Visiting Scholars

Effective: May 10, 2021
Contact: Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost

Contents

- Introduction
  - Purpose
  - Background
  - Definitions
  - Exclusions
- Policy Statement
  - Section I: Visiting Scholar Designation
  - Section II: Responsibilities of Individual and Administrative Hosts and Applicable University Departments
  - Section III: Responsibilities and Privileges of Visiting Scholars
- Resources

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish expectations for the designation, roles, and overall responsibility for visiting scholars, and to set forth procedures for obtaining approval for and registering visiting scholars at Iowa State University. It is important that the university maintain a record of such visitors and review documentation or agreements in order to protect the university’s interests, including intellectual property, as well as the integrity of federally funded research endeavors.

Background

Iowa State University recognizes that individuals from other universities, institutions, and businesses may wish to visit for extended periods of time for reasons including, but not limited to, conducting research in a university facility, collaborating with university faculty on specific projects, and observing research, extension/outreach, instruction, or administration. The designation “visiting scholar” is a privilege accorded to scholars temporarily in residence at the university. Visiting scholars may not begin program activity prior to final approval of the request and the approved start date.

Definitions

Individual host means any current university employee who hosts a visiting scholar pursuant to the appropriate approvals set forth in this policy. University undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars are not eligible to serve as an individual host for purposes of this policy. Back to top

Administrative host means the designated university representative within a college, department or school, center or institute, or unit where the visiting scholar will be present. The administrative host shall coordinate with the office of the dean of the college, Office of the Vice President for Research (VPR), or equivalent administrator, respectively, when the delegate administrative host is not the dean/associate dean, VPR, etc.
University personnel means any paid faculty or staff in any college, department or school, center or institute, or unit.

Visiting scholar, for purposes of this policy, includes individuals from other universities, institutions, and businesses who are granted access to university facilities to conduct collaborative research or to observe research, extension/outreach, instruction, or administration; and who do not receive financial support from the university for their effort beyond travel and/or expense reimbursement, where appropriate and applicable. This definition includes visitors with the designation of “visiting student researcher” as well as unpaid visiting faculty (i.e., Fulbright Scholars and faculty from other academic institutions during a period of sabbatical at their home institution).

Scope

This policy applies to all university personnel who entertain requests from, or otherwise wish to host, individuals from other universities, institutions, and businesses to visit any campus or location of the university and use university facilities to conduct collaborative research or to observe research, extension/outreach, instruction, or administration. These visitors do not carry an official status of employment at Iowa State University. These individuals must have university hosts, and in certain cases (that is, where the visiting scholar has access to university facilities for fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days or more) require additional university approval for the visit as provided below.

Exclusions

The designation of visiting scholar excludes – and therefore this policy does not apply to – any one or more of the following:

- Individuals who are merely visiting common areas at Iowa State
- University invited speakers/guest lecturers who provide a speech/guest lecture that is open to the university community or public or to a university class
- University invited dignitaries or government/diplomatic visitors to Iowa State
- Enrolled university students (whether registered as a degree or non-degree student at Iowa State)
- University employees
- Academic affiliates (i.e., affiliate faculty)
- Independent contractors retained by the university
- University retirees with emeritus status
- University predoctoral scholars enrolled at Iowa State (Chapter 10 of the Graduate College Handbook)
- University postdoctoral scholars (Chapter 10 of the Graduate College Handbook)
- Undergraduate and graduate students from other academic institutions designated through Iowa State procedures as interns and externs, or those for whom a formal student exchange program (MOA/MOU) exists
- Employment candidates visiting campus as part of the selection process
- Individuals visiting Ames Laboratory (including those in the Contributors program)
- Visitors participating in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Global Programs training programs, including the ISU-UP (Uganda program)
- Members of university recognized advisory or review boards whose visit to the university relates to their service on that board.

Policy Statement

All university personnel who wish to host individuals from other universities, institutions, and/or businesses as a “visiting scholar” at the university must comply with this policy and all other applicable laws and university policies.
Section I – Visiting Scholar Designation

A. Visiting Scholar Overview

All individuals from other universities, institutions, and/or businesses who are granted access to university facilities to conduct collaborative research or to observe research, extension/outreach, instruction, or administration; and who do not receive financial support from the university for their effort beyond travel and/or expense reimbursement, including health insurance where required by the university, where appropriate and applicable, must be recommended by an administrative host prior to coming to Iowa State. When the proposed visit to the university is for fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days or more, the visitor must be approved by the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost for the designation of visiting scholar prior to coming to Iowa State. 

B. Criteria for Designation

This designation is appropriate for qualified individuals from industry, government, or other institutions who wish to visit the university and engage in activities under the purview of this policy. The designation of visiting scholar is appropriate for faculty from other academic institutions who are invited to Iowa State University as a Fulbright Scholar or during a period of leave from the home institution, including for a period of sabbatical. (Any unpaid visiting faculty appointment at Iowa State as managed through this visiting scholar process differs from employment as paid visiting faculty – see Faculty Handbook 3.3.4.) This designation also includes visiting student researchers – students enrolled in a degree program other than Iowa State University who wish to conduct research in residence at Iowa State.

The following are the minimum eligibility criteria for a visiting scholar designation at the university:

- The proposed visiting scholar must be visiting from, and affiliated with, an outside (U.S. or foreign) university, institution, or business;
- The proposed visiting scholar must have a bachelor’s degree or equivalent;
- The individual host and administrative host must agree to serve as the hosts of the proposed visiting scholar and agree to the responsibilities of each as provided below;
- The visiting scholar must agree to pay an administrative fee upon arrival;
- The proposed visiting scholar may be required to successfully complete a background check and export control review. When required, the background check and export control review must be completed prior to granting the visiting scholar access to university facilities;
- Regardless of the duration of the visit, visiting scholars may be required to enroll themselves and their accompanying dependents in the ISU Student and Scholar Health Insurance (SSHIP); and
- If the proposed visiting scholar is intending to arrive on a J-1 visa sponsored by the university, additional criteria must be met. Consult with the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) to learn more about the minimum requirements for a J-1 visa.

Requests for exceptions to the minimum eligibility criteria above must be made in writing and submitted to the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost for approval.

C. Duration of Designation

Visiting scholar designations are for a maximum period of one year. Upon recommendation of the administrative host and approval by the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost, visiting scholar designations may be renewed up to a full second year, although shorter extensions are possible. An extension beyond two years must be approved by the dean of the college, vice president for research or equivalent administrator, where applicable, and the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost and will be granted only for extraordinary and compelling reasons.
D. Application and Approval Requirements for Visiting Scholars

1. Visiting Scholars Present for Less Than Fourteen (14) Consecutive Calendar Days

When university personnel wish to host a visiting scholar for less than fourteen (14) consecutive days, the individual host and the administrative host must ensure compliance with the following:

a. Criteria for designation for the proposed visiting scholar (Section I.B.);
b. Submission of a Visiting Scholar Request form;
c. Export control review for all proposed international visiting scholars;
d. Conflicts of Interest and Commitment (COIC) disclosure in the event the visiting scholar will be responsible for university research during the visit;
e. In the event the proposed visiting scholar will be creating intellectual property in university facilities, assignment of Intellectual Property by means of signing the Visiting Scholar Agreement form;
f. A fully executed Visiting Scholar Agreement form electronically signed by the proposed visiting scholar;
g. Consultation with ISSO (issoscholar@iastate.edu) for all proposed international visiting scholars, especially those requiring a J-1 visa sponsored by the university;
h. All visiting scholars must pay an administrative fee assessed through the U-Bill upon arrival;
i. Joint issuance of a letter of invitation. The individual host and the administrative host must jointly issue a letter of invitation to the proposed visiting scholar. All letters of invitation must comply with the visiting scholar letter of invitation requirements. A template for the letter of invitation can be found on the SVPP website;
j. Responsibilities of individual and administrative hosts and applicable university departments (Section II); and
k. Responsibilities and privileges of visiting Scholars (Section III).

Upon completion of all applicable documents and consultation with the applicable university departments (e.g., Export Compliance Office, Office of Research Ethics) and review by the administrative host, the administrative host will determine the eligibility of the proposed visiting scholar.

2. Visiting Scholars Present for Fourteen (14) Consecutive Calendar Days or More

When university personnel wish to host a visiting scholar for fourteen (14) consecutive days or more, the individual host shall coordinate with the administrative host to ensure compliance with the following:

a. Criteria for designation for the proposed visiting scholar (Section I.B.);
b. Submission of a Visiting Scholar Request form;
c. Export control review for all proposed international visiting scholars;
d. Conflicts of Interest and Commitment (COIC) disclosure in the event the visiting scholar will be responsible for university research during the visit;
e. In the event the proposed visiting scholar will be creating intellectual property in university facilities, assignment of Intellectual Property by means of signing the Visiting Scholar Agreement form;

f. A fully executed Visiting Scholar Agreement form electronically signed by the proposed visiting scholar;

g. Consultation with ISSO (issoscholar@iastate.edu) for all proposed international visiting scholars, especially those requiring a J-1 visa sponsored by the university;

h. All visiting scholars must pay an administrative fee assessed through the U-Bill upon arrival;

i. Joint issuance of a letter of invitation. The individual host and the administrative host must jointly issue a letter of invitation to the proposed visiting scholar, subject to prior determination of eligibility by the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost as indicated below. All letters of invitation must comply with the visiting scholar letter of invitation requirements. A template for the letter of invitation can be found on the SVPP website;

j. Responsibilities of individual and administrative hosts and applicable university departments (Section II); and

k. Responsibilities and privileges of visiting scholars (Section III). 

Upon review of all applicable documents and consultation with the applicable university departments (e.g., Export Compliance Office, Office of Research Ethics), the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost will determine final eligibility of the proposed visiting scholar. If a proposed visiting scholar does not meet the requirements for approval, the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost will notify the individual host and the administrative host. A letter of invitation shall only be issued after eligibility has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost.

If approved by the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost, the university will designate the visitor a visiting scholar and only then should planning for the visit proceed. The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost will provide notice of final approval of the visiting scholar to the individual host, the administrative host, and any necessary and appropriate university units.

E. Documentation of Designation

Regardless of the duration of the visit, all visiting scholar designations will be entered and maintained in the university’s designated management system.

Section II – Responsibilities of Individual and Administrative Hosts and Applicable University Departments

A. Individual Host

Regardless of the duration of the visit, the individual host is responsible for hosting and facilitating the visit and ensuring that the visit concludes satisfactorily. The individual host must agree to provide ongoing oversight in conjunction with the administrative host for the full duration of the visit. At the conclusion of the visit, the individual host is responsible for notifying the administrative host, ISSO (if applicable), and the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost (if applicable) of the visiting scholar’s departure from the university. Failure to comply with these responsibilities may impact the ability of the individual host to host future visiting scholars.

B. Administrative Host

The administrative host or their designee is responsible for ensuring the completion of all requirements to host a visiting scholar (e.g., Visiting Scholar Request form, Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Disclosure, etc.) and must ensure that all required documentation, if necessary, is prepared and submitted to the appropriate offices. The administrative host shall consult with the
office of the dean of the college, Office of the Vice President for Research, or equivalent
administrator when the delegate administrative host is not the dean/associate dean/VPR, etc. for
approval and signature of required documents as applicable.

The administrative host is responsible for providing space for the visiting scholar, if appropriate, and
for orienting the visiting scholar to applicable university policies and university resources.

The administrative host must ensure that authority for use of university facilities/equipment or access
to university facilities/equipment is appropriate and issues the appropriate authorization letters, if
applicable. **Back to top**

In addition, the administrative host is responsible for ensuring that the visiting scholar:

- Is aware of all applicable university policies and applicable local, state, and federal laws
  while visiting Iowa State and reports any violations of university policy or the law in
  accordance with university policy and procedure;
- Receives all required university training (e.g. non-discrimination and anti-harassment, health
  and safety for the facilities and equipment, if any, they will use or other mandatory training);
- Understands that proprietary work for his or her home organization may not be carried out in
  university facilities during the visit, unless the university has entered into a written agreement
  with the visiting scholar and/or the visiting scholar’s home institution to perform such work;
- Returns all issued office or laboratory keys, computer equipment, the ISU card (if one is
  issued – see Section III), and all credentials upon completion of the visit.

The administrative host also is responsible for ensuring that any concerns expressed about the
visiting scholar or by the visiting scholar regarding the conduct of university personnel, student(s), or
other visiting scholars are addressed in accordance with university policy and procedure. Upon
conclusion of the visit, the administrative host is responsible for coordinating with the individual host
to notify the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost of the visiting scholar’s departure,
including notifying ISSO as required for international visiting scholars. **Back to top**

C. International Students and Scholars Office

Regardless of the duration or purpose of the visit, ISSO is responsible for reviewing all requests for
J-1 visa documents and for issuing those documents as appropriate. Under the approval of the U.S.
Departments of Homeland Security and State, only certain individuals within ISSO are authorized to
issue J-1 visa documents and are responsible for enforcing compliance with federal rules and
regulations governing legal immigration status in the United States. (Note that form each J-1 visa, an
ISSO scholar fee applies and will be paid by the ISU department/unit.) All international visiting
scholars must check in with the ISSO on or before their first day of program activity. Consult the
ISSO website or contact issoscholar@iastate.edu for details.

D. Export Compliance Office

Regardless of the duration or purpose of the visit, in order to comply with federal export control laws
and regulations, all proposed international visiting scholars are subject to an export control review
prior to approval of the request.

The required export control review will occur via the Export Control Worksheet process. International
visiting scholars must have an Export Control Worksheet on file at least thirty (30) days prior to
arrival at university facilities. **Back to top**

If, in the determination of the university export compliance officer (“UECO”), any proposed
international visiting scholar covered under this policy creates a significant export compliance risk,
the UECO may, at the UECO’s sole discretion, require internal approvals and assurances from the
Individual and/or administrative hosts prior to approving such visits in consultation with the dean of the college, Vice President for Research or equivalent administrator, where applicable. The UECO reserves the right to withhold approval for any proposed international visiting scholar covered under this policy if, in the opinion of the UECO, the visit would result in any violations or significant risk of any violations of U.S. export control laws or regulations or the proposed visit requires any license or approval which the UECO determines is unlikely to be timely issued due to the nature of the applicable controls and/or limited time available to seek such license or approval.

E. Conflicts of Interest and Commitment

Regardless of the duration of the visit, the administrative host for any proposed visiting scholar must ensure that the proposed visiting scholar complies with the requirements of the Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Policy which includes completing a Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Disclosure. The Conflicts of Interest Program staff in the Office of Research Ethics will initiate the process in the event that the visiting scholar will be responsible for research in any university research activities. The Office of Research Ethics will notify the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost on the review and determination of the Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Disclosure submitted by proposed visiting scholars. Back to top

F. Intellectual Property

Regardless of the duration of the visit, a visiting scholar who will be creating intellectual property in university facilities (e.g., conducting research) during the visit will assign Intellectual Property by means of signing the required Visiting Scholar Agreement form.

Section III – Responsibilities and Privileges of Visiting Scholars

Regardless of the duration or purpose of the visit, a visiting scholar is subject to and required to observe all rules, regulations, and requirements of the university, and all applicable state and federal laws, including, but not limited to, conduct, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, ethical behavior, responsible conduct of research, equal opportunity, compliance, safety, and health.

Visiting scholar status is a privilege, not a right, and an individual holds this status at the pleasure of the university. The status may be revoked at any time (even during the term of the designated status) by the university in its sole discretion, without the necessity of a reason. Similarly, there is no right to a renewal of the status at the end of the term of the visit.

The visiting scholar designation does not permit the use of Iowa State University resources, except in compliance with all university policies.

Visiting scholars are not employees of the university and, therefore, are not entitled to financial support, compensation, or other benefits available to university personnel. Visiting scholars may, however, be eligible for expense reimbursement, where appropriate and applicable. Back to top

Visiting scholars also are eligible for the following:

- **Access to university facilities and resources** (e.g., libraries, laboratories, etc.), as deemed appropriate by the applicable university facilities and resources in consultation with the administrative host and in accordance with university policies. The administrative host is responsible for informing the visiting scholar prior to arrival about the approved access to university facilities and resources.

- **Office space**, if deemed appropriate by the administrative host. The administrative host is responsible for arranging access to the appropriate office or laboratory key(s). Administrative hosts should be cognizant of the need to be cautious about issuing such access and must consider export control, conflict of interest, and other factors. Upon the completion of the
visiting scholar’s term at the university, the administrative host must ensure all keys issued to the visiting scholar are returned.

- **Iowa State email address**, the primary purpose of which is to enable visiting scholars to send and receive electronic university correspondence. Upon completion of the visiting scholar's term at the university, the university will disable the Iowa State University email address and all Iowa State University information technology access assigned to the visiting scholar.

- **University identification card** (ISU Card), issued by the ISU Card Office to all visiting scholars. The primary purpose of the ISU card is to enable visiting scholars to use university publicly accessible facilities, such as the library. Upon completion of the visiting scholar's term at the university, the administrative host or their designee must collect the ISU card from the visiting scholar and destroy it.

## Resources

### Links

- [Visiting Scholars website, Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost](#)
- [Visiting Scholar Request Form](#)
- [Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Policy](#)
- [Conflicts of Interest Program - Lynn Comoto](#)
- [Export Compliance Office](#)
- [Graduate College Handbook](#)
- [International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)](#) 
- [ISU Card Office](#)
- [Office of Research Ethics (ORE)](#)
- [U-Bill, Accounts Receivable Office](#)