

J-1 INTERN PROGRAM

Information and Instructions

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Center for International Education
(Updated March 27, 2008)

General Overview

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville has been granted permission by the U.S. Department of State to host students from outside the U.S. for internship programs related to their studies. These interns can be given J-1 immigration status under the sponsorship of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The UTK J-1 Intern Program is administered by the UT Center for International Education (**CIE**). Note that the regulations and procedures for the "Intern" category are quite different than those for other categories of J-1 Visitor, such as Student, Research Scholar, Professor, Short-term Scholar, or Specialist. (See other resources for information about these categories). However, like all other J-1 Exchange Visitors, J-1 interns are normally expected to return to their home countries upon completion of their programs.

According to U.S. Government regulations, the internship program must be a "structured and guided work-based learning program, that reinforces a student's or recent graduate's academic study, recognizes the needs for work-based experience, provides on-the-job exposure to American techniques, methodologies, and expertise, and enhances the Intern's knowledge of American culture and society."

Internships normally take place on the UTK campus, supervised by a UTK professor, but in some cases they may take place with outside organizations (called "third parties") under the **secondary supervision** of a UTK professor. [*Procedural note: Due to recent changes in the intern program regulations, forms and instructions for off-campus internships are not yet available. Call the UT Center for International Education if you wish to sponsor an off-campus intern*] Currently, The University of Tennessee is authorized to host interns in the fields of science, engineering, mathematics, and industrial occupations. It may be possible to add new fields to this list. Contact CIE **at least six months before the program** to discuss this possibility.

Who is eligible for the J-1 Intern Program?

A prospective intern must be enrolled in a recognized degree- or certificate-granting post-secondary academic institution outside the U.S. **or** must have graduated from such an institution no more than 12 months before the beginning of the internship. A prospective intern must be screened for English proficiency and personally interviewed to ensure that she/he has the appropriate background and skills for the program. Before the intern applies for the J-1 visa, he/she must be given a clear written statement of the learning goals and activities of the internship program.

What type of activities are appropriate for an internship?

The internship must be designed as an educational program, directly related to the intern's current or recent field of study. The intern may receive a stipend or salary from The University of Tennessee (or third party organization), but he/she may not fill a normal position of employment which could or would be filled by a regular employee, and he/she may not displace a U.S. worker. The internship should normally involve entry-level work or activities but should not duplicate any previous internship or employment that the intern has had.

The internship must consist of at least 32 hours of structured activities per week. The intern may not engage in "casual or unskilled labor", and no more than 20% of the program may include clerical work. Interns in medical and social service fields (such as nursing and social work) may not engage in patient care or contact. Additional restrictions apply to persons in the field of hospitality and tourism.

How long may an internship last?

An internship may last for three weeks to twelve months. The length of the program must be established before the intern arrives; in most cases, the internship program may not be extended after the intern arrives.

May an intern transfer to another institution or engage in a second internship?

An intern is normally expected to complete the planned internship with the original program sponsor, so a transfer would probably not be appropriate. After the intern returns home, he/she may be invited to the U.S. for another internship, provided he/she still meets the eligibility criteria and that the internship does not duplicate the activities of the first.

How is the internship evaluated?

U.S. law requires a **written** evaluation of every internship program, to be signed by the intern and the primary supervisor. For all interns, an evaluation must be completed and signed **at the end of the internship period, before the intern returns home**. If an internship will last more than six months, an additional, midpoint, evaluation is also required. Copies of these evaluations must be given to the intern, to the supervisor, and to the Center for International Education. **This is a strict law! FAILURE TO SEND THE COPY OF THE EVALUATION FORM TO CIE MAY MEAN THAT THE HOST DEPARTMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO HOST FUTURE INTERNS!**

How can a host department initiate paperwork for a J-1 intern?

If a UTK department is interested in hosting an international intern in the department or with a "third party" organization, it should follow the steps listed below. These requirements are dictated by U.S. law. (More detailed instructions are given in a separate list called "Documents to be Submitted for a J-1 Intern").

1. Appoint a host professor to be the primary supervisor. (If the training will take place outside of UTK, the primary supervisor may be an employee of a third party organization, and the UT professor will serve as a secondary supervisor and program evaluator. [*Currently, instructions and forms for third party training are not available. Contact CIE for details.*].)
2. Determine that the prospective intern meets the stated criteria for the J-1 Intern Program sponsorship (as explained above). Obtain **Certification of Academic Status** from intern's academic institution.
3. Design a detailed internship program and obtain the intern's agreement to this plan.
4. Conduct a personal (or telephone) interview of the Intern. In most cases, this interview must be conducted by the host professor. **Complete Interview Report Form.**
5. Evaluate the English proficiency of the Intern and complete **English Proficiency Form.**
6. Complete **Form DS-7002** describing the internship goals and activities. If there are multiple phases of training (with different activities), complete a separate Page 2 for each phase. After the form and all Page 2's have been completed, the form is signed by the intern and the supervisor. (Faxed or scanned signatures by intern are acceptable; intern may keep copy with original signature)
7. Make arrangements for financial compensation of intern, and/or obtain documentation of other financial support.
8. If the primary supervisor will be a non-UT employee, complete a **Third Party Agreement Form** (*not yet available*). Determine how supervision will be shared with the UT host professor. Conduct an on-site visit of the internship location, if required.
9. Submit all required forms to the UT Center for International Education (1620 Melrose Avenue) (as listed in the separate list of documents).

10. If all documents are complete and intern appears to be eligible for the J-1 program, CIE will issue a **Form DS-2019** and send it to the intern, along with the copy of the DS-7002.
11. Arrange appropriate housing well in advance of the Intern's arrival. (CIE cannot make housing arrangements; this must be done by host department.)
12. As soon as possible after the intern arrives, arrange for him/her to attend an orientation program in CIE.
13. **DON'T FORGET TO COMPLETE REQUIRED EVALUATION FORMS ON TIME AND SEND COPIES TO CIE!!!!!!! DEPARTMENT MAY USE FORMS PROVIDED BY CIE OR MAY DESIGN ITS OWN EVALUATION FORMAT.**