

Student Visas: Choosing a Student Visa Type

Most international students at the University of Notre Dame study with an F-1 student visa, but in some cases a J-1 student visa may be appropriate. We have provided information in the following pages that distinguish between these two visa types.

Students may also be in the U.S. in another visa status that allows study, but these two visa types are student specific and allow students to access post-graduation employment authorization benefits. *Students may not enroll in classes at the University with a B1/B2 or WB/WT visa status.*

Contact International Student & Scholar Affairs at issa@nd.edu with questions about visa type.

Student Visas: General Info

F-1 Visa

- ISSA issues the student a Form I-20
- Usually degree seeking, but some non-degree students may apply for an F-1 visa
- All students must be enrolled full-time
- Most students study with an F-1 visa

J-1 Visa

- ISSA issues the student a Form DS-2019.
- The J-1 visa is used for many kinds of exchange visitors, including student, professor, and researcher
- Student category includes can be degree seeking, non-degree seeking, or non-degree seeking (research only)
- Students must be enrolled full-time, per requirements of program

F-1 Visa vs J-1 Visa: Funding

F-1 Visa

- Funding can be personal (including family funds or approved loans) or external (government, employer, or organizational)
- Must demonstrate funds for first year of the program

J-1 Visa

- More than 50% of student's funding is from institutional or governmental sources in form of scholarship, fellowship, assistantship, stipend, tuition waiver, or other direct support for education
- Regulations require student to demonstrate funds for duration of program

F-1 and J-1 Visa: Employment

F-1

- Eligible for on-campus employment
- Off campus employment requires prior authorization and must be related to student's major
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for off-campus employment that is an integral part of the degree program; requires a job offer
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) for work that is optional; does not require a job offer
- Students in non-STEM fields are eligible for 12 months OPT; students in STEM fields are eligible for 36 mths

J-1

- All employment requires prior authorization
- Eligible for on-campus employment once written authorization received from ISSA
- Academic Training (AT) for off-campus employment related to degree
- AT may be used during and/or after the academic program ends
- Length of available AT depends on program type.
- AT requires an employment offer letter and dates of authorization are linked to the offer dates

F-1 and J-1: Dependents

F-2 Dependents

- may study part time
- not eligible for any employment authorization
- F-1 student must provide evidence of funding for dependents for one year of program; \$550 per month for each dependent

J-2 Dependents

- may study full time
- may apply to USCIS for employment authorization
- income from the dependent's employment cannot be authorized to support the J-1 visa holder
- J-1 student must provide funding for dependents for entire program; \$550 per month for each dependent