OUTSTANDING PROFESSORS AND RESEARCHERS
DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

The following are the basic requirements for qualification under this category:

1. **an offer of employment for a tenured or tenure-track position, or a comparable “permanent” research position.** USCIS defines a “permanent” position as one that is “for a term of indefinite or unlimited duration, and in which the employee will ordinarily have an expectation of continued employment unless there is good cause for termination.” Visiting and employee-in-training appointments are not considered permanent.

2. **three years of teaching and/or research experience in the academic field, generally beyond the Ph.D.**

3. **international recognition as being "outstanding" in the academic field.** Specific documentary requirements to establish international recognition will be discussed on the following pages.

PART I. BASIC DOCUMENTATION
The following documentation should be submitted as a packet to IFSS. Please do not submit sections separately. All documentation in Part I is required. In Part II, the foreign scholar must show evidence from at least two of the categories.

1. **I-140 Form, signed in blue ink by department chair or hiring authority.** See worksheet in this packet. Scholar's family members should be included on Form I-140 if they also will be applying for permanent residence. The $580 filing fee should be submitted after the IFSS review is complete and the petition is ready to be sent to USCIS. The scholar is responsible for paying the fee, not the department.

2. **Evidence of an offer of a tenured or tenure-track position, or a "permanent" research position.** (See above definition of a “permanent” research position under “basic requirements.”) Submit a copy of the signed offer letter from the Dean or the academic department offering the foreign scholar a tenured or tenure-track position, or a position in the Researcher or Scientist series. For research positions, prepare a letter attesting to the permanent nature of the position (see instructions in the packet).

3. **Department’s summary letter of the foreign scholar’s qualifications and the evidence presented.** The letter should explain in detail the importance of each piece of evidence. See enclosed instructions.
4. **Evidence of at least three years of experience in the academic field.** Experience in teaching or research while working on an advanced degree will only be acceptable if the scholar has acquired the degree and "if the teaching duties were such that he or she had full responsibility for the class taught, or if the research conducted toward the degree has been recognized within the academic field as outstanding." (USCIS regulations) As this is difficult to demonstrate and USCIS has consistently rejected such claims, it is generally better to wait until the scholar has the required three years of post-degree work experience.

   a. **Letters from current and/or former employers.** Include the name, address, title of the writer and a specific description of the duties performed by the foreign scholar. If all or part of the three years of experience was obtained through employment by the sponsoring academic Department, this information may be included in the letter documenting the required three years of experience. See sample.

   b. **Copy of Ph.D. or highest degree obtained.** Submit photocopy only, with certified English translation if in a foreign language. See translation guidelines. If the field of study does not appear on the face of the diploma, a copy of the transcript will be needed.

   c. **Curriculum Vita.** Submit current CV or resume. Include education, employment experience, memberships in professional associations, awards and other information from Categories A - F listed below. Include complete list of publications and conference presentations.

5. **Support Letters.** Submit support letters from recognized experts in the scholar's academic field. See “Instructions for Support Letters” and follow carefully.

6. **Completed Department Request to Sponsor Employee for U.S. Permanent Residence, the completed and signed Dean’s or Director’s Authorization and Beneficiary Information forms.**

**II. DOCUMENTATION OF "OUTSTANDING" QUALIFICATIONS**

Evidence of the foreign scholar's qualifications in at least two of the following areas must also be presented. Most University applicants under this category submit documentation in three or four areas. However, it is much better to submit very strong documentation in only two areas than to pad the application with marginal documentation that only serves to weaken the application. In addition, the USCIS requires explanations of the significance of the documentation submitted, and how it demonstrates the individual's international recognition as outstanding in the field.
USCIS wants proof that the applicant is **individually recognized internationally as being outstanding**. Although they realize that much academic research is carried out in groups, the applicant must stand out from the other members of the group as individually outstanding on an international level.

**A:** Receipt of major prizes or awards for outstanding achievement in the academic field. The awards must be national or international, not local, and not be academic scholarships or grants. The applicant must have received the award, not just have been nominated. Submit photocopies of prizes or awards. Include evidence of the reputation of the organization granting the award, the significance of the award, and the criteria used to select the recipient.

**B:** Membership in associations in the academic field which require outstanding achievements of their members. Outstanding achievements must be an essential condition for membership, not just activity in a particular field. Similarly, the prestige of the association does not count unless outstanding achievements are one of the criteria for membership. Submit photocopies of membership certificates, letters of nomination, or letters from associations. Include a description of the association’s mission and the requirements which must be met for membership, such as by-laws of the organization or a letter of explanation.

**C:** Published material in professional publications written by others about the scholar’s work in the academic field. According to the USCIS Nebraska Service Center, "an unevaluated listing in a subject matter index or footnote, or a reference to the work without evaluation is insufficient." They require published material in national or international professional journals written by others (not past or present colleagues) about the applicant which specifically name the applicant. Submit photocopies of cover pages of publications and pages where the scholar’s name appears, including footnotes, with title and date of publication. Please highlight the scholar’s name on all pages where it appears. Document the impact of the journal(s).

**D:** Evidence of the scholar’s participation, either individually or on a panel, as the judge of the work of others in the same or an allied academic field. The applicant’s acclaim should be the reason for being selected, not just because it’s a routine part of the job. The judging must be on a national or international level of other accomplished professionals for peer-reviewed journals or government agencies, not the supervision of PhD. candidates. The requests must be frequent, not occasional; the applicant’s opinion must be regularly sought. Submit photocopies of lists of editors, letters requesting review of publications, thank you letters, etc. Please highlight foreign scholar’s name where it appears. Explain the criteria for selection as a panelist, reviewer, etc., such as widespread recognition or outstanding achievements in the field.

**E:** Evidence of the scholar’s original scientific or scholarly research contributions to the academic field. The evidence must show that the scholar is not just competent, but
rather is significantly superior to others in the field. Submit a complete list of professional presentations, patents, etc. Include date, place, lists of speakers, criteria for selection, photocopies of invitations, conference papers, etc. Please highlight foreign scholar's name where it appears. Include evidence of the importance of such contributions, as well as the significance of the particular conference or event, to the field. According to the USCIS Nebraska Service Center, "evidence that those outside the scholar's circle of colleagues and acquaintances consider the work important is especially valuable."

F: Evidence of the scholar's authorship of scholarly books or articles (in scholarly journals with international circulation) in the academic field. This carries little weight if publication is a normal part of the job. The publications should be in some of the most prestigious journals and be widely cited by independent researchers. Submit a complete list of publications. Submit photocopies of title page and/or first page of publication showing title of article/book, title of journal, date, volume, authorship. Please highlight the foreign scholar's name where it appears as author. It is important to explain the significance to the field of the publications in which they appeared, its circulation, and process for selection of articles.

The support letters should address the relevant categories of evidence. Highlight the section in the letter that pertains to a particular category and include it under the category, along with the other evidence. See “instructions for Support Letters,”

TRANSLATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS GUIDELINES

Translations:
Translations do not need to be done by a professional translating service, nor do they need to be notarized. They should be accompanied by a statement from the translator indicating his/her qualifications for doing the translation. The foreign scholar or immediate family members should NOT do the translation. The translator must sign and date the translation and state on its face: “I certify that I am competent to translate (name of language) into English and this is an accurate translation of the original.”

Publications:
DOL and USCIS do not need the complete publications. They merely want proof that the individual has publications in the relevant field. Any publications that are not in English must be accompanied by a translation. We therefore suggest submitting the following:

Articles: copy of only the first page, showing the name, date, and volume number of the journal, the foreign scholar’s name and the title of the paper.

Books: copy the cover page of the book, showing the title, author’s name, and the table of contents of the book.

Chapter in a book: cover page of book, as above, with the first page of the chapter.
Conference presentation: cover page and table of contents of the conference bulletin, and abstract of the paper presented.

For each publication copy, please highlight the foreign scholar’s name wherever it appears on the page.

OPR.doc 11/2012