

Bryant University
Office of International Affairs
International and Exchange Visitor Planning Guidelines

These Guidelines serve as a resource during the planning stages for hosting an International or Exchange Visitor (“visitor”). The following outlines a number of considerations when planning for a visitor as well as provides other related information.

Office of International Affairs (OIA) provides immigration services for Bryant University. The main role of OIA is to facilitate compliance with the federal regulations that govern the stay of international students and scholars while in the United States and assist with employment benefits related to student and scholar visa classifications. We support host faculty and departments by managing the immigration procedures involved in admitting international researchers and visiting professors and students, and advising departments and scholars on current immigration policy.

Hosting Department/Faculty Responsibilities:

Bryant University academic departments/faculty members are the primary sponsors for visiting scholars – scholars are issued visa documents at the invitation and request of a specific faculty host within a host department. When inviting a visiting scholar to the University, the host faculty and department take on certain responsibilities in support of the objectives and standards of the exchange program, and for the general welfare of their visiting scholar.

Understanding the Spirit of the Law

The J1 visa program is administered by the U.S. Department of State under the Exchange Visitor Program to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges. Exchange Visitors are expected to go home to share their experience, and to encourage Americans to participate in same programs in other countries. (22.CFR Part 62.1 (a) and (b))

Steps for faculty to follow in preparation for hosting an international exchange visitor:

1. In communicating with the department chair, the perspective host faculty member should establish a close communication with the perspective visitor at least 6 months prior to the planned arrival date. Necessary documentations such as proof of financial support and academic plan should be finalized in advance.
2. Intent to Sponsor Form*: Faculty must complete this preliminary form and submit it to their Department Chair and Academic Dean for approval. Once initial approval is received, the faculty member may proceed to the next step.
3. Formal Request Form*: This form must be completed and submitted to the Department Chair, Academic Dean, Provost, and Vice President for International Affairs for final approval.
4. Visa Requirements: It is important to remember that each visitor’s immigration status will vary. Upon approval to host a visitor, an assessment of the visa requirements will be made by the Office of International Affairs.
5. Once the Office of International Affairs assesses that the prospective visitor qualifies for J-1 visa, the following forms will be issued:
 - Request to issue Form DS-2019 for a J-1 Exchange Visitor
 - Desired J-1 Scholar Category Selection Form
6. Host Faculty Check List: The host faculty must review this check list prior to the visitor’s arrival to ensure the successful Exchange Visitor Program.

Departments should allow at least six (6) months (in advance of a visitor's expected arrival date) for the visa assessment and for processing. *Sample forms are located at the end of this document.

Planning Process

Inviting an exchange visitor is more than a written invitation; it is a commitment to provide the visitor with an experiential program that benefits the host, the visitor and the Bryant Community. The following points should be discussed within the hosting department.

- Who in the department will serve as the visitor's host and point of contact (before, during and after their stay)? Who will serve as the back-up if the primary contact is not available?
- Will the point of contact be available throughout the visitor's stay? If not, what arrangements will be made so that the visitor continues to be supported during his/her stay?
- What are the expectations for the visitor, both in terms of what he/she will do, and the qualifications/abilities he/she should possess? (Note: The US Department of States expects that J-1 visitor will have already completed at least a bachelor's degree and have levels of knowledge and experience that are necessary to complete the specific activities and objectives for the visit.)
- Has the department assessed the visitor's English skills in listening and speaking? (Note: This is in compliance with the 22 CFR 62.1 (a)(2) which states "J1 visitors must possess sufficient proficiency in the English language to participate in their programs.")
- Who in the hosting department will be available to help the visitor in the following area?
 - Housing and Living Arrangements: The host, or host department, has responsibility to find housing for the visitor and the dependents, if applicable. Bryant does not provide housing either on or off campus. The host, or host department should ensure that the visitor has the adequate living arrangement and have access to transportation for shopping trips.
 - Pickup upon arrival: Sponsoring departments should assist the incoming visitor with transport to and from the airport, train or bus station upon arrival.
 - Transportation: The visitor will need to understand U.S. insurance requirements and driving regulations if they intend to rent/own a car. Bryant does not provide transportation.
 - Dependents: If the visitor is bringing his/her children, and they require schooling, the host or host department, will need to assist the visitor to locate the school and process necessary paperwork.
 - Banking: The host, or host department will need to assist the visitor in locating a bank and in setting up a bank account, if necessary.
- Does the department have the office space, equipment, facilities, time, resources, etc., to commit to a visitor? If so, how long, and what resources will be made available?
 - Office Space or Work Area: The host faculty, or host department, should work through the Academic Affairs office well in advance of the visitor's arrival to secure office space for the visitor. In case a laboratory bench is needed, the host or host department should arrange to provide the laboratory space.

- Computer, Email, Network Access: The host will need to request adequate computer system. This may include a desktop or laptop.
 - Bryant Banner and Photo ID: The host, or host department must request a Banner ID for the visitor. This will enable him/her to obtain a Bryant ID card. The host, or host department will need to have the ID's magnetic strip coded at Support Services for any copying rights.
 - Email, Network Access: The host, or host department must request an email account and network access at the IT Help Desk. The host or host department may determine what level of access is needed.
 - Sponsoring Department Orientation: The host or host department should provide the exchange visitor with an in-person welcome and introduction to the department, including meeting with colleagues, staff and students with whom the exchange visitor will be working.
- Does the visitor understand they will not be receiving any financial support from Bryant during their stay in the U.S.? This means they will be required to support their own housing, living and transportation expenses, and have sufficient funds for their entire stay. (Note: J-1 visitors will be required to demonstrate a minimum level of funding before any visa paperwork can be processed.) A visitor must show a minimum of \$2,000 per month for themselves, minimum funding of \$500 per month for each accompanying dependent child under age 21, and minimum funding of \$500 per month for an accompanying spouse.
 - What kinds of social and cultural activities does the hosting department anticipate arranging for the visitor? (Note: The U.S. Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program encourages J1 visitors to participate in the cross-cultural activities.)
 - Does the visitor understand that they will be required to obtain the mandatory health insurance, as required by the U.S. Department of State for all J-1 visitors and J-2 dependents? Does he/she understand that this insurance cannot be cancelled during their program time?
 - Does the visitor understand that, under certain circumstances, where Bryant is providing some form of supports, these supports may be considered taxable? (Note: For example, the Fulbright Scholars typically receive a housing benefit and this benefit is taxable.)
 - Does the visitor understand they will be subject to a background check, consistent with Bryant's policy?
 - Does the host department understand that the J-1 status is of a temporary nature and is to be used for academic positions only. It may not be used for tenure-track or tenured faculty appointments or for nonacademic administrative or technical positions.
 - Does he/she understand that they may be subject to 2 year home residency requirement?
 - Does the visitor understand that he/she should complete the mandatory check-in process at the Office of International Affairs (OIA) within 10 days upon entering the U.S.? This process is necessary to properly activate their J-1 visa status. Failure to check in with OIA in a timely manner can result in termination of J-1 visa status. The further instruction regarding the check-in for SEVIS registration will be given by the OIA.

These areas must be satisfactorily addressed as part of the initial approval process and before a commitment (invitation) is made to a visitor.

Immigration and Visa Requirements

Visa Category Assessment

It is important to remember that each visitor's immigration status may be different. Upon approval to host a visitor, an assessment of the visa requirements will be made by the Office of International Affairs. This includes determining which category of J visa is appropriate, or if another visa type (e.g. B1 – Business Visitor visa) is appropriate. It is also important to keep in mind that the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services have the authority to grant a visa status and issue visas for entry into the United States. There are no guarantees a visa will be issued.

The visitor will be required to provide additional information in order to assess the visa requirements. This information includes, but is not limited to, biographical information (name, address, DOB, etc.), copy of passport photo identification page, spouse and dependent information and financial information. Departments should allow at least six (6) months (in advance of a visitor's expected arrival date) for the visa assessment and for processing.

In the case of a J visitor, the information provided will be used to create the visitor's DS-2019 form and for the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to grant a visa. Any change in the visitor's activities after arriving at Bryant could signify misrepresentation of the DS-2019, which is a violation of J visa regulations that may result in the termination of the visitor's exchange program. Before making any changes to a visitor's program, the host and departments should contact the Office of International Affairs.

All immigration and/or visa questions should be directed to the Office of International Affairs.

Employment of Foreign National

Bryant University maintains a separate sponsorship policy (covering H-1B and Permanent Resident Status) for a nonimmigrant who has accepted an appointment for the position of tenure-track professorship at assistant, associate or full professor level, full-time Lecturer or administrator. The full policy is available at: employment.bryant.edu, select "Sponsorship."

All questions relating to this policy or the employment of a non-immigrant, should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

Bryant University
Office of International Affairs
Intent to Sponsor Form – Step 1

This form is completed by a faculty member (sponsor) who is interested in hosting an International Exchange Visitor. Upon completion, this form is submitted to the Department Chair and Academic Dean for approval.

The host faculty must address the following:

- What is the purpose of the visit?
- How will Bryant benefit from the visit?
- What resources are required (e.g., housing, computer, office/lab space, English conversational tutoring, transportation) and how those services will be furnished?
- How will the visit, and all associated expenses, be funded?

The host faculty acknowledges that he/she has read the International and Exchange Visitor Planning Guidelines, and understands their role as a host faculty and their commitment to the visitor, including the following:

- Identify the visitor's primary and secondary point of contact. This includes providing the visitor with the name, telephone and Bryant email address.
- Clear expectations for the visit have been developed and reviewed with the visitor.
- To comply with the spirit of the Exchange Visitor Program as it's defined by the U.S. Department of States and cultural exchange activities will be planned as part of the visit.

Faculty Sponsor: _____ Date: _____
Signature Print name

Initial Approval (required):

Department Chair: _____ Date: _____

Academic Dean: _____ Date: _____

Upon initial approval to host a visitor, the host faculty is required to complete the Formal Request Form (Step 2) and submit to the their Department Chair for approval and processing.

Department should allow at least six (6) months (in advance of a visitor's expected arrival date) for the visa assessment and for processing.

In case the hosting department is division other than Academic Affairs, hosting staff/administrator and department head should sign off the formal request form.

Bryant University
Office of International Affairs
Formal Request Form – Step 2

This form is submitted to the Department Chair, Academic Dean, Provost and VP for International Affairs for approval and processing. Upon approval to host a visitor, an assessment of the visa requirements will be made by the Office of International Affairs. The host faculty and visitor will be required to provide additional information in order to assess the visa requirements.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SPONSOR

_____ of the _____
Faculty member corresponding with appointee *Department*

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT CONTACT

Name _____ Telephone _____ Email _____

PRIMARY CONTACT (if different from Host Faculty)

Name _____ Telephone _____ Email _____ Cell: _____

SECONDARY POINT OF CONTACT

Name _____ Telephone _____ Email _____ Cell: _____

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROSPECTIVE VISITOR

Full name _____ Gender **F** **M**
Family/Last *First/Given* *Middle*

Email: _____ Citizenship _____

Highest Academic degrees held by the individual _____
Degrees *year(s) awarded*

Academic Affiliation (institution): _____

Complete address to which the visa documents should be sent: _____
Address

City *State/Province* *Country* *Zip Code*

Permanent Address (if different from mailing address): _____

INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPOINTMENT

Bryant University title _____

Dates of appointment: From (month/day/year) _____ To (month/day/year) _____

Is it possible that the department will renew or extend the appointment beyond this date? _____

If so, please explain briefly the terms that will determine renewal or extension. _____

Purpose of visit:

1. What proportion of his/her time will be spent on the following activities?

Teaching _____ Research _____ Training _____ Study _____

Other(please be specific) _____

2. Describe briefly the proposed duties of the prospective appointee: _____

3. Describe, in detail, the benefits (short- and long-term) to Bryant of hosting this visitor:

What campus resources (be specific) do you anticipate will be needed for this visitor (e.g., office space, lab space, computer, email address, other system access, English conversational tutor)?

Will the visitor's stay be fully funded by the visitor? If NO, please explain in detail.

Department Agreement – signature below confirm agreement with the following points:

- The visiting scholar and accompanying dependents have adequate financial support for the duration of the scholar's program.
- The department has determined that the scholar has English language proficiency adequate for the proposed activity.
- The host faculty member and the department have clarified expectations with the scholar regarding University support, benefits, length of program and have secured office/lab space, equipment, computer access, clerical support, and faculty collaboration for the visitor.
- The host faculty member satisfactorily addressed all the considerations outlined within the "International and Exchange Visitor Planning Guidelines" with the department chair as well as with the visiting scholar.
- The scholar is aware of health insurance requirements and understands who is responsible for payment of premiums.
- The department will assist the visiting scholar upon arrival with transportation and housing arrangements, and will refer scholar to the Office of International Affairs (OIA) for a mandatory check in and SEVIS registration.
- The scholar will engage only in activities consistent with the intended program and the department will notify the OIA of any changes in the program such as changes in financial support, loss of funding, or transfer to a different department.
- The host faculty will accept full responsibilities of hosting the visiting scholar (and his/her dependents, if applicable).

Host Faculty Signature

Print name

Date

Required Approvals:

Department Chair:

Signature

Print name

Date

Academic Dean:

Signature

Print name

Date

Provost:

Signature

Print name

Date

Vice President for International Affairs:

Signature

Print name

Date

In case the hosting department is division other than Academic Affairs, hosting staff/administrator, department head, divisional Vice President should sign off the formal request form.