



Cornell University International Students and Scholars Office

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I am a professor and I would like to invite a student who is currently enrolled at an institution abroad to work in my lab over the summer... what is the appropriate visa category?

Choice #1) Have them come as a non-degree student. This is the first choice (and the best choice) whether they are an undergraduate or a graduate student abroad.

Pros and Cons:

- **MUST register**
 - Graduate Students: free tuition in summer (must pay for student insurance for the summer), no course requirements
 - Undergraduate students: must register for at least 6 credits, must pay tuition (may be able to get new “Vice Provost for International Affairs tuition waiver”—ask your Dean’s office)
 - Undergrads must pay for own accident and medical insurance
- **CAN work** on campus up to 20 hours per week (paid or unpaid)
- **CAN be reimbursed for expenses (travel, food, lodging)**

Choice #2) Give them an academic appointment and have them come as J-1

Research Scholars. This is **ONLY** a choice for graduate students who will be given an academic appointment. Most academic appointments require PhDs and your college's dean may need to waive that requirement for a non-PhD holder to be given an academic appointment. [Please Note: CALS has recently changed their policy to have all such visitors come as students and will NOT waive the PhD requirement.]

Pros and Cons:

- **MUST** have an academic appointment
- **CAN work** on campus up to 40 hours per week (paid or unpaid)
- **CAN be reimbursed** for expenses (travel, food, lodging)
- **If not benefits eligible** (unpaid or temp), then need to have own accident and medical insurance

Choice #3) Have them come on a B1 / B2 visitor’s visa or the visa waiver program (if from visa waiver country). This is a risky CHOICE.

Pros and Cons:

- **CAN NOT register** (it is clearly against the regulations for a B1/B2 or visa waiver status holder to register for classes)
- **CAN NOT be paid to work on campus at all (exception for B1s only at Cornell for 9 days or less)**
- **CAN be reimbursed for expenses (travel, food, lodging) but be careful about recording exactly what is being reimbursed**
- **MIGHT not meet university requirements for volunteers (please read university policy on volunteers: http://www.policy.cornell.edu/PDF_65_University_Volunteers2.cfm. If a person’s visa status prohibits work in the U.S., then usually they also cannot be a University volunteer.**
- **Needs own accident and medical insurance**
- **MIGHT have trouble at U.S. consulate obtaining B1 / B2 visa stamp to do research at Cornell**
- **MIGHT have trouble at U.S. port of entry gaining entry as B1 / B2 or visa waiver visitor to come to Cornell to do research**