



## Incidental Study request for J-1 Scholar Exchange Visitors

### What is Incidental Study?

**Incidental Study** is study that is **secondary** to an Exchange Visitor's primary objective. Research Scholars, Professors, and Student Interns on a J-1 visa (also known as Exchange Visitor scholars), are here primarily to teach or perform research. Although they are in a status designed for a purpose other than study, they can engage in study that is incidental to their program objective. Incidental study is study that is part-time and non-degree seeking and all incidental study must be authorized by the ISSS Office.

### General Guidelines Regarding Incidental Study:

As an Exchange Visitor (EV), you are allowed to enroll in classes as long as the following conditions are met:

1. Enrollment is incidental to your primary objective,
2. You continue to pursue your program objective as listed on your DS-2019, and
3. You are fulfilling the requirements of your J-1 visa category.

If a program of study becomes your primary objective, your immigration status may no longer be appropriate. It is a violation of your immigration status to enroll full-time in a degree seeking program on a J-1 non-student visa. If you plan to pursue a degree, you should apply for a change of immigration status through USCIS or depart the U.S. and apply for a visa at a US Consulate or Embassy in your home country that allows full-time study.

### You are eligibility for Incidental Study if:

- You are maintaining your current J-1 non-immigration status.
- You are admitted to the University of Utah in a non-degree seeking program.
- You register for less than full-time (11 credits for undergrad and 8 credits for graduate).
- You ensure that your study will not interfere with or delay your primary program objective.

### How to apply for Incidental Study?

1. To request permission for incidental study, please submit an **Incidental Study e-form** by selecting the iStart link  found at [www.ic.utah.edu](http://www.ic.utah.edu).
2. Please be prepared to provide the following:
  - a. A copy of your current DS2019.
  - b. Confirmation that you will continue to pursue your program objective, the incidental study will not interfere or delay your program objective, you will follow the rules of your current visa category, and you will list the number of credits you plan to take.



## Frequently Asked Questions:

- 1. Can I begin a program of study before receiving permission from ISSS?**  
No. Since engaging in a program of study could have an adverse impact on your immigration status, it will be necessary to meet with a **J scholar advisor** prior to enrollment to ensure that you will not violate your current immigration status.
- 2. Can I enroll in classes as a full-time, degree-seeking student?**  
No. Enrollment in a degree-seeking and/or full-time study program signifies a change in your primary objective.
- 3. How is it determined if study has become my primary objective for being in the United States?**  
Generally, if you register for full-time study or enroll in a degree-seeking program, your primary objective has changed. If your primary objective has changed, then your current J-1 category, such as Research Scholar, Short Term Scholar, or Student Intern is no longer appropriate.
- 4. How long can I engage in incidental study while completing my primary objective of teaching or research?**  
You are allowed to engage in incidental study for the duration of your Exchange Visitor Program, as long as you continue to maintain status and follow the rules and regulations of your J-1 visa category.
- 5. What if I want to change my primary objective and become a full-time degree-seeking student?**  
You may apply for a degree-seeking program through the Office of International Admissions, but understand that admissions will not admit you to a degree-seeking program as a non-student J-1 principal unless you plan to change your immigration status, either by application through UISCIS or by departure to apply for a visa at a Consulate or Embassy in your home country. For more information on a change of status, please schedule an appointment with an ISSS scholar advisor.
- 6. Can my dependent spouse or minor child enroll in classes?**  
Yes, your dependents can study full time or part time, but spouses and children who derive their status from you as a J-1 principal may not remain in the United States beyond your program end date as the J-1 primary in order to continue a program of study. In most cases, children lose their derivative status at the age of 21 and must apply for a change of status to F-1 if they wish to remain in the United States to continue their program of study.