



THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL INITIATIVES D'YOUVILLE ACADEMIC CENTER SUITE 219

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

If you would like to get work experience in your major field of study this summer or after you complete your studies, you should apply for Optional Practical Training employment authorization from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) *early!* **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO HAVE A JOB OFFER TO APPLY FOR OPT!** Applications are available on-line.

PRE-COMPLETION OPT

- **During the semester (up to 20 hours a week)**
- **During annual vacation periods(summer and winter break)**
- **After completion of all course requirements for the degree while working on the thesis or dissertation(full time only)**

POST-COMPLETION OPT

- **For after completion of study (full time only)**
- **If you have travel plans after school ends, your OPT must be authorized by USCIS BEFORE you leave the country. We are unable to endorse your Form I-20 for reentry until your EAD card is issued.** You will need your EAD Card, endorsed I-20 and a letter from an employer to return to the U.S. Do not leave the United States until you have secured employment.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT F-1 OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is off-campus employment authorization that lets F-1 students get work experience in their major field of study. The amount of work you are permitted is a maximum of 12 months of full-time employment for each higher

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educational level you pursue in the U.S. You can use it during or after your studies. You can work for any employer, anywhere in the country.

Think of it as an OPT bank account! In that account are 12 months of full-time optional practical training for your current program of study. Let's say you'd like to work full-time for three months after your sophomore (second) year in your bachelor's degree. That's a three-month withdrawal of full-time employment, leaving you 9 months left to spend during your bachelor's degree. During your junior year, you decide to work part-time (less than 20 hours a week) for two semesters or nine months. Since part-time employment counts at half the full-time rate, you've made a withdrawal of four and a half months of full-time employment. This leaves you with four and a half months of full-time employment still in your account to use after you graduate.

If you decide to spend all of your OPT after you complete your degree, you must request all of it at once, that is the full year. You cannot use it in pieces.

If you decide to go on for your Master's degree after completing your OPT for your Bachelor's, your bank account will be full again with another 12 months available to you!

HOW CAN IT BE USED?

- Summer vacation – either part-time or full-time employment
- During the school year-Only part time employment is allowed
- After completing all requirements for the course of study – full-time employment only.

HOW CAN YOU QUALIFY FOR IT?

- You are currently in valid F-1 status
- You have been a full time student for at least one full academic year(2 semesters)
- You **cannot** already have used 12 months of full-time Curricular Practical Training.

HOW DO YOU APPLY?

- Download the application on-line from the ISO website
- After assembling all the necessary documentation, please contact the CGI at 716-829-8119 or at petryshl@dyc.edu to schedule an appointment
- After your application has been reviewed by the CGI a new form I-20 will be issued with the OPT recommendation
- You will mail the application certified mail return receipt requested

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HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

It will take about two to three months for your EAD (Employment Authorization Document) to be returned to us from USCIS. It could take less or more depending on their workload.

It's important to take USCIS processing time into consideration when planning the date you want to start working! **You cannot begin to work until you have your EAD Card!!**

How can you extend your OPT?

You can extend Before-completion of studies by filing another application. You may not continue to work until it has been authorized by USCIS.

After-completion OPT **cannot** be extended. You must apply for the full amount of time remaining in your 12-month bank account. You will, however, be entitled to another 12-month period of OPT if you go on to a higher level of study.

For those students who qualify for the 24 month STEM extension please download the STEM OPT forms from the ISO website.

Study and after-completion OPT

Immigration regulations state that, "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." Therefore, you should not continue your U.S. studies until after your OPT has ended.

Do not start working until USCIS authorizes your employment and you have your EAD card!

APPLICATION FOR F-1 OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

1. COMPLETE THE ATTACHED APPLIACATION FORMS:

✓ OPT Request Form:

Item #1: Personal and Program Information. Please note that we recommend that you apply for OPT 90 days prior to your program completion to allow time for USCIS to process your application.

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NOTE: The latest date you can apply for OPT is 60 days after your course of study completion date.

Note: Your application must be received by USCIS Service Center within 30 days of the issuance of your I-20 with the OPT recommendation and DSO signature

Item #2: Indicate what type of OPT you are applying for and the dates you want to work. Tell us how much of your 12-month OPT benefit you have already used for this program, if any.

Item #3: Describe how your proposed employment for practical training is directly related to your major and appropriate for your level of education. Take time to do this carefully. Do not say, that you are seeking an entry-level job in your major..

✓ **Form I-765:** Application for employment authorization (pick up application in the CGI).

Complete items 1-18:

Item #3: Address. We have entered the address of our office, so that we may track the processing of your application.

Item#9: Social Security Number: Only enter a US social security number if you have already received one

Item #10 – A-Number or I-94 Number: Put your I-94 number unless CIS has previously assigned you an alien registration number.

Item #11 – If you have ever applied for hardship or optional practical training employment before, answer yes, where and when you applied, whether it was granted or denied and attach a photocopy of any EAD card issued for it.

Item #16- Before Completion of Studies (c)(3)(a)
After Completion of Studies (c)(3)(b)
Stem OPT (c)(3)(c)

Item #17: Only fill in if you are applying for a STEM Extension

Your certification – Sign, put your telephone number and the date.

2. ATTACH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS TO YOUR APPLICATION:

- ✓ **Two identical natural color U.S. passport size photographs of yourself, taken within 30 days. Print in pencil your I-94# on the back**
- ✓ **Forms I-20.** Photocopies of all previous Forms I-20 issued by us and other schools you have attended.

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- ✓ **Photocopy of any previous EAD Card(s).**
- ✓ **Photocopy of Form I-94 (both sides if paper based)**
- ✓ **If you received the electronic I-94 visit <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/consent.html> and print a copy**
- ✓ **Photocopies of your passport identification pages, and visa.**
- ✓ **OPT recommendation form filled out by your Academic Advisor**
- ✓ **\$410US Fee in the form of a check or money order. Make it payable to the Department of Homeland Security. If you are using a personal check, it must have your name and address on it(and it must be drawn from a US institution).**
- ✓ **Please make a photocopy of your entire application for your records**
- ✓ **Please make an appointment with the Center for Global Initiatives after assembling all application materials(Petryshl@dyc.edu)**

INFORMATION ABOUT APPLICATION PROCESSING

- 1) **If we determine that you qualify for Optional Practical Training Employment authorization, we will issue you a new Form I-20 with our recommendation on it.**
- 2) **After you have signed your new I-20, you will send your application to USCIS, certified mail, return receipt requested.**

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:

USCIS PO Box 660867

Dallas, TX 75266

or

For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS

Attn: AOS

2501 S. State Hwy.

1221 Business Suite 400

Lewisville, TX 75067

USCIS will communicate with our office about your application. If they request additional information, we will contact you. If your application is approved the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will be sent here and we will contact you to come in and pick it up.

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- 3) If you have filled out the Form G-1145, you will receive e-notification of the status of your OPT application (this form will be given to you at your OPT appointment)
- 4) You cannot begin working until you have received your EAD Card.

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING REQUEST FORM

1. PERSONAL AND PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Local address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

SEVIS ID # _____

Degree Program _____

Expected Date of Completion of Studies: _____

2. WHAT KIND OF OPT ARE YOU APPLYING FOR?

Before Completion of Studies:

- Full-time.** Only available during vacation periods or if you have completed all of your coursework except for comprehensives, thesis, or dissertation.

STARTING ON _____ AND ENDING _____.

- Part-time.** (Less than 20 hours a week)

Starting on _____ and ending _____.

After Completion of Studies:

Starting _____ Your start date could be as early as the expected date of completion of studies you out above, or any other date within the 60-day period following it.

Ending _____ You must apply for all of the 12-month benefit you have remaining for this program of study.

- How much of your 12-month OPT benefit for this program have you used, if any?**

3. DESCRIBE YOUR PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT AND EXPLAIN HOW IT RELATES TO YOUR MAJOR. Do not say that you are "seeking an entry level position that is appropriate for your skills and experience!"



**YOUR F-1 RESPONSIBILITIES
WHILE YOU ARE ON
AFTER-COMPLETION OF STUDIES OPT**

While you engage in this important employment opportunity, The Department of Homeland Security has important rules with which you must comply:

1. Work only within the dates that you have been authorized on your card.
2. Do NOT begin a new program of study. *If you do, your OPT is automatically canceled.*
3. Report any change of address or name to the International Student Office within 10 days of making the change.
4. Obtain a travel endorsement from the DSO should you need to travel outside the U.S. Should you need to renew your F-1 student visa, consult with us first!
5. Only accept employment in your field of study
6. You must begin work within 90 days of the start date on your EAD card
7. You must report any change in your employer's name and address within 10 days of the change to a P/DSO in the CGI(Ann Soares or Laryssa Petryshyn)
8. You must report any periods of unemployment to the CGI. An F-1 student can not accumulate more than 90 days of unemployment while on OPT.
9. There is a new form for OPT employment reporting on the website. Please download the form and e-mail it back to Ann Soares (soaresa@dyc.edu) or Laryssa Petryshyn (petryshl@dyc.edu)