



VISITING STUDENT FAQ FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

ENROLLMENT STATUSES

A student at another institution has contacted me about conducting research. What are their options?

Individuals enrolled at a Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) institution, an Ivy Plus institution, or the University of Illinois at Chicago, can pursue research with faculty via one of the [University's reciprocal exchange programs](#) at no cost to the student. These students are also eligible to enroll in coursework.

Students whose home institution is not affiliated with an exchange must enroll as a [Non-Degree Visiting Student](#) (NDVS). Non-Degree Visiting Students cannot enroll in coursework.

What is an NDVS?

A Non-Degree Visiting Student (NDVS) is a graduate student currently enrolled at another academic institution who visits Chicago to conduct short-term research with a faculty member. The vast majority of NDVS are international students who need visa support to visit Chicago; however, domestic students at another institution that does not participate in the [existing exchange programs](#) can request NDVS status as well. Students enrolled at an exchange institution should arrange a visit through the exchange, not the Division's NDVS program.

Can the primary purpose of a visit be something other than research, such as participating in the job market or employment as a research assistant?

No. The primary purpose of an NDVS enrollment is to conduct research. This is particularly important for international students entering the US on a J-1 visa, as should they be found to have entered the country for a purpose other than research, they may be deported and/or jeopardize their ability to receive a US visa in the future. Students on a J-1 visa may be eligible for up to 20 hours of student employment, but employment cannot be the primary purpose of their visit.

What does NDVS status grant?

NDVS have similar privileges to students enrolled in a degree-granting program, including library, building, and gym access; however, they cannot enroll in coursework. Students interested in coursework must enroll either through an [exchange program](#) (if enrolled at an eligible domestic institution) or through the [Graduate Student at Large program](#).

Can a student at another institution conduct research with a faculty member without going through the NDVS process or an exchange program?

The only way for a student to have a status at the university is through NDVS or the GRAD Exchange. International students who would need to enter the US on a visa with the intention of conducting research must enter on a J-1 visa; they cannot enter on a tourist or other visa. International students entering on a Fulbright-sponsored J-1 must still go through the NDVS process even though the University is not their visa sponsor.

NDVS REQUIREMENTS

When can an NDVS visit?

An NDV student must plan their visit to begin on the first day of an academic quarter; international students on a J-1 visa must arrive in the US by that date. The termination of their visit can be at any time; however, tuition rates are not prorated. If an NDVS will be in residency for only part of a quarter, they will be charged full quarterly tuition and fees.

How long can an NDVS stay?

Up to four quarters.

What are the admissions requirements for an NDVS?

NDVS must submit a brief online application which includes a research statement describing their intended research and reasons for pursuing it at UChicago and with the specific faculty sponsor. Additionally, all NDVS must meet the [University's English proficiency policy for non-degree students](#) by either qualifying for a waiver, submitting TOEFL/IELTS scores meeting requirements, or passing the University's in-house assessment.

Does NDVS cost the department money?

NDV Students are expected to pay their own tuition (\$1,456), health insurance (\$1,639), fees (\$466), and living expenses (approximately \$7,056) unless participating through one of our funded reciprocal agreements. However, individual faculty or departments can choose to pay tuition and fees out of their own accounts.

FACULTY SPONSORSHIP

What is a faculty sponsor?

NDVS are hosted within an SSD PhD program and must be sponsored by a member of the tenured/tenure-track Faculty who holds an appointment in the Division of Social Sciences. A sponsor must be in residency for the entirety of the planned duration of stay. A faculty sponsor should regularly meet with the student to ensure their time at UChicago is productive. The potential NDVS must contact the faculty in advance of applying for NDVS status and secure an informal approval to have the faculty member serve as their sponsor. Once the student completes the Divisional NDVS application, the faculty member will receive instructions on how to formally approve the student. The faculty member, not administrative staff, must complete the (very short) sponsor confirmation form.

Can area center directors or MA instructional staff serve as faculty sponsors?

No. Only PhD department faculty are permitted to serve as the formal sponsor for an NDVS. However, NDVS are welcome to connect with faculty across the University during their time at UChicago.

What if the faculty sponsor will be on leave during all or part of the student's planned visiting dates?

A faculty sponsor must be in residency for the entirety of the planned duration of stay.

OTHER LOGISTICS

Are departments notified of planned NDVS enrollments?

Yes, the student affairs administrator for each department is notified when an NDVS is processed, and we are preparing the formal invitation letter.

When should NDVS submit their applications?

Deadlines and requirements are available [here](#), and suggested submission deadlines are typically 8-12 weeks prior to the start of a quarter. While we can accommodate late applications, if an application is submitted after the posted deadline, we cannot guarantee all administrative steps will be completed in time for international students to receive a student visa. It takes typically at least 2 weeks for an NDVS to be fully processed and the student's information fed to the Office of International Affairs system; it takes typically 3 weeks for OIA to process a visa request and issue a J-1.

I want to bring a group of students from other institutions for a long term (several weeks to months) research initiative. Can I use the NDVS process for that?

NDV student status is intended for *one-off, student-initiated* research opportunities with a specific faculty. Anything more formalized involving multiple students is considered an "Other Educational Opportunity" (OEO) and requires additional planning and administrative logistics. Faculty planning something of this kind should contact Lindsey Weglarz, Assistant Dean of Students for Admissions, at lweglarz@uchicago.edu at least 6 months prior to when students would arrive to begin implementation of an OEO.

Where do I go with questions?

Cathy Mican processes all our NDVS applications. She can be reached at cmican@uchicago.edu, but students with questions should email ssd-admissions@uchicago.edu. Questions about domestic exchange programs should be directed to gradexchange@uchicago.edu.