



The University of Oklahoma
International Student Services

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING ONLINE FILING

OPT Application Procedure

Step 1: Gather scanned copies of the following documents

Have the following uploaded to your computer:

- 2x2 color passport-style photograph
 - OU ISS recommends that you use the following USCIS photo tool <https://tsg.phototool.state.gov/photo>
- I-94 record <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>
- Photocopy of your new OPT-recommended I-20 signed and dated by you and your OU ISS advisor
 - **If you do not have a new I-20 with an OPT Request listed on page 2, please STOP and complete the eForm request below. You must have this document for your application.*
 - To go <https://ou.edu/cis/iss/forms/OPTI20Request>
- Photocopy of your passport bio-page
- Photocopy of your F1 visa
- Photocopy of previous EAD (front & back) (if applicable)
- Photocopy of previous OPT and CPT I-20s (if applicable)

Step 2: Create your myUSCIS online account

If you have not yet created your myUSCIS account, click <https://www.uscis.gov/file-online/how-to-create-a-uscis-online-account> to create your myUSCIS account.

- Go to <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>, then click **Sign In**.
- Click on **myUSCIS**
- Click on **File a Form Online**
- Select **“Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)”** and then click **Start Form**
- Click **Next** on the following page
- Click **Start** to begin your application

Complete the Form I-765

**You cannot submit this any earlier than 90 days before the end-date of your I-20.*

Getting Started

Basis of eligibility

- What is your eligibility category?
 - Select **(c)(3)(B) Post-completion OPT**

Reason for applying

- What is your reason for applying?
 - Select **Initial permission to accept employment**
- Have you previously filed Form I-765?
 - If this is your FIRST I-765 form filed, select **No**.
 - If you have filed an I-765 before, regardless of the category, select **Yes**.

Preparer and interpreter information

- Is someone assisting you with completing this application?
 - Select **No**.
 - If you have a legal representative assisting you with this application, select **Yes**.

About You

Your name

- What is your current legal name?
 - **Provide you name exactly as it appears in your passport.**
- Have you used any other names since birth?
 - If you have never had your name legally changed, select **No**

Your contact information

- How may we contact you?
 - **Provide the requested information.**
 - *For email address, we suggest that you use a **personal email address** instead of your UNH/wildcat email address.*
- What is your current U.S. mailing address?
 - **Provide the appropriate information.**
 - *If you are using your own address, leave "In care of name" blank. If you use a friend's/family member's address, provide their name in this field.*
 - **For Norman Campus students:** We highly recommend using OU ISS address to receive your documents: In care of name: **International Student Services**
Address line 1: **729 Elm Ave, Farzaneh Hall 144**
City: **Norman**; State: **Oklahoma**; Zip code: **73019**
 - **For all OU campus students:** *OPT documents (approval notice, EAD card, etc.) cannot be forwarded to new addresses, so if you use your living address to have your OPT documents mailed directly to you, if you move before your OPT documents arrive through the mail, you should not use your personal address. Use a reliable mailing address if you don't use OU ISS's address.*
- Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?
 - **Provide the appropriate answer.**

Describe yourself

Provide the requested information

- What is your gender?
- What is your marital status?

When and where you were born

Provide the requested information

- What is your city, town, or village of birth?
- What is your state or province of birth?
- What is your country of birth?
- What is your date of birth?
 - *For date of birth, make sure this is in Month / Day / Year order.*

Your immigration information

Provide the requested information/documents for each section:

- What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?
 - **Provide Admission (I-94) Record Number found in Most Recent I-94**
- When did you last arrive in the United States?
 - Date of arrival: **provide Most Recent Date of Entry found in Most Recent I-94**

- Place of arrival: **provide Arrival Location found in Travel History in I-94**
- Status at last arrival: **provide Class of Admission found in Most Recent I-94**
Most students will select F-1 – F-1 – Student, Academic or Language Program
- What is the passport number of your most recent issued passport?
 - **Provide most recent passport number**
If you have renewed your passport since you last entered the US, your most recent issued passport may have a different number from your most recent I-94. That is fine. Provide the number of your valid and most recently issued passport.
- What is your travel document number (if any)?
F1 students do not have a Travel Document.
- What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?
Make sure this is in Month / Day / Year order.
- What country issued your passport or travel document?
 - **Provide the requested information**
- What is your current immigration status or category?
 - Select **F-1 – F-1 – Student, Academic or Language Program**
- What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?
 - Enter **the numbers** what follow the “N” in your SEVIS number on your I-20.

Other information

- What is your A-Number?
 - Most students should check “**I do not have or know my A-number**”.
However, if you have been issued an A-number from a previous EAD such as OPT or as part of the green card process, please list your A-number. The A-number is the USCIS # listed on your previous OPT EAD card, if applicable.
- What is your USCIS Online Account Number?
 - Most students should check “**I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number**”.
You may already have a USCIS Online Account Number if you previously filed certain paper forms and received an Account Access Notice in the mail. You can find the OAN at the top of the notice; it is not the same as an A-Number.
- Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?
 - **Answer accordingly.**
- Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?
 - If you already have an SSN, select **No**.
 - If you do not have a SSN and would like one as part of the OPT application, select **Yes**.

Evidence

2x2 photo of you

Follow the on-screen instructions to upload your passport style photo.

Form I-94

Follow the on-screen instructions to upload your most recent I-94 record.

You may obtain you most recent electronic I-94 at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>.

Employment Authorization Document

Follow the on-screen instructions to upload your EAD card.

*If you **have not** been issued an EAD card by USCIS in the past, upload a copy of your passport identification page(s) in this section. Also upload a copy of your F1 here as an additional document. Your F1 visa does not have to be valid.*

*If you **have** been issued an EAD card by USCIS in the past (such as for OPT after a previous degree program), upload a copy, in this section.*

Previously authorized CPT or OPT

Follow the on-screen instructions to upload previously authorized CPT or OPT.

If you **have** had CPT or OPT before:

- CPT: upload a copy of the I-20 you received with the CPT authorization.
- OPT/STEM OPT: upload a copy of the I-20 you received with the OPT authorization.

If you **have not** had either CPT or OPT, click **Next** to continue.

Form I-20

Upload the I-20 which your International Student Advisor issued to you with the OPT recommendation on page 2 of the I-20. Make sure the I-20 is signed and dated by both you and your International Student Advisor.

Important: If you **have not** completed the OPT I-20 Request Form and gotten your OPT I-20, **stop immediately** and follow the instructions at the beginning of this document for OPT-recommending I-20.

Additional Information

Additional Information

Refer to page 7 of your I-765 and add information if applicable.

Review and Submit

Review your application

Make sure to pay the correct fee for the OPT application!

Make sure there are no alerts or warnings regarding your application!

The online system will allow you to submit the application without completing some of the required fields for the application. So be careful!

Your application summary

Review your Application Responses Carefully!!

You will not be able to change your responses after you submit the application.

Your statement

You must check **"I can read and understand English, and have read and understand every question and instruction on this application, as well as my answer to every question"**.

Your signature

You must check **"I have read and agree to the applicant's statement"**. Type your **full legal name**.

Pay and submit

Pay the application fee indicated on the USCIS website. The application fee can be paid via bank account (ACH), debit, or credit card.

Congratulations! You have submitted your OPT application! You may follow the progress of the application by viewing "Your Cases" in your myUSCIS account and the appropriate tabs.

After you submit your OPT application with USCIS

Wait for your OPT to be approved...

1. You will receive a receipt notice from the USCIS. Make sure that all your information is correct on the receipt notice (address, spelling of your name, etc). If you notice an error, please call the USCIS Customer Service line. Submit a copy of your receipt notice to our office at <http://ou.edu/cis/iss/forms/uscis-notices>.
2. Use the receipt number on your receipt notice to track the status of your application online at uscis.gov.
3. If you have opted to receive a Social Security number, you will receive your SSN card within 7 business days of receiving your EAD card. Your SSN card will be sent to the address you indicated on your I-765 form (the same address where your EAD card will be sent). If you do not receive your SSN card within 7 business days of receiving your EAD card, visit your local SSA office to apply for your SSN in person.

Reporting requirements while on post-completion OPT

1. If you used your personal mailing address on the I-765 form, submit a copy of you EAD card to the ISS office as soon as you receive it using the **12-month OPT Employment and Address Report** at www.ou.edu/cis/iss/forms.
2. You are required to report changes in employment (including unemployment) and personal address within 10 days of any changes. Report your OPT Employment and Address information using the **12-month OPT Employment and Address Report** at www.ou.edu/cis/iss/forms.

! If you fail to report employment within 90 days OR accumulate 90 days of unemployment while on post-completion OPT, your SEVIS record (I-20) may be terminated (lose your legal immigration status) by SEVP (the US government).

Disclaimer: OU International Student Services is able to provide you with general guidance on maintaining your student visa status. However, any advice provided to you by our office, as well as the information in this packet, should not be construed as legal advice. Additionally, due to the fluid nature of governmental interpretation, USCIS may change its interpretation of these immigration regulations and eligibility requirements for benefits at any time. We will do our best to provide you with the most current guidance. Each case is fact-specific, and it is advised that you contact an experienced immigration attorney if any detail of your situation/application is unclear or complicated.



OPT Expectations and Responsibilities

1. I understand that I must send the packet to the appropriate USCIS center found on the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov/node/44256 and then select the appropriate filing address for my location.
2. I understand that the processing time is generally 90-100 days. I can pay the additional cost for Premium Processing by completing Form I-907 at www.uscis.gov/i-907.
3. I understand that I need to provide a copy of the OPT EAD card to the ISS office and that failing to do so may result in immigration issues.
4. I understand that my receipt notice will have a number that I can use to track my case status online.
1. I understand that I must routinely report my personal address and US employer address using the **OPT Reporting** form at www.ou.edu/cis/iss/forms. I will update it as necessary throughout my OPT. **This is a requirement to maintain my legal status in the US.**
5. I understand the recommendations for international travel while on OPT (I-20 signed for travel, EAD, valid passport, valid visa, employment confirmation letter).
6. I understand that I will receive an automated e-mail from the ISS office telling me that my I-20 is about to expire, I should delete it and ignore it. The OPT I-20 is my current I-20.
7. I understand that I must report the start and end dates of any period of unemployment to OU ISS and that my US employer must report to OU ISS within 48 hours if I have left their employment.
8. I understand that I must not have more than 90+ days of unemployment (counted from EAD start date) or this could result in the loss of my F-1 status. I will keep track of jobs that I apply to in case USCIS asks.
9. For more information about the Required Documentation, I will check the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov/i-765



Special Issues in OPT Employment

What types of employment are allowed for pre-completion and post-completion OPT?

A job offer is not a required element of the designated school official's recommendation for OPT, or of USCIS approval of OPT. All OPT employment must be in a job that is related to the student's degree program. For students who are not on a STEM extension, this employment may include:

- **Paid employment working hours per week** (post-completion OPT)
 - Part-time – 20 hours or less
 - Full-time – 21 hours or more
- **Multiple employers** – Students may work for more than one employer, but all employment must be related to the student's degree program.
 - Pre-completion OPT cannot exceed the 20 hours per week in the Fall and Spring semesters.
 - For example, if you have a Graduate Assistantship and work 10 hours per week, then you may only work 10 hours per week using Pre-Completion OPT for a total of 20 hours per week.
- **Short-term multiple employers** – Students such as musicians and other performing artists may work for multiple short-term employers in "gigs." The student should maintain a list of all gigs, dates and duration.
- **Work for hire** – 1099 employment where an individual performs a service based on a contractual rather than employment relationship. The student should maintain a list of contract periods, and the name and address of the contracting company.
- **Self-employed business owner** – Students on OPT may start a business and be self-employed. The student must work full-time, be able to show that he has the proper business licenses, and is actively engaged in a business related to the degree program.
- **Employment through an agency** - Student must be able to provide evidence that they worked more than 20 hours per week while employed by an agency.
- **Unpaid employment** – Students may work as volunteers or unpaid interns when this work does not violate US labor laws. Students must be able to provide employer evidence that the student worked more than 20 hours per week during the period of employment.
 - Unpaid work must be more than 20 hours per week for students on post-completion OPT

How can a student show that a job is appropriate for OPT?

Students should maintain evidence for each job of the position held, proof of the duration of the position, the job title, contact information for the student's manager, and a description of the work. If the job description does not make clear that the work is related to the student's degree, SEVP recommends that the student obtain a signed letter from the hiring official or manager, stating how the student's degree is related to the work performed.

What are the unemployment limits while an F-1 student is on post-completion OPT?

Students on OPT who accrue more than 90 days of unemployment will lose their F-1 status. Students who are the beneficiaries of OPT STEM extensions are allotted an additional 60 days of permissible unemployment for a total of 150 days. Periods of unemployment **not to exceed ten business days** are permitted **between jobs**. Time spent abroad **unemployed** and **on approved OPT** is still considered unemployment for the purpose of accruing time toward the 90 and 150-day limits.



Expected Degree Completion

The date to begin optional practical training (OPT) is the date on which all the requirements for the degree program have been met. This is called the **date of completion** and is not necessarily the date of graduation.

Section A – to be completed by student

Student Name: _____ OU ID: _____
Family (Last) First

I confirm that **I have met with my academic advisor/thesis supervisor/chair and that my expected completion date is the date shown below.**

Printed Name Signature Date

Reminder: You are not eligible for on-campus employment after your degree completion date. OU Payroll will be notified regarding your last day of the on-campus employment eligibility. This will also end any graduate assistant appointment benefits, including tuition waivers.

Section B – to be completed by Academic Advisor, Thesis Supervisor, or Department Chair

Undergraduate Students

The completion date is the **last day of finals week in the semester in which all course requirements are completed.**

Expected date of degree completion (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Graduate Students

The completion date can be (check one):

- The date on or after which all coursework is complete
- The date on which the thesis or dissertation is defended
- The last day of the semester in which the defense took place
- If the student has a Graduate Assistantship and the department requires the student to finish out the contract, this date can be the end of the contract (no later than May 15 for Spring semester or December 31 for Fall semester).

Expected date of degree completion (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

I confirm that the **expected completion date is the date shown above.**

Printed Name Signature Date