

International Scholar System – ISC Online



Invite.

Accept.

Process.

Welcome.

"The ISC online system has been an effective avenue in processing visa applications more effectively and timely. I believe one of the most important features of the system is the capability to keep those involved (visa scholar, department administrator, and ISC administrator) connected through automated messages and the routing tool. The system also contributes to the campus sustainability efforts in that it eliminates the need for paper copies."

--- Camthi Pham, Analyst, Botany & Plant Sciences

Campus Impact

This completely online system streamlines and simplifies the process of inviting an International Scholar to the campus. Valuable time, money, and effort are saved using ISC Online. The complete process is tracked, beginning with inviting a scholar to the campus and ending in the scholars' close of stay - organized in a stream lined, easy to use, secure site, for the scholars, department administrators, and system administrators.

The International Scholar Center online system (ISC Online) aids departments that apply for non-immigrant visas for UCR employees or international researchers.

As the number of international scholars increases at UCR, the ISC Online system will scale to meet the needs of campus departments who are struggling with larger workloads and fewer resources.

The comprehensive nature of the ISC Online development effort resulted in a tool that is a recruitment vehicle as well as an important financial control & monitoring application.

Why ISC Online?

ISC Online:

- Provides completely paperless creation, routing, reviews, and approvals of departmental visa requests.
- Processes new visas, extension of visas, and legal permanent residency (LRP) requests.
- Handles credit card and FAU payment transactions in a hassle-free way.
- Automatically sends messages and alerts to all parties involved.
- Eliminates common errors made by administrators and scholars.
- Tracks the status of the scholar through his or her entire duration on campus.

Highlights

- ***One Campus-wide System – Invitation information & processing is completed through one single system.***
- ***Real-Time Tracking & Reporting*** – Department and system administrators have access to updates via real-time reporting on the number of applicants, submitted application statuses, services reviewed by month or fund group, generated payment reports in periods, and the number of cases processed by service. When a scholar is close to status expiration indication of proximity is shown by color codes.
- ***Single Sign-On and Integrated Enterprise Access*** – Campus faculty & staff access ISC Online via UCR's campus portal (R'Space), with single-sign on integration & roles controlled via UCR's Enterprise Access Control System (EACS). New scholars use an email and credentials sent via the system to access ISC Online.
- ***Completely Online Review*** – Campus faculty & staff review and provide comment on the entire application file, including all supporting documents, online, simultaneously and from anywhere in the world.
- ***Intelligent Online Application*** – Departments and scholars complete the entire submission process online through a dynamic, user-responsive web interface and submit information and documents instantaneously, including payment using a major credit card.
- ***Visa Types*** – The system provides J-1 visa applications and extensions, H-1B visa applications and extensions, and other visas for easy selection. The International

Scholars Center can update these selections and add new entries.

- **Flexible Electronic Routing** – Departments route applicant files amongst program constituents and to/from UCR's International Scholar Center instantaneously, based on EACS role assignments. Administrators can immediately route for approval, enabling fast decisions, billing, payments, etc.
- **Payment Process** – Departments allocate fees based on the visa type (fee schedules are maintained in the system) and scholars pay fees using a major credit card. Departments pay for services via FAU using UCR's Web Recharge system.
- **User Roles** (the login panel is slightly varied to suit each role's specific needs):
 - **Department Administrator** – Can invite a scholar or extend an existing visa, can add billing information for an invitation. (Defined by EACS)
 - **Scholar** – Can provide personal information online. He/she can also make a payment online. (Defined by ISC Online)
 - **Department Approver** – Can review an invitation and approve or reject the invitation. (Defined by EACS)
 - **ISC Administrator** – Can add services for a scholar, bill department/scholar online and process a scholar's visa/LRP request. (Defined by ISC Online)
 - **Financial Analyst** – Can set up monthly budget, view reports and reconcile a credit card payment. (Defined by ISC Online)

The Process: Technology and Implementation

The International Scholars Center (ISC) partnered with Computing & Communications (C&C) to create a new online international scholars application and request processing system. The system enables departments to enter international scholar requests online, allows scholars to provide additional information via the web, provides a mechanism for estimating visa and other costs, includes online approvals, and is completely integrated with UCR's financial system and credit card gateway.

The application was first piloted by Botany and Plant Sciences, and then expanded to six more departments, leading to the Financial Systems Steering Committee's sponsorship.

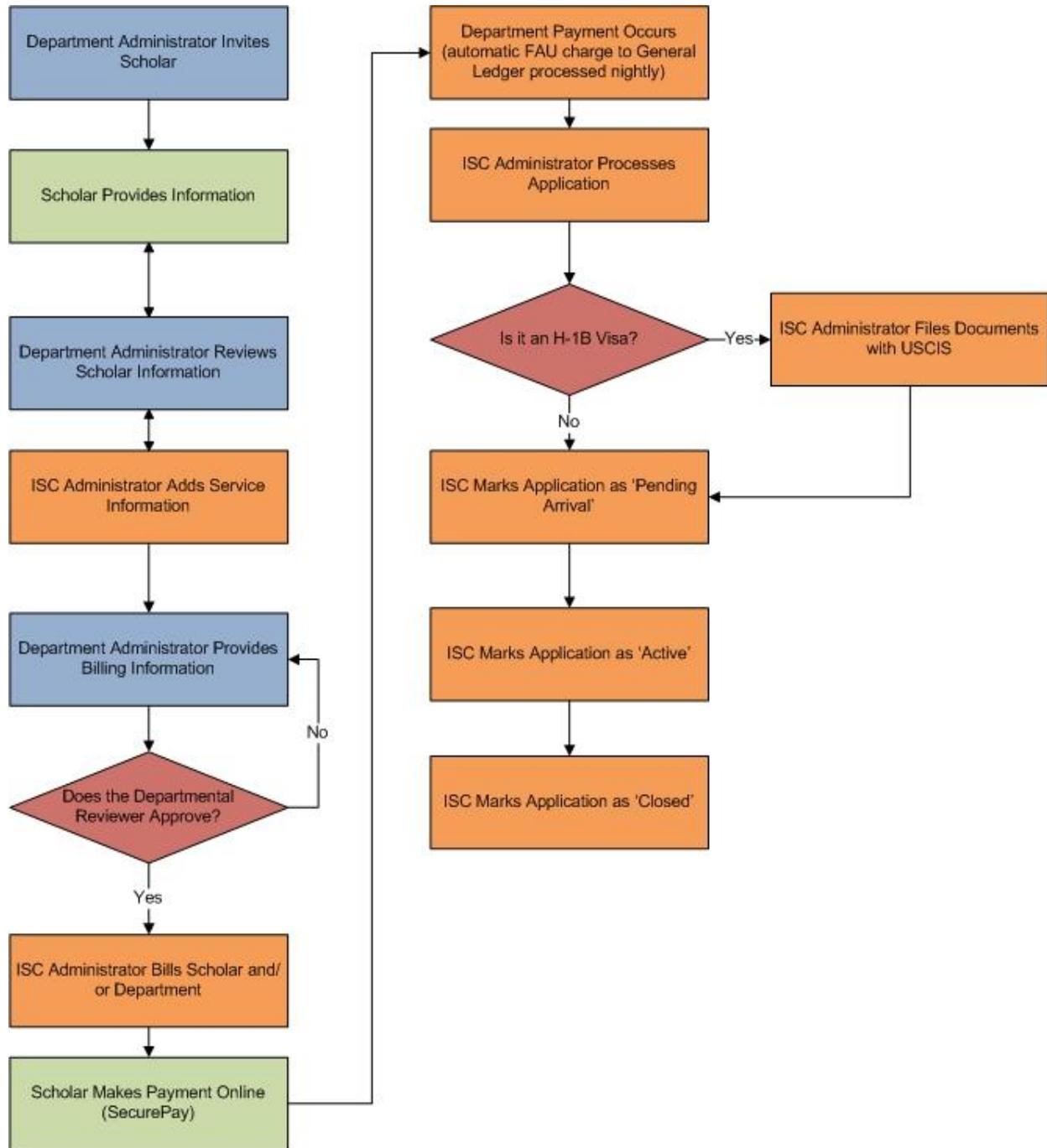
Technical Highlights:

- ISC Online utilizes UCR's standard Oracle/Solaris enterprise platform.
- ISC Online provides exceptional user and data security using Central Authentication Services (CAS) for user authentication, the Enterprise Access Control System (EACS)

for authorization, and SSL for data transmission.

- ISC Online facilitates department payment by sharing data with the UCR Web Recharge System, allowing departments to pay by multiple FAUs and providing a receipt.
- ISC Online uses UCR's enterprise routing & workflow engine, the Enterprise Access Control System (EACS) to establish and maintain user authorization.
- ISC Online makes extensive use of web services to communicate financial information with the UCR Financial System and SecurePay.
- The system uses template-based automated email notifications that can be modified to include additional information before they are sent (e.g. to add personalization to each case). Each email notification is stored and logged in the system and administrators can view the contents of each email message that has been sent during the entire process.
- ISC Online provides for export of information to MS Excel for reporting purposes. The system provides 7 different reports:
 - Current Active Visiting Scholars, Visa Type, Appointment End Date
 - Cases, Services provided, and Revenue Year-to-Date
 - Cases, Services provided, and Revenue by Month
 - Cases, Services provided, and Revenue by Visa Type
 - Revenue by Fund Group
 - Comparison of Cases by Month and Year
 - Transaction Search and Payment Reconciliation

“ISC Online” Routing Flow Chart



Testimonials

"As someone whose job entails processing visa application requests on a regular basis, I have both seen and benefited from the improved efficiencies provided by the International Scholar System. I no longer have to spend time contacting various individuals to determine what stage a request is at any given time, I now can view the information online in real-time. In addition, the system-generated email messages keep me updated on a regular basis regarding the status of the request and the next steps. Another notable feature is the billing side of the system that allows charges to post to the general ledgers overnight. This has eliminated several manual steps in the billing process and has reduced the opportunity for human error."

--- Jasmine Mejia, Payroll/Personnel Specialist, Botany & Plant Sciences

"One of the best features of the ISC Online system is the History tab which contains copies of all emails that were sent via the system and a full history of each step in the visa application process from end to end. This feature provides transparency for ISC Administrators as well as Departmental Administrators. Prior to the launch of ISC Online, collecting information regarding the history of a visa application request involved sorting through emails, reviewing paper files and making phone calls to individuals involved in the process. Now the same information is available at-a-glance 24/7 via ISC Online."

--- Antonette Toney, Data Manager, Office of Academic Personnel

"The ISC Online system has been an effective avenue in processing visa applications more effectively and timely. I believe one of the most important features of the system is the capability to keep those involved (visa scholar, department administrator, and ISC administrator) connected through automated messages and the routing tool. The system also contributes to the campus sustainability efforts in that it eliminates the need for paper copies."

--- Camthi Pham, Payroll/Personnel Assistant, Botany & Plant Sciences

"ISC Online is truly a well thought-out and designed piece of technology. This case management system has significantly helped the International Scholar Center process visa requests more efficiently as well as helped our office tremendously in organizing data."

"I like the fact that instead of having to pull a physical file to review email correspondence, receipt notice data, etc., we are able to pull up the same details on ISC Online. It has allowed

ISC to be much more efficient and it has been a huge time-saver. It is quickly leading to an efficient method to track the status of cases."

"In addition, ISC Online has cut down the time it takes to process applications, especially with the template creation options, email and letter generation tools. However, I believe one of the best features is that it has automated the billing process making it almost effortless and error free. "

"This system effectively streamlines the entire visa process, completely organizes ISC's case information, keeping every document and activity at our fingertips."

--- Kimberly Gentile, Manager and Senior Scholar Advisor, International Scholars Center

"We immediately partnered with Computing & Communications to develop the new system, which would include both programmatic and financial components in a seamless integration. It also included a reengineering of the ISC processes to make them more efficient and effective. Finally, the system was integrated with the campus financial system to allow for even more automation."

"The result is a superb system that facilitates the process of bringing international scholars to our campus. It also is saving huge amounts of time and effort by analysts involved with the financial aspects of the operation. Until the system was deployed, manual Non-Payroll Cost Transfers (NCTs) had to be processed in order to adequately track and monitor financial activity related to the scholars' visas. About 1,400 NCTs were transacted in FY2009/10, or about 115 per month. These were time consuming, wasting numerous analyst hours. Now, the system classifies transactions properly, integrates automated recharges for department payments, and creates several standard reports that save vast amounts of time."

"The International Scholar Center On-Line system is a fantastic addition to the other magnificent information systems developed and implemented by the UCR Computing & Communications organization."

--- Karim H. Zahedi, Executive Officer, Office of the Chancellor and EVC/Provost

Timeline

December 2008	Project Initiation
May 2010	Production Pilot with Botany and Plant Sciences
August 2010	Pilot expanded to six additional departments
October 2011	Open houses and informational sessions
March 2011	Deployment and announcement to campus

On the Web

Production site: <http://isc.ucr.edu/ischolars/home>

Support site: <http://cnc.ucr.edu/isc/>

Team Members

Computing & Communications

Eric Martin
Nasser Solomon
Jack Cui

UCR International Scholar Center & Partners

Antonette Toney
Suzan Dockery
Kimberly Gentile
Carmen Pinheiro
Shirley Chia
Karim Zahedi
Jasmine Mejia
Camthi Pham

Submitted By

Eric Martin
Project Manager
Enterprise Application Development
Computing & Communications
University of California, Riverside
eric@ucr.edu
(951) 827-6424