

TECHNOLOGY ALERT LIST & VISA DELAYS

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**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING & VISA DELAYS DUE TO TECHNOLOGY ALERT LIST**

Scholars who will conduct research or teach in STEM fields, especially those that are related to the fields on the Technology Alert List (TAL) can expect lengthy delays for their visa issuance due to background checks known as Administrative Processing. While the current version of the TAL is not available to the public, an older version of the TAL gives a list of 15 categories that are subject to clearance, which provides helpful guidance in preparation.

It is important to note that a scholar does not have to be conducting research in a field that is on this list to be subject to Administrative Processing clearance. If the Consular Officer feels that the field of research or teaching is possibly related to one of the 15 fields below, the scholar will have to provide additional information to obtain clearance prior to issuance of a visa. It is important that departments in STEM fields help their scholars by providing an additional support letter to clarify what the scholar’s research or teaching area is and whether or not it relates to any of the fields on the TAL list below. A sample support letter is provided.

**TECHNOLOGY ALERT LIST FIELDS (FROM DOS cable 2002 State 147566 - October 18, 2002)**

1. **Conventional Munitions** – including weaponry, countermeasures systems, and detection
2. **Nuclear Technology** – including peaceful and military applications and theoretical usage
3. **Rocket Systems** – including ballistic missile systems, space launch vehicles, and sounding rockets
4. **Rocket System and Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV) Subsystems** – propulsion technologies, aerospace thermal and high-performance structures, superalloys
5. **Navigation, Avionics and Flight Control Useable In Rocket Systems and Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV)** – internal navigation systems, tracking and homing devices, accelerometers, gyroscopes, flight control systems, GPS
6. **Chemical, Biotechnology and Biomedical Engineering** – including many dual-use technology in areas such as: aerobiology, biochemistry, pharmacology, immunology, virology, bacteriology, mycology, microbiology, pathology, toxicology, genetic engineering, pathogenecity research, organo-phosphate chemistry, neurochemistry, chemical engineering, neurology, immunology, etc.
7. **Remote Sensing, Imaging and Reconnaissance** – including work with satellite and aircraft remote sensing equipment that can be used for civilian imagery projects or for military/intelligence reconnaissance activities
8. **Advanced Computer/Microelectronic Technology** – including supercomputing, data fusion, acoustic wave devices, hybrid computing, superconductivity, etc.
9. **Materials Technology** – work with metallic, ceramic, composite, and synthetic materials
10. **Information Security** – technology related to cryptography and cryptographic systems
11. **Laser and Directed Energy Systems Technology** –lasers, optical tracking, directed and kinetic energy technology
12. **Sensors and Sensor Technology** – marine acoustics, optical sensors, magnetometers, image intensification devices
13. **Marine Technology** – tech associated with submarines, propulsion systems, navigation, and quieting systems
14. **Robotics** – tech associated with AI, automation, computer-controlled machine tools, pattern recognition tech
15. **Urban Planning** – architecture, civil engineering, community development, environmental planning, geography, housing, landscape architecture, land use and comprehensive planning, urban design

**TECHNOLOGY ALERT LIST LETTER**

**FOR SCHOLARS IN STEM FIELDS**

**[please Print on DEPARTMENTAL LETTERHEAD]**

**[provide scholar with your CV and publications list]**

Dear Consular Officer:

I write on behalf of The University of Alabama regarding SCHOLAR’S NAME, who has been hired by the DEPARTMENT’S NAME to CONDUCT RESEARCH/TEACH.  I will serve as SCHOLAR’S NAME’s supervisor. I am a professor and the Department Chair of the DEPARTMENT NAME, having been employed at The University of Alabama for \_\_\_ years.

SCHOLAR’S NAME is scheduled to begin RESEARCH/TEACHING in our department on DATE.   HIS/HER RESEARCH/TEACHING duties will include LIST RESEARCH FOCUS/TITLES OF COURSES TO BE TAUGHT.

SCHOLAR’S NAME’s expertise is in FIELD OF EXPERTISE, and HE/SHE will CONDUCT RESEARCH/TEACH related to that expertise.

Included with this letter are:

1. a general RESEARCH PLAN/TEACHING SCHEDULE for SCHOLAR’S NAME and
2. my CV and Publication List.

Neither SCHOLAR’S NAME’s RESEARCH/TEACHING, which are intended for public dissemination, nor HIS/HER field of expertise are found on the Critical Fields List of the Technology Alert List and HIS/HER work will not involve matters of national security.  As the State Department has recognized, information in the public domain (*e.g.*, widely available to the public), and information presented in an academic course or intended for publication generally is not controlled for U.S. technology transfer control purposes.

We respectfully request that SCHOLAR’S NAME’s visa application be reviewed as expeditiously as possible and that an H-1B visa be granted.

Please contact me at EMAIL ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT CHAIR