

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

I. Instructions for 12 MONTHS of OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

Definition-

Students in F-1 status may apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) part-time during fall & spring semesters or full time during summer vacation or after completion of their studies. OPT allows the student to be employed in his/her field of study for a total of 12 months after each degree level –e.g. BS., MS., Ph.D. OPT used prior to the completion of studies is subtracted from the 12 month total. Note: Curricular Practical Training (CPT) impacts OPT **only** if the student exceeds 12 months full-time CPT. Each period of OPT requested requires a recommendation from a designated school official (DSO) in the International Students and Scholars office, a completed I-765, and a fee of **\$410.00**, to obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from US Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS).

Eligibility-

F-1 students are eligible to apply for OPT when they have been in F-1 status for one academic year, and have otherwise maintained their F-1 status. The date for beginning post completion OPT is determined by the date when requirements for the degree program have been met. **This is called the date of completion; it is not necessarily the date of graduation.** The completion date for graduate students could be the date the thesis/dissertation is successfully defended. The completion date for undergraduate students is the last day of the semester in which they complete all course requirements. The application must be filed up to **90 days prior** to the end date of the degree program and no later than **60 days after** the end date of the degree program.

Post-completion OPT is now dependent on employment. Post-completion OPT may not accrue more than **90 days** of unemployment under the initial 12-month period of OPT. It implies that the student will be in violation of status if not employed. See additional information on front page of packet – General Information.

WARNING: If for some reason you do not graduate and will be required to enroll in the next semester you must contact ISS immediately. There are major issues when you do not complete your degree on time.

Procedures-

1. **Within 90 days before or no later than 60 days after the program completion date**, the following items should be presented to a DSO in the ISS office, 250 Student Union.
 - **Student request for Optional Practical Training.** Complete the final semester form with academic adviser signature.
 - **Form I-765.**
Item #16 should be (c) (3) (B).
 - **Current original Form I-20**
 - **Passport** valid for a minimum of 6 more months.
 - **I-94**, arrival/departure records (the white card or the printout from www.cpb.gov/i94).
 - **Colored photocopy of valid visa** (see instructions in packet)
 - **2 photos** (see instructions in packet; do not trim photos).
 - **Email Address and Phone Number** are required in SEVIS
2. If you are eligible and have maintained F-1 status for one academic year, ISS will recommend OPT via SEVIS and issue another Form I-20 noting OPT.
3. **SEVIS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** Student is required to report within **ten days** the following information:
 - Any change in name or address
 - The name and address of the employer
 - Any change of the name and address of the employer
 - Any interruption of employment
 - A change of immigration status

You must report your company information upon the start date of the employment. You may send the update to this ISS web address: <http://iss.okstate.edu/forms>.

II. Instructions to apply for Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

Detailed instructions and required documentation are part of Form I-765 application for the Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Follow directions carefully for proper filing to avoid processing delays.

The dates on the EAD card will be the Immigration approved dates for your period of authorized employment. **NO OTHER DATES WILL BE VALID.** This handout explains the first step to filing for an EAD card. Changes, exceptions, and/or additions to required documents and procedures could occur. Please direct questions to the **International Students and Scholars, Oklahoma State University, 250 Student Union, Stillwater, OK 74078-7051, (405) 744-5459 or su-iss@okstate.edu.**

For best results, organize documents for mailing in the order listed below with item #1 on top. The DSO will determine if other documents should be included for mailing.

1. _____ **\$410.00 fee-** Payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Either a personal check or a money order is acceptable. **NO CASH.**
2. _____ **Two photographs**
The photos are the same type as those required for a Passport. All Photos must be recent with full frontal/passport photos with a white background. Specifications for the photos are given in the instructions for the I-765. Print your name and SEVIS number on back of photos. The ISS will provide a plastic bag for photo mailing. Do not staple, cut or trim photos.
3. _____ **Completed I-765**
Item #16 write (c) (3) (B)
Form G-1145 – You may submit this form with your application so you can receive an email or text message when your OPT packet has been received.
4. _____ **Photocopies of previous EAD(s)**
Send if applicable.
5. _____ **I-20 - Photocopy**
The Service Center will accept a photocopy of the Form I-20 issued via SEVIS. Page 2 of I-20 will show the DSO recommendation for OPT. The endorsement by the ISS staff for OPT must be within 30 days of receipt of the document at the Service Center. The DSO will make a copy of the I-20 for the application after completion of the process. Do not include copies of previous I-20s.
6. _____ **I-94 Copy**
Print a copy of your I-94 from www.cbp.gov/i94. The I-94 must show your most recent entry.
7. _____ **Visa Page**
Make a slightly enlarged colored photocopy of your valid visa page in your passport. If the visa has expired, you need to include a colored copy of your driver's license or passport biographical page. FEDEX Copy in 060 Student Union is a convenient location to make these copies.

It is suggested that all of the above be sent by **priority or courier mail**. The packet should be sent to:

If using USPS mail to the following address:

**USCIS
P.O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266**

If using FEDEX, 060 Student Union mail to the following address:

**USCIS Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business
Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067**

You should receive a receipt notice within 3-4 weeks after mailing. Keep this receipt for inquiry about the application. Note: changing your address after submitting your application may delay receipt of the Immigration decision. However, to record a change of address or correction of name, call **1-800-375-5283 (National Customers Service Center)**. USCIS Case Status Service is available now online. To check the status of your application, go to:

<https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do>

Approval and issue of the EAD card may take 60 -120 days. OPT will begin the date the application is approved by Immigration or the date recommended by ISS. The card will be mailed to the ISS address. Upon receipt of the EAD card, ISS will contact you to verify mailing or if you will be collecting the EAD from the office. Eship will be the courier for the EAD card mailing. See Eship instructions on iss.okstate.edu under forms. The EAD card is the picture ID that should be used to complete the Form I-9 required by an employer.

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