Quick Guide to Visas

1. During the interview process for any faculty hire (part-time or full-time) the candidate must be asked “If chosen, are you able to provide eligibility to work in the United States at any institution.” This question opens up the communication with the candidate to determine if they have or need a visa.

2. American University normally sponsors one of three visas depending on why the faculty member is here and the employment status of the faculty member.

   • Full-time tenure-line hires are normally offered H-1B visas. These are permanent visas handled by the Office of General Counsel. These visas take 4-6 months to receive after the paperwork is submitted to the government. It is best to assume that from the start of paperwork to obtaining the visa that it will take 5-7 months due to the volume of paperwork required for this visa. The government does offer an expedite service on this visa, where for a fee, an H-1B visa application can be decided in 15 calendar days.

   • A TN-1 visa is an option offered to Canadian and Mexican Citizens to work in the United States usually for a year and is renewable. This visa is handled through Human Resources and occasionally through the Office of General Counsel. The time involved in obtaining a TN-1 visa varies depending on numerous circumstances and should be discussed on a case by case basis.

   • A J-1 visa is our most common visa. This visa is a temporary visa and is normally offered to term faculty and adjuncts. Adjunct Scholars or Faculty Fellows coming here for a short period of time can also obtain a J-1 visa. Please note that a J-1 Visa takes 6-8 weeks to process from the time that the paperwork is submitted in full to ISSS. Depending on the candidate’s home country, the visa may take longer. This means the department should assume that 7-9 weeks is needed to process the visa from start to finish. There is no way to expedite this type of visa. If the required amount of time is not given, ISSS may refuse to process the visa.

3. If a candidate you are considering needs a visa, please contact the College Faculty Coordinator to discuss the visa and to begin the process.