

VISITING GRADUATE STUDENT POLICY & PROCEDURES
UPDATED January 2018

I. POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Preamble

Increased participation of visiting graduate students (VGS) in research activities at UCSD is inherently beneficial for the University, its current students and faculty, and the VGS and the home institution. Not only does such participation increase UCSD's international profile, but inclusion of diverse perspectives accelerates the progress of research and enriches the campus climate. In addition, VGS may bring specific expertise to a given research problem that is not available on campus, and their involvement can strengthen and cement collaborative interactions between UCSD faculty and international colleagues.

Definition

A VGS is a pre-doctoral graduate student (PhD, MA, MS, MBA, or MD) pursuing research at UCSD related to their degree program at their home institution. The VGS must be enrolled in a degree granting program or equivalent at an institution of higher education other than the University of California, and be physically present at UCSD for the duration of the appointment. The UC appointment must serve an academic purpose for the unit in which they are visiting.

Policy

The University of California policy on *Visiting Scholars and Other Visitors* (APM-430) may be found at:

<http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/apm/apm-430.pdf>

Administration

Prior to the visitor's arrival, the appointment must be approved by a Faculty Sponsor, the department chair or organized research unit (ORU) director, and the Dean of the Graduate Division.

A VGS should be sufficiently advanced in their course of study at their home institution as to be able to contribute meaningfully to ongoing research at UCSD without significant additional training (typically, in or beyond the third year of study, depending on the discipline). They should also be able to demonstrate sufficient oral and written language proficiency to enable them to participate fully both in research activities and in the social and cultural life of the campus.

Acceptance of a VGS implies a commitment on the part of the host faculty member and/or department to provide, at a minimum, appropriate mentoring. Departments or programs with significant numbers of VGS should also consider arranging events to orient such students to practical and social aspects of campus life as well as US research culture, and to promote their continued engagement. In formal programs, it would be desirable to negotiate a contribution from the home institution to support such activities.

VGS will not be permitted to enroll in UCSD courses for credit unless they do so via Extension, with payment of appropriate fees by either the student or their home institution. VGS may be permitted to audit UCSD courses with permission of the instructor. A VGS may not be enrolled in any degree program at UCSD.

All VGS are prohibited from being appointed as a Lecturer at UCSD or any title covered by the UAW/ASE contract with the UC system.

It is required that all VGS have health insurance coverage 24 hours a day, including time spent at UCSD conducting research.

Any intellectual property generated by a VGS while working at UCSD remains under the control of the University. All VGS will be required to sign the UCSD Patent Agreement.

Appointment into this title is not for physicians with patient care or researchers with clinical activity. For appropriate appointment, contact School of Medicine's Dean's Office.

II. TITLES AND APPOINTMENT CRITERIA

A. Non-Salaried Visiting Graduate Student -Title Code 3730 – Visitor Graduate (WOS)

A non-salaried VGS receives financial support for their visit from their home institution (grant, fellowship/scholarship) or personal funds. See "Compensation" below for support level requirements.

A non-salaried VGS does **not** receive compensation from their UCSD Faculty Sponsor.

NOTE: Non-salaried Visiting Graduate Students are NOT to be entered into PPS at this time.

B. Salaried Visiting Graduate Student - Junior Specialist

A salaried VGS may receive partial or full support from their UCSD Faculty Sponsor via the Junior Specialist Title. Approval for this title must be requested in advance by submitting an appointment file to the Graduate Division. See "Compensation" below for support level requirements.

For data entry guidelines, please see <http://grad.ucsd.edu/files/financial/PPS/visitinggrad.pdf>.

C. Terms of Service

Visiting graduate students should normally be appointed for a period of no less than 3 months. While recognizing that appointments that exceed one year may be desirable in some disciplines, all appointments must be evaluated and renewed on an annual basis. Students with initial one-year appointments who later wish to extend their appointment may request an extension up to an additional year (for a total of 2 years maximum) with appropriate justification. **Note that**

students with support extending beyond one year may be considered for an *initial* appointment of 2 years maximum. In this scenario, a letter from the Faculty Sponsor citing exceptional circumstances must be submitted with the application.

Students applying for J-1 visas should review potential visa term restrictions at: <http://ifso.ucsd.edu/dept-facilitators/j1/index.html#Minimum-Financial-Support>.

Compensation

All VGS engaged in research activities at UCSD, and appointed for 6 months or less, must have financial support that meets the J1 visa requirement of \$2,400 per month. All VGS appointed for more than six months must have financial support comparable to that available to UCSD graduate students enrolled in similar disciplinary programs for the duration of their appointment. The source of support may come from their home institution (fellowship/scholarship or grant), personal funds, and/or salary from UCSD. Please see the following chart for a list of financial support levels by degree major: [VGS Compensation Levels](#).

Regardless of the source of support, under no circumstances will the appointment of a VGS be approved if the student will receive support less than the minimum requirement for J1 visa holders. Under no circumstances should involvement of a VGS detract from financial support and/or resources that would be otherwise available to registered UCSD graduate students whether domestic or international.

An exception approval is required when a department is requesting a salaried VGS appointment above the amount paid to a registered UCSD graduate student in a comparable department. **NOTE: the maximum Junior Specialist monthly dollar amount for the purposes of calculating *percentage* of pay is \$3388/mo effective 1/1/18.**

Salaried VGS are eligible for Workers' Compensation at UCSD if injured in the course and scope of their employment.

Workers Compensation coverage is not provided to a Non-salaried VGS.

III. Visiting Graduate Student Processing Fee

Each Visiting Graduate Student (VGS) is **required to pay a \$100 nonrefundable processing fee**. This is a one-time fee that covers a period of stay up to 2 years. **An additional \$100 nonrefundable processing fee will be charged in the following instances:**

- 1) the period of stay extends beyond 2 years
- 2) there is a > 30-day break in the appointment period and a new appointment packet is required

There are two options to pay the processing fee: 1) upon arrival at UCSD, the VGS may pay the fee directly at the UCSD Cashier's Office, or 2) the Sponsoring Department may pay the fee via

UCSD recharge. **In all cases**, the Sponsoring Department must supply an index number when submitting the original VGS application to the Graduate Division.

The processing fee is due on the 15th of the month following the appointment start date. For example, if the appointment begins October 1, the fee must be paid no later than November 15. If the VGS does not pay the fee by the deadline, the fee will be automatically recharged to the Sponsoring Department. For this reason, it is imperative that the Graduate Division is notified of any changes to the appointment period.

IV. APPLICATION PROCESS

All VGS must have a UCSD Faculty Sponsor who will host the visit. Prospective VGS should first contact the department chair or faculty with whom they would like to work, and request an invitation. The host faculty and/or department are responsible for preparing and submitting the appointment packet prior to the visitor's arrival, in addition to preparing for the arrival (ex: arranging for office space, if applicable). **VGS may not enter the lab or university facility without an official approved appointment.**

The appointment submission process for the VGS is through the Visiting Graduate Student Appointment System (VGSAS). VGSAS is an online administrative portal and database.

To request Department Administrator access to VGSAS, an authorized individual (MSO) must send an e-mail to vgcoordinator@ucsd.edu. Once authorized, the Department Administrator will have the authority to assign users and user roles for the Sponsoring Department.

The link to VGSAS may be found here: <https://vgs.ucsd.edu>. A user's manual can be found under the heading *Documentation* at this link. In addition, if you would like to be added to the Visitinggradstaff listserv, please email vgcoordinator@ucsd.edu.

The following documents will be required to be uploaded in VGSAS as a condition of the VGS appointment approval process. **All documents must be submitted in English.**

Initial Appointment

1. [UC Patent Acknowledgement/Oath](#)
2. Current Curriculum Vitae
3. **Current** proof of Registration (i.e. copy of current transcript or letter from home institution) as a graduate student (PhD, Masters, or MD)
4. Proof of health insurance – submit a **copy** of the completed UCSD International Center, ["Form C: Health Insurance Memorandum of Understanding"](#)

The Patent Acknowledgement Form with **original** signatures must be submitted once the VGS arrives on campus. Please note that the Patent Acknowledgement Form may be uploaded through

VGSAS in lieu of the original in order to expedite the review process, and under the condition that the original form will be submitted as soon as the visitor arrives. The original form must be submitted no later than 30 days after the appointment begin date to prevent delay/denial of future appointments. For non-salaried appointments, forward the original document complete with VGS and witness signatures to VGS Coordinator at MC 0003. For salaried appointments, forward the original completed document with required new hire paperwork to Payroll at MC 0952.

B. For International Visitors: Appointment material should be submitted at least 3 months in advance of the start date, and earlier for international visitors who require a visa. Once the VGS Appointment Form has been approved, the Sponsoring Department or ORU will submit the appropriate visa paperwork to the [International Center](#). International students coming on F1-STEM should also note the new F-1 STEM OPT Extension Protocol below.

C. Upon arrival, an approved visiting graduate student may obtain a UCSD Campus ID Card. Information on how to obtain a UCSD Campus ID Card is available on the [Blink website](#).

D. EXPORT CONTROL: Before agreeing to host a VGS from a foreign country, please review the information from the UCSD Export Control Office. That office can provide further guidance if there is a specific concern. <http://blink.ucsd.edu/sponsor/exportcontrol/>

V. Appointment Extension

The appointment extension process for the VGS is through the Visiting Graduate Student Appointment System (VGSAS).

The following document is required when the VGS/Sponsoring Department is requesting an appointment extension:

- **Current** proof of student registration and/or transcript from the home institution.
- **Exception letter (if applicable)**

F-1 STEM OPT extension: New regulations governing the F-1 STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT) extension are in effect **as of May 10th, 2016**. In order for UC San Diego to either continue to employ or hire new F-1 students during their STEM OPT period, the institution must meet new requirements. Students will be responsible for alerting their departments to their need for STEM extension support, and departments will have to decide to either meet these new requirements or sponsor students in an alternative visa classification that provides work authorization. For more information, see: <http://blink.ucsd.edu/HR/supervising/hiring/staff/f1-stem-opt.html>

VI. Health Insurance

It is required that all VGS have health insurance coverage 24 hours a day, including time spent at UCSD conducting research.

Effective September 1, 2014, this requirement must be met 1) through the UC San Diego Visiting Scholar Benefit Plan offered by Garnett-Powers, 2) through another insurer or 3) be provided by the student's home country.

To enroll in the Plan offered by Garnett-Powers, visit <http://clients.garnett-powers.com/vs/ucsd/> or call toll free 1-888-441-3719. Note: The VGS appointment must be approved by the Graduate Division prior to enrollment in the Plan.

If the VGS has other insurance, certain requirements must be met to waive the UCSD Plan. If the VGS is international with his/her own coverage, that coverage must also meet these standards that meet or exceed the J-1 Visa requirements, as well as provide this same coverage to the student's eligible dependents. The minimum levels of coverage that must be offered through the student's own insurance can be found on Form C at: <http://ifso.ucsd.edu/files/ifso/FormC.pdf>.

If the student's insurance meets these requirements, he/she may request a waiver (to decline coverage) for the Plan. **Instructions on how to submit a waiver can be found here:** <http://clients.garnett-powers.com/vs/ucsd/waiver/>.

VII. PPS INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions for hiring Junior Specialists can be found at: <http://grad.ucsd.edu/files/financial/PPS/visitinggrad.pdf>

IX. BENEFITS AND SERVICES

VGS will be provided access to the following campus services regardless of their source of support:

- Campus ID card (see [Affiliates categories](#), Visiting graduate)
- Library privileges
- Discount rates to special events
- Eligibility to enroll in Garnett-Powers and Associates Visiting Academic Benefit Plan
- Eligibility to purchase RIMAC (recreational facility) card
- Visa sponsorship (F1 opt, J, or B)
- UCSD email account (policy varies by department)
- Individual recharge accounts (policy varies by department)

X. OTHER RESOURCES

Off Campus Housing: <http://students.ucsd.edu/campus-services/housing/offcampus/>

La Jolla Del Sol (UCSD Affiliated Housing): <http://hdh.ucsd.edu/arch/ljds.asp>

Parking: <http://blink.ucsd.edu/facilities/transportation>

Questions regarding **visas** should be directed to International Center: <http://icenter.ucsd.edu>

Other Visiting Scholars: <http://blink.ucsd.edu/sponsor/ora/appoint-visiting.html>