



University of Nevada, Reno

Optional Practical Training

**Office of International Students and Scholars
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What is OPT?

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

8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii).



What is Post-Completion OPT?

- **12 months of work authorization**
- **Starts after program completion**
- **Employment in field of study**
(Major on I-20)

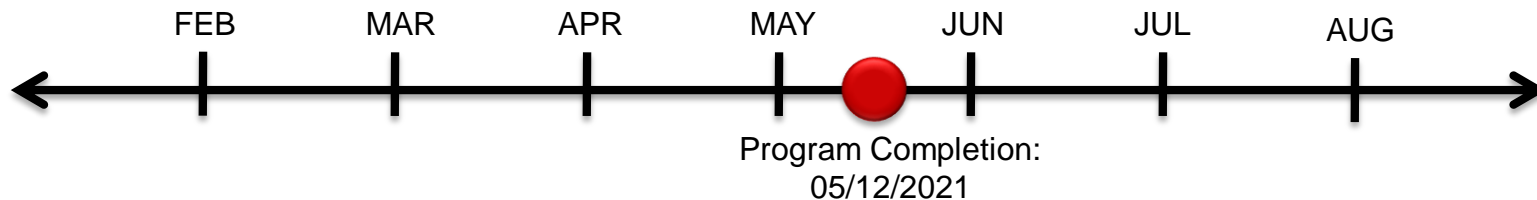


Who Can Apply for OPT?

- **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)



When to get appointment with OISS to apply:



90 days: 02/11/2021

60 days: 07/09/2021

Choose a date for work authorization to start:

60 days:

05/13/2021 to 07/11/2021

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

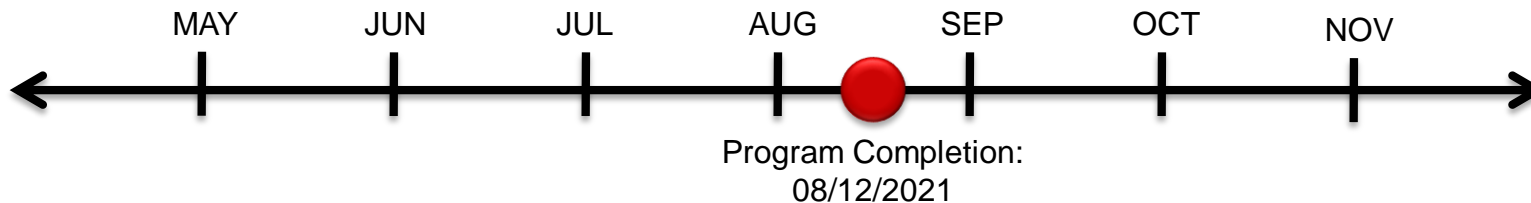
What about using CPT to start working earlier:

CPT

End date: 05/12/2021



OPT Timeline (Summer Graduation)



When to get appointment with OISS to apply:



Choose a date for work authorization to start:

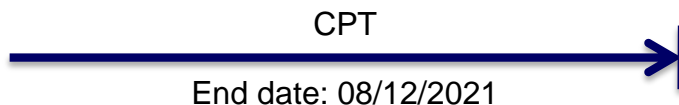


End date*: Up to 12 months after start date

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

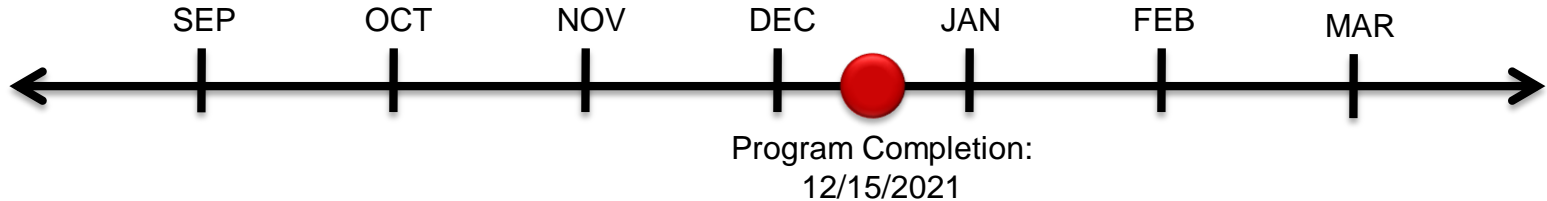
How long should it take to receive the OPT card: 90 days from the date USCIS receives application

What about using CPT to start working earlier:

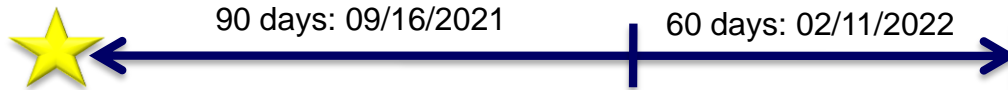




OPT Timeline (Fall Graduation)



When to get appointment with OISS to apply:



Choose a date for work authorization to start:

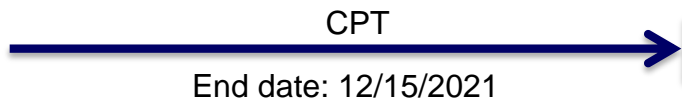


End date*: Up to 12 months after start date

*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:





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 (less than 20 hours per week) 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 have all required documents at the appointment



OPT Online Application

- All documents uploaded to the “OPT Request” questionnaire should not be secured.
- DO NOT include your SSN in the I-765 upload.

-Submit-

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](#)

Adilia Ross

Request: Optional Practical Training (OPT) (F-M)

Term/Year: Request, 2021

Dates: TBA

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 marked 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)(ii). 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 sue 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.

Title	Completed
01. OPT Important Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
02. OPT Checklist	<input type="checkbox"/>
03. OPT Reporting Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disclaimer about Guidance from the OISS (F)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Questionnaire(s)

Click the following to view and complete the following online questionnaire(s). You may begin a questionnaire and save it for later completion, but note that you must click Submit in order for the questionnaire to be logged as complete and ready for review.

Title	Completed
OPT Request	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommendations

Requests **Completed**

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.

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.

[- Request Electronic Recommendation](#)

1 or more required recommendations have not yet been requested.

Signature Documents

Click the following to view and digitally sign important documents to indicate your agreement and understanding.

Title	Completed
OPT Statement of Understanding	<input type="checkbox"/>



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**



OPT Packet (What to Mail)

- 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**



OPT Packet (What to Mail, cont.)

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 \$410⁰⁰ (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



OPT Packet (What to Mail, cont. (2))

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





OPT Packet (What to Mail cont. (3))

4. **Completed original Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization). You may find the form and instructions at: <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>**
 - ❖ 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



I-765

- **Go to [Sample OPT I-765](#) for a sample I-765.**
- Make sure you are using the correct edition otherwise USCIS will reject your application. Check "Edition Date" at [Form I-765](#)
- If you need more space than is provided in Part 6 (page7), you may use extra copies of the page



I-765 – PAGE 1

- Enter your 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



I-765 – PAGE 2

- 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
- 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



I-765 – PAGE 3

- 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.



I-765 – PAGE 3 cont.

- Item 27: 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



I-765 – PAGES 4 to 6

- Read the full “Declaration and Certification” carefully
- Float your handwritten signature inside the “Applicant’s Signature” box, do not touch or go outside the lines
- Parts 4 to 5 do not apply to you if you completed the form yourself



I-765 – PAGE 7

- Complete this page if:
 - You need 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)
 - You have been approved for CPT, OPT, SEH, or TPS in the past



OPT Packet (What to Mail cont. (2))

- 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 (even if it is expired), 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

Filing address subject to change. Refer to the “Where to File” section at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765> for the correct filing address.

Form Details Close All Open All

Edition Date ▼

Where to File ▲

The filing address depends on your reason for applying and the eligibility category you entered in Question 27. Please check the [filing locations for Form I-765](#) for a list of addresses. If you file at a Lockbox, read our [filing tips](#).

Filing Tips for Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Complete **all sections** of the form.

Don't forget to sign your form! We will reject and return any unsigned form.

Filing Fee ▼



Close All Open All

Asylees/refugees and their spouses and children ▼

Categories based on nationality ▼

Foreign students ▲

Eligibility Category 8 CFR 274a.12 This is the category you selected in question 27 on Form I-765	Category Description	Filing Location
F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)		



Where to Send the OPT Packet (cont.)

- **To reduce the chances of your OPT application being rejected or denied by USCIS, the OPT application packet must:**
 - Use USCIS forms with the correct edition date
 - 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 or 60 days of your program completion, whichever comes first



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



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 after 48 hours of your approved start date, 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 detailed information and guidance videos**



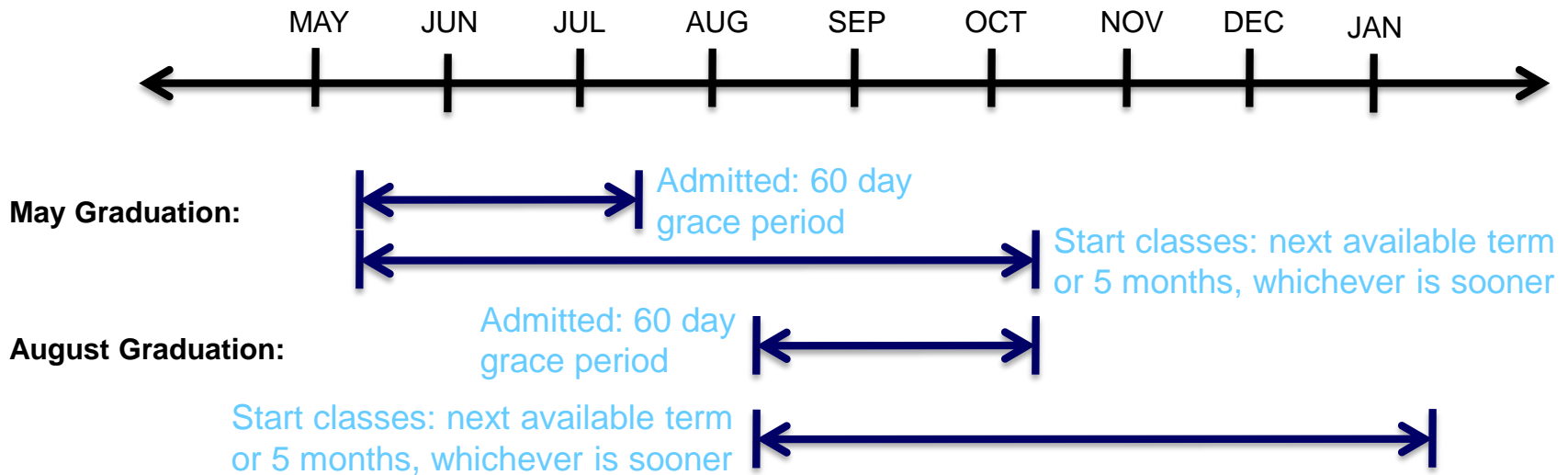
OPT Reporting Requirements, cont. (2)

- If you cannot update your employment in the SEVP Portal because it is past the 10-day reporting timeline, submit the [12-Month OPT Update Form](#)
- 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

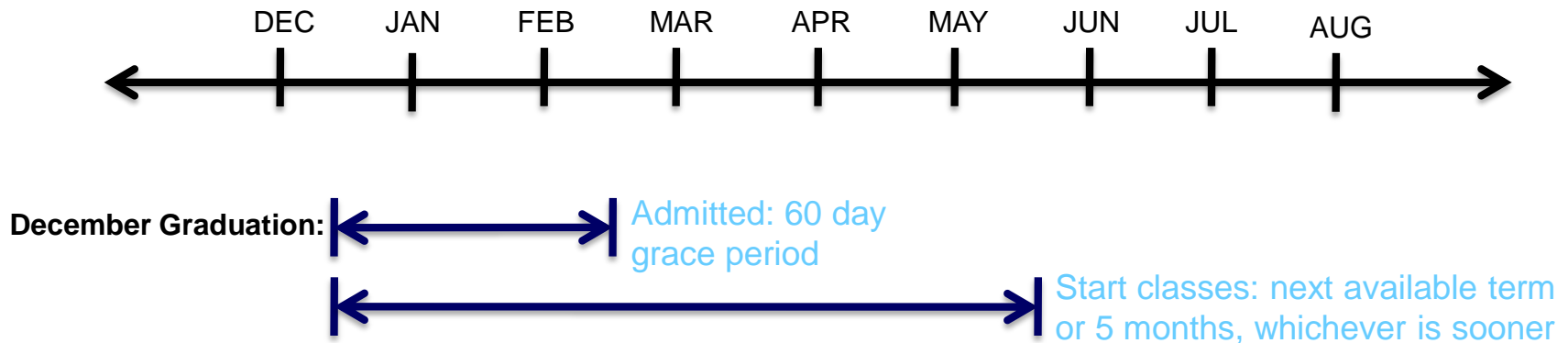


The 90 days of unemployment rule is still applicable if a student applies for OPT to bridge the gap between academic programs



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



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

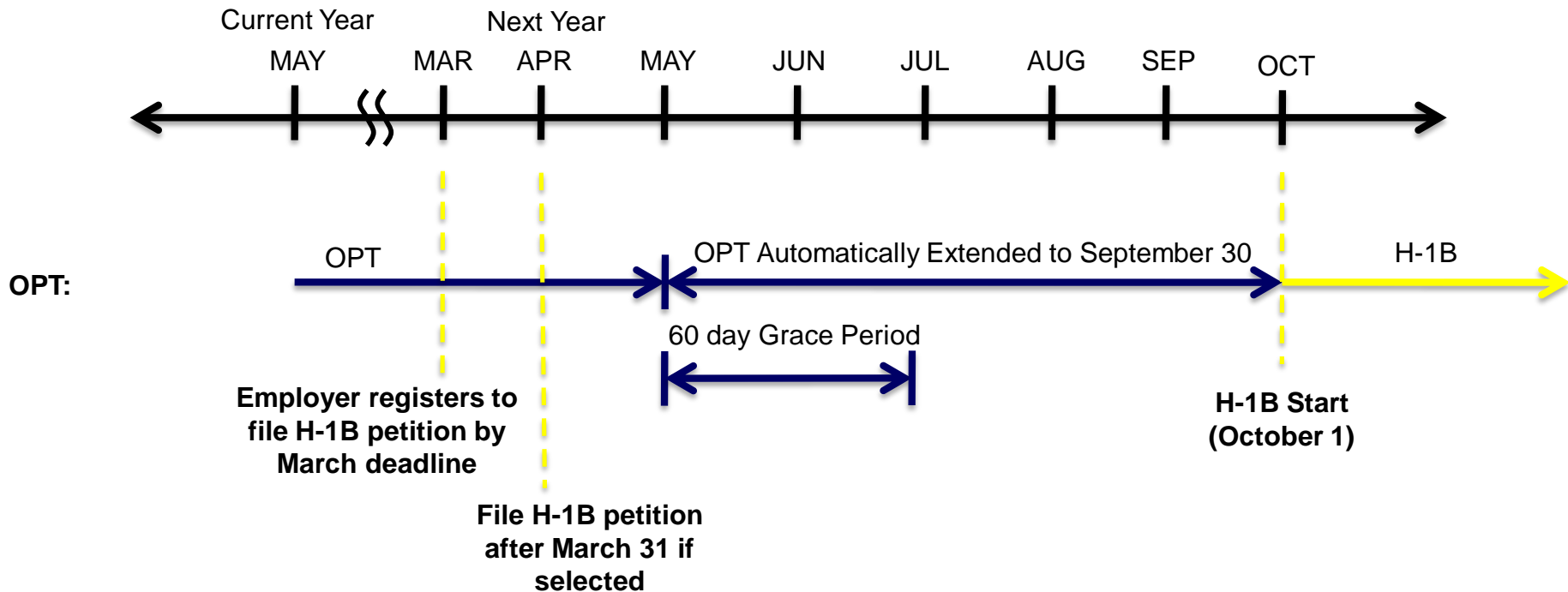


H-1B (Specialty Occupations)

- **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**



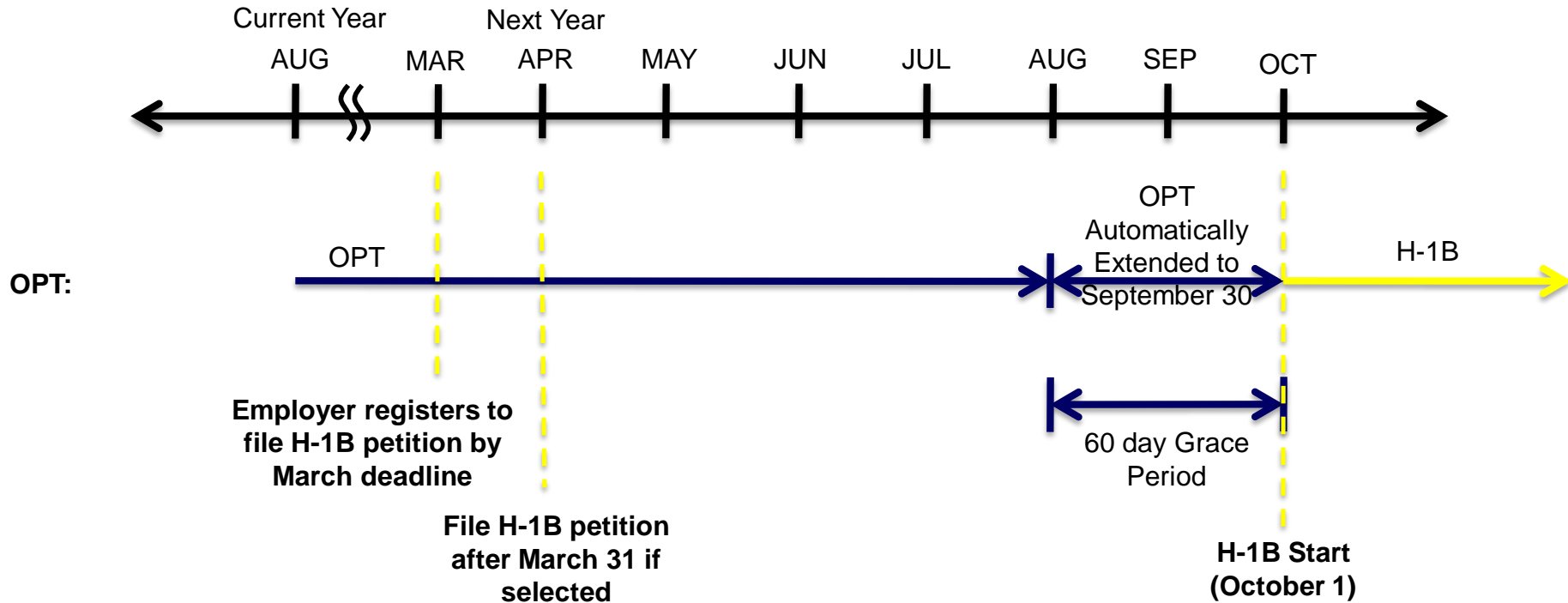
OPT / H-1B Timeline (Spring Graduation)



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



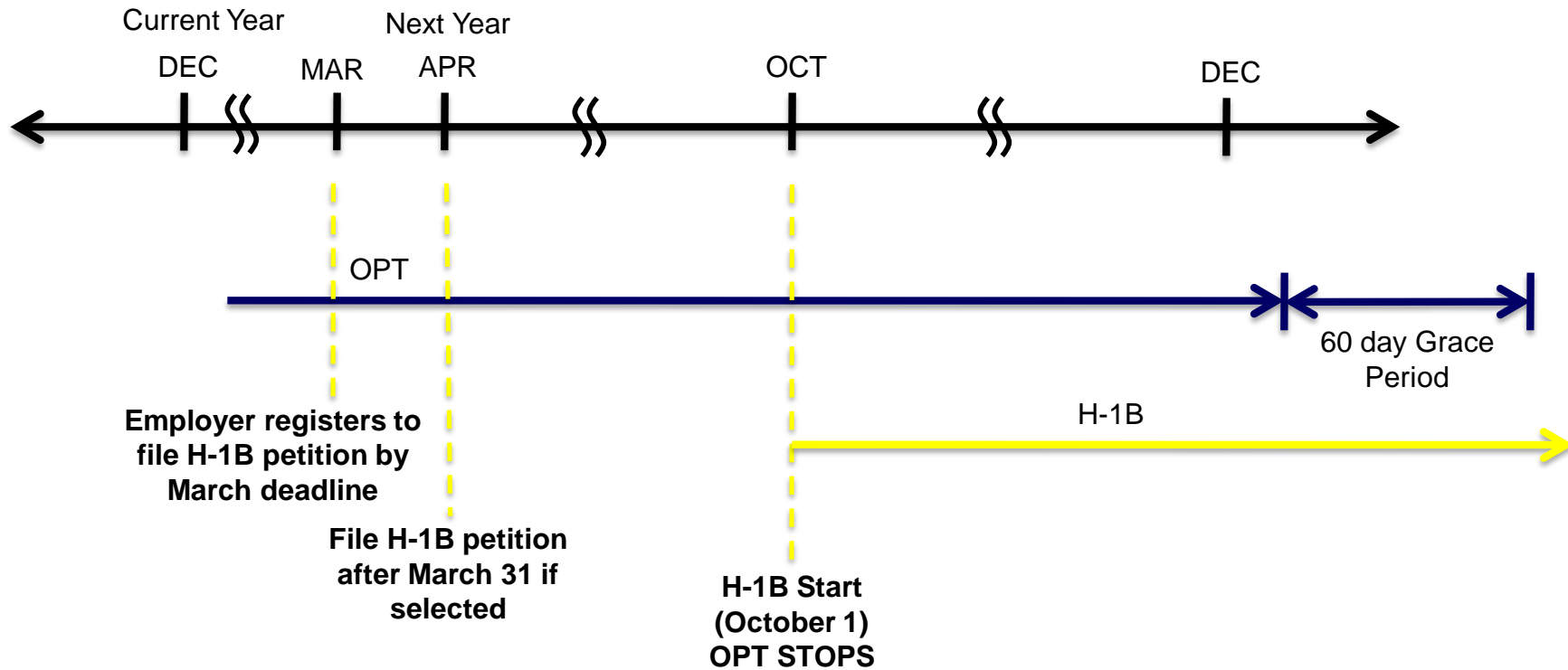
OPT / H-1B Timeline (Summer Graduation)



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 (Fall Graduation)



OPT:



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

N

