



Orientation for New Visiting Scholars

Welcome to UNC Charlotte! Below is an overview of your J-1 immigration status, tips on settling in, and ways to connect with the International Student and Scholar Office (ISSO).

MAINTAINING YOUR J-1 IMMIGRATION STATUS

When you entered the U.S. using your passport, visa and DS-2019, you obtained J-1 'status' which is reflected on your I-94 arrival/departure record. Now that you are here, you must abide by certain rules to maintain your J-1 immigration status.

- Keep your local address current with USCIS. Update information online at the [ISSO Scholar Portal](#)
- The DS-2019 contains information regarding your exchange visitor program. If there are any changes, you must notify the ISSO. If more time is needed you must request an extension from your host department prior to the document's expiration.
- The 'visa' is the stamp in the passport, which may expire while inside the U.S.
- I-94 should indicate 'D/S'. This means duration of status (program end date).
- You are permitted to stay in the U.S. up to 30 days beyond the end date of your program as listed on the DS-2019 form.
- If you plan to travel outside the U.S., you (and any dependent spouse/children) must bring your DS-2019 to our office for signature 2 weeks before your travel. Take your signed document with you when traveling. You will receive a new I-94 upon re-entry (except for travel of less than 30 days to Mexico, Canada). Always ensure for accuracy upon your re-entry by consulting <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>.
- If your DS-2019 has the comment 'is subject to 212(e)' this means that based on either the source of your funding or the U.S. State Department skills list, you may not adjust your status in the U.S. until you've either waived or fulfilled this requirement, otherwise known as the '2-year home residency requirement'.

HEALTH INSURANCE

As a J-1 scholar, you are required to maintain health insurance coverage that meets program requirements for yourself and any dependents in the U.S.

- This coverage must remain in effect for the full period of your exchange visitor program until your final departure date from the U.S. You are required to keep the





ISSO informed of updates to your coverage. Do not allow gaps to occur as illness or an accident can occur at any time.

- Failure to maintain coverage is a violation of your immigration status and may result in early termination of your program.

If you have health insurance through the UNC system, you must ADD coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation of remains. You can enroll online for roughly \$15/month through [Geo Blue](#) . Simply enter your group access code listed below to review plan details and self-enroll.

Program Name: State of North Carolina
Self enrollment Code: PXC-5202

THE ISSO SCHOLAR PORTAL AND ISSO WEBSITE

Please complete the check-in on the [ISSO Scholar Portal](#); upload a scanned copy of your passport, visa, [I-94](#), and health insurance card/documents.

Use the ISSO's website (isso.charlotte.edu) to learn more about your J-1 responsibilities and benefits.

UNIVERSITY EMAIL AND PHONE

Your host department will also make the necessary arrangements for you to have an email account and phone number. You are expected to use your UNC Charlotte email for all communication amongst members of the University community. Please check your account daily. All important messages and emergency notifications are sent via University email.

- **If you are paid by UNC Charlotte:** your host department has already created your Banner record and you may apply for your University ID card anytime.
- **If you are not paid by UNC Charlotte:** your host department will create a guest account upon completion of your ISSO orientation.

UNIVERSITY ID CARD

Your ID card allows you access to computers anywhere on campus, is required to obtain library materials, and should be carried with you at all times. Certain buildings and laboratories are accessible only with the ID card. Please verify with your host department regarding access to secure areas, based on your particular work/research assignment.





To apply for a university identification card (ID card) you will first need to have a record in the University database (Banner). Then with your passport, you may request your ID card in either the ID office in the Student Union (# 69 on campus map) or Auxiliary Services (# 39 on campus map).

EMPLOYMENT AT UNC CHARLOTTE

If you are employed by UNC Charlotte, you must [complete the I-9 process](#) before you can begin working. The Human Resources Office and the Tax Office websites will guide you through the process. You will also be required to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN).

CAMPUS SAFETY

- UNC Charlotte is a public and open campus. Personal safety is a priority.
- Campus Police are available via phone at **704-687-2200** (from a campus phone, dial **72200**).
- Use a blue emergency light for emergency assistance from any campus location.
- The University issues a **NinerAlert** when there is a threat to campus safety or operations. They are automatically sent via University email, text message, and digital screen take-over.
- Download the **LiveSafe App** (available free in the app store) for additional options.
- Visit <http://emergency.uncc.edu/> for additional safety tips.

OBTAINING A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)

Once you complete the check-in procedure, the ISSO staff will activate your SEVIS record (DS-2019). Please note that your SEVIS record **MUST** be activated **PRIOR** to submitting an online application at www.ssa.gov/ssnumber . Then you must go in person to [the Social Security Administration Office](#) at 2201 Coronation Blvd. # 100. Charlotte, NC 28227.

You will need:

- Your invitation/offer letter
- Your DS-2019
- Your passport with visa inside
- Your I-94 arrival/departure record (print out)

Getting there: CATS Bus #29 stops near the East Parking Deck. You must have exact change and request a TRANSFER when boarding. Click here for the CATS schedule <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cats/Pages/default.aspx>





OBTAINING A BANK ACCOUNT

If you wish to open a bank account, you may do so but are not required to. You will need to provide your immigration documents and some banks will require you to have a social security number.

OBTAINING A NORTH CAROLINA IDENTIFICATION CARD (NON- DRIVER'S LICENSE)

Issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles to individuals who don't have a driver's license in the United States and want an ID for identification purposes.

You must present your original immigration documents (passport, visa, I-94, DS-2019, invitation letter, utility bills, and bank statement). Make sure you have the exact same spelling of your name on all documents.

OBTAINING A NORTH CAROLINA DRIVER'S LICENSE

The operation of an automobile without a valid driver's license is illegal and punishable by a fine and/or jail sentence. An international driver's license ([which is valid for up to 60 days of establishing a residence in North Carolina](#)) and a valid license from your home country are acceptable. However, it is recommended that you obtain a North Carolina driver's license OR state ID if you plan to be in the U.S. for an extended period of time.

You must visit the DMV office in person with your immigration documents (passport, visa, I-94, DS-2019 and invitation letter) with you and prepare for the tests. Check the website below for information on tests and application: www.ncdot.gov/dmv/driver/.

STAYING INFORMED AND CONNECTED

Please use your University email account. You will be added to a google group with other visiting scholars and will receive email announcements and newsletters from the ISSO.

Please attend ISSO social events in order to get to know others, which will help with your transition to the U.S. and to Charlotte. If you experience any emergencies, such as hospitalizations, please inform our office as soon as possible.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Tarek Elshayeb (telshaye@uncc.edu, 704-687-7781) or Denise Medeiros (dvmedei@uncc.edu, 704-687-7784).

Our best wishes for an enjoyable and enriching educational and cultural experience!

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