

Northern Michigan University Visiting International Scholar Program

NMU's strategic plan, *Investing in Innovation*, identifies domestic and global outreach and engagement as strategic focus areas. NMU views the presence of international visiting scholars as important and in alignment with the goals of its strategic plan. Hosting international scholars whose goals are consistent with the University's contributes to the richness of the experience for the visiting scholar as well as providing valuable contributions to the intellectual life of faculty, staff and students.

What is a Visiting Scholar at NMU?

Visiting Scholars may be professors, researchers, scientists, or other academic personnel who are temporarily in residence at NMU who have defined access to identified University facilities with prior approval by the respective department head and college Dean. A *visiting scholar* is typically in residence at NMU for a minimum of two weeks up to a maximum of one year.

International scholars generally come to NMU through:

1. collaborative research projects with an NMU faculty member, or as a research or teaching associate for an academic department.
2. prior knowledge of individual faculty members and/or the reputation of the Department or the University.
3. referral from national or international funding agencies, foundations, Fulbright commissions, IREX, foreign universities, foreign embassies or other reputable national and international organizations.
4. NMU partner institutions or other international initiatives.

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Application Guidelines

Northern Michigan University **accepts only visiting scholars who have a completed masters or doctoral degree or other equivalent degree**. Exceptions may be made for scholars who have special attainments, skills or experiences that uniquely qualify them for the proposed scholarship. All exceptions require approval by the respective departmental faculty, Department Head, Dean and the Provost.

All visiting scholar applicants need to complete the Application for Visiting International Scholar form ([link here](#)). **A completed application is required to be submitted to the department head of the academic department in which the scholar will reside during her or his time of study on NMU's campus four months prior to the intended date of arrival.**

Letter of Invitation

When the completed application materials have been received, reviewed, and approved and a faculty mentor has been identified, a letter of invitation will be sent to the visiting scholar from the department head. This process may take 3-4 weeks or longer. In the event multiple applications are submitted for a limited number of appointments, selections will be made based on an applicant's scholarly record, appropriate match with a faculty mentor, and alignment with the University's needs. Visiting scholar appointments will be granted on the basis of departmental approval (faculty and Department Head support) and faculty mentor availability.

Length of Stay

Visiting scholars may be in residence at the University for up to one year however some exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis. Most NMU faculty are not available to work with and mentor visiting scholars during the summer months; thus it is important that a clear understanding be established about the proposed length of stay.

English Language Proficiency

Although there is no minimum English language requirement, international visiting scholars must have sufficient understanding of English to be successful in the exchange project or program and for day-to-day living in the U.S. English language proficiency may be verified by interview, academic documentation or English language test score.

The scholar may attend the NMU English Language Institute Program upon payment of tuition and other fees.

Expectations

In addition to submitting an application, a visiting international scholar needs to:

- Obtain leave from their home institution
- Acquire a department faculty mentor from NMU who agrees to provide guidance on a designated project (a department head may assist the international scholar in this process).
- Be fully funded with financial resources outside Northern Michigan University (currently a minimum of \$1,200/month) and assume financial responsibility for visa processing fees. Note: Proof of financial resources is required for the scholar to obtain the DS2019 which is used to apply for a J1 visa. If a background check is required, the visiting scholar assumes responsibility for those related costs. Financial support can come from home country sources, grants, or personal funds.
- Provide health insurance individually, and for any accompanying family members for the duration of the agreed upon length of the visit.
- The scholar may also be asked to contribute their expertise in translating materials and furthering NMU's internationalization efforts.

- Establish housing which may or may not be on NMU's campus. Visitors will be provided with access to Northern Michigan University housing information. Visiting scholars are responsible for securing housing arrangements for themselves, and any accompanying family members. This includes education placement needs for school age family members. The faculty mentor may be available to assist the scholar in finding housing.

Services

A visiting scholar at Northern Michigan University will be assigned the service title of Visiting Scholar without pay. It is important to note that a visiting scholar is not paid and does not hold an official academic appointment either in a specific Department or at the University in general.

A visiting scholar:

- Is assigned office space (which may be shared) with access to a computer and printer (if available).
- Is given free reading and borrowing privileges in the University library.
- May purchase photocopying services at the University library.
- May attend the NMU English Language Institute Program (upon payment of tuition).
- May attend courses on a non-credit basis with instructor approval.
- Purchase a Parking Permit at cost (if applicable)
- May use University recreational facilities upon payment of fees.
- NOTE: Budget and staffing limitations may prohibit access to the following services: copying on department equipment, long distance telephone calls and support staff or graduate student assistance.

Summary Steps for International Scholar Application

1. Identify and contact faculty mentor within host department
2. Complete and submit application material to academic department head
 - Provide a CV (in English)
 - Recommendation letter from an administrator at the scholar's home institution that outlines current position, current teaching/research/administrative responsibilities, highest degree achieved and funding)
 - Scope (purpose) of visit
 - Provide the recommended certification of finances for the scholar and all dependents.
3. The host department head and college Dean reviews application with the faculty mentor and the department faculty. A Skype (or other online media) interview with the applicant may be

required. The final decision rests with the department head (however departmental faculty must support the request), the college Dean and the Provost.

4. If approved, a formal letter of invitation is sent by email to the applicant from the department head. The original letter of invitation along with a copy of the application and all supporting document must be sent to the International Education Services Office for processing of DS 2019.

5. Upon receipt of the letter of invitation, the applicant contacts NMU's International Education Services office to obtain the necessary documentation for a visa application (The J-1 exchange visitor non-immigrant visa category is the status most commonly used by international visiting scholars. For more information: <http://j1visa.state.gov/basics/>).

6. Visa application submitted to US authorities.

7. Once a visa is obtained the applicant makes travel arrangements and arranges housing. The faculty mentor can be contacted for assistance with identifying housing.

Department Responsibilities Prior to the Visiting Scholar's Arrival on Campus

1. Provide a campus wide announcement of the visiting scholar's arrival (e.g. Campus Connect). Include information about the scholar's focus and purpose (research) for visiting our campus.
2. Assure transportation from the airport is made upon the Visiting Scholar's arrival.

Exit Interview

An exit interview with the Department Head and hosting department should occur prior to the Visiting Scholar's at the conclusion of their visit.

Examples of Faculty Mentor Expectations

- Housing
- Food/Restaurant Options
- Arrangements from airport
- Campus Tour
- Processing paperwork ie: access, ID card, parking etc.
- Update Department Head/Dean on status/progress of program
- Liaison for multi-disciplinary collaborative research
- Assistance setting up the household i.e. showing the visiting scholar where grocery stores are etc.