

The University of Texas at Dallas

International Student Services Office

**Post Completion
Optional Practical Training**

Topics covered in this presentation:

- Who is eligible to apply.
- Reporting requirements.
- Limits of unemployment.
- Travel.
- Taking classes.
- Types of employment allowed.
- The application process.
- Where to get application forms.
- How to contact us.

Types of OPT

1. Post-Completion: After completion of an academic program
 2. Coursework Completion: After completion of all courses except thesis or dissertation
 3. Pre-Completion: After one academic year of full-time enrollment
- 17-Month Extension: After initial post-completion OPT for students in select STEM majors who work for E-Verify registered companies
 - Cap-Gap Relief: Automatic extension of F-1 status and OPT for students who have been approved for an H-1B

This presentation is about initial OPT. See the ISSO website for more information about the 17-month extension.

Eligibility

- Lawfully enrolled full-time for one academic year: two consecutive long semesters (Time in another legal-study category, such as H-4 can count if immediately preceding the semester of the OPT)
- Currently in F-1 status
- Completing your degree requirement this semester
- Minimum GPA: 2.0 Undergraduates 3.0 Graduates
- 364 Days or less of full-time CPT at the current educational level
- No previous OPT on the current educational level

\$ 100 Practical Training Fee

- This fee is separate from the USCIS application fee that the student will include in the OPT package mailed to the USCIS Service Center
- This fee must be paid online through EZPay before a student submits an OPT application to the ISSO
- Directions for paying the fee:
 - https://ezpay.utdallas.edu/C20239_ustores/web/
 - Click on International Student Services
 - Click on Practical Training Fees

OPT Facts

- You can have up to 12 months per educational level
- There is a 60-day grace period after the OPT end date in which you can:
 - Apply for a Change of Status
 - Apply for an I-20 for a new degree program
 - Depart the US
- You continue to be F-1 while on OPT
- If you are approved for a change of status to H-1B while on OPT, your OPT and F-1 status will be cancelled on your H-1B start date.

Reporting Requirements

Students on post-completion OPT must report to the ISSO the following information within 10 days of a change:

- Your current U.S. address
- Start or end of employment
- Change of your employer's name
- Change of your employer's address
- Change of your official name

How to Report

To report a change of address or employment complete an **ISSO OPT Reporting Form** and submit it via email, fax or in person to the **UT Dallas ISSO**. The ISSO will report your changes to Homeland Security.

- Form: <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/index.html>
- Email: ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu
- Fax: 972-883-4010

Limits of Unemployment

Students on post-completion OPT may accrue up to 90 days of unemployment.

How To Calculate Days of Unemployment

Each day (including weekends) during the period when OPT authorization begins and ends that the student does not have qualifying employment counts as a day of unemployment. OPT authorization begins on the employment start date shown on the student's EAD.

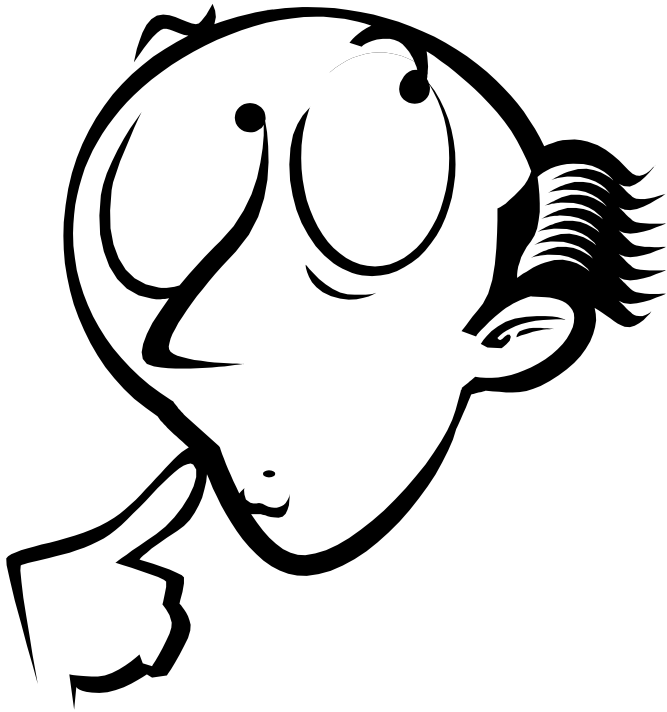
When to apply

- Earliest: Up to 90 days prior to the program completion date
- Latest: USCIS must receive your application within 60 days after the program completion date
- You may want to wait until you are certain that you do not need another semester before you apply
- For SEVIS purposes, your program completion date is:
 - Your defense date or
 - The final day grades are posted online for the full-term session as published in the academic calendar.

Choosing your OPT start date

- Earliest start date: on or after the program completion date
- Latest start date: 60 calendar days after the program completion date
- You cannot begin work until you receive the EAD and you reach the start date on the EAD
- Remember processing can take up to 90 days

Know what you want before you apply



Once you mail the application:

- You cannot make changes to your request
- If you withdraw the OPT you lose the USCIS processing fee
- If you attempt to withdraw your application it may get approved and you will be limited to part-time employment until program completion.

Traveling Abroad while on OPT

Before the program completion date and still taking classes:

- If you have not yet completed your last semester , it is OK to re-enter the US after applying for OPT
- **After the program completion date you must present all of the following documents upon re-entry:**
- Valid passport
- Valid F-1 visa (it is easier to renew your visa while in school than while on OPT)
- OPT I-20 endorsed for travel within the past 6 months
- OPT EAD
- Proof of employment (pay stubs or letter of employment)

OPT Employment

- The job must be directly related to the major and educational level that is on your current I-20
- You and the employer make this determination
- You can change employers as long as each job is directly related to your current major and educational level



Types of Employment Allowed for Post-Completion OPT

- Paid employment of at least 20 hours per week.
- Unpaid employment (volunteer/unpaid internship) of at least 20 hours per week.
- Multiple employers.
- Work for hire/1099 employment.
- Self-employed business owner (student should have evidence of proper business licenses).
- Employment through an agency or consulting firm.
- All work must be related to the major on your I-20.

Search for OPT Employment



- Document your search for employment and keep employment records. You may be asked for proof of OPT employment or job search for future immigration applications or interviews
 - Copies of job-specific cover letters and resumes
 - Any letter or email that contains info about:
 - Interviews
 - Testing
 - Information Sessions

Can I take classes while on OPT?

- The Immigration regulations specifically state the following: “authorization to engage in practical training employment is automatically terminated when the student begins study at another educational level.”
8 C.F.R. 214.2 (f) (10) (ii) (B)
- If you do study while on OPT, the Department of Homeland Security has stated that the classes are only to be **incidental** to your employment

Submit to ISSO

- OPT I-20 Request Form
- OPT Recommendation Form (if you have not yet applied for graduation or are applying based upon your defense date)
- Copy of completed I-765
- If you had a previous USCIS work authorization (not CPT or on campus work) add a copy of your previous EAD and corresponding I-20 or H-1B I-94 Approval Notice

OPT I-20 Request Form

Complete the student information.

Name: _____ UTD ID: _____
Date of Birth: _____ Phone Number: _____ Graduate (circle): Fall Spring Summer

Circle your Graduating semester.

IMPORTANT: You must pay the \$100 Practical Training fee before submitting this form to the ISSO or your request will be delayed. Pay online at: https://ezpay.utdallas.edu/C20239_ustores/web/

The UT Dallas Practical Training fee must be paid before you submit your request to ISSO. Indicate the date you paid the fee.

Answer questions #1 - #3.

1. Have you had more than 364 days of full-time CPT at UT Dallas on the current degree level? YES NO
I understand that if I have had more than 364 days of full-time CPT at the same educational level and school that I am not eligible for OPT.
2. On what date did you pay the Practical Training fee? _____
3. What OPT dates do you request (max 1 year)? Start: _____ End: _____
*Earliest start date: program completion date; latest start date: 60 days past that date
USCIS processing is 2-3 months. In most cases, USCIS approves the dates requested.*
4. If you do not have an SSN you can apply for one after you receive the OPT EAD and reach the OPT start date. When you receive the EAD, contact our office for the required authorization letter.

You can select an OPT start date as early as the program completion date, or up to 60 days after the program completion date.

DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT TO ISSO:	
• OPT I-20 Request Form	
• Copy of completed I-765	
• Recommendation Form, only if...	You have not applied for graduation <i>OR</i> You are applying for OPT based on defense date
• Copy of EAD if...	You have previously submitted an I-765 for an EAD.

The OPT end date cannot be more than 12 months after the OPT start date.

Important Things to Remember

Read "Important Things To Remember."

- > You are responsible to mail your OPT application to USCIS.
- > Mail your application promptly. USCIS must receive your application within 30 days of when the I-20 was printed and within 60 days of your completion date. If not, your application will be rejected or denied.
- > If you choose for the OPT EAD to be mailed to you directly, supply a copy to the UT Dallas ISSO.
- > If you choose for the OPT EAD to be mailed to the UT Dallas ISSO, you are authorizing ISSO staff to open USCIS correspondence and scan a copy for your file.
- > If USCIS denies your OPT request, contact an international student advisor immediately to discuss your options.

- > I understand that in order to maintain F-1 status while on Post-Completion OPT I must limit unemployment to a total 90 days or less throughout the whole period of OPT.
- > I understand that while on OPT I must report every change of name or employment status to the ISSO. I must report changes of address to the Registrar's Office.

Sign and date.

Signature Date

OPT Recommendation Form

This form is not required if you have applied for graduation. This form is required if you are applying for OPT based on your defense date.

To be completed by student:

First Name: _____	Last Name: _____
ID #: _____	Phone: _____
Street Address: _____	
E-mail Address: _____	Date of Birth: _____
Semester of course completion with UT Dallas: _____	
I verify that I will complete my coursework requirements for the degree listed on my I20 at the end of the above semester. The required courses are listed below. I verify that the information on this form is true to the best of my knowledge.	
Student signature: _____	Date: _____

This must be a specific date in mm/dd/yy format if you are applying for OPT based on your defense date.

To be completed by Academic Advisor:

Graduating Term (or thesis defense date*): _____
Degree level: _____
Degree program: _____
Courses required to complete degree program:
Course name: _____
Course number: _____
Is the student currently registered in the above courses? Yes No
Comments: _____

I verify that, by completing the above courses, the student:
_____ will graduate at the end of the semester listed
_____ will meet the minimum coursework requirements for the degree listed
Academic department: _____
Academic Advisor name (print): _____ Phone: _____
Academic Advisor signature: _____ Date: _____

Form I-765

The information below is not meant as legal advice and is subject to change without notice.

If you answered "Yes" to #11, which USCIS Service Center processed the request? (Texas, Vermont, California or Nebraska)

For OPT, mark the first box.

What authorization dates were on the EAD?

I am applying for: Permission to accept employment.
 Replacement (of lost employment authorization document).
 Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach previous employment authorization document).

Granted or Denied? If denied, include copy of denial letter. If granted, include copy of EAD.

Last name in CAPITAL letters, then first and middle names. Example: SMITH, John

1. Name (Family Name in CAPS) (First) (Middle) Which USCIS Office? Date(s)

Your address or the ISSO address. The receipt and EAD will be sent to the address listed here.

2. Other Names Used (include Maiden Name)
INT'L OFFICE, SSB34

3. Address in the United States (Number and Street) (Apt. Number)
800 West Campbell Rd

(Town or City) (State/Country) (ZIP Code)
Richardson TX 75080

Date and port of entry on your I-94 card. "Place" should be city and state, not airport code.

Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation)

12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S. (mm/dd/yyyy)

13. Place of Last Entry into the U.S.

Your passport information.

4. Country of Citizenship/Nationality

5. Place of Birth (Town or City) (State/Province) (Country)

6. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) 7. Gender
 Male Female

Visa status at time of last U.S. entry, e.g. "F-1 student"

14. Manner of Last Entry (Visitor, Student, etc.)

15. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.)

16. Go to Part 2 of the Instructions, Eligibility Categories. In the space below, place the letter and number of the category you selected from the instructions (For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.).

"F-1 student"

If you have never had a SSN, leave blank.

8. Marital Status Married Single
 Widowed Divorced

Indicates you are applying for post-completion OPT.

Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (C) (3) (B)

11-digit number from top left corner of I-94.

9. Social Security Number (include all numbers you have ever used) (if any)

10. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or I-94 Number (if any)

17. If you entered the Eligibility Category, (c)(3)(C), in item 16 above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number in the space below.

#17 does not pertain to post-completion OPT. Skip this section.

Degree: _____

Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify: _____

Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number _____

Have you submitted an I-765 for an EAD before? If not, mark "No" and skip to #12.

11. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?
 Yes (If "Yes," complete below) No

Certification

Your Certification: I certify, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the Instructions in Part 2 and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Block 16.

Sign and date. Providing a phone number is optional.

Signature Telephone Number Date

I-765 Address

- ❑ The address on the I-765 determines which regional USCIS Service Center will process the application.
- ❑ Applications with a Texas address on the I-765 will be processed by the Texas Service Center. If you do not use a Texas address, please download the I-765 instructions from <http://www.uscis.gov> to determine which USCIS Service Center will process your application.

Address Options

Your local address:

- The OPT receipt notice and EAD card will be mailed directly to you.
- You must provide the ISSO with a copy of the EAD card after you receive it.
- The post office will not forward federal mail. We do not recommend this option if you will move before you receive the EAD card.

ISSO address:

- Use the address format on the I-765 instructions on the previous slide.
- The OPT receipt notice and EAD card will be mailed to ISSO.
- We will open the envelope, make a copy, then send you an email notification that a document has arrived for you to pick up.

OPT Process

- Submit required documents to ISSO.
- ISSO verifies eligibility and issues an OPT I-20 within 3 business days. An e-mail is sent when I-20 is ready.
- Pick up documents and mailing instructions from ISSO.
- Add remaining documents, photos and application fee to your OPT packet.
- Make a copy for your records.
- If you wish to have it reviewed, bring the packet to the ISSO.
- Mail the application to USCIS.
- USCIS sends a receipt with your application case number.
- Check the status of your application online. Go to www.uscis.gov and enter your application case number.
- If application is approved, USCIS sends an EAD.

Copy of CPT Employment

- All USCIS Service Centers require post-completion OPT applications to include proof of CPT's done at this educational level. Therefore, when we process your OPT application, we will print the CPT employment page of your SEVIS record for you. You will need to mail this page along with your OPT application to USCIS Service Center.
- If you do not include the CPT employment page of your SEVIS record with your application, approval of the application may be delayed or possibly denied.

Mail to the Texas Service Center

- G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance (this form is optional).
- Check for \$380 made payable to the Department of Homeland Security. Write I-94 on check.
- 2 passport pictures (print name and I-94 number on the back)
- Original I-765
- Copy of OPT I-20 (pages 1 and 3)
- Copy of ID page of valid passport. If passport will expire within 6 months include evidence of renewal
- Copy of I-94 front and back
- Copy of visa (F-1 or other and COS Approval Notice , if applicable)
- Copy of any previous EAD and corresponding I-20
- Copy of CPT employment page of your SEVIS record

USCIS Confirmation of Delivery

Although you will receive an official receipt notice from USCIS about 2-3 weeks after you mail the application, we recommend you send your application by a method in which you will receive confirmation that it has been delivered. These are some options you may want to consider:

Method	Description
Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance	If this USCIS form is submitted with your OPT application, you will receive an email or text message that confirms your application was received. There is no fee required for submitting this form. Email or text messages that cannot be delivered will not be retransmitted.
U.S. Postal Service Certified Mail	Provides a mailing receipt and delivery information. You can also receive online access to the delivery status for an additional fee. The average cost of certified mail is \$3-\$5.
Express Mail with the U.S. Postal Service or a private courier	Provides a mailing receipt and online access to the delivery status.

I-797 Receipt Notice

U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service

Notice of Action

RECEIPT NUMBER		CASE TYPE	
SRC-010-00-11101		I539	
RECEIVED DATE	PRIORITY DATE	APPLICATION TO EXTEND/CHANGE NONIMMIGRANT STATUS	
February 13, 2003		APPLICANT	
NOTICE DATE	PAGE	KITTY, JONES	
February 14, 2003	1 of 1		
JONES KITTY c/o International Office MC 36 PO Box 830688 Richardson TX 75083-0688		Notice Type: Receipt Notice Fee Previously Collected Class requested: F1	
<p>The above application or petition has been received. It usually takes 30 to 60 days from the date of this receipt for us to process this type of case. Please notify us immediately if any of the above information is incorrect.</p> <p>We will send you a written notice as soon as we make a decision on this case. You can also use the phone number (214) 381-1423 to obtain case status information direct from our automated system 24 hours a day with a touch-tone phone and the receipt number for this case (at the top of this notice).</p> <p>If you have other questions about possible immigration benefits and services, filing information, or Immigration and Naturalization Service forms, please call the INS National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 1-800-375-5283. If you are hearing impaired, please call our TDD at 1-800-767-1833.</p> <p>You can also visit the INS on the internet at www.ins.gov. On our web site you can get up-to-date case status information on your case and find valuable information about immigration services and benefits.</p>			
<p>Please see the additional information on the back. You will be notified separately about any other cases you filed.</p> <p>IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE TEXAS SERVICE CENTER P O BOX 851488 - DEPT A MESQUITE TX 75185-1488 Customer Service Telephone: (214) 381-1423</p>			



Notify the ISSO if...

- You fail to graduate or must defend in a later semester.
- If you don't get a receipt within 4 weeks after mailing your application and you have verified with your bank that your check has been processed, send an email to the USCIS Lockbox facility at lockboxsupport@dhs.gov.
- If you get your receipt, but don't get your card within 3 ½ months of the received date. Bring your receipt to the ISSO.

REMEMBER

- USCIS must receive your OPT application within 60 days of your program completion date.
- OPT I-20 processing time is 3 business days.
- Your OPT application must contain a copy of your OPT I-20.
- The ISS Office must have a copy of your EAD card or your F1 status may be negatively affected.
- Contact the ISSO before the expiration of the EAD card if you want to continue your F-1 status.
- Check your grades. If you cannot graduate, you must notify ISSO prior to graduation date to explore available F-1 options.

Forms

The ISSO can provide you with forms or you can download forms at:

Location	Form
<p>http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/index.html</p> <p>www.uscis.gov, then select “Forms”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPT I-20 Request• OPT Reporting Form• I-765• G-1145

Contact Us

The following options are available if you would like to contact an immigration advisor with questions about OPT:

- Walk-In Advising: Mon-Thu 10:30-5:00 and Fri 10:30-4:00.
- Send an email to ISSOcurrent@utdallas.edu.
- Call 972-883-4189 to schedule an appointment.

**Congratulations and good
luck!**

