

Division of Student Affairs ~ International Student and Scholar Services

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INFORMATION FOR NEWLY ADMITTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS in J-1 VISA STATUS

The International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) team is here to help you navigate the complexities of your immigration status and to assist you in making a smooth transition to studying and living in the U.S. For detailed information visit our website at <http://www.fau.edu/iss>.

BEFORE YOU ENTER THE UNITED STATES

- **Review the enclosed form DS-2019 carefully.** Please sign the form to verify that all information is correct.
- **Pay \$180 SEVIS fee.** Newly admitted students who enter the U.S. for the first time in J-1 status must pay the SEVIS fee prior to applying for their visa.
- **Apply for the J-1 Visa.** For the visa application, you will have to present your DS-2019 issued by Florida Atlantic University (FAU), passport (valid at least six months into the future), FAU admission letter, and financial documents to prove availability of funds for your education and living expenses. For complete information about the J-1 visa application visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange/exchange.html> and visit the website of the embassy/consulate where you plan to apply for the visa (<http://www.usembassy.gov>). Application procedures for the J-1 non-immigrant visa vary among consular posts. Please contact the consular office where you plan to obtain your visa for appointment, forms, fees, and other application details. **DO NOT ENTER THE U.S. in visitor status (WB/WT or B-1/B-2).** This status will not allow you to register for courses in the U.S.
- **Make housing arrangements before arrival.** On-campus housing is limited, and reserving space requires an application far in advance of the semester start date. Exchange students must contact Ms. Tania Tucker (trtucker@fau.edu) to request a housing application and make housing arrangements.
- If you arrive early and need to make hotel arrangements, you can find information about Boca Raton area hotels at <http://www.fau.edu/parents/hotels.php>.
- **Prepare for money matters.** You are expected to have sufficient funds for the period of studies as indicated on the DS-2019. For your initial arrival bring cash or travelers' checks to cover your initial expenses, medical insurance, tuition/fees, books and supplies, and initial housing arrangements. Individual financial needs vary greatly, but we recommend that you have at least U.S. \$3000-\$4000 in cash or travelers' checks. Another good option is to arrange for a wire transfer of funds that can be immediately available. If you are a graduate student with an assistantship, it may take a month or longer after the beginning of the semester to receive your first payment from the university. Thus you will still need to have some funds available for initial expenses.
- **Bring medical and immunization records with you.** Florida State Law requires all students to be immunized against measles and rubella. Prior to registration you will have to provide medical certificates in English showing you received the required immunizations, or you will have to receive immunizations upon arriving at FAU (for an additional cost to you). http://www.fau.edu/shs/info_forms/immunizations.php
- **Prepare for entry to the United States.** At the port of entry (i.e., Fort Lauderdale International Airport, Miami International Airport, etc.) you will need to present the following documents: passport with valid J-1 visa, DS-2019, and Form I-94 (which you will receive on the airplane upon your arrival). Be prepared to answer questions about the purpose of your entry to the U.S., what you will be studying, etc. To find

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- o You may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the start date of your DS-2019, and you must arrive prior to the date of your scheduled orientation. If you have on-campus housing and arrive prior to the check-in date, please note that temporary housing is not available at the university and you will be responsible for making other living arrangements such as hotel stays.
 - Hotel information for the Boca Raton area: <http://www.fau.edu/parents/hotels.php>.
 - Transportation information from Miami International Airport:
<http://www.fau.edu/iss/pdfs/Route%20Information.pdf>
- o Attend the Exchange Student Orientation scheduled through the Office of International Programs. During this orientation, you will attend a session regarding your rights and responsibilities as a J-1 visa holder and you will also complete your mandatory immigration check-in. There will be a mandatory Immigration Orientation/Check in when you arrive. Please contact Ms. Tania Tucker at trtucker@fau.edu for details.
- o If you have not completed this step prior to your arrival, purchase the mandatory medical insurance through one of the following options:
 - 1) Purchase the FAU insurance plan, contact Insurance for Students, Inc. at www.insuranceforstudents.com or contact Student Health Services <http://www.fau.edu/shs/>. Compliance with the insurance requirement must be verified prior to registering for courses. An insurance representative will be available at the Student Health Services (SHS) office at the beginning of the semester.
 - 2) Present the Alternate Insurance Compliance Form, signed by the insurance company providing the coverage: <http://www.fau.edu/shs/images/alternate-insurance-form.pdf>
Students can email insurance@fau.edu to find out if the information provided meets FAU insurance requirement.

General Information about the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html

The Exchange Visitor (J) non-immigrant visa category enables foreign nationals to come to the U.S. for a variety of activities intended to increase mutual understanding between the United States and other countries. Established through the Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (also known as the Fulbright-Hayes Act), this program is administered primarily through the U.S. Department of State along with the Department of Homeland Security (unlike other visa categories which are administered primarily through the Department of Homeland Security). Therefore, the J Exchange Visitor Program has some unique requirements that distinguish it from other visa categories used for study, work, or travel. Your exchange visitor category is listed on the DS-2019. The Exchange Visitor Program has many categories besides the one assigned to you. While participating in this FAU-sponsored program you are expected to engage in the activities which are in line with the program objectives listed on the DS-2019. Changes of category are generally not permitted under the J Exchange Visitor Program and will not be supported by FAU.

STAY CONNECTED...



New Students can connect to ISSS by joining our Facebook community to receive announcements about FAU social activities, campus events and local community events. Log on to [Facebook www.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) to create an account and become a “fan” of: [International Students @ FAU](https://www.facebook.com/InternationalStudents@FAU). Please check our web site at <http://fau.edu/iss> on a regular basis.