

Announcement About Redesigned Exchange Visitor Program Process

June 15, 2019

Revised November 5, 2019

Colleagues:

I'm pleased to announce a revised, unified process for requesting approval for Exchange Visitor Program visitors (EVP; previously known as the J-1 visitor program) hosted by our faculty and a more supportive framework for these visitors once they arrive at Northeastern. This new process will go into effect on July 1, 2019. These visitors are an important and valued part of our research and scholarship endeavors, and promote our institutional goal of global engagement.

For the purposes of this new process, EVP visitors include:

- Visiting Students at all levels (Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral) (Note: Full-time enrolled international students on student exchange programs do not fall under this process)
- Visiting Scholars (those with doctoral degrees who hold non-faculty positions at other academic institutions or positions at other non-academic institutions, agencies or companies)
- Visiting Faculty (those who hold a faculty position at another institution)

This initiative will enhance our alignment with the the U.S. Department of State vision for the EVP visitors. The goals of the revised process are to: promote transparency in meeting the objectives of the EVP as well as the review workflow, enhance process efficiencies, and assure that all EVP visitors are appropriately integrated into the U.S. cultural experience and the university.

Since late 2018, a working group led by my office has developed a new, unified intake proposal and routing form for all EVP visitors. This routing form includes the following important components:

- 1) Information to be provided by the sponsoring faculty member including details regarding the anticipated arrangements for the EVP visitor during their experience here. This includes more uniform, recommended hourly pay levels for paid appointments, and standard weekly hours recommendations;
- 2) Sign-off by the associated unit head and Dean's office; and
- 3) A review by the sponsoring faculty's HRM key contact to verify English language proficiency for EVP visiting students and scholars designed to promote their successful integration in to the university and surrounding communities and success in meeting their EVP goals, as well as restricted party screening and any other steps related to HRM. Visiting students and scholars without TOEFL or IELTS scores will have their English language skills assessed by a

3rd party contractor. This process will be administered through each college's HRM key contact. Further details about this process will be forthcoming.

Process for approval:

- 1) **Please submit the routing form to Deb Franko, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, via email (d.franko@northeastern.edu).** Review of the submission will be conducted by a University Visitor Oversight Committee. The committee members are Tom Sheahan, Senior Vice Provost for Curriculum and Programs, and Jigisha Patel, Assistant General Counsel and Chief Advisor for International and Immigration Services, and the committee will be chaired by the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. The goal of this committee is to provide consistency in approvals, and identify potential university-wide trends to enhance the process and EVP visitor experience.
- 2) Upon approval of the EVP visitor, the process for obtaining issuance of the DS-2019 visa sponsorship documentation from the Office of Global Services will be followed, as is the current practice.
- 3) New offer letter templates for Visiting Students (paid or unpaid), and Visiting Scholars and Faculty (paid or unpaid) are now available for use by HRM key contacts.

Please note that EVP visiting students will be required to register for a zero credit hour, non-billable course at the appropriate level so that they are entered into our student system and have access to university facilities and systems that support students without requiring separate administrative sponsorship. This information is provided in the Visiting Student offer letter.

Within the next 2 weeks, a session will be scheduled with the HRM key contacts from all colleges to roll out the implementation details for this new process. If you have questions in the meantime, please contact Deb Franko (d.franko@northeastern.edu).

We hope this process will lead to consistent and transparent requirements for hosting visitors, and provide timely decisions on those requests.