

**PRACTICAL TRAINING INFORMATION**

Practical training may be authorized to an F-1 student who has been lawfully enrolled on a full time basis, in a Service- approved college, university, conservatory, or seminary for one full academic year. This provision also includes students who, during their course of study, were enrolled in a study abroad program, if the student had spent at least one full academic term enrolled in a full course of study in the United States prior to studying abroad. A student may be authorized 12 months of practical training, and becomes eligible for another 12 months of practical training when he or she changes to a higher educational level. Students in English language training programs are ineligible for practical training. An eligible student may request employment authorization for practical training in a position that is directly related to his or her major area of study. There are two types of practical training available:

**Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

An F-1 student may be authorized by the DSO to participate in a curricular practical training program that is an integral part of an established curriculum. Curricular practical training is defined to be alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school. Students who have received one year or more of full time curricular practical training are ineligible for post-completion academic training. Exceptions to the one academic year requirement are provided for students enrolled in graduate studies that require immediate participation in curricular practical training. A request for authorization for curricular practical training must be made to the DSO. A student may begin curricular practical training only after receiving his or her Form I-20 with the DSO endorsement. Curricular Practical Training does not have the same 12 month limit, however, it is restricted to work that is demonstrably integral to the curriculum i.e. some experience to give the student specific skills as part of their degree program. This rarely applies to programs in the Business and Management or theology department, so CPT is not relevant to School of Business and Management, School of Theology, or Master of Oriental Medicine students. A student need to find the job first, then apply for CPT (a job offer letter from employer is required).

**Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment authorization that gives F-1 students an opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to a practical work experience off campus. You may use some or all of the available 12 months of practical training during your course of study or save the full twelve months to use after you complete your studies. Authorization for optional practical training is granted by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) – formerly known as the Immigration and Naturalization Service or INS - and can take at least 90 days and frequently up to 120 days to obtain. It is important that you apply for the authorization at the earliest possible date.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

You must have been a full-time student for at least one academic year preceding the submission of your OPT application. You must also maintain a valid F-1 status at the time of your application and intend to work in a position directly related to your major field of study.

# OPT APPLICATION & APPROVAL PROCESS

A student must initiate the OPT application process by first requesting a recommendation for OPT from his/her designated school official (DSO). Upon making the recommendation, the DSO will provide the student with a signed I-20 form indicating that recommendation.

The student must properly file a Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization) with USCIS and the required fee for the Form I-765 and the supporting documentation, as described in the form's instructions.

## FILING DEADLINES FOR PRE-COMPLETION & POST-COMPLETION OPT

Students may file a Form I-765 for pre-completion OPT up to 90 days before being enrolled for one full academic year, provided that the period of employment will not start prior to the completion of the full academic year.

For post-completion OPT, the student must properly file his or her Form I-765 up to 90 days **prior to his or her program end-date and no later than 60 days after his or her program end-date**. The student must also file the Form I-765 with USCIS within 30 days of the date the DSO enters the recommendation of OPT into his or her SEVIS record.

## PRE- VS. POST-COMPLETION OPT

WHEN EMPLOYMENT OCCURS	HOURS PER WEEK	COMMENTS
<b>Summer Break (Pre-Completion)</b>	There is no minimum or maximum hours per week a student is required to work on pre-completion OPT.	The amount of time you use for pre-completion OPT will be deducted from your 12-month allowance. Part-time OPT is deducted from the 12 month limit at 50%. For example, if you work part-time for 4 months, only 2 months will be deducted. You will retain 10 months to use at another time.
<b>Fall, Winter, or Spring Quarter (Pre-completion)</b>	Must not exceed 20 hours per week.	Students on Pre-completion OPT are not eligible for STEM Extension OPT or the H1B cap gap extension.
<b>After degree completion (Post-completion)</b>	Students must work an average of 20 hours per week during post-completion OPT to be considered employed and to maintain F-1 status.	No more than 3 months of unemployment are allowed during the 12-month post-completion OPT period.

## TERMINATION

Authorization to engage in optional practical training employment is automatically terminated when the student transfers to another school or begins study at another educational level.

# REPORTING WHILE ON OPTIONAL TRAINING

An F-1 student who is authorized by USCIS to engage in optional practical training (OPT) employment is required to report any change of name or address, or interruption of such employment to the DSO for the duration of the optional practical training. **Within 10 days of the change**, the student must report to the student's DSO a change of legal name, residential or mailing address, employer name, employer address, and/or loss of employment.

## FILING DIRECTIONS

If you believe you are eligible for OPT and would benefit from practical training in your field of study, request a recommendation for OPT from an international student advisor who is a Designated School Official (DSO) at school. Your DSO must first recommend you for OPT in SEVIS and provide you with an updated Form I-20 showing the recommendation. You will submit that Form I-20 with the application for employment authorization.

1. Submit the Optional Practical Training Request Form to the International Student Advisor. You will be contacted whether or not your request is approved.

2. If you are approved for OPT, please prepare the following materials:

- Complete the Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization. The Form I-765 and instructions are available on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Web site ([www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)) under Immigration Forms.
- Form I-94 (photocopy of both sides)
- Valid passport - photocopy of photo page, renewal page if original has expired, and pages showing amendments such as name changes, corrections, etc.
- Visa (if applicable)
- Photocopies of all Forms I-20 you have been issued
- Photocopies of any previous employment authorization documents (EAD)
- Two identical photographs (photograph instructions are found on the Form I-765 instructions under Required Documentation)
- \$380 fee (check or Money Order payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security)

Once you have all the application materials ready, please come to the International Student office to make an appointment with an International Student Advisor. Please **do not** submit any materials to the International Student office in advance.