ACADEMIC TRAINING INSTRUCTIONS FOR J-1 STUDENTS

1. Academic Training or “AT” is an optional, additional training experience for J-1 students. AT can vary in length depending on your program length but the maximum amount of time on initial AT for a J-1 degree student is 18 months. Non-degree students cannot be approved for AT beyond their total period of time of the J-1 program and are limited to a total stay of 24 months (inclusive of all study time and AT time).

2. If a student is pursuing post-doctoral research, they may be authorized for an additional 18 months (total 36 months).

3. AT cannot be authorized for longer than the job-offer (as long as eligibility criteria in #1 are met).

4. Regardless of whether the AT is full-time or part-time, it is considered full-time.

5. AT can be paid or unpaid, if the employment post-completion, and is unpaid, students must provide proof of funding for duration of stay.

6. To be eligible, the AT must be directly related to the student’s major field of study and the student must be in status and in good academic standing. AT must be granted by the program sponsor (Rutgers) in writing before the student is permitted to begin the training.

7. Regulations require the academic training program to be evaluated for effectiveness in achieving its goals and objectives.

8. AT is authorized for a specific job(s) within specific start and end dates. It is not “blanket” work permission in the field of study.

9. Application for AT is made directly to a Responsible Officer of the J-1 program, which at Rutgers University is your International Student Adviser (ISA) at the Center for Global Services. For undergraduate students, the application must contain a recommendation from the academic dean; for graduate students, a recommendation is required from the graduate program director. For non-degree students, the application be recommended by the appropriate sponsoring office (Study Abroad office). Authorization is given by the ISA in the form of a revised DS-2019 with an Academic Training notation, and is granted, within its regulatory limits, for the length of time necessary to complete the goals and objectives of the training.

10. To be eligible for academic training after completion of studies, a job offer letter is required before the expiration of the student’s DS-2019. The academic training “clock” begins on the start date of the employment OR on the 30th day after the degree completion date, whichever comes first. (Note: The AT can start more than 30 days after program completion, but the training clock would begin on the 30th day after program completion, even if the training itself has not yet started).

11. The student’s DS-2019 MUST be valid through the duration of the program and AT. The application for AT must be submitted before the expiration of the DS-2019 and the completion of the degree requirements.

12. While you are on AT you are obliged by law to notify the Center of all changes in your U.S. address within 10 days of the change taking effect (please refer to the “Change of U.S. Address Instructions” form).
How to Apply for J-1 Academic Training

1. Obtain from your prospective employer:
   a. A letter which includes all of the following:
      - Name and address of employer
      - Beginning and ending dates of the training employment
      - Salary (If unpaid financial proof showing living expenses is required)
      - Job title
      - A list or explanation of major job responsibilities
   b. A complete description of your health insurance benefits and a letter from your employer indicating the date your benefits will begin (this information may be included in the letter described above). If no health benefits are given, you will be required to provide proof of alternate coverage for the full period you have been authorized for AT.

2. Show the employer’s letter to your academic dean, graduate director, or your Academic Official and request that they complete either:

   The Certification form for J-1 Academic Training form

   OR

   A signed letter detailing the following:
   - All Training (employment) Program details like, the start and end date, hours per week, job title, training location address, supervisor’s full name, email, and phone number
   - The student’s name, degree information and program and/or degree completion date
   - The goals and objectives of the specific training program (employment offer)
   - How the proposed training being offered relates to your major field of study
   - Why the proposed training is an integral or critical part of your academic program
   - How and when the training will be evaluated for effectiveness and appropriateness

3. Bring to your ISA the following:
   - Employer’s letter
   - Proof of funding for months beyond program end date if AT salary does not cover requirements
   - Information about health insurance benefits
   - Academic official’s letter or recommendation form mentioned above
   - Passport and immigration documents

4. Authorization will be granted on an updated DS-2019 that notates some specifics of your AT. If an extension of stay is required to obtain the remainder of your practical training, you will need to apply about two months prior to the expiration of your DS-2019. The new DS-2019 will state that you are applying for an extension for the rest of your practical training allotment.

Procedures if you lose or wish to change your job

Because AT is authorized for a specific job, if you lose your job during the authorized period, your AT authorization automatically expires. You would then be required to leave the U.S. or change to another nonimmigrant status within 30 days of the day you stopped working. If you wish to change your job, you must go through the entire application procedure outlined above (employer’s letter, adviser’s letter, international student adviser authorization) prior to terminating the already authorized job and before beginning the new job. The student’s DS-2019 MUST be valid in order for you to be eligible for an extension or change in AT.