Western Carolina University welcomes the opportunity to host J-1 visiting professor and research scholar for a semester, a year or longer. 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 purpose of the J-1 exchange visitor visa for professors, research scholars, and short-term scholars is to facilitate international collaborative teaching and/or research efforts. Visitors (who must typically have training at the master’s level or higher) are invited to the U.S. for a program with a specific objective and length of stay not to exceed five years.

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 **3 months** before the intended arrival of the visiting scholar to allow time for document preparation, mailing the immigration documents, and visa processing. In some cases, scholars may experience significant delays in visa processing due to increased U.S. government security requirements. If the scholar is in the U.S. in a different status and wishes to change status within the U.S. (if eligible), additional time beyond 3-4 months may be necessary.

2. The faculty member or department head communicates with possible international visitor and determines the area of research interest, the time and duration of the visit, funding for the visit, housing arrangements, etc.

3. The faculty member or department head accesses the Guidelines for J-1 Visiting Professors and Research Scholars on the IPS website and communicates with the International Programs and Services 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 sends the “**Request for J-1 Visa Document**” to the visitor (see separated document).

6. The department head sends a letter of invitation to the visiting scholar on department letterhead and sends it to IPS (Appendix C).
   a. IPS issues the J-1 visa document
   b. IPS mails 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.

7. The visiting scholar follows the visa application procedures stated on the U.S. Embassy/Consulate website, makes an appointment at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate, pays the visa fee, complete visa interview, obtain visa, makes travel arrangements, and notify the department and IPS of arrival date.

8. The visiting scholar arrives in Cullowhee.

9. The visiting scholar contacts the IPS office the schedule a **MANDATORY** J-1 orientation upon arrival.

10. 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.

**Definition of J-1 Visiting Professor/Research Scholar**

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.

**Minimum Academic Credentials for J-1 Professor and Research Scholar**

All J-1 visitors at WCU are required to have at least a master’s degree in a related field and have demonstrated relevant experience in their field of expertise.

**Approval of Hosting J-1 Visiting Professor/ Research Scholar**

A. Either a WCU overseas partner institution works with IPS to send a professor/research scholar to Western Carolina University OR

1. The prospective visiting professor/research scholar contacts 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 research scholar must be granted by the Dean of the sponsoring college, after consultation with the Director of IPS. In order to do so, the college needs to agree to review the visiting professor/research scholar’s teaching or 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 research.

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

- Faculty mentor to oversee the research and/or teaching responsibilities of the visiting professor/research scholar
- Office space or computer desk
- Laboratory or studio space and materials access
- Telephone access
- Computer access
- WCU email address
- CAT card

C. If the WCU College Dean agrees to the above, the College Dean will then

1. Send 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). Please see Appendix C for a sample invitation letter.

D. IPS will work with the incoming visiting professor/research scholar
1. To acquire the necessary information to issue the J-1 DS2019 form and other documents for visa application
2. To obtain adequate health insurance coverage for the entire length of stay in the U.S. for the professor/research scholar and all dependents, should there be any.
3. To prepare other logistics for the J-1 scholar’s arrival.

**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 the faculty mentor and IPS.

**Mandatory Health Insurance**

*IMPORTANT!* The US Department of State (DOS) federally mandates all J-1 and J-2 status holders to carry adequate health insurance coverage. Each J-1 scholar must purchase insurance for him/herself and his/her J-2 dependents before arriving to the US. If he/she and/or dependents fail to maintain the mandatory health insurance coverage, they will be in violation of federal immigration regulations; will be subject to termination as a program participant; and must leave the US immediately.

Insurance coverage must meet the following:

- 1. Medical insurance must cover the entire period of participation in the Exchange Visitor program.
- 2. Medical benefits must provide a minimum of $50,000 per accident or illness.
- 3. Medical evacuation must be covered in the amount of $10,000, minimum (emergency medical transportation to the home country).
- 4. Repatriation must be covered in the amount of $7,500, minimum (in the unfortunate event of death, repatriation is the transportation of remains back to the home country).
- 5. Deductible must not exceed $500 per accident or illness.

**Payment of Services**

Visiting professor from WCU partner institutions who teaches 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 IPS director. WCU pays stipends to the eligible visiting professor/research scholar as an independent contractor.

**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 limited 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 pursuant to University policy. If the visiting professor/visiting scholar wants to purchase a car, there are a number of car dealers in the area.

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.

J-1 Visiting Professor and Research Scholar Protocol

Once the visit is approved by the College Dean, the visiting professor/research scholar 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. Required documents from visiting professor/research scholar
   1. Research Proposal outlining the project and expected activities – submit either to IPS or the hosting WCU department or faculty member
   2. Curriculum Vita or Resume
   3. J-1 Professor/Research Scholar Application Form (submit to IPS)
   4. Proof of adequate Health Insurance while in the U.S.

B. Once on campus, the visiting professor/researcher needs to:
   1. Report to IPS and attend IPS mandatory orientation. **All J-1 visa holders MUST report to the IPS within 30 DAYS of the beginning of the program.**
   2. Attend the **MANDATORY** New Faculty Orientation at the beginning of the semester, 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. IPS can offer assistance and guidance as needed about the university and surrounding area.

Export Control Protocol at Western Carolina University

*From the 2011 Export Control Plan:*

“All foreign visitors to WCU must obtain the Provost’s approval at least three months in advance of the visit. Faculty already employed in the United States are cleared through Visual Compliance by their home institution. International Programs and Services will not be required to perform Visual Compliance on visiting scholars that are foreigners but were already employed in the United States. 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.” Responsible Contact: Provost

**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:**
  - 2-week May session
  - 5-week session in June until July 3rd or so
  - 5-week session in July until beginning of August
  - 9-week summer session from June to the beginning of August

**How to Obtain a CatCard and Outlook Email Address For A J-1 Visiting Professor/Researcher**

A. For Professors/Research Scholars who are receiving a stipend. The AA-7 form drives the process. Please review Policy 97 Data Security and Stewardship for details.

B. For those Research Scholars or Researchers who are not getting a payroll check

1. The host department faculty or staff needs to
   a. complete the [Western Carolina University Consultant/Guest Access Request Form](http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/Consultant-Guest_Access_Request_Form_10-2010_reader_enabled.pdf) and submit to CIO Office
   b. Complete the [Form of Private Individuals Who Volunteer Services to Western Carolina University](http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/Consultant-Guest_Access_Request_Form_10-2010_reader_enabled.pdf) and return to HR.

2. When the Guess Access Request form is signed by CIO Office, it will be forwarded to HR to enter into Banner for creation of a 92#.

3. With the 92--- number, visiting scholars 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**

Ling Gao LeBeau, Director

International Programs and Services, 109 Cordelia Camp Building, 69 East University Way, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723, U.S.A.

Tel: 001.828.227.3433  FAX: 001.828.227.7080

Email Address: lglebeau@wcu.edu; Website: [http://international.wcu.edu](http://international.wcu.edu)
Appendix A

Invite J-1 Visiting Professor/Research Scholar to Western Carolina University

Office of International Programs and Services, Cullowhee, NC

What is J-1 Visiting Professor/Research Scholar?

An individual conducting teaching and research at overseas post-secondary accredited educational institutions, museums, libraries, or similar types of institutions, who are invited to WCU for an academic program with a specific objective and length of stay not to exceed five years.

- The purpose of the J-1 exchange visitor visa for professors and research scholars is to facilitate international collaborative teaching and/or research efforts.
- All J-1 exchange visitors at WCU are required to have at least a master’s degree in a related field and have demonstrated relevant experience in their field of expertise.

Why do I host a J-1 Visiting Professor/Research Scholar?

- Build collaborative relationships in terms of teaching and research with overseas colleagues in your field.
- Enhance your curriculum internationalization.
- Provide international perspectives to your teaching and research.
- Attract international talents to WCU.
- Improve WCU’s global recognition.

Am I required to provide salary or stipend to visiting professor/research scholar?

- No, you are not required, unless the visiting professor/research scholar is hired by your department to teach and/or conduct research.
- Visiting professors/research scholars are generally financially sponsored by home country government or institutions to conduct research in the U.S.

What does a visiting professor/research scholar do at WCU?

- Observe your classes and research and exchange ideas.
- Conduct own research.
- Teach classes, if permitted by your program.
What is my responsibility when the J-1 Visiting Professor/Research Scholar is at WCU?

- Provide an office or work station
- Work with Human Resources to provide WCU email access and CatCard.
- Encourage your visitor to participate in the academic and social activities of your unit as well as in cross-cultural activities on the campus and within the community.
- Supervise your visitor’s academic activities and work schedule.

How do I recruit one?

- Post a welcome message on program website with program contact information
  - Request 3 documents
    - Complete “Personal Interest Form” (see separated document).
    - One or two page proposal outlining study or research goals at WCU.
    - Copy of Resume or Curriculum Vita.
- IPS will add your visiting scholar link to website to publicize.

How can I ensure it is a good match?

- Review the 3 documents.
- Conduct a Skype Interview or in-person interview if applicable (please record the interview as evidence of the visiting scholar’s English proficiency).
- If you show concern, contact Ling LeBeau at lglebeau@wcu.edu or 828-227-3433 for a discussion.

If I decide to host the visiting professor/research scholar, then what is next?

- Ask your visiting scholar to complete the form “Request for J-1 Visa Document”, part 1 to 3, and send back to you.
- You and your College/School Dean sign the application form and send to IPS along with the following documents
  - Copy of letter of invitation to your visitor outlining program objectives and period of duration, printed on departmental letterhead. Please see “WCU Sample J-1 Invitation Letter” (Appendix C).
  - Copy of visitor’s CV.
- IPS will then contact your visitor for other documents, i.e., documentation of funding, copy of visa documents if the visitor is in the US.
- IPS will finalize the J-1 visa package and assist your visitor from applying to the visa to settling down at WCU.

What do I do when the visitor arrives at WCU?
• Ask the visitor to report to IPS as soon as possible with copy of visa documents
• Take the visitor to Human Resources to complete necessary forms.
Overview of J-1 professor/research scholar application process

1. Review applicant's 3 documents: Personal Interest Form, Proposal, CV (host department)
2. Conduct an online interview (host department)
3. Send Form "Request for J-1 Visa Documents" to visitor (host department)
4. Receive the completed form and sign Part 8 (host department)
5. Send the completed Form AND 3 documents to IPS: Invitation letter and visitor’s CV (host department)
6. IPS will forward the application to the Provost office for approval, and finalize the J-1 visa package
7. J-1 visitor obtains visa overseas
8. J-1 visitor arrives at WCU
9. J-1 visitor attends IPS mandatory orientation
10. Arrange a work station for the J-1 visitor; take the visitor to Human Resources for paperwork (host department)
11. J-1 visitor starts to work with you
Appendix B

SAMPLE INVITATION LETTER FOR J-1 VISITING SCHOLAR

(print on departmental letterhead.)

[Date]

[Name of visiting scholar]
[Street Address]
[City] [Province] [Postal Code]
[Country]

Dear [Name of visiting scholar],

On behalf of [Name of hosting department], I would like to formally invite you to Western Carolina University as a visiting scholar. This invitation is effective for the period of [Start Date of Program] to [End Date of Program].

[Name and title] will be your faculty host during your time at Western Carolina University and will work with you as you engage in the following activities at WCU:

[Describe in detail the individual or collaborative research/teaching, presentations and other activities; specify the academic field of research and specific courses which will be taught (as applicable).]

Support and Resources

During your time at WCU, the following support and resources will be made available to you:

[Describe in detail what will/will not be made available, e.g.]

You will be allowed to observe (without pay) three to four classes per semester (without credit or certificate). You will be provided with a shared office, phone, computer and all the facilities granted to faculty members including invitations to our department meetings and seminars.

Funding

[Non-WCU Funding Option]

It is my understanding that you will provide your own funding, from (funding source), to cover all the expenses of your stay at Western Carolina University, including health insurance for yourself and your accompanying dependents.

[WCU Funding Option]

The Western Carolina University shall provide a stipend of $[Dollar Amount] per [Month/Year]. The University will also provide medical insurance.

Housing

You will be responsible for finding your own housing accommodations and providing your own room and board. [If you are able to offer assistance in these areas, please specify the services you will provide].
Ling Gao LeBeau, Director of International Programs and Services at Western Carolina University will assist you with your visa application and immigration procedures. If you have questions or concerns regarding immigration matters, please contact Ms. LeBeau directly via email: lglebeau@wcu.edu or telephone: +001-828-227-3433.

We look forward to welcoming you to Western Carolina University. I am certain that you will have a productive and rewarding experience and we will gain much from your presence on campus. Please feel free to contact me should you require any additional assistance.

Sincerely,

[Signature of College/School Dean]

[Name, Title]
[Department]

Cc: Name and Title of Host faculty
   Ling Gao LeBeau, Director of Office of International Programs and Services