

## Understanding Your DS-2019

*The DS-2019 is a multi-purpose document* issued by a U.S. government-approved institution (or organization) certifying that your admission into a program has been accepted and that you have demonstrated sufficient financial resources to stay in the U.S. for the length of the DS-2019 form. The DS-2019 is officially titled the "Certificate of Eligibility" because with it, you are "eligible" to apply for a J-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad. Your spouse or children will also each need their own DS-2019 to obtain J-2 dependent status, if desired.

### **How the DS-2019 is created**

Once your admission into a program has been accepted, your name and other biographic information are entered into a U.S. government database called SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). The SEVIS database processes the information and produces a "PDF" file of the DS-2019 that is sent back to the school via the internet. The school official (called the Responsible Officer) prints and signs the DS-2019 and then it is prepared for delivery to you. If an update or change information needs to be made on the DS-2019, the Responsible Officer makes these requests through SEVIS and the document can be easily reproduced (see also [Understanding SEVIS](#)).

### **How the DS-2019 is used outside the U.S.**

The DS-2019 form is used by the prospective visitor to apply for a J-1 visa at the U.S. embassy or consulate abroad (see also [Applying for a Visa](#)). The visa is the document needed to be allowed entry into the U.S. (see also [Understanding the Visa](#)). *The DS-2019 must be presented along with the J-1 visa to a U.S. Immigration inspector upon arrival at the U.S. port-of-entry* (see also [Entering the U.S.](#)).

### **How the DS-2019 is used inside the U.S.**

*Once you have arrived in the U.S. and passed through the border inspections process, the DS-2019 is used as identification purposes and proof of your legal status.* If you get a job on or off-campus, you will be required to show the DS-2019 to your employer during the hiring process.

### **Transfer of Programs**

The DS-2019 is also needed for a transfer of programs. If you are transferring from one J-1 program to another, you must obtain a DS-2019 from the new school or program before your current DS 2019 has expired. See the Responsible Officer at your program to get more information about the transfer process.

### **Traveling with the DS-2019**

*If you will be traveling abroad and then returning to the U.S. to resume your J-1 program, you must take your DS-2019 with you.* The DS-2019 is required to re-apply for a visa if you need one (see also [Applying for a Visa](#)) and for re-entering the U.S. Before your departure from the U.S., make sure that you have an unexpired "travel validation" from an Adviser at SISS on the DS-2019 (bottom right corner). This signature is valid for one year for multiple visits outside the U.S. or until the DS-2019 expires, whichever is

first. In most cases, a travel validation can be done quickly and easily at SISS; however, be sure to plan ahead and get it done several weeks before you depart the U.S. to avoid the holiday rush (see also [Travel and Re-entry to the U.S.](#))

### **Important Information on the DS-2019**

*Some immigration regulations governing the J-1 status are listed on page 2 of the document. It is important that J-1 visitors read this page to understand the rules that apply to their stay in the U.S.*

### **The DS-2019 End Date**

An "end date" was entered into item #3 on page 1 of your DS-2019 based on your particular program. *If you are not able to finish your program on that date, you must request an extension from the SISS office at least two weeks before the end date expires* (Students, see also [Extension of Program](#)). In all cases, proof of sufficient funds will be required to extend your stay in the U.S. For some, this documentation may take time to acquire; advance planning is highly encouraged. Please consult with an Adviser at SISS if you have any questions about your stay in the U.S.

### **The 30-day Grace Period**

After completing your program, you are allowed a 30-day grace period to depart the U.S.

From: [http://ias.berkeley.edu/siss/multiple\\_use/understanding\\_ds2019.html](http://ias.berkeley.edu/siss/multiple_use/understanding_ds2019.html)