Dear Faculty Member,

We would like to point out to you some of the highlights of the exchange visitor process, and especially to note several regulations that could affect your scholar, both during the visa application process, in the scholar’s home country and upon his arrival and initial stay in the United States.

1. Exchange Visitor makes Visa Interview Appointment with U.S. Consulate: Scholar will be instructed to take DS-2019, proof of financial support and other documents to interview. Information on visa application process can be found: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html#6](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html#6)

2. SEVIS Fee Payment: Before the exchange visitor goes to the visa interview at the U.S. Consulate, he must pay a $200.00 SEVIS fee. The fee should be processed by the Department of Homeland Security at least three business days prior to the counselor interview. Details can be found: [https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/](https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/)

3. Visa Review Process: The Department of State is charged with reviewing all requests for scholar visas. The past year has taught us that the Department of State takes this responsibility very seriously. Most visa applications for study/research in the following fields are subject to a review process that can add 30-90 days to the application process. Please keep visa processing times in mind when determining program begin and end dates. Fields of study on the Department of State Technology Alert List include the following:
   - nuclear technology
   - chemical, biomedical engineering and biochemistry
   - rocket systems, navigation, avionics and flight control useable in rocket system
   - remote sensing, imaging, and reconnaissance
   - advanced computer /microelectronic technology
   - materials technology, including ceramics and advanced metals
   - information security
   - laser and directed energy systems technology, sensors and sensor technology
   - marine technology; robotics
   - urban planning (including architectural and civil engineering).

Further information on the Technology Alert List can be found in a Department of State cable to US Consulates: [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)

4. Arrival to Missouri S&T: As per federal regulations, J scholars are required to arrive at their institution within 30 days of the start date given on the form DS-2019. Scholars have the option of arriving early, with a maximum arrival date of 30 days prior to the start date. If they are unable to arrive within 30 days of their DS-2019 start date, they may need a new DS-2019, and should contact our office for more information. An important part of the exchange visitor’s legal requirements to maintain valid immigration status is check-in with the International Affairs Office immediately upon arrival at Missouri S&T. During the check-in the visitor’s immigration documents will be copied and SEVIS registration prepared.

5. Health Insurance Requirement: All J-1 scholars are required to purchase and maintain medical, repatriation and medical evacuation insurance complying with Department of State requirements listed on the DS-2019 for themselves and their dependents in J visa status for the duration of their program. Willful failure on the exchange visitor’s part to maintain the required insurance will result in the termination of the exchange visitor and the dependent’s J visa status. Termination of an exchange visitor’s record is always an adverse event, and terminated exchange visitors cannot apply for reinstatement, extension of stay, change of category, or any other exchange visitor benefits.

The insurance coverage types and levels should meet the criteria below:
   - Medical benefits of at least U.S. $50,000.00 per person per accident or illness.
   - Repatriation of remains in the amount of U.S. $7,500.00.
• Expenses associated with medical evacuation in the amount of U.S. $10,000.00
• A policy secured to fulfill the insurance requirements shall not have a deductible that exceeds U.S. $500.00 per accident or illness.

If a J-1 scholar or dependent has any break in this coverage, he/she is considered out of valid immigration status. Immigration regulations state, “A willful failure to carry insurance is considered to be a violation of the Exchange Visitor Program regulations. Department of Homeland Security treats willful failure to carry insurance as a serious infraction for which neither correction of the record nor reinstatement is available as remedies.”

6. Requesting a Social Security Number: If the scholar is employed on-campus, he will require a Social Security number. In order to apply for a Social Security Card, Social Security guidelines state that the exchange visitor should be in the United States for at least ten days. The exchange visitor must have checked-in with the Office of International Affairs, and have received proper employment certification forms from the Office before the Social Security Administration can process an application for a Social Security number. Please refer to Social Security Administration on SSN’s and international students and exchange visitors: http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10181.pdf

Currently it is not unusual for the U.S. Social Security Administration to take three or more weeks to process a Social Security card. We have asked prospective exchange visitors to carefully note this in their financial planning. We have encouraged the exchange visitor to bring sufficient funds to cover initial living expenses, insurance and unforeseen delays in the issuance of a Social Security card.

7. Extending Program Participation: Exchange visitors can never allow their DS-2019’s to expire. Departments that intend to extend the stay of exchange visitors should apply for an extension by following the steps described in: http://international.mst.edu/documents/DS-2019Request.pdf. Requests for extension should be submitted to the Office of International Affairs at least 30 days in advance of the program end date. The maximum stay for scholars (in all institutions) is five years.

Please feel free to contact the International Affairs Office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gene Beyer, Assistant Director
Office of International Affairs
320 W. 12th Street
104 Norwood Hall
Rolla, MO 65409-0160

Phone: 573-341-4208
Fax: 573-341-4024
Email: ia@mst.edu