



Academic Training (AT)

What is Academic Training?

Academic Training is employment training or practical experience related to a J-1 Student's field of study in order to supplement your academic program in the United States. Academic Training is available at any point in your academic program (either while you are enrolled in courses or after you complete your program of study), as long as you are maintaining your J-1 status and follow the appropriate application process.

Academic Training may involve sequential or simultaneous activities, can be either paid or unpaid, and can involve one or several employers. Application and approval procedures must be followed for each employer and activity, and the relevant Academic Training time limits for your degree level must not be exceeded.

To participate in Academic Training, your program sponsor (listed on your DS-2019) must evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the academic training in achieving its stated goals and objectives in order to ensure the quality of the Academic Training program.

To be eligible for AT:

- Your primary goal in the United States should be to study rather than engage in Academic Training.
- You must have completed at least one full semester at the University of Utah to be eligible to apply.
- You must participate in Academic Training that is directly related to the major field of study that is listed on your Form DS-2019.
- You must be in good standing with your post-secondary accredited academic institution.
- You must receive written approval in advance from ISSS for the duration of your training (the maximum length of your training will depend on your degree level).

How to apply for AT:

1. Obtain a **job offer letter** from your potential employer, which includes:
 - a. Company Name and Location
 - b. Job Title
 - c. Name, Address, and Email Address, and Phone Number of Training Supervisor
 - d. Number of Hours Per Week
 - e. Start and End Dates of Training
 - f. Description of Goals and Objectives of your Academic Training
 - g. Compensation (if applicable)
2. Schedule an appointment to meet with an international student adviser to review the **J-1 Academic Training Request E-form** and discuss how the training will relate to your major field of study and why the training is an integral or critical part of your academic program.
3. Meet with your Academic Advisor to discuss the Academic Training opportunity and E-Form.
4. Submit the **J-1 Academic Training Request E-form** through iStart, upload your current DS-2019 and Job Offer Letter, and input your Academic Advisor's contact information.
5. The ISSS Office will contact you when your new DS-2019 with Academic Training authorization is ready to pick up. Please allow two weeks for processing.

Time Limitations on Academic Training:

You may participate in Academic Training before and/or after the completion of your program of study, however, you must have completed at least one semester at the University of Utah to be eligible to apply. You are allowed to participate in AT for the length of time needed to complete the goals and objectives of the training. The duration of AT must meet the following requirements and be approved by ISSS before the employment begins:

- **Undergraduate and pre-doctoral training:** You are eligible for one month of AT for each month of study, for a maximum of 18 months. For example, if your exchange program is 3 months you are eligible for 3 months of AT.
 - More than 18 months can be approved at the undergraduate and pre-doctoral level only if it is necessary for you to meet the requirements of your degree program in the United States.
- **Post-doctoral training:** Your Academic Training cannot exceed 36 months including all prior Academic Training you have completed.
- **Non-degree seeking students:** Your combined duration of study and Academic Training may not exceed a total of 24 months.

Frequently Asked Questions for Academic Training:

1. When do I need to apply for AT?

You must apply for AT at least two weeks before the program end date on your DS-2019. Your AT start date must be within thirty (30) days after completion of your exchange program.

2. How many hours am I allowed to work?

You may participate in Academic Training part-time (less than 20 hours per week) while enrolled in classes and full-time (up to 40 hours per week) after completion of your exchange program. You may also participate in full-time AT during authorized school breaks and vacation semesters.

Please note: Your total amount of AT is calculated by month, not by hour. Accumulating two months of part-time AT is the same as accumulating two months of full-time AT.

3. Does the job I have while on AT have to be paid employment, or can it be unpaid?

The Department of State describes the primary purpose of AT as an opportunity for a student “to participate in an academic training program during his or her studies, without wages or other remunerations” but paid training is also allowed. In either case, AT must be approved in advance of the start date.

Please note: If you plan to participate in an unpaid AT, you will be required to submit financial documentation for the duration of your AT as evidence that you will be able to cover your living expenses during this time.

4. Can I change employers during my AT?

Yes, you may have more than one employer during your Academic Training. If you wish to change employers, you must submit a new AT request for each employer. Each employer must be approved by ISSS before you may start employment. Additional employment cannot exceed the time limitation.

5. What if I earn more than one degree? Can I participate in more than one AT?

No, earning more than one degree does not increase eligibility for more AT.