



Guide for J-1 Exchange Visitors

Prepared by International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)

This document covers how to:

- Review the Form DS-2019
- Check Passport Validity
- Obtain a J-1 Visa
- Enter the United States

The U.S. Department of State website is undergoing frequent changes in 2025. The website links in this document may no longer be valid. If a link does not work, consider searching for the topic on the travel.state.gov website, or contact ISSS for guidance.

Step 1: Read Your Form DS-2019 Carefully

- Your **NAME** and **DATE OF BIRTH** must be exactly as they appear on your passport. If they are not correct, please contact International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) at iss@middlebury.edu immediately.
- Check your **START DATE (“From”)** and **END DATE (“To”)** in Box # 3 to make sure it is correct and matches your contract, invitation, or admission letter.
 - You may enter the U.S. up to 30 days before this date.
 - You may stay in the U.S. for purposes of tourism for up to 30 days after this date, if your program allows it.

If there is any change to your contract, invitation letter, or arrival date, contact ISSS for an updated DS-2019.
- Box #4 shows the category of activity.
- Box #5 shows the estimated financial support from Middlebury or another funding source.

3. Form Covers Period: From (mm-dd-yyyy): 06-10-2009 To (mm-dd-yyyy): 08-15-2009	4. Exchange Visitor Category: Professor, Research Scholar, Short-term Scholar, Student Degree, Student Non-degree <hr/> Subject/Field Code: Subject/Field Code Remarks: XX.XXXX Brief description of program
5. During the period covered by this form, the total estimated financial support (in U.S. \$) is to be provided to the exchange visitor by: Current Program sponsor funds : \$ <input type="text"/> Total : \$ <input type="text"/>	

Total = Your salary and/or funding from Middlebury, funds from another sponsor, and/or personal funds.

- **Sign your name at the bottom of the form.** If you have dependents (a spouse, or children under the age of 21) entering the U.S. in J-2 status, they will each receive a DS-2019 form to apply for their J-2 visas. If you intend to bring your dependents to the U.S. with you and you have not received separate DS-2019s for your dependents, please contact ISSS immediately at iss@middlebury.edu.

Step 2: Check Your Passport Validity

- Your passport should be valid for at least six (6) months beyond the date you intend to remain in the U.S.



(Because citizens of Canada and Bermuda are not usually required to present a visa at the U.S. border, citizens of Canada and Bermuda may skip ahead to Step 4.)

Step 3: Obtain a J-1 Visa

- Citizens of all countries (except Canada and Bermuda) must have a J-1 visa to enter the U.S. as an Exchange Visitor. Apply for a J-1 visa well in advance of your planned travel to the United States. To learn more about U.S. Visas, please consult: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas.html>. To find the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest to you, please consult: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>.
- You must schedule a personal interview for the visa application at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy. It may take time to secure an appointment, so please initiate your visa application as early as possible.
 - Before your interview, practice answering questions in English about your plans in the U.S. and after you return home. Remember that J-1 status is a *nonimmigrant* status with intent to return to your home country. If your spouse and/or children will remain in your home country, be prepared to explain how they will support themselves without your sending them money from the U.S. Be positive and respond to questions with clear, concise answers.
 - U.S. embassies are authorized to continue to waive in-person visa interviews for certain first-time and/or renewing visa applicants. The interview waiver specifications were updated February 18, 2025. If you qualify, the U.S. consulate may indicate that you are not required to attend an in-person interview. Please monitor the travel.state.gov website for details.
- After your visa interview, your application may require further administrative processing, which may take several weeks. The consular officer will notify you if further processing is necessary for your application. If your application is subject to administrative processing, you can only wait until the Consulate decides. This process cannot be expedited.
- If your visa is approved:
 - As soon as you receive your passport with the visa sticker from the Consulate, please look at the visa type to confirm that a J-1 visa was issued.
 - If another visa type was granted in error, you should inform a Consulate official immediately. It should be easy to correct the visa type if you inform them as soon as you receive the visa. ***If you leave the Consulate without correcting the visa type, it is extremely difficult or impossible to correct it later. Failure to correct an error like this may prevent you from participating in your program with Middlebury.***
- If your visa is denied:
 - Ask for the reason for the denial in writing.
 - Contact ISSS so we can determine the next steps.
 - For more information, please visit the following U.S. Department of State website at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/visa-denials.html>.



The J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa Application Process

To apply for a J-1 Exchange Visitor visa, there are several steps. The order of these steps and the way you complete them may vary at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will apply. Therefore, please consult the instructions available on the website of the consulate or embassy where you will apply.

The basic steps are:

1. **Complete the Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (Form DS-160)**

Go to: <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>

2. **Schedule a Visa Interview** (You will need your SEVIS ID number from your DS-2019)

3. Prepare for Your Interview

A. **Pay the non-refundable DS-160 visa application fee**, if required to do so before your interview.

(The amount can be found at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html#overview>.)

B. **You may also be required to pay a Visa Issuance or Visa Reciprocity fee**. This fee varies by country. To determine if you have to pay a Visa Issuance fee, ask the Consulate or see:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country.html>.

C. **You may need to pay the SEVIS Fee if Middlebury did not pay the fee for you.**

If a SEVIS Fee Receipt was not provided to you by ISSS, follow the instructions for payment at <http://www.middlebury.edu/international/iss/visas/sevisfee>.

D. **Gather required documentation:**

- Passport (valid 6 months into the future)
- Form DS-160 Confirmation Page
- Application fee payment receipt(s), if required to pay before the interview
- Photo – you will upload a photo while completing the DS-160. However, if the upload fails, you must bring a photo with you. For photo requirements, see: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos.html>
- Form DS-2019—*Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status*
NOTE: No Middlebury-sponsored J-1s are issued or need the Form DS-7002 for Training/Internship Placement.
- SEVIS I-901 Fee Receipt.

E. Additional documents that may be required include, but are not limited to, evidence of:

- The purpose of your travel (i.e. contract or invitation or admission letter);
- Your intent to depart the United States after your travel.
- Your ability to pay all travel costs; and/or
- Other documents the consular officer may request.

Evidence of employment and/or your family ties may be sufficient to show the purpose of your travel and your intent to return to your home country. You may show evidence that another person will cover some or all costs for your travel.

F. Attend Your Visa Interview, if required.

For the most current and accurate information regarding applying for a J-1 Exchange Visitor visa, please consult: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html#overview>.

Step 4: Enter the United States

>>> **Do not enter the U.S. on a Tourist Visa or through the Visa Waiver Program.** <<<

Always carry the following documents with you in a secure manner during your travel:

- Passport
- DS-2019
- SEVIS I-901 Fee Receipt
- Contract, invitation, or admission letter from Middlebury
- Financial support documentation, if not referenced in your letter/contract from Middlebury

**** Do not place these documents in your checked luggage. Place them in a carry-on bag. ****

The U.S. Customs & Border Patrol (CBP) Official may ask you questions upon your entry.

- If you are asked about your source of funding or your “intentions,” show your Middlebury contract, invitation letter, financial memo, or admission letter.
- The border official will “admit” you to the U.S. by scanning your passport to generate an electronic arrival record. They may or may not stamp your passport noting: “**J-1 D/S**” (**D**uration of **S**tatus) on the stamp.
- If the CBP official admits you to the United States, at most ports of entry an **I-94 Arrival/Departure Record** will be created in the electronic I-94 system. If you receive an electronic version of the I-94, you should print a copy of the electronic Form I-94 from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/home> upon entry or as soon as possible after you enter. Please confirm that it indicates “J-1 D/S” on the I-94.
- At some land borders or in certain circumstances, you may receive a paper version of Form I-94.

The I-94 record is the only official evidence of the non-immigrant status and period of admission at time of entry you are granted. **Once you are in the United States, you should print and carry the paper I-94 record with you as evidence of your status in the U.S. for each entry.**

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Securing America's Borders

Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number : ██████████
Most Recent Date of Entry: 2018 February 12
Class of Admission : J1
Admit Until Date : D/S
Details provided on the I-94 information form:

Last/Surname : ██████████
First (Given) Name : ██████████
Birth Date : ██████████
Passport Number : ██████████
Country of Issuance : ██████████

[Get Travel History](#)

Effective April 26, 2013, DHS began automating the admission process. An alien lawfully admitted or paroled into the U.S. is no longer required to be in possession of a preprinted Form I-94. A record of admission printed from the CBP website constitutes a lawful record of admission. See 8 CFR § 1.4(d).

If an employer, local, state or federal agency requests admission information, present your admission (I-94) number along with any additional required documents requested by that employer or agency.

Note: For security reasons, we recommend that you close your browser after you have finished retrieving your I-94 number.

For inquiries or questions regarding your I-94, please click [here](#)

[Accessibility](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

LEFT: Electronic Form I-94 is available at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/home>.

BELOW: Paper version of the Form I-94. This will only be issued if you enter the U.S. at a land border or in special circumstances.

Departure Number
763303 11

Immigration and Naturalization Service
I-94
Departure Record

JUN 27 2005

Family Name
First (Given) Name
Country of Citizenship
P.O.L.A.M.P.

SPECIAL NOTES

- **The 212(e) Two Year Home Residence Requirement**

You may be subject to this requirement if your field of work is considered a priority area in your home country, or if you receive government funds to support your program. If you are subject, you may be required to spend a total of two years in your home country after you finish your J-1 program in the U.S. before applying for U.S. Legal Permanent Residency, L, H, or K visa status.

To learn more about this requirement, please visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html#overview>.

- **30-Day Grace Period**

Upon completion of your program, you will have a 30-day grace period to remain in the United States for purposes of tourism, and to prepare to depart the United States. Work is not allowed during these grace periods. Some programs may require you to leave immediately following your program end date.

For more information: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html#overview>.

If you have any questions, please contact International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS).

Email: iss@middlebury.edu

Phone: (802) 443-5858