

Academic Training Policies & Procedures

Overview

The Institute of International Education (IIE), Coordenação De Aperfeiçoamento De Pessoal De Nível Superior (CAPES) and Conselho Nacional De Desenvolvimento Cientifico E Tecnológico (CNPQ) strongly encourage all eligible Brazil Scientific Mobility Program (BSMP) students to actively seek and partake in a work-related experience that directly relates to their major fields of study while participating in the program. The scope of this policy falls directly in line with the greater BSMP objective of widening the academic and research exchange between the U.S. and Brazil and increasing Brazilian initiatives in sciences, technology and innovation.

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Academic Training Description

For the purposes of the Brazil Scientific Mobility Program, **Academic Training (AT)** takes place during the summer and can be any of the following:

- Internship
- Research
- Observership

Students may engage in diverse opportunities such as an internship, full-time research (often in on-campus labs at their host institution or at another university), or observership of a professional in a specific industry (generally for dentistry, nursing, and medical students who are not permitted to have direct patient contact). AT must be approved in writing by IIE before the student may participate in any activities or orientations related thereto.

Students may not participate in AT during the academic year, but may volunteer in an area that interests them, such as visiting local schools to tutor students or performing experiments in a professor’s lab, as long as it is not the student’s primary focus and is done on a voluntary basis. This activity can be permitted at the discretion of the student in consultation with his or her academic advisor and does not require IIE’s written approval. A voluntary research activity or project that takes place during the academic year must not result in academic credit, payment, or other substantive benefit and must not adversely affect the student’s academic performance.

Academic Training Eligibility

Although J-1 student exchange visitors are eligible under federal regulations to engage in various types of employment, BSMP students are only permitted to take part in AT which must be directly related to the student's field of study. The authorization to engage in either type of activity is under the discretion and permission of IIE and established BSMP policy.

In order to be eligible for AT, students must have successfully maintained full-time academic and J-1 status and be in good academic standing. In general full-time undergraduate course of study ranges from 12 to 18 credits depending on the host institution. Good academic standing is defined as maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or higher while simultaneously fulfilling all the requirements that a host institution requires of its non-degree students. Students who will have completed at least one semester of full-time academic coursework prior to the summer will have unrestricted access to IIE Academic Training resources. Students enrolled in a concurrent "Bridge" program (English and regular academic courses) are subject to the policies outlined below.

Not Eligible for Academic Training

If less than 50% of a student's course load in the Spring term is comprised of academic (non-English) credits, the student is not eligible to pursue Academic Training. Students who are ineligible for AT but are continuing their scholarships will be placed in an academic institution for summer coursework by IIE. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

Students who are not eligible for AT approval will automatically be placed in academic coursework in the summer.

Eligible for Academic Training

If 50% or more of a student's course load in the Spring term is comprised of academic (non-English) credits and the student is continuing his or her scholarship, the student is eligible to pursue Academic Training.

The deadline for students to submit their completed Request for AT Approval form for the 2014 summer period is April 1st 2014. Any student who does not submit the form by April 1st, 2014 will automatically be placed in summer coursework.

Students will gain access to the IIE Academic Training Website only after they have secured an AT Opportunity. They will not be allowed to use the IIE Academic Training website to search for AT positions.

All Bridge students will need to submit the **Spring 2014 Bridge Report Form** before requesting approval for AT. Requests for AT approval will not be reviewed until students have submitted this form so that IIE can verify that their course load is at least 50% academic.

Academic Training Policies

As defined by J-1 exchange visitor regulations, the purpose of AT is to provide employment authorization to J-1 students so they can gain practical experience in their major field of study while maintaining J-1 visa status. For the purpose of BSMP, AT is further defined as a traditional internship, co-op, observership, or practicum that is completed over a pre-approved period of time during the summer.

In addition to the above, all AT requests must comply with the following BSMP policies and J-1 exchange visitor regulations:

I. Qualifications

- A. AT can take place either on- or off-campus, and may be paid or unpaid.
- B. AT should be full-time (at least 35 hours per week). Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis.
- C. AT should be no shorter than eight weeks in duration and cannot be any longer than the total amount of time spent in the student's full course of study. AT that lasts fewer than eight weeks may be permitted in special cases.

II. AT Requirements

- A. Students must begin summer AT activities within 30 days of their last exam of the Spring term.
- B. Students must report any changes to the terms or conditions (host organization, supervisor, location, dates, etc.) of an authorized AT opportunity in writing to IIE immediately.
- C. Students must report any change in their U.S. address upon arrival to their AT site.
- D. Students must be enrolled in a health insurance plan that meets J-1 visa regulations throughout the AT opportunity. Students whose health plan will not must inform IIE immediately so that IIE can purchase insurance on their behalf.

III. Academic Credit During AT

- A. AT can be taken for academic credit only in two cases. If a student receives academic credit for AT that does not meet one or both of these criteria, the student will be responsible for all credit costs and fees.
 - The AT provider requires that students receive credit in order to participate in the Academic Training.
 - Academic credit is required in order for the student to be eligible for on-campus housing.
- B. If a student is required to receive credit (for one or both of the reasons stated above), the student must take only the minimum amount of credit required (typically one to three credits).
- C. IIE must pre-approve students who are required to receive credit to engage in an AT opportunity. Students are required to submit the Summer Coursework Request form before enrolling in credits.

IV. Visa Regulations

- A. All students, in particular those studying medicine, veterinary sciences, dentistry and pharmacy, must understand and agree to comply with the J-1 regulation stipulation that they will not have any patient contact (human or animal) during the course of their exchange program.
- B. Students must comply with the two-year home residency requirement of the J-1 visa upon completion of BSMP.
- C. Students whose scholarships end at the conclusion of AT must comply with the 30-Day Travel Grace Period requirement.

Process to Obtain Approval for Academic Training

Students must receive written approval for any AT opportunity from IIE, their academic advisor or dean, and their AT supervisor or Human Resources representative prior to beginning employment, including any related orientations.

1. Consult with an academic advisor, dean or career services office to find out what opportunities are available and/or how to start networking in the appropriate field of study.
2. Search on the internet, through connections and career fairs, and follow up on ideas presented by professors on how to find Academic Training. Apply early and often to internship opportunities.
3. Monitor the IIE Academic Training website and look for e-mail announcements from IIE and its AT partners. Students should not rely entirely on this website.
4. Complete the following steps at least one month before the requested AT start date:
 - A. Go to the IIE Academic Training website and complete the **Academic Training Opportunity Form**. This form must be completed in full.
 - B. **Print** your form and have it **signed** by you, your academic advisor, and Academic Training supervisor.
 - C. **Submit** the signed form to BSMP Student Service Portal. (<http://mycusthelp.info/IIE>). Make sure to use the Document category: **“Pre-Degree AT Request”**
 - D. If you have an **Offer Letter** from the AT provider, also submit it to the BSMP Student Service Portal and use the Document category: **“Internship Offer Letter”**
5. Wait approximately 5 business days to receive official approval confirmation from IIE.

Students Who Are Unable to Secure an Academic Training Opportunity

Students who are unable to secure an AT opportunity must provide verification that they pursued opportunities in good faith and were unsuccessful in obtaining an offer.

- **Students in Chamada 127 and 143** – As students will enroll in coursework in Fall 2014, they may be permitted to pursue alternative activities such as summer coursework.
- **Students in Chamada 117 and 132**- As students are expected not to enroll in coursework in Fall 2014, they will be required to return to Brazil following the conclusion of their Spring terms.

- If you should have questions, please consult the Academic Training section of the BSMP website here:

<http://www.iie.org/Programs/Brazil-Scientific-Mobility/Current-Students/Academic-Training>

- If you cannot find the answer to your question on the BSMP website, please send an email to BrazilAT@iie.org