

University of South Alabama
Inter-institutional Collaboration
International Scholars and Departmental Checklist

The following is a brief informational checklist for international collaboration agreements involving the exchange of scholars coming to the University of South Alabama. The points listed should be discussed with and by the hosting USA academic unit(s) hosting the collaboration and scholars.

The University of South Alabama hosting unit should be prepared to discuss the following:

1	International Student Admissions
2	Access to University Services (library, computing, recreation center, office space, etc.) and campus photo ID.
3	Enrollment in classes, tuition and fees – including related health tests and immunizations required for enrollment.
4	Health Test and Immunizations (recommended as well as required for enrollment in classes).
5	Health Care Access and Insurance (minimum US DOS requirements and recommended coverage).
6	Housing on and off campus (availability considerations).
7	Banking and US Social Security Number (SSN) or US Internal Revenue Service Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN).
8	Employment Limitations and Prohibitions (immigration regulations).
9	USA Office of Research Compliance and Assurance screening.
10	US Immigration Compliance officers at the University of South Alabama.
11	International Collaborations and Initiatives Support Contacts.

For detailed discussion on each of the items listed above please go to our web page at:
<http://www.southalabama.edu/oie/scholar.html>

Or contact us at: intledu@usouthal.edu

ALL THIS BELOW WOULD BE ON THE WEB PAGE AS INFORMATION

University of South Alabama
Inter-institutional Collaboration
International Scholars and Departmental Checklist Detailed Information

The following are some detailed points to consider for international collaboration agreements involving the exchange of scholars coming to the University of South Alabama. The points listed should be discussed with and by the hosting USA academic unit(s) hosting the collaboration and scholars.

International Student Admissions: Applications for admission will be governed by the admissions standards of USA and the specific disciplines as published in the USA Bulletin and located on the web at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/bulletin/> For specific international student admissions standards please go to: <http://www.southalabama.edu/intnatsrv/checklist.html>.

Access to University Services (library, computing, recreation center, office space, etc.) and Campus Photo ID: You should speak with your host about what access is available with respect to your stay on campus. Exchange Visitors will be eligible to receive a EV campus photo ID which provides limited access to some of these services. Your host department must make arrangements for the ID upon your arrival.

Enrollment in classes: If you are coming as a scholar and wish to take classes you are welcome to do so however you will need to complete the appropriate admission process for your proposed activity. USA offers both for credit (academic degree, non-degree or transient student status; undergraduate, graduate and professional levels) and non-credit (ESL, Continuing Education, etc.) options. Check with your host and the USA admissions unit for the appropriate admissions requirement relevant to your choice of course work. Tuition and fees are posted at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/admissions/expenses.html> Also please see the following requirements and recommendations.

Health Tests and Immunizations (recommended as well as required for enrollment in classes) Although not required of our NON-Student guests USA highly recommends that all foreign scholars consider completing the USA recommended immunization and testing requirements prior to arrival in the US (bring all documentation with you). If you plan on taking or participating in classroom based activities you are required to have completed these test/immunization requirements. The University of South Alabama (USA) requires that ALL International and ESL students who enroll for any classes MUST PROVIDE acceptable proof of tuberculosis screening. The screening result date must be within the past six (6) months. The University of South Alabama also requires for those born after 1956 to have had 2 doses of a measles containing vaccine (rubeola, M.R., MMR) prior to registration. One dose must have been after 1980 and at least one of the doses must have been an MM – see form for details: <http://www.southalabama.edu/studenthealth/immunizationForm.pdf> Any questions about the USA health test/immunization requirements should be directed to the Director of the USA Student Health Center.

Health Care and Insurance (minimum US DOS requirements and recommended coverage): The University of South Alabama has a Student Health Care center supported as part of the greater USA Medical Health Care

network. This center provides urgent and appointment care services during normal business hours and billing to selected insurance policies is available. Note that these services and billing procedures are customary to all US health care providers. USA offers all students and scholars access to a major medical policy that has been designed specifically to comply with the US Exchange Visitor federal regulation and to meet the needs of the students and scholars, keeping out of pocket expenses reasonably low and in combination with the local health care service network of providers.

All foreign students are automatically enrolled in a USA provided major medical health insurance plan and the premium is charged to their student accounts. This same plan is available for purchase by all scholars and their dependents coming to USA on the exchange visitor program (J-1 visa). Note that under USA policy and in compliance with US DOS regulations Exchange Visitors must demonstrate proof of health insurance with a valid US claims office upon arrival and prior to participation in their planned activities. Health care in the US is expensive and you will be required to guarantee payments and or make immediate full payments for the health care received. For details on the USA health plan contact the USA Student Health Center.

Housing (availability considerations): The University of South Alabama has limited dormitory space which may be available on a limited basis depending on the semester you are here. The vast majority of our foreign guests stay in off campus housing some of which is nearby to campus. You should contact your hosting department to determine the best approach for housing upon arrival. When considering housing make sure you discuss transportation needs as well, although there is some public transportation the schedule and routes can be problematic. Housing Office: <http://www.southalabama.edu/housing/> On Campus Meals and Dining services : <http://www.campusdish.com/en-US/CSS/usouthal>

Banking and US Social Security Number (SSN) or US Internal Revenue Service Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) – For banking in the US check with your home country banks about branch offices or banking in the United States. In an effort to reduce money laundering, U.S. financial institutions are required to verify the identity of every individual who opens a bank account. In compliance with federal regulations, all banks operating in the U.S. have established Customer Identification Programs (CIP) that they are to follow for anyone who seeks to open an account. While the specifics of the CIP may vary from one bank to another, Department of Treasury regulations found at 31 CFR § 103.121 set forth the following minimal information that the banks must obtain from you before allowing you to open an account:

Your name
Your date of birth
Your street address (P.O. Box)
An identification number

The regulations 31 CFR § 103.121(b)(i)A)(4)(ii) clarify that for a non-U.S. person, the identification number shall be one or more of the following:

A taxpayer identification number (see discussion below).
A passport number and country of issuance.
An alien identification card number.
Number and country of issuance of any other government-issued document showing nationality or residence and bearing a photograph or similar safeguard.

It is important to remember that banks establish their own customer identification programs and may ask for additional documentation because they are ultimately responsible for establishing the identity of their customers. For example several local banks require the following identification:

Wells Fargo Wachovia Bank <https://www.wachovia.com/>: Passport and university ID card-

BBVA Compass <http://www.bbvacompass.com/>: Passport, sign W-8 form.

Regions Bank <https://www.regions.com/>: Passport, US Drivers license, or US non-Drivers license (restrictions on visa types other than F-1)

These requirements are subject to change at any time so you will need to verify this information prior to or upon arrival. Requirements may vary by bank, nationality, and type of accounts/transactions.

In addition all foreign nationals residing in the US (temporarily or permanently) are required to comply with and file a annual US tax return with the US Internal Revenue Service for details go to:

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96477,00.html>

Scholars coming to USA who will receive some form of reimbursement, payment or salary from USA will be required to have a SSN or ITIN number in order to receive any payments as well as US tax treaty benefits. For information review the USA OIE brochure on Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) for Foreign Scholars.

Employment Limitations and Prohibitions: All foreign nationals are must comply with the US federal regulations pertaining to employment in the United States. These requirements vary by visa type: Temporary visitors (B1/2 visa, Visa Waiver primarily) are NOT eligible to work in the US. Exchange Visitors on the J-1 visa may only work for the hosting institution that sponsors their stay in the US. NO other employment or payment for services is allowed other than those associated with the hosting institution. Reimbursement for expenses as well as honoraria may be possible on a limited basis depending not the type of visa and duration of stay, all forms of employment or pay for services should be reviewed and approved in advance and in writing by the hosting institution immigration compliance as well as US IRS tax compliance officer. For USA contact: Kelley Lynd, Klynd@usouthal.edu (EV immigration compliance officer, USA Enrollment Management Services) or Lacy Fetters, lsimmons@usouthal.edu (Alien Tax Compliance officer, USA Business Office).

USA Office of Research Compliance and Assurance. All foreign collaboration activities are subject to compliance with the USA Office of Research Compliance and Assurance policies and procedures which include compliance with relevant U.S. and foreign export and technology transfer regulations. Where such collaboration involves the transfer of equipment, software and any other goods as a necessary component of projects, or in support of personnel working in collaborative research with USA faculty, such shipment of supplies/goods will be subject to advance review and compliance with the USA Office of Research Compliance and Assurance policies and procedures and in compliance with relevant U.S. and foreign export and technology transfer regulations. All collaborations are also subject to US Restricted Party Screening. For more details please review the information at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/researchcompliance/exportcontrol.html> and contact the USA Office of Research Compliance and Assurance: <http://www.southalabama.edu/researchcompliance/index.html>

US Immigration Compliance: The University of South Alabama has three offices authorized under University of South Alabama, US Department of Homeland Security and Department of State regulations to advise on and process United States immigration compliance documentation:

- For foreign students coming to the University of South Alabama as degree, non-degree , transient students & exchange: Donna Pigg, M.S., Director, International Student Services, University of South Alabama, Meisler Hall Rm 2200, 390 Alumni Circle, Mobile, AL 36688-0002, (251) 460-6050, (251) 414-8213 FAX, <http://www.southalabama.edu/intnatsrv/> - email: dpigg@usouthal.edu
- For scholars, foreign employees, permanent residency coming to USA: Kelley Lynd, Immigration Coordinator, University of South Alabama, Enrollment Services, 390 Alumni Circle, Room 2400, Mobile, AL 36688-0002, Telephone: 251/460-7967, Fax: 251/460-7023, email: klynd@usouthal.edu <http://www.southalabama.edu/enrollmentservices/immigration.html>
- For English As A Second Language Program participants: Frank Daugherty, Program Coordinator, English Language Center, University of South Alabama, 555 University Blvd North, Room 221, Mobile, AL 36688-0002, Tel. (251) 460-7185 Fax (251) 460-7201, jdaugher@jaguar1.usouthal.edu ; <http://www.southalabama.edu/esl/>

International Collaborations and Initiatives Support:

- For inter-institutional collaboration agreements and administration of international initiatives contact: Jim Ellis, Ph.D., Director, Office of International Education, University of South Alabama, 555 University Blvd North, Room 320, Mobile, Alabama 36688-0002, 251-460-7053 – jimellis@usouthal.edu or intledu@usouthal.edu <http://www.usouthal.edu/international>
- For academic unit initiatives please refer to the college directory at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/departms.html>
- For international student admissions please contact the International Student Services office: Donna Pigg, M.S., Director, International Student Services, University of South Alabama, Meisler Hall Room 2200, 390 Alumni Circle, Mobile, AL 36688-0002, (251) 460-6050, (251) 414-8213 FAX, <http://www.southalabama.edu/intnatsrv/> - email: dpigg@usouthal.edu
- For research initiatives and support please contact the respective academic unit and or the USA Office of the Vice President for Research - <http://www.southalabama.edu/vpresearch/> ; Russ Lea, Ph.D., Vice President for Research, Phone: (251) 460-6333, rlea@usouthal.edu
- For USA Research Compliance and Assurance (ORCA) contact: <http://www.southalabama.edu/researchcompliance/index.html>; Alison Henry, MS, Assistant Director, (251) 460-6509 – ahenry@usouthal.edu
- For health programs related initiatives contact the USA Division of Health Sciences: <http://www.southalabama.edu/vphealthsciences.html> ; Ronald D. Franks, M.D., Vice President for Health Sciences
Phone: (251) 460-7189, rfranks@usouthal.edu
- For Academic Affairs: <http://www.southalabama.edu/academicaffairs/> David Johnson, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Phone (251) 460-6261 Fax: (251) 460-6575, djohnson@usouthal.edu

Added resources:

Banking and finances in the US:

<http://www.nafsa.org/resourcelibrary/default.aspx?id=8665>

<http://www.uc.edu/international/services/scholars/finances.html>

US immigration overviews:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/>

Arriving in the US what to expect at US Customs:

http://www.ice.gov/sevis/factsheet/100104ent_exchng_fs.htm

<http://www.educationusa.info/pages/students/travel.php>

United States of America
Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN)

INFORMATION SHEET FOR FOREIGN SCHOLARS
COMING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
USA Office of International Education (8/2010)

(This document is meant as informational only. All procedures, eligibility and information referenced should be verified with the appropriate official US federal or State agency indicated herein.)

Prior to filing a tax return with the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which is a requirement for any individual who receives payment for services, grants, scholarships and other awards in the United States, you will need either a United States Social Security Administration Number (SSN) or a US Internal Revenue Service Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN). Please carefully consider the following if you do NOT already have one of the above.

When receiving payments for services, grants, scholarships and other awards in the United States, US citizens, permanent residents and foreign nationals are subject to a range of withholdings from these payments or awards. The amount withheld is based upon the nature of the payment, citizenship of the payment recipient, and local and federal tax regulations. The US has entered into tax treaties with certain countries which provide federal tax relief for citizens of those countries when receiving certain payments in the US and provides similar benefits for US citizens receiving payment in that other country. More information on these tax treaties is available at the following link on the IRS website: (<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96434,00.html>).

Foreign scholars should be aware that often the percentage of withholding ranges between 14% and 30% of the total amount of the payment/award. Under the tax treaties referenced above, however, this amount can be minimal to none. When accepting such payments/awards, all scholars also acknowledge that they must comply with US tax regulations and file an income tax return in April of each year and at such time may receive a portion of their withholdings back or be required to pay additional taxes on their earned income.

In order to file an income tax return, and to be eligible for the tax treaty benefits, the foreign scholar/student must have a US Social Security Number (SSN) or a US IRS Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN). Generally, a SSN is only issued to US citizens or permanent residents or to those foreign nationals eligible to work in the United States and is issued by the Social Security Administration (SSA). The IRS issues ITINs to foreign nationals and others who have federal tax reporting or filing requirements and do not qualify for SSNs. The University of South Alabama (USA) cannot provide you with advice on which you will be eligible for, as that is a determination made by the US SSA and IRS agencies. Additionally the University of South Alabama is not able to provide scholars with US or State Income Tax eligibility or filing advice, for such you should contact the specific agencies involved.

If the foreign scholar/student does not have a SSN or ITIN number, then such should be applied for upon arrival into the United States. Once an application is submitted, the process can take 10 days to a month depending on the documentation, processing times, etc. Alternatively, the US Social Security Administration and Internal Revenue Service offer the opportunity for foreign scholars to possibly apply for the SSN or ITIN while outside of the US in certain US embassies or consulates. There is no assurance that a SSN or ITIN will be issued and the scholars should contact the respective US office abroad to determine their specific proof of eligibility requirements, processing time, etc.

Until the SSN or ITIN is received, the scholar who is eligible for tax treaty benefits can either accept the payment/award (with proof of having applied for the SSN or ITIN) less the withholding deductions (14-30%), or wait until such time as the SSN or ITIN is received and then have the payment made based on any appropriate tax treaty withholding deductions. USA must have evidence of one of these identification numbers prior to determining the amount of the withholding from such payments.

It should be noted that tax treaty benefits only apply to federal withholdings, and that the scholar may also be subject to withholdings from state and local governments which are not affected by US tax treaties. For specific information on the Alabama Income Tax rules and regulations please go to:

<http://www.revenue.alabama.gov/incometax/itindex2.html>.

In order to appropriately address these issues for foreign scholars and students, universities and other institutions in the US have a non-immigrant tax compliance officer who reviews the tax compliance aspects and makes the necessary determination as to how much of the given payment or award will be withheld and submitted to the US Internal Revenue Service. For the University of South Alabama this person is Ms. Lacy Fetters, Payroll Accountant, USA Financial Affairs, lsimmons@usouthal.edu, Phone: 1-251-460-6654.

For more information on these procedures please note the following:

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96690,00.html> *Obtaining an ITIN from Abroad - Alien taxpayers who need an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) may be able to secure one from outside the United States. The IRS has permanent staff available which are able to help process Forms W-7, IRS Application Number (PDF) at the following U.S. embassies overseas: Beijing, Frankfurt, London, and Paris. The addresses and phone numbers of these overseas offices may be found at Contact My Local Office Internationally. In addition, there are public accounting firms overseas in certain countries which are Authorized Acceptance Agents for ITIN numbers. You will find their names and addresses at the Acceptance Agent Program page.*
<http://www.irs.gov/localcontacts/article/0,,id=101292,00.html>

<http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10096.html> *“Generally, only noncitizens authorized to work in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) can get a Social Security number. Social Security numbers are used to report an individual’s wages to the government and to determine a person’s eligibility for Social Security benefits. You need a Social Security number to work, collect Social Security benefits and receive some other government services. There are two ways you can apply: You can apply in your home country before you come to the United States when filing an application for an immigrant visa with the U.S. Department of State. In almost all cases, if you apply for a Social Security number and card with your immigrant visa application, you do not have to visit a Social Security office in the United States. (For more information, see www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnvisa); or you can visit a Social Security office in person.” (excerpted from SSA web page).*

<http://www.ssa.gov/foreign/> SSA’s Office of International Operations (OIO) home page. *“The purpose of this web page is to assist Social Security customers who are outside the U.S. or planning to leave the U.S. OIO is responsible for administering the Social Security program outside the U.S. and for the implementation of the benefit provisions of international agreements. Since SSA has no offices outside the U.S., OIO is assisted by the Department of State’s embassies and consulates throughout the world.”* On this page you will find the contact information for the US Embassies/Consulates supporting the SSAOIO. Excerpted from OIO page.

<http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5fs.pdf> (SSN application form) *“In most cases, you can take or mail this signed application with your documents to any Social Security office, U.S. Embassy or consulate or VARO. If you are a military dependent or a U.S. citizen working on a U.S. military post, you may also go to the Post Adjutant or Personnel Office. If you do not want to mail your original documents, take them along with this application to one of the offices listed above. The people there will make certified copies of your original documents and mail them to the Social Security Administration along with this application. Do not mail your original documents to the Social Security Administration in Baltimore, Maryland.”* (excerpted from SSN application form)

http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/factsheet/SSA_J_fact_sheet_final_May_9%20revised.pdf (J Nonimmigrants: Getting a Social Security Number – FACT SHEET) *“The Social Security Administration (SSA) uses the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program’s Verification Information System (VIS) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as its primary data source to verify legal entry into the United States and, in conjunction with travel documentation, to verify the immigration status of non-citizen Social Security number (SSN) applicants. It may take several days after the arrival of a nonimmigrant for arrival data to upload to VIS.”* (Excerpted from Fact Sheet)