intern. The categories are defined below for informational purposes only. Ultimately the International Programs office will need to determine in conjunction with the hosting department and exchange visitor what the most appropriate category will be based on the purpose and length of the visit.

1. Short Term Scholars are defined as “scholars coming to the United States for a period of up to 6 months to lecture, observe, consult, and to participate in seminars, workshops, conferences, study tours, professional meetings, or similar types of educational and professional activities.” [22 CFR 62.4] No extensions beyond 6 months are permitted.

- Purpose of visit: lecture, observe, consult, train staff, demonstrate special skill(s)
- Current position in home country: Professor, researcher (post-doc or pre-doc/graduate student), or someone with similar credentials (Doctor, attorney, etc.)
- Duration of U.S. visit: 1 day - 6 months
- Individual may return in this category an unlimited number of times

2. Research Scholars are persons who are primarily engaged in research. They may also teach or lecture. Research Scholars are expected to have appropriate academic or similar credentials. Research Scholars may participate in the exchange visitor program for up to 5 years.

- Purpose of visit; research, observe, consult, teach, capacity in connection with a research project
- Current position in home country: Professor, researcher (post-doc or pre-doc/graduate student), or someone with similar credentials (Doctor, attorney, etc.)
- Duration of U.S. visit: 3 weeks - 5 years
- Individual is subject to the 24 Month Bar (See below for more information)

3. Professors are persons who are primarily engaged in teaching. They may also engage in research. J-1 professors may not be appointed to tenure or tenure-track positions. Professors are subject to the same length of stay as Research Scholars.

- Purpose of visit: teach (primary), lecture, observe, consult, research
- Current position in home country: Professor, researcher (post-doc or pre-doc/graduate student), or someone with similar credentials (Doctor, attorney, etc.)
- Duration of U.S. visit: 3 weeks - 5 years
- Individual is subject to the 24 Month Bar (See below for more information)

4. At the University of Southern Maine the Student category is used primarily for full time students engaged in a non-degree “prescribed course of study” from a University abroad that has a written exchange agreement with USM. (The majority of degree seeking international students attend USM in F-1 student status).

In July of 2008 the Exchange Visitor regulations were amended to create a new “Student Intern” subcategory under the College and University Student Category. Essentially the Student Intern category provides an opportunity for foreign students currently enrolled and pursuing a degree at a postsecondary academic institution outside of the United States to participate in an internship program for up to 12 months for each degree/major. There is a lengthy list of criteria that must be met by the student and the sponsoring faculty must be willing to abide by a set of specific requirements as outlined by
the Department of State. Faculty and/or students interested in learning more about the intern category should contact Kimberly in the International Programs office at ksinc@usm.maine.edu

Special Conditions on Participation Related to the Research Scholar & Professor Categories

1. **Twelve month bar after previous J participation**: Time spent in the United States in any J status (including J-2 status) during the 12-month period *preceding* the prospective professor or research scholar’s program date *may* affect the alien’s eligibility for participation as a Professor or Research Scholar.

2. **24 month bar on repeat participation**: An individual who participates in the Exchange Visitor Program as a Professor or Research Scholar becomes subject to a 24-month bar on “repeat participation” in those categories after completing his or her program.

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