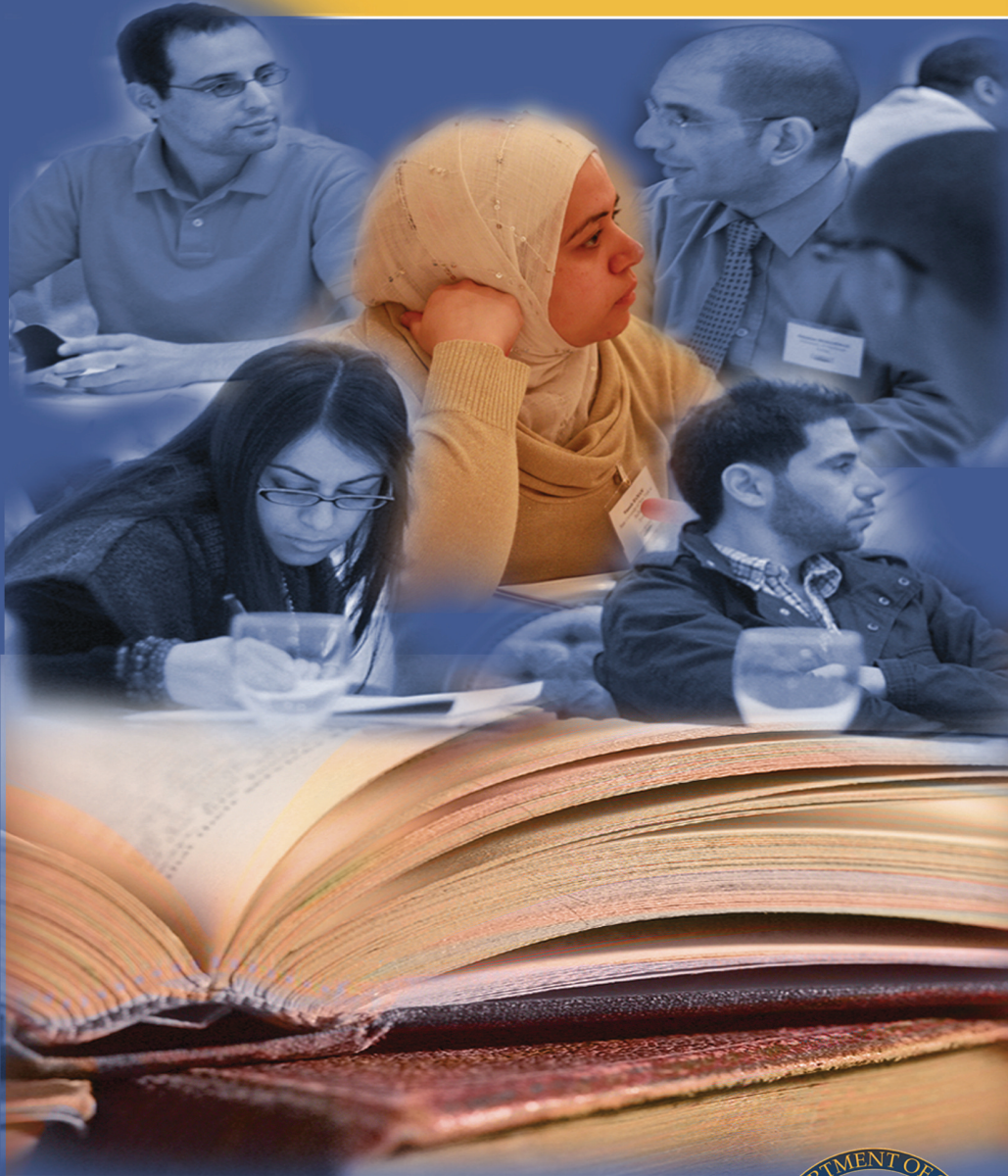


# FULBRIGHT



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<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
History of the Fulbright Program .....	2
Program Administration .....	3
<b>AMIDEAST</b> .....	<b>4</b>
J-1 Immigration Status .....	6
Two-Year Home Country Physical Presence Requirement .....	8
<b>UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRANT</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Terms of Appointment .....	9
Duration of Your Grant .....	10
Initial and Renewal Grants .....	10
Financial Arrangements .....	11
Monthly Maintenance Payments .....	11
U.S. Income Taxes .....	13
Earning Money in the United States .....	14
Accident and Sickness Coverage (ASPE Health Coverage) .....	15
<b>BEFORE YOU LEAVE YOUR OWN COUNTRY</b> .....	<b>19</b>
The Visa Process .....	19
Pre-Academic Programs .....	20
Preparing for Departure to the U.S. ....	21
Travel Arrangements to the U.S. ....	21
Travel Tips .....	22
Packing Tips .....	23
What to Bring .....	25
Temporary Housing .....	26
<b>WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN THE UNITED STATES</b> .....	<b>28</b>
At the Airport .....	28
The Immigration Process .....	28
Housing Arrangements .....	30
Automobiles .....	32
Banking and Finance .....	32
Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number .....	33
Waiving University Health Insurance .....	34
Making Arrangements for Your Family .....	35
<b>DURING YOUR STUDY PERIOD</b> .....	<b>36</b>
General Advice and Assistance .....	36
Reporting to AMIDEAST .....	37
Monthly and Special Allowances .....	41
Requesting Advances .....	42
Academic Regulations .....	42
Responsibility for Your Student Account .....	43

Short-Term Travel Outside the United States .....	44
Employment .....	46
Academic Training During Your Program (Short-term).....	47
Changing Field of Study .....	48
Cultural Enrichment Opportunities.....	50
Use of Facebook, Blogs, & Other Internet-Based Media.....	51
<b>CONCLUDING YOUR FULBRIGHT PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>53</b>
Departure Information.....	53
Academic Training (After Program) .....	53
Return Travel.....	58
Two-Year Home Country Physical Presence Requirement.....	59
Becoming A Fulbright Alumnus/Alumna .....	60

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## Introduction

*“The Fulbright Program aims to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason, and a little more compassion into world affairs and thereby to increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship.”*

*-Senator J. William Fulbright*

Congratulations! You have been offered a Fulbright grant because of your academic accomplishments, career aspirations, and leadership potential. Final confirmation of your grant depends on a number of factors, including approval of your nomination by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, acceptance into an appropriate academic program at a university in the United States, and the availability of funds.

Your Fulbright grant will be sponsored by the United States Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) or a binational Fulbright Commission. As a result of this award, you will become a member of a community of more than 310,000 leaders in government, business, the arts, the media, and the academic communities who have shared the experience of studying abroad as Fulbrighters since the program was launched more than sixty years ago.

The honor of receiving a Fulbright scholarship has many attendant responsibilities. One of your most important duties will be to serve as an ambassador of your country to your U.S. campus and community. Another responsibility will be to fulfill the daily administrative requirements of the Fulbright program. AMIDEAST has developed this manual to help you understand these obligations. Please read it carefully and refer to it regularly for the duration of your program; it contains most of the important information that you will need in order to take full advantage of your time as a Fulbrighter. If you cannot find the answer to your questions here, do not hesitate to contact your AMIDEAST advisor for more information. The team is here to help you.

Welcome to the Fulbright Foreign Student Program!

## HISTORY OF THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM

The flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government, widely known as the Fulbright Program, is designed to “increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.” With this goal as a starting point, the Fulbright Program has provided approximately 310,000 participants—chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential — with the opportunity to study, teach, conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.

The Fulbright Program was established in 1946 under legislation introduced by former Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas. The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State. Since its inception over sixty years ago,

approximately 122,800 “Fulbrighters” from the United States and 202,600 from other countries have participated in the Program. The Fulbright Program awards approximately 8,000 new grants annually. Currently, the Fulbright Program operates in over 155 countries worldwide.



***“We must try to expand the boundaries of human wisdom, empathy and perception, and there is no way of doing that except through education.”***

- Senator J. William Fulbright

## **PROGRAM FUNDING**

The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Program is an annual appropriation made by the United States Congress to the Department of State. Participating governments and host institutions in foreign countries and in the United States also contribute financially through cost-sharing and indirect support, such as salary supplements, tuition waivers and university housing.

## **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

The Fulbright Program is administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State under policy guidelines established by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB) and in cooperation with a number of private organizations.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs develops policies to assure fulfillment of the purposes of the Fulbright Program and administers the Program with the assistance of binational commissions and foundations in 50 countries, U.S. embassies in 100 other countries and a number of cooperating agencies in the United States.

The J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, composed of 12 educational and public leaders appointed by the President of the United States, formulates policies for the administration of the Program, establishes criteria for the selection of candidates, and approves candidates nominated for awards.

Binational commissions and foundations abroad propose the annual country programs, which establish the numbers and categories of grants based on input from local institutions. In a country without a commission or foundation, the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy develops and supervises the Fulbright Program. Currently, 50 commissions are active, most of which are funded jointly by the United States and the respective government of the country where the commission or foundation is based. Each

commission or foundation has a board, which is composed of an equal number of Americans and citizens of the participating nation.

Some Fulbright Programs are administered directly by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Others are administered with the assistance of cooperating agencies. A foreign citizen interested in the Fulbright Program should contact the Fulbright Commission or Foundation in his home country or, where no commission exists, the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy.

**AMIDEAST**

Strengthening mutual understanding and



cooperation between Americans and the



peoples of the Middle East and North Africa

Founded in 1951, AMIDEAST seeks to strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation between Americans and the people of the Middle East and North Africa. AMIDEAST has grown and evolved to address changes the world has witnessed in the past half century. Today, through our offices across this region, we deliver professional skills and English language training programs to people from all walks of life.



Our advising and testing services and our administration of exchange programs help make the benefits of an American-style education more accessible to students and professionals throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Our institutional development programs help public and private organizations more effectively and efficiently carry out their missions and serve their constituents. In the United States, AMIDEAST is expanding its outreach efforts to make the rich histories, cultures, and societies of the Middle East and North Africa within reach to American audiences through the distribution of engaging educational materials and the development of unique study abroad experiences.

AMIDEAST is strongly committed to the view that education and exchange are critical forces in shaping rewarding relationships between the United States and the Middle East and North Africa at the personal, institutional, and governmental levels.

AMIDEAST's activities fall into 5 major program areas:

- Educational services, testing services and advising
- English language and professional skills training
- Academic and Cultural Exchange
- Institutional Development and Capacity Building
- Education Abroad for Americans

In 2013, AMIDEAST operated 25 field and project offices in 14 countries. We provided over 175,000 individuals with information and materials on U.S. higher education and testing, administered 125,480 computer-, paper-, and Internet-based tests, taught English language and professional skills to more than 66,800 students and professionals from across the Middle East/North Africa, and supported short- and long-term international scholarship and exchange programs for over 1600 participants, and empowered over 15,400 young men and women through special programs.

AMIDEAST has administered Fulbright Foreign Student Program grants for Middle East and North Africa participants for more than 40 years and is pleased to continue supporting the United States Department of State in operating this prestigious international exchange program.



## **J-1 IMMIGRATION STATUS**

As the recipient of a Fulbright grant, you must apply for an **Exchange Visitor (J-1) visa** under the sponsorship of the United States Department of State (Exchange Visitor Program Number G-1-12218). AMIDEAST is responsible for creating the record for you in **Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and issuing the Form DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status** needed to obtain your J-1 Student visa.

The **Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)** is an online database first implemented by the U.S. government in January 2003. The system enables the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to maintain updated biographical and program information on J-1 Exchange Visitors living in the United States. SEVIS tracks all entries and exits to and from the United States. AMIDEAST is required to maintain the following types of information via SEVIS:

- Arrival at host institution and ongoing program participation;
- Name and address changes;
- Changes in host institution and field of study;
- Program end-dates, including extensions, completion, withdrawal or termination

As a J-1 Exchange Visitor, you must have these documents to enter the United States in Exchange Visitor status:

- A valid passport;
- A valid DS-2019 form;
- A valid J-1 visa.

Your **passport** should be valid for at least six months after the end date on your DS-2019. If your passport will expire during your stay in the United States, you must renew it through your country's consulate. When you send in your passport for renewal, keep a copy of the biographical information page, your J-1 visa, and your DS-2019 with you. Please also send a copy of the new passport to AMIDEAST. It is your responsibility to ensure that your passport remains valid during the period of your Fulbright grant.

Your **DS-2019 form** is your certificate of eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) immigration status. It reflects information in your SEVIS record at the time it was issued. Whenever information that appears on the DS-2019 form is updated in your SEVIS record, such as change of program dates, you will be issued a new DS-2019 form. Your DS-2019 outlines some of the regulations governing Exchange Visitor status. In order to remain in J-1 status, you must:

- maintain adequate health insurance coverage for you and your dependents at all times;
- be enrolled full-time in an academic program (unless otherwise authorized by AMIDEAST); and
- be in good academic standing.

You will need to present a valid DS-2019 form to the U.S. consulate or embassy when you apply for your J-1 visa. Once you enter the U.S., your DS-2019 form maintains the validity of your status during the time limits of your stay in the U.S. As long as you possess a valid DS-2019 and are participating in your academic program, you are legally present in the United States, even if the J-1 visa stamp in your passport has expired. **Your J-1 immigration status will end the day you complete your academic program or the Program End Date in your SEVIS record, as listed on your current DS-2019 form, whichever date comes first.**

A visa is the document in your passport that allows you to enter the United States. Your **J-1 visa** indicates the United States government's permission for you to enter the country as an Exchange Visitor. Receipt of the visa indicates that a U.S. Consular

Officer has reviewed your application and has determined that you are eligible, but not guaranteed, to enter the United States for a specific purpose. Please remember that a valid J-1 visa is required to *enter* the United States, and a valid DS-2019 form is required *to legally remain* in the United States.

In order to leave and reenter the U.S. throughout your grant period you will need a visa that allows multiple entries. If you plan to travel outside the U.S. and the J-1 visa in your passport permits only one entry or has expired, you must apply for a new J-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy before you will be allowed to re-enter the U.S. and return to your program. Keep in mind that, while you are allowed to apply for a renewal visa from any U.S. Consulate or Embassy, we *strongly* recommend that you renew your visa from your home country.

### **TWO-YEAR HOME COUNTRY PHYSICAL PRESENCE REQUIREMENT**

As a Fulbright grantee, you are participating in an exchange program that holds as its mission the premise that you will return home to share your experiences with your country. To fulfill this mission, the Fulbright Program requires grantees to return to their home countries when their authorized academic activities are completed. Under U.S. law, upon expiration of your Exchange Visitor (J-1) immigration status, you are required to reside in your home country for an aggregate two years before you may apply for U.S. immigration, U.S. permanent residency, or a U.S. non-immigrant work visa. The two-year home residency rule does not prohibit you from applying for most tourist, student, or other exchange visitor visas.

Please be advised that any grantee who applies to waive the two-year home residency requirement will automatically become ineligible for post-program Academic Training, regardless of the outcome of the waiver application.

## Understanding Your Grant

### TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

The Terms of Appointment is your contract with the Fulbright Program. It describes the conditions and financial benefits of your award and explains your responsibilities to the Fulbright Program, AMIDEAST, your home country, and the United States government. When your U.S. academic institution is finalized, you will be given the Terms of Appointment to read and sign. You will become a Fulbright grantee upon signing your Terms of Appointment.

*Be certain to read your Terms of Appointment very carefully before you sign it.* If you have any questions about the information it contains, please consult the agency from which you received notification of your award (AMIDEAST, U.S. Embassy or binational Fulbright Commission).

Among other things, your Terms of Appointment will indicate the length of your grant, whether your grant is for a degree program or for non-degree research, your primary funding source (a binational Commission or the United States Department of State), whether your grant provides full or partial funding, and your commitment to return to your home country for an aggregate of two years of residency after completion of the grant. If you are receiving a partial grant, the other sources of your funding will also be indicated. Expenses not mentioned in your Terms of Appointment must be paid from your own resources.

*Be sure to carry a copy of your Terms of Appointment with you to the United States.*

## DURATION OF YOUR GRANT

Your Fulbright funding will end on the day you complete your academic program, or upon reaching your Maximum Funding Date (MFD), **whichever date comes first**. For example, if your MFD is July 31, 2014, but you complete your academic program in May 2014, your Fulbright funding will end with May's allowance. On the other hand, if your MFD is July 31, 2014, but a delay in your program does not allow you to complete your academic program requirements until December 2014, your Fulbright funding will still end on July 31, 2014. In this situation consult your AMIDEAST advisor to see if you are eligible for an extension, or explore other options to complete your program. . In all cases, travel benefits must be issued prior to the end of your Fulbright sponsorship.

*Note: Your J-1 status and your DS-2019 form will expire on the day you complete your academic program or the Program End Date in your SEVIS record, **whichever date comes first**.*

Please refer to your Terms of Appointment to determine your Maximum Funding Date (MFD).

## INITIAL AND RENEWAL GRANTS

Fulbright grants are awarded for no more than twelve months at a time even though you may have been awarded a scholarship to participate in an academic program that would require more than twelve months to complete. The benefit start date indicated on your Terms of Appointment marks the start of your grant. If eligible, a renewal grant will be awarded each year up to your Maximum Funding Date (MFD). Academic performance and sufficient budgetary funds are the major factors considered when evaluating a grantee's eligibility for a grant renewal.

If applicable, you will automatically be offered a grant renewal. AMIDEAST or your binational Fulbright Commission will send

notification of your renewal. You do not need to request or submit an application for a renewal grant.

PhD grantees whose programs are funded by MACECE or BFCE may be eligible for additional renewal grants, up to the maximum of their Fulbright grant benefits. If your program continues beyond the limit of Fulbright sponsorship, you will have to finance your program with university support and personal funding.

Students who are given grants for one year of non-degree research are not eligible for a renewal grant.

### **FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Your Terms of Appointment indicate that your Fulbright grant will cover the basic estimated living expenses incurred during your period of study. The expenses estimate on which the grant is based is moderate and does not cover the cost for clothing, car, vacation travel, or any other personal expenses that may arise.

If you are currently employed in your home country, you should expect to adjust your standard of living to the style of a graduate student in the United States. While in the United States, you will be able to maintain the standard of living of a working professional only if you use personal financial resources. Expenses not specifically covered by your award will need to be paid from your own funds.

### **MONTHLY MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (MMA)**

If you are to receive maintenance payments through AMIDEAST, you should keep in mind the following points:

1. **If at all possible, bring money with you!** Your AMIDEAST grant is not intended to cover all of your expenses and you will find that your maintenance allowance will be, at most, only adequate for your needs. At the very least, you will need

to have some cash for hotels and food while you go through the process of opening a bank account and clearing your first AMIDEAST check.

2. **Inform your AMIDEAST advisor of your physical residence address as soon as possible.** This information will allow your AMIDEAST advisor to validate your record in the SEVIS database. **If you do not report your address within 10 days, your J-1 status will be in jeopardy.**
3. **Make arrangements to receive your first monthly maintenance check.** Your AMIDEAST advisor will work with you on identifying an appropriate place to send your first check.
4. **Notify your AMIDEAST advisor if your mailing address is different than your housing address** so that he or she can send future checks and other correspondence to you.
5. **Electronic transfer of your monthly maintenance payments into your U.S. bank account will be available to you as soon as you enroll in Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).** To enroll in the system, complete the Electronic Funds Transfer Form found the Grantee Resources webpage and return it to AMIDEAST by early October. Enrollment in electronic funds transfer is mandatory.
6. Except for grantees starting their program in the spring, no allowances shall be disbursed in the form of a check after October. To receive subsequent allowances, grantees must have a bank account where their allowances can be electronically deposited.

## U.S. INCOME TAXES

As a Fulbright grantee, you are required to file a tax return **if** you received U.S.-source income. Although Egypt, Israel, Morocco and Tunisia have tax treaties with the United States, citizens from these countries *must still* file a tax return.

AMIDEAST, on behalf of the United States Department of State, pays the 14% required tax on your Fulbright scholarship. This is done instead of deducting your tax obligation from your grant or requiring you to make the tax payment directly. It means that you will receive allowances equal to the amounts specified in your Terms of Appointment. *Any refund of the taxes paid by AMIDEAST on the Fulbright grant must be returned to AMIDEAST by the grantee.*

AMIDEAST uses Windstar tax software for reporting taxes to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service). Windstar's web-based Foreign National Information System (FNIS) is used to collect student data and provide tax forms to students electronically. Additionally, the Windstar system offers a service for filing your taxes called Foreign National Tax Resource (FNTR). All Fulbright grantees are eligible to use the FNTR service at no cost.

After arrival to the U.S. you will receive an email from AMIDEAST with information on how to complete the online FNIS form and submit it electronically. You will be required to send AMIDEAST your signed Immigration Status Data Form which authorizes AMIDEAST to provide your tax forms through the Windstar web-based software. In January, we will request that you review and /or update your FNIS record to reflect current changes.

By March 15th of each year, AMIDEAST will email more specific information about filing a tax return, instructions on how to access your tax forms in FNIS, and how to file your tax return using



FNTR. It is then your responsibility to complete and mail the forms to the IRS by the appropriate deadline.

Keep in mind that if you receive income from any source **other than your Fulbright grant**, you may have to pay U.S. federal and state taxes on that income.

No state income tax is paid by AMIDEAST. However, you may be required to file a state income tax return *in addition* to a U.S. federal income tax return. Every state has different requirements, and you must check with your international student office for further information on whether you are required to file a state income tax return. If you are required to file a tax return for the state in which you live and study, it is your responsibility to pay any taxes that you may owe to the state.

*AMIDEAST advisors are not able to give advice or assistance in completing tax forms. It is your responsibility to consult a tax expert if you have any questions on how to complete and file the required tax forms. Additional information about tax filing, required forms and using the Windstar system is available on AMIDEAST's Grantee Resources webpage.*

## **EARNING MONEY IN THE UNITED STATES**

You should not expect to be able to earn money in the United States, and you should not depend on your spouse to earn money if s/he accompanies you.

**While you are a Fulbright grantee, you may not accept employment or an assistantship of any kind without prior permission of ECA, your binational Fulbright Commission, and AMIDEAST. If permission is granted, your maintenance allowance, as specified in your Terms of Appointment, may be reduced.**

## **ACCIDENT AND SICKNESS COVERAGE (ASPE Health Coverage)**

As a Fulbright grantee, you have health care coverage through the United States Department of State Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). You will receive an ASPE health coverage number at the beginning of your program. The ASPE policy is currently administered by Seven Corners. This policy only covers accidents and illnesses, which means that it does not cover routine checkups or visits to the doctor. **Pre-existing conditions are not covered by the policy. You will need to obtain your own supplemental health insurance to cover any ongoing or potential medical requirements for pre-existing conditions.**

The ASPE policy covers up to US \$100,000 for each accident or illness for a maximum of 52 weeks. Before being treated for any illness, consult the online *ASPE Health Benefit Guide* regarding the benefits of the ASPE health care coverage:

<http://usdos.sevencorners.com> **You will need the coverage number to create a Seven Corners “MyPlan” account and print your health card.** The *ASPE Health Benefit Guide* and instructions for printing your health card can be found on the [Grantee Resources](#) site.

After reviewing the booklet, visit the First Health Network on the Seven Corners-ASPE website to find a physician or medical facility in your host town or city within the Preferred Provider Organization (a network of physicians, hospitals and clinics that have agreed to offer the U.S. Department of State discounted health care services).

Using First Health Network saves you money because U.S. Department of State will generally pay 100% of the covered charges (minus the \$15 co-pay) when you use a preferred physician or medical provider. **Failure to use a First Health Network provider in a network area may result in additional charges not covered by ASPE that you would be responsible for**

paying. You may also call customer service for assistance in locating a provider. You will need to pay the first \$25 of the treatment of any illness or injury (as mentioned in the ASPE brochure, this first US\$25 is called a "co-pay"). There is a \$75 co-pay for Emergency Room visits, hospitalizations and Urgent Care visits (which may be waived if admitted). Ask your health care provider whether you will need to pay in full upon receiving treatment or whether the provider can bill your Health Benefit Plan directly. In most states, only the co-pay amount is required at the time of services. Please be aware that ASPE health coverage is only valid in the United States and will not cover you in your home country or if you travel outside the U.S. The coverage is only for you and does not include any dependents here with you in the United States. If your university has required that you to enroll in its medical insurance policy, you must use the university policy first before you use the ASPE Health Benefit Plan. Contact AMIDEAST with any additional questions regarding your health coverage and policy.

The health care coverage you receive does not cover routine eye exams and dental checkups, although some university health plans include access to an on-campus dental clinic. We recommend that you see your optometrist and dentist before leaving your home country, as these types of checkups can be expensive in the United States. If you are interested in purchasing a separate dental coverage policy, the international student office at your host institution may be able to recommend a reputable insurance company.

### **Prescription Medication**

If you are taking a prescription medication, we recommend that you bring a sufficient amount with you to the United States, as well as a copy of your prescription. Many pharmacies will not honor a prescription written in another country, and you may need to obtain a new prescription from a physician in the United States. The visit required to obtain the prescription might not be

covered by your health care policy. There is a \$15 co-pay for all brand name drugs with a generic equivalent available.

### **Immunizations**

Most universities require students to receive immunization shots before arriving or during their first month on campus. The university will notify students about any mandatory immunizations and it is up to the student to receive them in their home country or upon arrival. If immunizations are required by your university and you have not yet received them, the following immunizations will be covered by ASPE upon arrival in the U.S.:

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Polio, Varicella, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus Vaccine (HPV), Hepatitis A Vaccine, Hepatitis B Vaccine, Hepatitis C Vaccine, Meningococcal Tetravalent (Meningitis), Influenza, Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine, Tuberculosis skin test (PPD) and Tetanus booster—only if booster is required by the University.

### **Mental Health**

It is important that you read and understand how this aspect of your health care coverage works. Keep in mind that your emotional well-being is as important as your physical well-being. As you adjust to your program and new surroundings, you may feel depressed, confused, or unhappy for a time. If you find that you are not feeling well emotionally, we recommend that you see a professional, just as you would for a physical problem. Most universities have mental health professionals who can help you.

## Recertification Approval Requirement

This healthcare plan requires precertification for all inpatient hospital admissions, skilled nursing, outpatient chemo and radiation therapy, outpatient surgeries and procedures, pregnancies, physical or occupational therapy, dialysis, plasmaphoresis, MRI, PET scan, CT, home health and home infusion therapy.

You or your physician must call the Pre-certification phone number, (800) 461-0430 to obtain preadmission approval at least one business day before a planned hospitalization in the United States. Certification for Emergency admissions or admissions due to an unexpected illness or injury must be obtained within two business days following admission. Pre-certification is not a guarantee of coverage. A \$300 penalty will be applied if pre-certification is not obtained.

## *Before You Leave Your Own Country*

### THE VISA PROCESS

AMIDEAST will provide the **DS-2019 form** needed to obtain a J-1 visa. As soon as you receive your DS-2019 form, you are eligible to apply for your J-1 visa to come to the United States, and you should begin the process as soon as possible. As you prepare to apply for your J-1 visa, please keep the following in mind:

- Be sure *not* to apply for an F-1 (student) visa, a B (visitor) visa, or an immigrant visa. Applying for any of these visas during your application or grant period may jeopardize your status as a Fulbright grantee.
- Your passport should be valid for at least six months beyond the program end dates listed on your DS-2019 form.
- When applying for the J-1 visa at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate, you will be asked for your passport and the DS-2019 form in addition to information about your medical history, university acceptance, and academic qualifications.
- You will only be able to meet with the Consular Officer for a short period of time during your interview. Therefore, it is important to make a good impression, speak exclusively in English, prove your purpose for going to the United States, and demonstrate that you will return to your home country at the conclusion of your program.
- As part of the visa interview, a quick ink-free fingerprint scan will be taken, as well as a digital photo.

**You must present the following items at the interview:**

- Form DS-2019
- Form DS-160 Online Non-immigrant Visa Electronic Application
- A passport valid for travel to the United States and with a validity date at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the United States
- One (1) 2 inches x 2 inches (or 5cm x 5cm) photograph

***Please make sure that the spelling of your name is the same on all of these documents.***

You may also be asked to provide the following:

- Supplemental Non-immigrant Visa Application, Form DS-157
- Medical history (i.e. Certification of Good Health, proof of vaccinations, chest x-ray)
- University acceptance letter, including letters awarding scholarships or financial aid (if applicable)
- Fulbright Terms of Appointment

**Here are some helpful links to more information about obtaining visas and entering the United States:**

The U.S. Department of State: <http://j1visa.state.gov>

Traveler Information from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP): <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel>

## **PRE-ACADEMIC AND GATEWAY PROGRAMS**

To better prepare you for your time in the U.S., ECA may sponsor a pre-academic program the summer before beginning your academic program. These programs focus on field-of-study training, intensive English, and/or academic and cultural skills.

If you are placed in a pre-academic program, AMIDEAST expects that you will attend. **Dependents may not accompany you to a**

**pre-academic program.** Housing for dependents is not provided at the sites for these programs, and accompanying dependents distract the grantees from full participation in the pre-academic program.

You must contact your AMIDEAST advisors upon arrival to your pre-academic program with your physical address.

### **PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE TO THE U.S.**

Before you leave your country for the United States, you should plan to do the following things:

- Research **housing** options in the U.S., both short and long term.
- Obtain or update your **passport** and the passports of your dependents that will accompany you. Your passport must be valid for at least six months after the end date printed on your DS-2019 form.
- If you plan to bring any **dependents**, you must obtain a DS-2019 form for each accompanying dependent from the AMIDEAST office or U.S. Embassy.
- Apply for the **J-1 entry visa** and the J-2 dependent visa(s) if your spouse and/or children will accompany you.
- Review **medical coverage information** and purchase additional insurance/coverage for yourself or any accompanying dependents. Before you leave, it is suggested that you take care of routine check-ups and purchase extra medications, including eyeglasses, to sustain you while in the U.S.
- Make arrangements with your **bank** to transfer funds to a U.S. bank; purchase traveler's checks, and obtain a small amount of U.S. currency.



## TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS TO THE U.S

Unless your Terms of Appointment specifically states otherwise, you will receive your airline ticket or specific travel funds to the United States from the U.S. Embassy or Consulate, from the binational Fulbright Commission, or from the AMIDEAST field office in your country. If indicated in your Terms of Appointment, you may also receive a Transit Allowance.

*Even if you received your J-1 visa well in advance, you are only eligible to arrive in the United States within 30 days of the program start date on your DS-2019.*

## TRAVEL TIPS

The United States welcomes international students and wants you to have a positive and productive experience in our country. Recent world events have made travel more difficult for everyone, but we hope that the following information will help ease your arrival into our country. In recent years, more security procedures have been put in place at all U.S. airports. People are asked to remove their shoes during the security-check process, and individuals are randomly selected for more detailed inspections. If this happens, please understand that it is currently a standard part of the search process for anyone traveling to or within the United States. To allow sufficient time for undergoing security procedures, please plan to arrive at the airport at least 3 hours early.

Know where you are going once you reach your final destination (hotel, university, etc.), and have the address and telephone number of that location with you. You should receive an “**Arrival Information**” email from AMIDEAST before you leave your home country. This email will provide you with the following information:

- University contacts and telephone numbers (international advisor and academic advisor);

- If you have requested temporary housing, the name, address, and telephone number of the hotel at which you will be staying (or other temporary housing instructions);
- Directions on how to reach your temporary housing location;
- Information on who will meet you at the airport if you are to be met.

Since unforeseen problems do arise, please be sure to travel with an adequate supply of U.S. dollars in case of an emergency and your AMIDEAST advisor's contact information.

### **Special Meals**

If you have any special dietary restrictions (any special food you can or cannot eat), you should request a special meal at least three days prior to traveling by contacting your travel agent or the airline directly. Standard special request meals include vegetarian, Halal, and diabetic meals.

### **Local Transportation**

If prior arrangements were not made for you to be met at the airport, you can find out what options are available for getting to your hotel or other accommodations at the baggage claim area of the airport. Most airports have an information desk that can help you find the best way to get where you are going. Also, if the hotel has a free "courtesy shuttle service" to the hotel the telephones to call for pick-up will usually be located at the baggage claim area. Common means of transportation from the airport are free hotel bus services, taxis, buses, and subways.

### **PACKING TIPS**

Airline and transportation companies can provide you with information on what not to carry in your luggage. Below are a few logistical guidelines to assist you as you prepare to pack:

1. Allow enough time before or between flights for random searches, which are conducted at all airports and for all flights. All travelers, including U.S. citizens, are subject to these searches. Both checked and carry-on luggage may be opened and checked.
2. Carry-on luggage should be kept to a minimum. Most airlines now allow only one carry-on bag and one personal item (such as a briefcase, handbag or laptop).
3. Check the airline's policy on allowable number and size or weight of baggage, as well as fees charged. Many airlines are now charging fees upon check-in for each piece of checked luggage.
4. It is a good idea to include a change of clothes and some toiletry items (toothbrush, brush, etc.) and any medication you may need in case your baggage is lost or your flight is unexpectedly delayed.
5. **Keep all important papers and documents (passport, DS-2019 form, original transcripts, travelers' checks, medical documents, medications, etc.), as well as arrival information, with you in the carry-on bag. Place copies of these documents inside your checked luggage. Leave another copy with a friend or relative in your home country.**
6. Be prepared to open and turn on electronic devices (such as laptop computers) that you plan to bring with you.
7. Flammable products and sharp objects are not permitted in carry-on luggage. Most of these objects can be carried in checked luggage, but you should check with your airline before you pack them.
8. Be sure to keep your carry-on bag and baggage with you at all times, except for when the luggage has been checked with the airline. Do not leave your belongings unattended.
9. There are many items that are **prohibited** in carry-on luggage:

Liquids in containers *larger* than 3 oz (~85g)

Cigarette lighters  
Knives of any size  
Razor-type blades  
Fingernail clippers with files attached  
Beard or mustache trimmers  
Liquids in aerosol cans such as deodorant, hair care products, and perfume, etc.  
Shaving creams

Please visit the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most recent updates and alerts: <http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information>

## **WHAT TO BRING**

**Documents** (carry these items with you, **not** in your checked luggage):

- Your passport, DS-2019 form, and all other immigration documents
- Original diplomas and transcripts you received from all post-secondary academic institutions attended
- Medical and dental records for you and any dependents, including certificates of vaccinations and immunizations
- Information about current medical treatments or conditions, including prescriptions for eyeglasses and medications (both the generic and brand names)
- An international driver's license if you plan to apply for a driver's license in the U.S.
- Proof of your safe driving record in your home country for the past one to three years if you plan to purchase automobile insurance in the U.S.
- Your U.S. Social Security Number if you were issued one during a previous visit to the United States
- An official document stating the date of your birth if it is not shown on your passport

- Medical records and academic records of any dependents who will be enrolling in school in the U.S.
- Birth certificates or other proof of age for children who will be entering school for the first time
- Copies of your marriage certificate

**Finances:**

- We recommend you bring \$1000 – 1500 in traveler's checks, as well as a limited amount of U.S. currency
- Credit cards (if you possess any)

**Clothing:**

- Research the climate of the area in which you will be studying so you know what types of clothes to bring.

**Other:**

- Personal items
- Tools and supplies that are appropriate to your field of study (although you can usually buy these items in the United States, they may be expensive)
- Photographs, maps of your country, or items that can be used in informal talks that you may be invited to give
- Small souvenirs, especially craft items from your country, to present as gifts to colleagues, friends, and hosts

**TEMPORARY HOUSING**

**Only if you request** temporary housing will AMIDEAST/Washington, D.C. make a hotel reservation on your behalf so that you will have a place to stay when you first arrive at your campus. If you need such arrangements, please try to research possible accommodations that would fit your personal and financial needs in advance and send this information, along with details of your request, to AMIDEAST as soon as possible.

Even though AMIDEAST may hold your reservation with a credit card, you will be responsible for paying for the room charge at the

time you check in. Please do not allow the hotel to charge your room to the AMIDEAST credit card. Phone calls made from a hotel room can be expensive, and you will have to pay for those phone calls at the time you check out. Remember that the AMIDEAST toll-free phone number 1-800-368-5720. Although prices vary by location, you should expect to pay between \$60 and \$125 for each night you stay.

Note: If your travel plans change while you are in transit, you will be responsible for informing the hotel. Many hotels require that a reservation be canceled 24 hours in advance. If, for any reason, you do not cancel your reservation by the approved time and AMIDEAST is charged for your space, you will be responsible for payment of the one-night penalty charge, and the money will be deducted from a future maintenance payment.

## **When You Arrive in the United States**

### **AT THE AIRPORT**

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has now automated the Form I-94 and will no longer issue paper I-94 cards. Instead, CBP will scan your passport, generating an electronic arrival record, and your passport will be stamped with “J-1 D/S” This stamp indicates your status as a J-1 visa holder and your end date as “D/S”, which stands for “duration of status.” This end date means the official viewing this record should refer to your DS-2019 form to see the end date of your status.

CBP will make the electronic arrival (I-94) number available at: [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94) We recommend that you visit this website to print your electronic arrival number before applying for benefits such as a driver's licenses or social security number. Your university might also require a hard copy of your electronic arrival number.

### **THE IMMIGRATION PROCESS**

At your port of entry in the U.S., proceed to the terminal area for arriving passengers. You should be ready to present your passport, the DS-2019 form, the Customs Declaration Form, and any other documents that prove your status in the United States. You will be asked to state your reason for wishing to enter the U.S. and information on your final destination if it differs from your port of entry. Be prepared to know the name and address of your academic institution. Also, as part of the US-VISIT program, you will have your fingerprints scanned and a digital photograph taken. The United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) officer will then stamp and scan your passport to generate an electronic arrival record.

You may also be asked to participate in a second interview, which would be held in private. This interview is nothing to worry

about! It simply means that the immigration officer wants more details on the purpose of your visit. Be truthful with your answers but do not offer any unsolicited information. Please note that anyone could be subject to additional scrutiny, and persons are selected at random for this secondary interview.

**In general, please allow several hours between connecting flights to pass through immigration.**

### **United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indiciary**

**Technology (US-VISIT):** All nonimmigrant visa holders must participate in the US-VISIT program, a biometric system that tracks entries to and exits from the United States. In many cases, US-VISIT begins when you apply for your visa and consular officials collect digital fingerprints, digital photographs, and biometric data from you. Upon arrival in the United States, a digital finger-scanner will capture your fingerprints, and your photograph will be taken. This process ensures that your data match the identity that is on record at the Department of State. It is kept on file for future comparison, such as when exiting the United States. More information on the US-VISIT system can be found at:

<http://www.dhs.gov/us-visit-traveler-information>

### **ARRIVAL AT YOUR ACADEMIC INSTITUTION**

Universities have International Student Offices (ISO) that are very helpful. Typically, the ISO can provide information about getting to and from the airport to campus. Many international offices often assist students in making these arrangements. Once you arrive to campus, you should visit the international student office. You should also meet with your faculty advisor or department liaison upon arrival.

After you arrive at your academic institution, you should use the following checklist to prioritize some of the things that need to be taken care of immediately:



1. Contact your AMIDEAST advisor in Washington, D.C. with the address of your physical residence;
2. Check in with the International Student Office on your campus; inquire about any planned orientations programs , and any welcoming activities for spouses and/or children (if applicable to you);
3. Locate permanent housing;
4. Open a bank account with your first MMA check from AMIDEAST;
5. Update the university with your permanent address and phone number.
6. Complete and return all AMIDEAST arrival forms within 15 days of registering for classes;
7. Print your ASPE health insurance card following the instructions on AMIDEAST's Fulbright Grantee Resources webpage  
[http://www.amideast.org/sites/default/files/otherfiles/hq/fulbright/6 how to print your aspe card.pdf](http://www.amideast.org/sites/default/files/otherfiles/hq/fulbright/6%20how%20to%20print%20your%20aspe%20card.pdf);
8. Identify a hospital in case of an emergency;
9. Apply for a Social Security Number or Individual Tax Payer Identification Number and send AMIDEAST a copy of your Social Security card as soon as available;
10. If you plan to purchase an automobile, obtain a driver's license – even if you have a driver's license from your home country, you need to obtain one for the U.S. – register the car, and purchase car insurance;
11. Investigate schooling for any accompanying children (if applicable);
12. Look for cultural enrichment or volunteer opportunities on your campus or in the local community.

## **HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS**

*You are responsible for making your own housing arrangements for the academic year. AMIDEAST cannot make housing arrangements for*

you. Grantees select their own housing because the needs of each person differ, as does the situation on each campus..

Although **housing rates** can vary widely, you should expect to spend at least half of your monthly maintenance allowance on rent. Finding suitable housing accommodations at many universities can be challenging and stressful. In most places, dormitory space and inexpensive off-campus rooms and apartments are in short supply. However, most universities have special on- and off-campus housing offices that will provide you with lists of available places and varying degrees of assistance in securing them. Please note that most graduate students live in shared accommodations, as apartments for singles tend to be significantly more expensive.

If you decide to accept **on-campus housing**, you will be responsible for completing all required application forms. Some universities ask for a deposit. Other universities will ask you to pay a large portion, if not the full semester's balance, of your on-campus housing fee at or before the time of registration. Be sure to find out how much your on-campus housing will cost, when payment must be received, and how you are going to arrange for payment. If necessary, AMIDEAST can, at your written request, advance payment to the university for your on-campus housing deposit/fees. If this arrangement is made, the advance will be deducted from your maintenance according to an adequate arrangement agreed upon between you and your AMIDEAST advisor. Please keep in mind that these deductions may significantly reduce, or even eliminate, your monthly maintenance payment. Please ask your AMIDEAST advisor for assistance if you find yourself in this situation.

If you will live off campus, please review the *Guide to Finding Housing* and the *Off-Campus Housing* information available on the AMIDEAST [Grantee Resources](#) webpage.

Please note that on-campus housing contracts and off-campus rental leases are legally binding, so pay special attention to deadlines and length of commitment to your housing lease. Lastly, AMIDEAST recommends students purchase **renter's insurance**. More information is available in the online guides.

## AUTOMOBILES

While Fulbright regulations do not forbid grantees from owning cars, AMIDEAST strongly discourages grantees from owning automobiles unless one is absolutely necessary. An automobile is expensive to maintain, and ownership of a car carries with it certain liabilities and responsibilities. Some sponsors prohibit students from owning automobiles altogether. If you are considering owning an automobile while in the U.S., please thoroughly read the automobile information on AMIDEAST's Grantee Resources webpage.

## BANKING AND FINANCE

Banks are the safest place to keep your money. **Do not keep large amounts of cash in your home or on you.** You will need to open a bank account as soon as possible. Once your bank account is open, you will need to complete the AMIDEAST Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form. AMIDEAST will use this information so that your Fulbright allowances are deposited directly into your bank account. Your international students office should be able to provide information on banking in your area, as well as explain checking accounts, saving accounts, and how bank fees are administered.

Although credit cards prove to be very useful, beware that debt can accumulate with high interest rates. When applying for a credit card, you will need to ask for the best possible interest rate and if there are any penalties for not paying the entire balance of the credit card each month. We recommend that you do not make any purchases on a credit card that you do not have the actual funds to cover.

## SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER or INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Every person who receives income in the U.S. is identified by either a Social Security Number (SSN) or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). For tax purposes, you are required to obtain a SSN or an ITIN after arriving to your host institution. AMIDEAST must be informed of the SSN or ITIN within 60 days of the beginning of the academic program.

### **Applying for a Social Security Number (SSN)**

As a Fulbright grantee, you are eligible to apply for a Social Security Number. You will need this number in order to:

- file federal and state taxes
- engage in any employment (with prior AMIDEAST approval)

A Social Security Number is also useful for opening a bank account and applying for a driver's license. Remember your SEVIS record must be "validated" *at least ten days* before you can apply for a Social Security number. It may take several weeks for a card to be issued. **Do not** carry your Social Security card with you unnecessarily after you receive it. Send a copy of the card to AMIDEAST, and keep the card in a safe place. Never email your Social Security Number to AMIDEAST (or any other entity or person) because it may be compromised, only send a copy of the card to AMIDEAST and present the actual card when needed.

Please note that AMIDEAST serves as your sponsoring agency. If the local Social Security office asks for a letter from your university or the U.S. Department of State, remind them that AMIDEAST serves as your sponsoring agency and is responsible for any employment authorization. If you encounter problems applying for the Social Security number, it could be helpful to return on a different day and speak with a different employee. Please inform your AMIDEAST advisor if you are unable to secure an SSN.

The application process for a Social Security Number is available on the Grantee Resources webpage.

### **Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)**

If you do not have or are not able to obtain a Social Security Number, then you will need an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). The ITIN is a tax processing number issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). It is a nine-digit number. The IRS issues ITINs to foreign nationals and others who have federal tax reporting or filing requirements and do not have or are not eligible to obtain a Social Security Number. To apply for an ITIN, you should complete Form W-7 application and send the original signed form (not a copy or a scan) to AMIDEAST – Student Taxes. Form W-7 is available online at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

### **WAIVING UNIVERSITY HEALTH INSURANCE**

Your university will automatically enroll you in its own health insurance policy unless you “waive” this enrollment. With the exception of grantees from Egypt, it is very important that you waive any optional university health insurance before you arrive or upon arrival. Typically there is a deadline to waive university health insurance at the beginning of the academic year. Your Fulbright grant will not pay for university health coverage. **Any expenses for non-mandatory university insurance will be billed directly to you.**

When you “waive” enrollment, you specifically request not to be enrolled in the university’s insurance program. Often optional health insurance coverage can be waived by presenting proof of coverage under another plan (in your case, the ASPE-Seven Corners policy) or simply by signing a document indicating that you do not want the university policy. **Sometimes a waiver will be good for an entire academic year; in other cases, you must**

**waive coverage every time you register for a new academic term. It is your responsibility to understand the university policy and deadlines.**

If you are not sure about your university's health insurance policy or waiver procedures, please talk to your international student advisor or other appropriate individual. It is your responsibility to obtain and act upon accurate information regarding university health insurance.

If you are at an institution where the university insurance cannot be waived, or if you are an Egyptian student with university coverage as part of your grant, then you must remember to use the university policy as your “**primary insurance**” when completing any medical forms. Subsequently, the ASPE Seven Corners health coverage becomes your “**secondary insurance**”.

## **MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR FAMILY**

If you are eligible to bring your family to the United States, you must read and acknowledge the information on AMIDEAST's Grantee Resources webpage carefully **before** you request dependent DS-2019 forms for your spouse or children. The cost of living for a family in the United States can be very expensive and your Fulbright monthly maintenance allowance will not be adequate to cover your family's expenses. For more information on what is required to bring dependents with you to the U.S., please visit the *Making Arrangements for Your Family* section of the [Grantee Resources](#) webpage.

## *During Your Study Period*

### GENERAL ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

During your stay in the United States, AMIDEAST will be ready to assist you whenever possible. You will be assigned an advisor who will be your primary contact person at AMIDEAST. Throughout the year, AMIDEAST will send you general instructions and announcements, typically via e-mail, to inform you of reporting requirements and any special opportunities available through the Fulbright Program. **It is very important that you provide AMIDEAST with your local phone number and your university e-mail address, as well as your personal email, since accounts such as yahoo, hotmail, etc. might filter out AMIDEAST group messages and treat these as spam.** You can expect to hear from your Program Officer and Program Assistant periodically. If you have not received an email from AMIDEAST at least 3 times a semester, be sure to check in. For information about academic and campus matters, consult your academic and international student advisors.

The following are examples of information that must be shared with your AMIDEAST advisor:

- Change of address within 10 days of moving;
- Any important academic problems;
- Major changes in your personal status such as marriage, divorce, births, and deaths;
- Name change due to marriage, divorce, etc. within 10 days of making such a change;
- Health problems;
- The arrival and departure of any dependents in the United States;
- Any international travel;
- Any domestic travel upon request of your AMIDEAST advisor;
- Plans for departure from the United States.

## REPORTING TO AMIDEAST

AMIDEAST is responsible for creating, maintaining and updating your record in the U.S. government Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and for maintaining compliance with SEVIS and J-1 exchange visitor regulations. **It is therefore imperative that you comply with the AMIDEAST reporting requirements outlined here.**

All the forms that AMIDEAST will ask you to complete can be found on our Grantee Resources webpage:

<http://www.amideast.org/fulbright/grantee-resources/required-forms>

***UPON ARRIVAL:*** *It is imperative that you report to AMIDEAST within ten days of your arrival in the United States and provide your local address. AMIDEAST can then validate your record in the SEVIS database. If you fail to report to AMIDEAST within ten days of your arrival, then your SEVIS record is automatically marked as invalid. This will seriously impact your ability to stay in the United States and begin your program.*

***WITHIN THE FIRST WEEKS:*** AMIDEAST will be requesting several forms from you over the course of the first weeks of your academic program. These forms include:

- Academic Program Outline
- Information Release Form
- Electronic Funds Transfer Form (to be submitted with a voided check)
- Emergency Contact Information Form
- W-8 Ben Tax Form – To be completed only by **Egyptians, Moroccans, and Tunisians**
- Copy of your Social Security card or ITIN (as soon as available)

**Your documents can be sent via e-mail, fax, or via U.S. mail. Keep copies for your records.**



**EVERY TERM:** Most universities rely on a term system that consists of semesters (Fall, Spring, Summer), or quarters (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer).

Beginning with your second term, AMIDEAST will ask you to complete a Progress Report at the start of each new term. This form will give you and your academic advisor the opportunity to tell AMIDEAST what you will be doing during the coming semester and to give AMIDEAST an assessment of your progress. If AMIDEAST does not receive these documents by the date specified, we will be forced to hold your next month's allowance. If you are a **degree-seeking grantee**, you must also request that a university-issued grade report be sent to AMIDEAST at the end of every term. Even when you reach the advanced stages of your program and only register for research credits, you are required to send AMIDEAST a grade report at the conclusion of each academic term. This grade report must be an official, cumulative transcript. It is your responsibility to pay any fees associated with this service.

If you are a **non-degree student**, you are required to submit a Progress Report. If you officially registered for coursework during the term, you must also submit a university-issued grade report.

**SUMMER PLANS:** In April of each year, AMIDEAST will request that you and your academic advisor complete a Summer Plans Form. This form will tell AMIDEAST what you plan to do during the summer and what allowances you are eligible to receive.

If you are in a degree program, you should enroll in a full-time summer load of courses that will contribute to the completion of your degree program. A "full-time summer load" is determined by your university.

If there are no courses offered by your university during the summer, or if none are appropriate for you, you should

investigate your options to work on your thesis or conduct research on-campus and confirm whether or not you need to register for thesis/research credits. If neither of these options is feasible, we encourage you to create your own research work-plan for the summer, have it approved in writing by your academic advisor, and send it to AMIDEAST at the same time you return your Summer Plans Form.

If you are a non-degree student, you should continue with the research work-plan you have been following all year during the summer.

**If you are not engaged in academic work (courses and/or research) during the summer, you will not be eligible for a summer book allowance.**

If you travel outside the United States for any reason, please be aware that if you are gone for more than twenty-nine (29) consecutive days (including your days of departure and return), **you will not receive maintenance for the month or months during which you are outside the United States. Students who come from countries with a Commission (Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco) may be subject to different travel deduction rules. Check with your AMIDEAST advisor and your Terms of Appointment.**

**END OF YOUR PROGRAM:** Approximately two months before you are expected to finish your degree or research project, AMIDEAST will contact you about your travel plans to return home. You will be required to complete a few forms, including a survey, before your flight arrangements will be made. More details are found in the subsequent section, entitled **Concluding Your Fulbright Program.**

**ALWAYS:** You must keep your AMIDEAST advisor informed of your current residence, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address at all times. The residence address you provide must

be the actual physical location where you reside. In no case may the address of your host institution be used as your residence address. ***If any of your addresses change, you must notify AMIDEAST within ten days of the change.***

During the period of your Fulbright grant, you will also receive notices from AMIDEAST requesting that you complete other required forms and documents. Although you may get tired of seeing them, each and every one is important and must be returned to AMIDEAST by the date indicated! We truly appreciate your patience and cooperation with this matter.

In addition, you should tell your AMIDEAST advisor about any important academic problems, as well as changes in your personal circumstances (i.e., health problems, marriage, divorce, plans for departure from or arrival to the United States, or births of any dependents).

**PRIOR APPROVAL:** You must obtain *advance approval* from AMIDEAST for the following activities:

- On-campus Employment;
- Academic Training;
- Transferring to a different academic institution;
- Changing degree objective or field of study;
- Travel outside of the United States;
- Online course enrollment, which is only approved in rare circumstances;
- Reduced course load (less than full-time).

Employment policies are discussed later in this chapter. Procedures for travel outside of the United States are discussed in the subsequent section Short Term Travel Outside the United States.

## MONTHLY AND SPECIAL ALLOWANCES

***Monthly Maintenance Allowance (MMA):*** You will receive a monthly allowance based on your location. This allowance will be deposited into your bank account automatically once you submit your Electronic Funds Transfer Form. The monthly allowance will be deposited in advance of the first of the month for which it is intended. **For instance, you will receive your allowance for October at the end of September.** Please plan accordingly.

***Book Allowance:*** Your Fulbright grant provides funds for books as long as you are engaged in academic work in the United States. Unless otherwise specified through your Commission, installments will be paid to you with your September maintenance as a Fall Book Allowance, and in January as a Spring Book Allowance. You will receive another book allowance in June as a Summer Book Allowance if you are enrolled in classes during the summer term. Please note that students on the quarter system still only receive one book allowance in September and one in January and then, if applicable, a Summer Book Allowance in June.

***Equipment Allowance:*** As a Fulbright grantee, you are eligible for \$500 towards required equipment, such as a computer. This allowance is issued once during your grant and will be automatically deposited with your monthly allowance at the start of your program.

***Conference Allowance:*** As a Fulbright grantee, you are eligible for a reimbursement or advance of up to \$500 towards a professional conference that is related to your area of focus and *takes place in the United States*. This allowance is issued once during your grant and requires receipts or the funds must be returned.

***Thesis Allowance:*** Eligible grantees may request a \$300 thesis allowance in their last semester to use towards printing their final thesis. Please check your grant agreement to see if you are eligible.

This allowance is issued once during your grant and requires receipts or the funds must be returned.

## **REQUESTING ADVANCES**

An advance is similar to a loan because AMIDEAST will consider the money outstanding on your account until you repay it. If you request an advance of your monthly maintenance allowance for a special circumstance, you will need to determine with your AMIDEAST advisor a deduction schedule for paying back the advance using your next monthly allowance(s). If your request is approved, you will receive payment within two weeks.

## **ACADEMIC REGULATIONS**

You are required to comply with the regulations of your academic institution. These regulations include such matters as class attendance, course assignments, absence from campus, and withdrawal from courses for which you are registered.

### **Full Time Enrollment**

If you are enrolled in a degree program, you must maintain full-time enrollment as defined by your host institution and in a manner where you will graduate by your grant end date; and maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or above, unless your institution has set a higher standard. Also, you cannot carry more than one grade of "Incomplete" for more than one term. You must arrange to have a university-issued grade report sent to AMIDEAST at the end of each academic term. Official transcripts are also required at the conclusion of your Fulbright Program. If you are a non-degree student, your academic advisor must be able to attest that you are engaged in work that is equivalent to full-time course work.

## Plagiarism

The higher education system in the United States is competitive, and each student is evaluated by the work he or she accomplishes. As an international student you may not be familiar with some rules that pertain to academia in the U.S. One particular rule that international students may not be aware of is the proper use of citations. **Failure to properly cite work that is not your own can lead to charges of plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unaccredited use (both intentional and unintentional) of someone else's words or ideas.** Some cultures may not insist on documenting sources of words, ideas, images, sounds, etc., however in the U.S. educational system it is required. A charge of plagiarism can have severe consequences, including expulsion from a university or loss of a job, as well as loss of credibility and professional standing.

## Online Courses

When planning your course schedule, it is important to note that enrollment in on-line courses is not authorized. Should an on-line course be a requirement for your degree completion, contact your AMIDEAST advisor to seek special approval prior to enrolling.

## Study in a Third Country

Study trips or internships in 3<sup>rd</sup> countries (not in the U.S.) will not be supported by your grant award. The purpose of your grant is to conduct your studies and experience the culture in the U.S. Often, required international trips or internships can be replaced with domestic alternatives and these options should be discussed with your academic and AMIDEAST advisors.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR STUDENT ACCOUNT

AMIDEAST will pay required tuition and mandatory fees directly to your academic institution unless the institution provides tuition assistance (such as a tuition scholarship or waiver). AMIDEAST

will not be held responsible for other fees or tuition not required for your academic program. Any charges that your academic institution makes to you, such as library fines, parking violations, housing payments, or any other optional charges incurred by you are your responsibility.

### **SHORT-TERM TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES**

Before you travel outside of the U.S. at any time during your program, you must:

- Notify AMIDEAST of your travel plans;
- Send AMIDEAST a copy of your travel itinerary;
- Send your DS-2019 by traceable mail (e.g. UPS, FedEx) to AMIDEAST to get required travel validation signature;
- Remember that your monthly allowance may be affected by the length of time spent outside the United States.

Please remember that as a J-1 Exchange Visitor, you must have these documents to re-enter the United States:

- A valid passport
- A valid DS-2019 form
- A valid J-1 visa

### **Passport**

If your passport or other travel document will expire before you return to the United States, you must contact your Embassy or nearest Consulate before you depart from the United States for information about renewing these documents. Although AMIDEAST may be able to provide you with an address and telephone number for your Embassy, we can give you very little additional information. It is your responsibility to ensure that your passport remains valid during the period of your Fulbright grant.

## DS-2019

Your DS-2019 is your certificate of eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) immigration status. If you wish to leave the United States, you must send it to your AMIDEAST advisor immediately so that AMIDEAST can sign the Travel Validation section of your DS-2019 before you leave the U.S. A travel validation signature is valid for one year. Only an authorized AMIDEAST representative may sign your DS-2019. Allow up to two weeks for return of your signed DS-2019.

If your DS-2019 form will expire before you plan to return to the United States, you must obtain a new DS-2019 from AMIDEAST headquarters before you leave the United States. Take your new DS-2019 with you when you depart the United States. Since J-1 visa expiration dates typically correspond with DS-2019 expiration dates, you will likely have to use your new DS-2019 to obtain a new visa to re-enter the United States. See the previous section on “The Visa Process” for details on applying for a visa.

## J-1 Visa

Your J-1 visa indicates the United States government’s permission for you to apply to enter the country. If the J-1 visa in your passport will expire by the time you wish to return to the United States, you must apply for a new J-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy. Keep in mind that, while you are allowed to apply for a new visa from any U.S. Consulate or Embassy, we strongly recommend that you apply in your home country.

If your J-1 visa is no longer valid, or if it will expire while you are out of the U.S., you must *immediately* make an appointment with the U.S. Consulate to apply for a new J-1 visa upon arrival at your destination. After you obtain your new J-1 visa, you may return to the United States.



When you reenter the United States, an immigration officer will process the DS-2019 and extend your permission to stay in the United States.

This procedure may also apply to your J-2 dependents if they travel outside the United States during the period of your Fulbright grant.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

As a J-1 Exchange Visitor, you are legally eligible to work only if

**A note of caution:**

As a J-1 visa holder, you are eligible for a variety of work opportunities in the United States, but employment without proper authorization is a serious violation of your status. Before you start any kind of employment, you must first consult AMIDEAST whose written approval is necessary *in advance*.

your program sponsor authorizes you to do so in advance. Please discuss your interest in paid employment with your AMIDEAST Advisor before accepting any offers. During your program, there are two types of employment for which you may be eligible:

- Student (On-Campus) Employment
- Academic Training (during and after program, for eligible grantees)

### **Student Employment (On-Campus)**

Student employment typically comes in the form of university teaching, research, and graduate assistantships. Any request to engage in on-campus employment must be related to your field of study, and requires prior approval through AMIDEAST. Under no circumstances will employment of more than twenty (20) hours per week be considered during the academic year.

If employment is approved, your monthly maintenance payments may be reduced by any amount you earn over \$500 per month after taxes. For example, if you earn \$700 a month, \$200 will be

deducted from your monthly maintenance allowance (\$700 - \$500 = \$200).

If you have been offered a university teaching or research assistantship, you must submit your request for work authorization at least three weeks before the start date of your proposed job. AMIDEAST will inform you in writing of its decision and any terms and conditions.

### **Academic Training During Your Program (Off-campus, Short-term)**

As a U.S. Department of State sponsored student in J-1 status, you may be eligible for *Academic Training (AT) during your academic program*. Academic Training is employment authorized for a specific period of time so that students may gain practical experience in their fields. Often, this comes in the form of internships during the summer or during the academic year. An AT opportunity must complement a student's academic activities and supplement the stated program objectives. Students may participate in part-time AT while taking classes, or they may participate in full-time academic training in the summer/winter break. Prior approval is required before starting any employment opportunity. The U.S. Department of State reserves the right to deny any requests that involved politicization of scholarly inquiry and/or do not follow the primary program objectives. Below are a few general conditions. You should review the full details on the Grantee Resources webpage.

- The maximum length of participation in training activities is 18 months, except in the cases where the grantee's program is less than 18 months in which case training activities cannot exceed the length of the study program
- Some grantees are eligible to participate in Academic Training *both during and after* they have completed their academic program. Please check with your AMIDEAST advisor on your eligibility.

- **If you are pursuing Academic Training for a period during your academic program**, any salary earnings above \$500 will be deducted from your monthly maintenance allowance.
- You may not participate in Academic Training during your academic program if such participation will delay the completion of your academic program requirements.

### **How to apply for work authorization for on-campus**

**employment or Academic Training:** In general, you will need to submit an offer of employment with pertinent details, a completed advisor approval form, and your own letter of request. Please refer to the Employment section on the Fulbright [Grantee Resources](#) webpage for information on how to apply for approval.

**Remember:** federal, state, and local taxes may apply to any earnings received through employment.

### **Internships**

Both paid and unpaid internships are considered Academic Training opportunities and are therefore subject to the rules and policies listed in the Academic Training section above. If an internship is required for your degree, and/or if you are receiving credit, you still must receive prior approval.

### **CHANGING FIELD OF STUDY**

You may not change your field of study without prior consultation with, and the approval of, your academic advisor, your Fulbright Commission (if applicable), and the United States Department of State. A request for change must be submitted in writing to AMIDEAST at least one month in advance of the academic term in which you intend to begin studying the new field. Strong justification for the change, including the following items, must accompany your request:

- A photocopy of the university's letter offering you admission to the new academic program;
- A photocopy of the university's letter offering you tuition assistance (if applicable);
- A letter from you requesting permission to change fields of study and justifying your request;
- A letter from your academic advisor supporting your request.

If you have obligations to an institution in your home country, AMIDEAST must also receive confirmation from that institution that you may change your field of study.

### **TRANSFERRING TO A DIFFERENT INSTITUTION**

If you feel that the program of study at your current academic institution is unsatisfactory and you wish to consider a transfer to another institution, you are expected to discuss the matter first with your academic and international student advisors and then contact your AMIDEAST advisor. Transfers are strongly discouraged because there is almost inevitably some loss in time and academic benefit. You should not proceed any further without approval from AMIDEAST. Information about transferring to a different institution is outlined on the Grantee Resources webpage.

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Should you find it necessary to interrupt your studies in the US and return to your home country for personal reasons, you may petition your AMIDEAST Advisor for a leave of absence (and temporary suspension of your Fulbright funding) for a specific period of time, generally limited to one academic term. Authorization for a leave of absence would require approval from your university, the U.S. Department of State and, in some cases, the U.S. Embassy in your home country or your binational

Commission. Grantees are not eligible to receive their MMA or any other allowances while on a Leave of Absence.

## **CULTURAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Institute of International Education (IIE):** On behalf of the United States Department of State, IIE hosts several three- to four-day Enrichment Seminars every year, during the spring semester, for first-year Fulbright students. Each seminar brings together approximately 150 Fulbrighters in various cities across the U.S. in an open and interactive forum to discuss and learn more about a chosen topic. Travel and other costs associated with your attendance are covered by your sponsor, the United States Department of State. Between November and February, you will receive information about the upcoming seminar and an invitation to apply. As space is limited, IIE will assign applicants to a seminar site based on several criteria – topic preference, distribution of grantees from various countries at each seminar, distribution of fields of study, and U.S. host institution representation, as well as costs related to air travel. These seminars offer a wonderful opportunity for students to meet other Fulbrighters from all over the world who are studying at universities throughout the United States.
- **One To World:** Through One To World programs, Fulbright grantees in the New York Metro area have the opportunity to meet New Yorkers, explore American institutions “behind the scenes,” visit local neighborhoods, and learn about facets of U.S. culture and society they might not otherwise encounter. Please visit [www.one-to-world.org](http://www.one-to-world.org) for more information.
- **Fulbright Association:** The Fulbright Association has a national network of chapters run by alumni volunteers to offer, among other activities, current Fulbrighters from abroad educational and cultural programs opportunities to enrich

their experience. Please visit [www.fulbright.org](http://www.fulbright.org) to see if there is a chapter near you.

- **International Education Week:** Each November, the U.S. Department of Education promotes International Education Week in an effort to recognize the value of gaining a broad understanding of the cultures, languages, and governments of other nations. As a Fulbrighter, you are encouraged to participate in such activities. For more information, contact your international student advisor or visit <http://iew.state.gov>
- **Exchanges Connect:** This international online community managed by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs connects potential current and former educational and cultural exchange program participants so that they can discuss application processes, programs, and living abroad. For more information, visit: <http://connect.state.gov>
- **International Exchange Alumni:** This is a dynamic and interactive networking website for all past and current participants of U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs. Here, you can build on your exchange experience and explore all the resources available to you as a member of the site. For more information, visit: <https://alumni.state.gov>

## **USE OF FACEBOOK, BLOGS & OTHER INTERNET-BASED MEDIA**

With the growth of blogging and social networking sites in recent years, Fulbrighters have had more opportunity than ever to share their experiences with friends, family and the Internet community. This in turn brings positive attention to the Fulbright Program and its impact not only on the Fulbrighter but the host community as well.

Should you decide to share your Fulbright experiences publicly via any web-based media (and we hope you will), there are a few points that you should keep in mind:

1. Avoid confusion by acknowledging that yours is not an official Department of State website, and the views and information presented are your own and do not represent the Fulbright Program or the Department of State.
2. While participants in all U.S. State Department-sponsored academic exchange scholarships have full academic and artistic freedom to write, publish and create, they are also expected to maintain a standard of conduct that is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Fulbright Program – to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.
3. Any Fulbright grantee who posts inappropriate or offensive material on the Internet in relation to the Fulbright program may be subject to revocation or termination of their grant. Be aware that what is deemed culturally acceptable in the United States (or, more specifically, on the Internet in the United States) may not be received well overseas. Describing the challenges of living in a foreign country is fine, but please refrain from using disparaging language to describe your host country or the people you live and work with.

## Concluding Your Fulbright Program

### DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Several months before your Fulbright Program Maximum Funding Date (MFD), AMIDEAST will send you information concerning departure procedures. Your Fulbright funding will end on the day you graduate or upon your Maximum Funding Date, whichever date comes first.

*Note: The duration of your grant benefits are separate from the duration of your J-1 exchange visitor status. Your J-1 status and DS-2019 form will expire on the day you complete your study program or the Program End Date in your SEVIS record, whichever date comes first.*

You have a thirty (30) day grace period following the Fulbright Program end date. Although you will not receive any Fulbright funding during this period, you may use the time, if needed, to complete your departure arrangements. *You may not engage in academic work during the grace period.*

*You will be responsible for your own expenses from the end of your grant period until your departure from the United States.*

### ACADEMIC TRAINING (After Program)

As a U.S. Department of State sponsored student in J-1 status, you *may* be eligible for Academic Training (AT) upon completion of your program.

**Not all grantees are eligible for post-program Academic Training, so please check with your AMIDEAST advisor to verify your eligibility.**

Please be advised that *authorization for Academic Training is not guaranteed, but rather, it is contingent upon approval from the U.S. Department of State and your home country Commission or post.* Each request for AT will be carefully examined to ensure that the training will be beneficial to the overall program objectives.



Academic Training requests must be submitted to your AMIDEAST advisor **at least four weeks** before the start of the training opportunity. Remember, Academic Training will not be granted automatically.

### Eligibility:

- Check with your AMIDEAST advisor on your eligibility.
- Academic training conducted after completion of the academic program **cannot** exceed 12 months.
- Total Academic Training (i.e., during + after your academic program) **cannot** exceed 18 months.
- If you are enrolled in a degree or non-degree program less than 12 months in length, Academic Training **cannot** exceed the length of your academic program.

### Conditions:

- Your primary purpose in the United States must be for study and not Academic Training;
- You must be in good academic standing at the university named on your DS-2019 form;
- The proposed employment must be directly related to your major field of study;
- The training must be authorized *before* the completion of your academic program.
- The training period must begin within 30 days of program completion.
- You will **not** receive financial support from AMIDEAST, your binational Fulbright Commission, or the U.S. Department of State. Your academic training after degree completion must involve **paid** employment, or, you must demonstrate proof of financial support equivalent to the minimum monthly maintenance rate (after taxes) of the respective city where the training will occur.
- You must maintain accident and sickness coverage for all J-2 dependents throughout the Academic Training period. If your

employer provides health insurance to you and your dependents, but the policy does not fulfill J visa requirements, you must purchase supplemental coverage for your dependents.

Please be advised that *authorization for Academic Training requires approval from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in your home country or your binational Commission prior to the start of the training*. Further, the U.S. Department of State *reserves the right to deny any requests that involve politicization of scholarly inquiry and/or do not follow the primary program objectives*.

**How to apply for work authorization for Academic Training:** In general, you will need to submit an offer of employment with pertinent details, a completed advisor approval form, and your own letter of request. Please refer to the Employment section on the Fulbright [Grantee Resources](#) webpage for information on how to apply for approval. **Remember:** federal, state, and local taxes may apply to any earnings received through employment.

**If your request is approved:**

- You will receive written authorization from your AMIDEAST advisor.
- You will retain your J-1 status upon receipt of an updated DS-2019 form from AMIDEAST.
- Your ASPE coverage will continue.
- Your return travel benefits will be provided upon completion of your training, if your original grant makes you eligible.
- You will be responsible for any additional expenses related to an AT opportunity, such as costs for relocating to another city.

### ***A Note of Caution:***

As a Fulbright student you are eligible for a variety of work opportunities in the U.S., but employment without proper authorization is a serious violation of your J-1 status, as well as Fulbright policies. Remember, before you begin seeking any type of employment, you must first consult your AMIDEAST adviser, whose written approval is necessary *in advance*.

### **TRANSFER OF DS-2019 SPONSORSHIP FROM THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM TO YOUR UNIVERSITY**

A DS-2019 transfer is an exceptional authorization to release Sponsorship of a Fulbright grantee's DS-2019 and J-1 immigration status to a university. All Fulbright status, privileges, and funding are terminated upon the date of the transfer of sponsorship. To request a transfer of sponsorship, you must arrange your own financial support and provide documentation of your financial resources to your university, AMIDEAST, the U.S. Department of State, and/or your binational Commission.

A DS-2019 transfer may be requested in order to complete the original academic program for which you were given your Fulbright grant or to begin a second, higher degree program.

- As a Fulbright grantee, you must fulfill a two-year home residency requirement at the conclusion of your academic program. By transferring sponsorship, you are only delaying fulfillment of that requirement until the end of your studies.
- To start the DS-2019 transfer process, you should contact the international student office at the university you will be attending. If the university is willing and able to provide you with a DS-2019, the university will ask you to indicate the source of your proposed funding (from your home government, from university financial assistance, or from your personal resources). Once the university is satisfied that you

have sufficient funding, the institution will request that AMIDEAST enter a release date into your SEVIS record. AMIDEAST will enter a release date after you have submitted the required materials, and if your request to transfer sponsorship is approved by the U.S. Department of State and/or your binational Commission.

**To request a transfer of sponsorship**, you must submit several documents. Please refer to the [Grantee Resources](#) webpage for detailed information.

**Notes:**

- A transfer of sponsorship may only be requested if university sponsorship will begin no later than the day your Fulbright grant expires. Your Fulbright grant will end on the day immediately after you complete your academic degree program, or on your Maximum Funding Date (MFD), *whichever date comes first*;
- A transfer of sponsorship cannot be completed for a grantee who wishes to pursue a second master's degree;
- If your university issues only I-20 Forms for F-1 visas, you will need to return home and apply for the F-1 visa at the U.S. Consulate in your home country.
- As a Fulbright grantee, you must fulfill a two-year home residency requirement at the conclusion of your academic program. Whether transferring J-1 sponsorship or re-entering the United States on a new F-1 visa, you are only delaying fulfillment of that requirement until the end of your studies.

## RETURN TRAVEL

Please refer to your Terms of Appointment to determine if you are eligible for return travel paid by the U.S. Department of State or your binational Fulbright Commission. During the summer months, international travel is particularly heavy, so it is important to make departure arrangements early.

Grantees from Morocco should contact their binational Fulbright Commission to make return travel arrangements.

Grantees from Egypt should consult their AMIDEAST Advisor for return travel guidelines.

All other eligible grantees should follow the guidelines below. Contact your AMIDEAST advisor if you have any further questions.

- The ticket may **only** be purchased by AMIDEAST;
- In order to comply with the Fly America Act, AMIDEAST must book your ticket with a U.S. airline directly to your port of arrival in your home country. If there is no U.S. carrier service at your port of arrival, you must fly with a U.S. airline from the point of departure in the United States to the furthest point available on the route. This option usually means flying with a U.S. airline at least as far as a transfer point in Europe;
- A one-way itinerary will be forwarded to you for approval. Once you approve the itinerary we will notify our travel agent to issue your ticket electronically. Any changes you wish to make to the ticket are subject to review by AMIDEAST to ensure compliance with J-1 visa regulations. Please note that any costs associated with changes to your ticket after it is issued will be your responsibility.
- The ticket may not include any scheduled, extended layovers in a transit country. Only regular, short layovers necessary to change flights are permitted.

- The ticket will be the least expensive ticket available. Although we will do everything possible to accommodate your requests in terms of dates, routing, carriers, and stopovers, the price of the ticket takes priority. If another itinerary is significantly less expensive than the one you have requested, we are required to choose the less expensive one;
- If you are transferring sponsorship and are issued a return ticket with a departure date more than thirty days after your Fulbright sponsorship ends, you will be responsible for maintaining the validity of that ticket by arranging and paying for any changes to your ticket;
- The ticket will be refundable only to AMIDEAST;
- You may not purchase a ticket or make a reservation and expect reimbursement.

### **Transit Visas**

Many European countries now require transit visas even for airline passengers who are not leaving the airport. Once you have been notified of your itinerary, you should contact the Embassy of each country through which you will be traveling to determine if you need a visa. You are responsible for payment of any fees required to obtain such visas.

### **TWO-YEAR HOME COUNTRY PHYSICAL PRESENCE REQUIREMENT**

As a Fulbright grantee, you are participating in an exchange program that holds as its mission the premise that you will return home to share your experiences. To fulfill this mission, the Fulbright Program requires grantees to return to their home countries when their authorized academic activities are completed. Under U.S. law, upon expiration of your Exchange Visitor (J-1) immigration status, you are required to reside in your home country for two years before you may apply for U.S. immigration, U.S. permanent residency, or a U.S. non-immigrant work visa. The two-year home residency rule does not prohibit

you from applying for most tourist, student, or other exchange visitor visas.

Please be advised that any grantee who applies to waive the two-year home residency requirement will automatically become ineligible for post-program Academic Training, regardless of the outcome of the waiver application.

## **BECOMING A FULBRIGHT ALUMNUS/ALUMNA**

Close to the completion of your academic program, you will receive departure information from AMIDEAST in Washington, D.C. Please remember to complete your program evaluation and alumni information form and send us your final transcript before you leave the United States. Once you have finished your academic program, submitted these forms, and returned to your home country, you will have officially become a Fulbright alumnus/alumna!

Here are some ways you can stay involved with Fulbright after the conclusion of your academic program:

- **Alumni Grants:** In an effort to support the professional development of Fulbright Alumni from the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, AMIDEAST, in cooperation with the United States Department of State, offers the Fulbright Alumni Development Grant. This grant provides qualifying alumni with up to \$2,500 of funding to attend a professional conference or seminar, complete a short-term training program, conduct a collaborative research project, or participate in a professional visit with colleagues in their field. **Please note: Alumni must complete their two-year residency requirement before they are eligible for this grant.** Please refer to the AMIDEAST website for more detailed information: [www.amideast.org/fulbright/alumni-information/alumni-development-grants](http://www.amideast.org/fulbright/alumni-information/alumni-development-grants)

- **Alumni Associations:** Please get in touch with the AMIDEAST office, binational Commission, or U.S. Embassy in your home country to find out about Fulbright Alumni activities in your home country.
- **Fulbright Blog:** AMIDEAST/Washington, D.C. publishes a Fulbright Blog for alumni and current grantees called *Fulbright Program for the Middle East and North Africa*. Please keep in touch with us so we can highlight your latest and greatest achievements. The Fulbright Program in the Middle East and North Africa blog can be found at <http://fulbrightmena.blogspot.com>
- **Your Contact Information:** Please keep AMIDEAST up-to-date on any changes in your contact information by visiting the website: [www.amideast.org/fulbright/alumni-information/alumni-information](http://www.amideast.org/fulbright/alumni-information/alumni-information)
- **U.S. Department of State Alumni Website:** Stay connected with your exchange experience, and explore the various opportunities available to you by joining International Exchange Alumni. Visit <https://alumni.state.gov/>

Please keep in touch with AMIDEAST/Washington, D.C. and your local AMIDEAST office, binational Fulbright Commission, and U.S. Embassy! We are always interested in hearing your news!





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FULBRIGHT

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