Optional Practical Training

Office of International Students and Scholars
120 Fitzgerald Student Services Building/0074
Reno, Nevada 89557
Tel.: (775) 784-6874 Fax: (775) 327-5845
http://www.unr.edu/oiss
oiss@unr.edu
What is OPT?

- “Temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student’s major area of study”

What is Post-Completion OPT?

- 12 months of work authorization
- Starts after program completion
- Employment in field of study (Major on I-20)
Who Can Apply for OPT?

- Student must have been enrolled full-time for one continuous academic year
- Student must not have used full-time Curricular Practical Training for 12 months or more
- Student must not have used 12 months of OPT at current education level. Students are eligible for 12 months of OPT per higher education level
- Student must apply for graduation if graduating in the semester before OPT starts
- Student must be maintaining F-1 status
OPT Timeline (Spring Graduation)

Program Completion: 05/13/2020

When to come to OISS to apply:
- 90 days: 02/13/2020
- 60 days: 07/10/2020

Choose a date for work authorization to start:
- 60 days: 05/14/2020 to 07/12/2020

End date*: Up to 12 months after start date

*End date cannot be more than 14 months after program completion

How long should it take to receive the OPT card: 90 days from the date USCIS receives application

What about using CPT to start working earlier:
- CPT
- End date: 05/13/2020
OPT Timeline
(Summer Graduation)

Program Completion: 08/13/2020

When to come to OISS to apply:

Choose a date for work authorization to start:

End date*: Up to 12 months after start date
*End date cannot be more than 14 months after program completion

How long should it take to receive the OPT card: 90 days from the date USCIS receives application

What about using CPT to start working earlier:

End date: 08/13/2020
OPT Timeline
(Fall Graduation)

When to come to OISS to apply:
- 90 days: 09/17/2020
- 60 days: 02/12/2021

Choose a date for work authorization to start:
- 60 days: 12/17/2020 to 02/14/2021

End date*: Up to 12 months after start date
*End date cannot be more than 14 months after program completion

How long should it take to receive the OPT card: 90 days from the date USCIS receives application

What about using CPT to start working earlier:
- CPT End date: 12/16/2020
90 Day Unemployment Rule

• You should not accumulate more than 90 days of unemployment from the start date on your EAD card during the 12-month post-completion OPT period

• You are considered to be in violation of your F-1 status if you accumulate 90+ days of unemployment unless you complete any of the following steps before the 90 days:
  • Applied for a new program or to transfer to another U.S. institution
  • Left the U.S.
  • Applied for a change of status
How to Avoid 90 Days of Unemployment

• Plan your OPT start date
• Find other types of employment in your field of study with at least 20 hours of work per week
  ▪ Part-time paid employment
    ▪ Requires more than 1 employer if less than 20 hours per week
  ▪ Volunteering/unpaid employment
  ▪ Employment hours may vary weekly but should average to at least 20 hours per week each month

Always keep documentation for proof all employment – paid or unpaid!
How to Apply

1. Complete the steps at Optional Practical Training (OPT) Form
2. Make an appointment with an advisor at OISS for OPT and bring all required documents
### OPT Online Application

**Announcements**

**Application Submission**

- **DO NOT FORGET TO SELECT THE ‘SUBMIT’ BUTTON AT THE TOP OF THE APPLICATION PAGE AFTER ALL BOXES ARE CHECKED TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION**

**View All Announcements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPT Employment Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Requests</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Practical Training (OPT) (1 required) This step is required if you are requesting to work on OPT that will begin after you graduate. Your academic advisor must confirm your eligibility to graduate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To request this confirmation, please click the “Request Electronic Recommendation” link below and enter the name of your academic advisor/faculty member into the manual entry section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Request Electronic Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more required recommendations have not yet been requested.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature Documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPT Statement of Understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instructions**

Please read this first

When you have completed all items in this request, click the submit button (located at the top of the page). All checkboxes must be checked in order to submit the completed request. Items do not need to be completed in any particular order.

OPT is defined as “temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student’s major area of study.” 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i). Students are eligible for 12 months of OPT per higher education level.

**Eligibility Requirements**

You:

- Must maintain F-1 status.
- Must have been enrolled full-time or part-time with permission for one continuous academic year.
- Must not have use full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for 12 months or more.
- Must not have used 12 months of Optional Practical Training (OPT) at current education level.
- Must apply for graduation if graduating in the semester before OPT starts.

**Learning Content**

Click the following to view, read, and mark these learning content pages as having been read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01. OPT Important Information</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02. OPT Checklist</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03. OPT Reporting Requirements</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclaimer about Guidance from the OISS (F)</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to Apply (cont.)

4. If you have all the required items, the OISS advisor will create a new I-20 requesting OPT and assist you with your OPT packet
   - The OISS advisor will shorten the end date on your I-20 in order to recommend post-completion OPT

5. Mail the OPT packet to USCIS and wait for your receipt and card

6. Please allow 90 days from the day USCIS receives your application for processing
1. Optional: Students may attach Form G-1145 (E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance) to the 1st page of the application to request an e-Notification (email or text) of the receipt of the application at the USCIS Lockbox facility. There is no fee for this service
2. *Money order, personal check, cashier’s check, or credit card using Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transactions in U.S. currency for the filing fee payment of $410.00 (four hundred and ten).

- Make checks and money orders payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security with “OPT filing fee” in the memo line
- Remember to sign the money order, personal check, or Form G-1450

* Filing fee subject to change, check http://www.uscis.gov/i-765 for the correct fee
3. 2 identical passport photos (2” x 2”) taken within 30 days of filing your application with your name and I-94 number lightly written on the back of the photos using a pencil or felt tip pen and in a small envelope or the vendor provided photo sleeve. Go to https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/photos/photos.html for specifications

- Read the instructions and questions carefully
- We recommend you type your responses
- If a question does not apply to you, type or print (handwrite) “N/A” unless otherwise directed
  - If you are typing your application, the form does not allow you to enter the “/” therefore you will have to handwrite “N/A” in black text after printing the application
- If your answer to a numeric response is zero or none, type or print “None” unless otherwise directed
- Use black ink to print and sign
- Enter name as it appears on your I-20
- Enter any previous names, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames

- If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in Part 6. Additional Information
- Your U.S. Mailing Address will be used by USCIS to mail any documents for your application
- If your mail is sent to someone other than yourself, please include an “In Care Of Name” as part of your mailing address
- If “No” to item 6, enter your U.S. Physical Address

### Your U.S. Mailing Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.a.</th>
<th>In Care Of Name (if any)</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.b.</td>
<td>Street Number and Name</td>
<td>123 Street Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.c.</td>
<td>Apt.</td>
<td>Ste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.d.</td>
<td>City or Town</td>
<td>Reno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.e.</td>
<td>State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** If you answered “No” to Item Number 6, provide your physical address below.

### U.S. Physical Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.a.</th>
<th>Street Number and Name</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.c.</td>
<td>City or Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.d.</td>
<td>State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- F-1 students do not have an A-Number or a USCIS Online Account Number
- Item 12: check yes if you have previously applied for an EAD
  - Copies of the front and back of the EAD card(s) should be included in your application packet
Follow the instructions carefully

- Items 16.a. to 17.b.: if it does not apply to you, print “N/A”

13.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

☐ Yes ☑ No

NOTE: If you answered “No” to Item Number 13.a., skip to Item Number 14. If you answered “Yes” to Item Number 13.a., provide the information requested in Item Number 13.b.

13.b. Provide your Social Security number (SSN) (if known).

14. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card? (You must also answer “Yes” to Item Number 15, Consent for Disclosure, to receive a card.)

☐ Yes ☑ No

NOTE: If you answered “No” to Item Number 14., skip to Part 2. Item Number 18.a. If you answered “Yes” to Item Number 14., you must also answer “Yes” to Item Number 15.

15. Consent for Disclosure: I authorize disclosure of information from this application to the SSA as required for the purpose of assigning me an SSN and issuing me a Social Security card.

☐ Yes ☑ No

NOTE: If you answered “Yes” to Item Numbers 14.-15., provide the information requested in Item Numbers 16.a.-17.b.

Father's Name

Provide your father’s birth name.

16.a. Family Name (Last Name) N/A

16.b. Given Name (First Name) N/A

Mother's Name

Provide your mother’s birth name.

17.a. Family Name (Last Name) N/A

17.b. Given Name (First Name) N/A
Follow the instructions carefully.

**Your Country or Countries of Citizenship or Nationality**

List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national. If you need extra space to complete this item, use the space provided in Part 6. Additional Information.

18.a. Country

- **China**

18.b. Country

- **N/A**
- Follow the instructions carefully

### Place of Birth

List the city/town/village, state/province, and country where you were born.

19.a. City/Town/Village of Birth

Beijing

19.b. State/Province of Birth

Hebei

19.c. Country of Birth

China

20. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

01/20/1996
- Go to Get Most Recent I-94 to retrieve and print your I-94 unless you changed your status in the U.S.
  - Items 21.a., 22, and 24 can be found on your I-94
- Item 23: can be found on the last admission stamp in your passport
  - If you drove across the border, enter the name of the city where you entered the U.S.
- Enter (c)(3)(B) for post-completion OPT (to start OPT after program completion or during thesis/dissertation stage after completing all required coursework)
- Items 28 to 31.b. do not apply to a 12-month post-completion OPT application
- Follow the instructions carefully

**Part 3. Applicant's Statement, Contact Information, Declaration, Certification, and Signature**

NOTE: Read the Penalties section of the Form I-765 Instructions before completing this section. You must file Form I-765 while in the United States.

**Applicant's Statement**

NOTE: Select the box for either Item Number 1.a. or 1.b. If applicable, select the box for Item Number 2.

1.a. ☒ I can read and understand English, and I have read and understand every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question.

1.b. ☐ The interpreter named in Part 4. read to me every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question in  

**Leave Blank**

a language in which I am fluent, and I understood everything.

2. ☐ At my request, the preparer named in Part 5,  

**Leave Blank**

prepared this application for me based only upon information I provided or authorized.

**Applicant's Contact Information**

3. Applicant's Daytime Telephone Number

7751234567

4. Applicant's Mobile Telephone Number (if any)

7751234567

5. Applicant's Email Address (if any)

student@nevada.unr.edu

6. ☐ Select this box if you are a Salvadoran or Guatemalan national eligible for benefits under the ABC settlement agreement.
- Read the full "Declaration and Certification" carefully
- Float your signature inside the “Applicant’s Signature” box, do not touch or go outside the lines

**Applicant's Declaration and Certification**

Copies of any documents I have submitted are exact photocopies of unaltered, original documents, and I understand that USCIS may require that I submit original documents to USCIS at a later date. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information from any and all of my records that USCIS may need to determine my eligibility for the immigration benefit that I seek.

**Applicant's Signature**

7.a. Applicant's Signature

Float Your Signature Inside The Box

7.b. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) 09/20/2018

NOTE TO ALL APPLICANTS: If you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents listed in the Instructions, USCIS may deny your application.
These sections do not apply to you if you completed the form yourself.
I-765 Page 7

- Complete this page if:
  - You needed more space for any of the items in Parts 2 to 5
  - You have used a different SEVIS ID in F-1 status in the U.S. (for example, you attended school for a while, left the U.S. to take a break from school, and returned with a new I-20, you would have a SEVIS ID from your first period of attendance that is different than your current SEVIS ID)
  - Page Number 3, Part Number 2, Item Number 26
  - List all previous SEVIS IDs used, include the education level, and start and end dates (MM/DD/YYYY to MM/DD/YYYY) for each SEVIS ID
  - You have been approved for CPT or OPT in the past
    - CPT: Page Number 3, Part Number 2, Item Number 27
    - Enter the SEVIS ID, CPT, PT/FT, Education Level, Employer Name, Start and End Dates (MM/DD/YYYY format)
    - OPT: Page Number 2, Part Number 2, Item Number 12
    - Enter the SEVIS ID, pre- or post-completion OPT, Education Level, PT/FT, Denied/Granted Start and End Dates (MM/DD/YYYY format)
      - If Granted, enter Employer Name
- Enter the information for each item (previous SEVIS ID(s), CPT, OPT) in a new item number. For example, enter all previous SEVIS IDs in Items 3.a. to 3.d., previous CPT(s) in Items 4.a. to 4.d., etc.
- For a to c, replace the “x” with the corresponding information as listed in the previous slide
- If you need more space than is provided, you may make extra copies of Part 6

**Part 6. Additional Information**

If you need extra space to provide any additional information within this application, use the space below. If you need more space than what is provided, you may make copies of this page to complete and file with this application or attach a separate sheet of paper. Type or print your name and A-Number (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the Page Number, Part Number, and Item Number to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)  
1.b. Given Name (First Name)  
1.c. Middle Name  
2. A-Number (if any)  
3.a. Page Number  
3.b. Part Number  
3.c. Item Number

3.d. Previous SEVIS IDs:

- N0000000003, Associate's, 01/05/1999 to 05/25/2010
- N0000000012, Bachelor's, 08/12/2011 to 05/20/2015
- N0012345678, CPT, Master's, PT, That Employer, 06/01/2018 to 07/31/2018
- N0000000012, Post-Completion OPT, Bachelor's, FT, Granted, 05/21/2015 to 05/20/2016
5. Copy of the 1st and 2nd pages of I-20 with OPT recommendation

6. Copies of the bio page of your current passport (include extension page if applicable), current visa, and Form I-94

7. Copies of the 1st and 2nd pages (or 1st and 3rd pages for I-20s issued before July 2015) of any I-20s with employment authorization (CPT, SEH, OPT)

8. If you changed your status to F-1 within the U.S., make a copy of Form I-797 Approval Notice

9. Front and back copy of any previous EAD card(s), if applicable
**Where to Send the OPT Packet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| U.S. Postal Service deliveries (request tracking option) | USCIS  
P.O. Box 21281  
Phoenix, AZ 85036 |
| Express mail and commercial courier deliveries | USCIS  
ATTN: NFB AOS  
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S  
Suite 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85034 |

*Filing address subject to change, check [http://www.uscis.gov/i-765](http://www.uscis.gov/i-765) for the correct addresses*
• If the address in item 3 of your Form I-765 is not in Nevada, refer to the “Where to File” section at http://www.uscis.gov/i-765 for the filing address.
Where to Send the OPT Packet (cont. (2))

- To reduce the chances of your OPT application being denied by USCIS, the OPT application packet must:
  - Not be received by USCIS more than 90 days before your program end date
  - Be received by USCIS within:
    - 30 days of the I-20 issue date listed at the bottom of the first page of your I-20
    - 60 days of your program completion
What to Expect After Mailing

• In 2 - 4 weeks of mailing your packet, you will receive a receipt notice, Form I-797C
• Check the status of your OPT application online with your receipt number at https://www.uscis.gov
• About 90 days from the receipt date on the receipt notice, you should receive the OPT card
• If you receive a Request For Evidence (RFE) or Request for Information (RFI), contact an OISS advisor immediately
• If your application processing takes more than 90 days from the received date on the receipt notice, contact an OISS advisor
What About Travel Outside the U.S.?

• You may travel out of the country and return before the program end date on your OPT I-20 with a travel signature and a valid passport and visa.

• If you want to re-enter the U.S. after your program end date, have the following documents with you:
  • OPT I-20 signed for travel (valid for 6 months) on the 2nd page
  • Valid visa (it is possible to renew a visa after OPT approval)
  • Passport valid for at least 6 months from the date you re-enter
  • Receipt notice if your OPT has not been approved
  • OPT EAD card and job offer/contract if your OPT has been approved

• Please note, re-entry after travel out of the country is never guaranteed. If your application is denied while you are out of the country, it may not be possible for you to return on the F-1 visa or to resume OPT.
What if I Don’t Graduate and Post-Completion OPT Has Not Been Approved?

- You may keep the OPT and take part-time classes while maintaining your OPT
- You may withdraw your application by writing a letter to USCIS requesting the withdrawal with an explanation of the reason for the withdrawal
  - The OISS advisor will email the letter to USCIS
- You will NOT be reimbursed your Form I-765 filing fee
What if I Don’t Graduate and Post-Completion OPT Has Been Approved?

- If coursework is still required during fall and spring semesters only work part-time (up to 20 hours/week). The 90-day unemployment limitation will still apply.
- If you only have your thesis or dissertation, you may work full-time.
- You must complete your program before your OPT ends since your I-20 cannot be extended.
OPT Reporting Requirements

- Use the SEVP Portal to report:
  - Changes to your mailing or physical address
  - Telephone number changes
  - Employment updates
- Report within 10 days of change
- Email OISS after you update your information in the SEVP Portal to confirm the update
OPT Reporting Requirements, cont.

- On your approved OPT start date, you will receive an email from do-not-reply.sevp@ice.dhs.gov with instructions on creating an SEVP Portal account
  - If you do not see the email in your inbox, check your spam or junk mail folder. If you still do not see it, contact OISS at oiss@unr.edu to request an account reset
  - The link to create your account will expire within 14 days of the date the email is sent
- You may go to SEVP Portal Help for more information
OPT Reporting Requirements, cont. (2)

• If you need to change your email address, use the [Change of Address Form](#)

• **OPTIONAL:** If you want a new I-20 with your OPT employer information, complete the [Student I-20/DS-2019 Request Form](#) and select “SEVP Portal Employer Update” for the request reason

• You should maintain health insurance coverage during your OPT authorization period
I’m starting a new academic program/level after I graduate, do I need OPT?

1. Must be admitted to new program/school by end of 60 day grace period.
2. New program must start at next available term or within 5 months of program end date, whichever is sooner.

The 90 days of unemployment rule is still applicable if a student applies for OPT to bridge the gap between academic programs.
I’m starting a new academic program/level after I graduate in December, do I need OPT?

1. Must be admitted to new program/school by end of 60 day grace period
2. New program must start at next available term or within 5 months of program end date, whichever is sooner

December Graduation: Admitted: 60 day grace period

Start classes: next available term or 5 months, whichever is sooner

The 90 days of unemployment rule is still applicable if a student applies for OPT to bridge the gap between academic programs
24-Month STEM OPT Extension Eligibility

- F-1 students with **STEM field** degrees
- Must be working for a U.S. employer in a job directly related to the STEM field of study (traditional paid employment)
- **Employer** must be registered in E-Verify
- File for extension up to 90 days before 12-month post-completion OPT ends
H-1B (Specialty Occupations)

- Granted up to 6 years
- Must have at least a U.S. bachelor’s degree (or foreign equivalent)
- Will be working in a job that requires at least a bachelor’s degree
- Employer must be willing to sponsor a visa petition
- H-1B Cap of 65,000 new H-1B approvals each year. Graduates with U.S. advanced degrees (master’s or higher) have an additional allocation of 20,000
- If your H-1B petition is timely filed, you will be eligible for a “cap gap extension”, a period in which a student’s status is automatically extended to bridge the gap between the end of F-1 status and start of H-1B status
OPT / H-1B Timeline
(Spring Graduation)

OPT:

Employer registers to file H-1B petition by March 20

File H-1B petition after March 31 if selected

OPT Automatically Extended to September 30

60 day Grace Period

H-1B Start
(October 1)

Students are not eligible to have their post-completion OPT extended during the cap-gap period if their OPT ends before their H-1B petition is submitted
OPT / H-1B Timeline
(Summer Graduation)

Current Year
AUG
MAR
Next Year
APR
MAY
JUN
JUL
AUG
SEP
OCT

OPT:

Employer registers to file H-1B petition by March 20

File H-1B petition after March 31 if selected

OPT Automatically Extended to September 30

60 day Grace Period

H-1B Start (October 1)

Students are not eligible to have their post-completion OPT extended during the cap-gap period if their OPT ends before their H-1B petition is submitted
OPT and J-1/H-1B in Higher Education

• J-1 (Researcher/Professor) can be extended to 5 years
• H-1B’s are not subject to the quota or the timeline
• Changing status to J-1 or H-1B can take 2 weeks to 6 months, so OPT is recommended to maintain status while the change of status application is pending
• Possible to leave the U.S. apply for new visa and re-enter under the new status
• Consider dependent’s work and school options
  ▪ J-2’s can apply to work and engage in full/part-time study
  ▪ H-4’s cannot work, but can engage in full/part-time study
It's QUESTION TIME!!