

GUIDELINES

VISITING PROFESSORS AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS AT WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY CULLOWHEE, NC

Western Carolina University welcomes the opportunity to host visiting professors and research scholars for a semester or a year. This is accomplished through the Department of State J-1 visa program, which authorizes WCU to bring in lecturers and research scholars for a stipulated period of time. IPS issues the appropriate J-1 visa documents through the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

The office of International Programs and Services (IPS) assists departments and colleges with many of the initial aspects of a visiting professor/researcher program for Western Carolina University. This is a time for professional growth for the visiting professors as well as WCU faculty. We want this time to be a profitable experience for all concerned.

Outlined herein are some issues that need to be considered by all parties involved with facilitating a successful visiting scholar experience at WCU.

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Checklist: The Process to be Followed

1. This process should start **at least 6 months** before the intended arrival of the visiting scholar.
2. The faculty member or department communicates with possible international visitor and determines the time of the visit, whether the services are paid or unpaid, housing arrangements, etc.
3. The faculty member or department head accesses the Guidelines for Visiting Scholars and Researchers on the IPS website and communicates with the International Programs and Services department director or assistant director about the proposed visit.
4. The department head communicates with the college dean about the proposed visit and seeks approval.
5. The faculty member or department head send the guidelines to the prospective international visitor to complete the visa information pages and housing information (Appendices A&B).
6. If the international visitor is coming to WCU on the B tourist visa, the department head drafts a letter of invitation to the visiting scholar on department letterhead AND mails it to the visiting scholar. WCU has no further responsibility in the issuance of this visa (advance to #8).
7. If the international visitor is coming to WCU on the J-scholar/researcher visa, the department head drafts a letter of invitation to the visiting scholar on department letterhead and sends it to IPS.
 - a. IPS issues the J-1 visa document needed by the visiting scholar at the U.S. Embassy in the foreign nation.
 - b. IPS sends the department's letter of invitation, the visa document, IPS visa cover letter with visa instructions, and a copy of the HTH Health Insurance Plan to the visiting scholar.
8. The visiting scholar fills out the appropriate forms on the U.S. Embassy website, makes an appointment at the U.S. Embassy in the foreign country (if required), pays the visa fee (if required), makes travel arrangements, and communicates with the department.
9. The visiting scholar arrives in Cullowhee.
10. The visiting scholar on the J-1 visa visits the IPS office to be validated in the SEVIS system. This is **MANDATORY**.
11. If the visitor is teaching classes, he/she must attend the New Faculty Orientation at the beginning of the fall semester. If the visitor arrives in spring, the department needs to provide academic orientation for the visitor; IPS will provide orientation to the area.

Types of Visiting Professors and Researchers

WCU will assist departments and colleges to facilitate the following types of visiting professors and researchers:

1. Short-term visits under 3 weeks on the B visitor visa to guest lecture, provide performances, visit classrooms, work with faculty and students on specific projects, or attend workshops or conferences. For further information on this type of visa, for which the scholar/researcher will need a B visitor visa, see <http://travel.state.gov/pdf/BusinessVisa.pdf>
2. Long-term visits of 3 weeks or more (up to 1 semester or 1 year) under the J-1 visitor visa to teach, research, guest lecture, provide performances, visit classrooms, work with faculty and students on specific projects, etc.
3. Exchange of faculty with a WCU partner institution for a semester or a year, whereby the visiting faculty member guest lectures for a few weeks or teaches full-time.
4. Hiring an international faculty member for a semester or year in a position that carries benefits, see the section on hiring international faculty on the IPS website: <http://www.wcu.edu/9514.asp>. This person will most likely need the H-1B visa. However, some of the issues covered in this document, like accommodations, payment of services, export control, still apply to the person holding the H-1B visa.

Definition of Visiting Professor/Researcher

According to the J-1 U.S. State Department Guidelines, a Professor is defined as:

An individual primarily teaching, lecturing, observing, or consulting at post-secondary, accredited educational institutions, museums, libraries, or similar types of institutions. A professor may also conduct research, unless disallowed by the sponsor.

A research scholar is defined as:

An individual primarily conducting research, observing, or consulting in connection with a research project at research institutions, corporate research facilities, museums, libraries, post-secondary accredited educational institutions, or similar types of institutions. The research scholar may also teach or lecture, unless disallowed by the sponsor.

Approval of Visiting Professor/ Research Scholar

- A. Either a WCU overseas Partner institution works with IPS to send a professor to Western Carolina University OR
- B. The prospective visiting professor works with a WCU faculty member, department or college to determine if the department or college is willing to receive a professor or research scholar. All requests for a visiting professor or researcher must be granted by the Dean of the sponsoring college. In order to do so, the college needs to agree to
 1. review the research proposal to determine if there is ample interest on the part of one of the WCU faculty members to serve as a mentor for the project.

Once the College Dean approves the proposal, the College Dean needs to assess whether the college can provide the incoming professor or researcher with the following:

1. faculty mentor to oversee the research and/or teaching responsibilities of the visiting professor
 2. office space
 3. laboratory or studio space and materials access
 4. telephone access
 5. computer access
 6. WCU email address
 7. CAT card
- C. If the WCU College Dean agrees to the above, the College Dean then works with IPS
1. to write a letter of invitation on college letterhead that stipulates the purpose of the visit, the length of time, where the visiting professor will be located, and any other conditions or stipulations that the department/college determine necessary (for visa application)
 2. to identify suitable housing on campus in the international faculty apartments managed by the Provost Office, or nearby housing,
 3. to assist with the mandatory orientation (according to J regulations) to the university and locale.
- D. IPS will work with the incoming visiting professor or researcher
1. to acquire the necessary information to issue the DS2019 for the J-1 Visiting Professor/Research Scholar at the overseas embassy.
 2. to show proof of adequate health insurance coverage for the entire length of stay in the U.S. for the researcher and all dependents, should there be any.
 3. to provide, with the sponsoring department and faculty mentor, a mandatory orientation to the university and locale.

Location of Activity

All SEVIS approved universities must indicate the location of the exchange activity. In the case of WCU, that location is a specific department in Cullowhee, NC. If the visiting scholar and accompanying dependents visit other cities in the U.S. on vacation or for professional reasons (attending a conference, visiting another institution), the visiting scholar must provide the itinerary and dates to IPS.

Payment of Services

Visiting exchange professors from WCU partner institutions who teach in the place of a WCU professor on exchange to partner institution will not be paid an additional stipend. In this case, the home universities will pay the salary of its employee for the duration of the exchange.

Visiting professors (and possibly exchange professor) may be eligible for small stipends for guest lecturing or performing at WCU or elsewhere in the region or country with **PRIOR APPROVAL** from the J-1 Visa Program Responsible Officer (RO) in the IPS office. Visiting professors on the B visitor visa may also be eligible for stipends. WCU pays stipends to the eligible visiting professor/researcher as an independent contractor. However, the international visitor must have a

United States Social Security # before getting paid. Depending on the length of time the international visitor is at WCU, acquiring a Social Security number may be difficult.

Bank Account

Depending on how long the international visitor is at WCU, a bank account may not be necessary. If the international visitor would like a bank account, the BB & T Bank in Cullowhee will set up an account with a completed W/8BEN Form (on IRS website), passport, and local address.

Transportation in the Cullowhee/Sylva Area

Incoming Visiting Professors and Research Scholars need to be advised that there is no public transportation in the Cullowhee/Sylva Area. The university provides CAT-Tran shuttle service for students and faculty to use around campus. Periodically there may be a shuttle that takes students to Sylva for shopping. The office of International Programs and Services will also assist visiting international faculty, on a limited basis, with transportation needs.

If the visiting scholar/researcher wants to purchase a car, there are a number of car dealers in the area. A North Carolina driver's license and a Social Security number are required to purchase a car with a North Carolina plate.

Accommodations

Finding accommodations for J-1 visitors to campus is the responsibility of the hosting department or the visitor. IPS will assist with suggestions and advising about the availability of on-campus accommodations under its control. For example:

- A. Faculty Exchanges – if faculty are exchanging from a WCU overseas partner institution for under 3 weeks, WCU can provide housing free of charge either on campus, off-campus, or with a WCU faculty member.
- B. Visiting Professors or Researchers on the J-1 visa. Depending on the special activities negotiated for the visiting professor or researcher, WCU can either provide housing free of charge or at a reasonable cost.
- C. Short-term visiting professor. Depending on the special activities negotiated for the visiting, short-term professor, WCU can either provide housing free of charge or at a reasonable cost.

Visiting Professors and Research Scholar Protocols

Once the visit is approved by the College Dean, the visiting professor or researcher needs to stay in contact with the WCU faculty mentor as well as with the office of International Programs and Services. This communication will expedite the research, visa, accommodation, and other university services for the incoming scholar.

- A. The documents that are most critical to the process are the following:
 - 1. Research Proposal of 2 pages outlining the project and expected activities – submit either to IPS or the hosting WCU department or faculty member
 - 2. Curriculum Vita or Resume
 - 3. Visa Information Form – page 7 (submit to IPS)
 - 4. Housing Information Form – page 9 (submit to IPS)

5. Proof of adequate Health Insurance while in the U.S.
- B. Once on campus, the visiting professor/researcher needs to:
1. Meet with the IPS SEVIS staff - especially if the visitor has been issued a J-1 visa from WCU. **All J-1 visa holders MUST report to the IPS SEVIS staff within 30 DAYS of the beginning of the program. The IPS SEVIS Staff will then transmit to SEVIS the fact that the professor and any dependents are PHYSICALLY PRESENT in the U.S. Without this verification in the system, the professor and any dependents are ILLEGALLY present in the U.S. and will be asked to leave.**
 2. Attend the MANDATORY New Faculty Orientation at the beginning of the semester, especially if the visitor has teaching responsibilities.
 3. Stay in contact with the WCU faculty mentor and the sponsoring department staff.
 4. Stay in contact with the office of International Programs and Services, especially the Assistant Director, who can offer assistance and guidance as needed about the university and surrounding area.
- The visiting professor/researcher may
5. Join the International Faculty Group on Campus (see IPS for details).

Export Control Protocol at Western Carolina University

From the 2008 Export Control Plan:

“All foreign visitors to WCU must obtain the Provost’s approval at least three months in advance of the visit. The Provost’s office will coordinate with the Graduate School and Research Administration with regard to Export Control Management Plan administration. The Provost’s office will also coordinate with the University Pandemic Flu Coordinator to determine, in advance of the planned visit, whether the World Health Organization and/or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have issued any travel notices pertaining to the international visitor’s home country.

The University will not allow access by foreign nationals or foreign persons to export-controlled information and technology without first obtaining an export license, other authorization, or exemption. Accordingly, access to the College of Arts and Sciences laboratories, facilities, and equipment in the Natural Sciences and Stillwell buildings and the Kimmel School of Construction Management and Engineering and Technology facilities and equipment located in the Belk Building and the Center for Applied Technologies shall be restricted. The Deans of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Kimmel School will be responsible for approving and coordinating access to restricted facilities and equipment. The Deans will also ensure that adequate controls of physical, visual, and electronic access to export-controlled information and technology are developed, which may include unique badging requirements for foreign nationals and segregated work areas for export-controlled information and technology.”

Policy 100 – International Travel and International Visitors

Access this policy for complete information: <http://www.wcu.edu/25383.asp>. Follow the instructions for filling out the required form and submit the form to your department head, dean and provost for approval. This visitor will be added to the international visitor list that International Programs and Services keeps in the office.

Academic Calendar at Western Carolina University

The academic year is divided into 2 semesters of 16 weeks each + one week of finals (17 weeks) and summer school. International visiting lecturers could be asked to guest lecture during any of these sessions:

Fall semester: mid-August to mid-December
Spring semester: early January to early May
Summer sessions: 3-week May session
5-week session in June until July 3rd or so
5-week session in July until beginning of August

How to Obtain a CatCard and Outlook Email Address For A Visiting International Scholar or Researcher

The AA-7 form drives the process.

- A. For those Research Scholars or Researchers who are receiving a stipend
- B. For those Research Scholars or Researchers who are not getting a payroll check, it has to be 'walked through'.

The department sponsor needs to take the new scholar to Human Resources, with copies of all their U.S. entry documentation (letter of invitation, passport, I-94 card, DS-2019, etc.), and the following completed forms:

- a. Employee Data Form
- b. Non-Employee Access in Banner form

These forms can be found in the Human Resources website under Identify ManagementForms at <http://admfin.wcu.edu/hr/Formspage.htm>

1. Human Resources enters the scholar into the system and issues a 92---- number to the visiting international scholar or researcher.
2. With the 92--- number, they go to the CatCard office, where the scholar will be issued a CatCard, allowing library access. The scholar may also wish to add money to his/her CatCard in order to pay for meals at campus dining facilities.

IPS Contact Information

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