Optional Practical Training Information and Application Workshop

Center for International Education
California State University, East Bay
Topics to be covered....

• What is OPT?
• Types of Employment
• Documents needed to prepare your OPT application
• Application Submitted! What now?
• Maintaining F-1 Status While on OPT
• STEM
What is Optional Practical Training (OPT)?

OPT is temporary employment authorization for International Students in F-1 status. OPT provides an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge acquired from their academic program to a work experience directly related to their current major field of study.

- **Length**: 12 months at each higher education level. You may become eligible for another 12 months of OPT when you move to a higher education level in the US.
- **Jobs**: While on OPT, students job(s) must be directly related to their current major(s), not minor.
- **How to obtain OPT**: You will email your completed OPT Request Form to CIE advisor and we will email you your OPT Request I-20. You will then mail the application to USCIS.
- **Processing Time**: Processing time for USCIS to approve your application and mail you the “Employment Authorization Document” up to 90 days or more
  - Currently taking between 2-3 months
Types of Employment

All employment must be related to your major

- **Paid employment.** Students may work part time (at least 20 hours per week when on post-completion OPT) or full time in a job related to their field of study.
- **Multiple employers.** Students may work for more than one employer, but all employment must be related to the student’s degree program.
- **Short-term multiple employers (performing artists).** Students, such as musicians and other performing artists may work for multiple short term employers (gigs). The student should maintain a list of all gigs, the dates and duration. If requested by USCIS, students must be prepared to provide evidence showing a list of all gigs.
- **Work for hire.** This is also commonly referred to as 1099 employment where an individual performs a service based on a contractual relationship rather than employment relationship. If requested by USCIS, students must be prepared to provide evidence showing the duration of the contract periods and the name and address of the contracting company.
Types of Employment

• **Self-employed business owner.** Students on OPT may start a business and be self-employed. In this situation, the student must work full-time. The student must be able to prove that he or she has the proper business licenses and is actively engaged in a business related to the student’s degree program.

• **Employment through an agency.** Students on Post-Completion OPT must be able to provide evidence showing they worked an average of at least 20 hours per week while employed by the agency.

**Unpaid employment** Students may work as volunteers or unpaid interns, where this does not violate any labor laws. The work must be at least 20 hours per week for students on Post-completion OPT. These students must be able to provide evidence from the employer that the student worked at least 20 hours per week during the period of employment.

It is recommended that you maintain evidence for each job: the position held, duration of that position, the job title, contact information for the student’s supervisor or manager, and a description
Employment Authorization Documentation (EAD)

- EAD will be mailed to you upon approval

- Dates indicate your eligible dates to work
  
  - You cannot begin working until the start date if you get the card before the start date

- Shows employers you are eligible to work in the USA

**Make sure you check spelling for any errors**
90-Day Unemployment Limit

- Your unemployment starts from the date on your EAD card, even if the date is in the past.
- You must work at least 20 hours per week in a qualifying position to be considered “Employed”.
- To avoid violating F-1 status, prior to reaching the 90-day unemployment limit, a student should take one of the following actions:
  - Apply to continue his or her education by a change of level or transferring to another SEVP-certified school
  - Depart the United States
  - Take action to otherwise maintain legal status
- As of SEPTEMBER 1st, 2020, your SEVIS record will be TERMINATED by SEVP for failing to report employment within 90 days

If one of those actions is not taken, a student who has exceeded the period of unemployment is considered violated his or her status. The student must depart the U.S. immediately as there is no additional grace period.
Eligibility to Apply

You must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible to apply for OPT:

• Be in valid F-1 status
• Enrolled full-time. Minimum 12 units for undergraduate students or 8 units for graduate students. You are also eligible to apply for OPT if you have approved Reduced Course Load (RCL).
• Fulfilled one year full-time requirement. You must have been enrolled full-time for at least one full academic year prior to submitting an OPT application. You have not already been approved for 12 months of OPT at the current degree level.
• Must be in good academic standing
• Job offer is not required.
Program Completion Date

The program completion date is NOT the same as your graduation date or the term you filed for graduation. Program Completion is when you complete all degree requirements.

CIE will change the program end date on your I-20 and print a new I-20 with OPT recommendation to you. You cannot work on-campus beyond your program end date on the I-20.
When to Apply for Post Completion OPT

• Submit your application up to 90 days before your program completion date
  – You may also submit your application during the 60 day grace period after the program completion date.
  – You must be physically in the US while applying for OPT. If you leave the US during the grace period, you lose your opportunity to apply for OPT.
Determine your OPT start & end date

• Your *requested* start date must be within your 60 day grace period after the program completion date.

• OPT will end 12 months (365 days) from the start date, or within 14 months of the program completion date.

• Once USCIS receives your OPT application, it is very difficult to change the requested OPT start and end dates. This could also delay application.
OPT Request Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Completion</th>
<th>Earliest Date to Apply for OPT Request I-20</th>
<th>Earliest Requested OPT Start Date</th>
<th>Latest Requested OPT Start Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>September 12th, 2021</td>
<td>December 12th, 2021</td>
<td>February 9th, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2022</td>
<td>October 18th, 2021</td>
<td>January 15th, 2022</td>
<td>March 15th, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2022</td>
<td>February 14th, 2022</td>
<td>May 14th, 2022</td>
<td>July 12th, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2022</td>
<td>May 9th, 2022</td>
<td>August 7th, 2022</td>
<td>October 5th, 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is your responsibility to confirm the grace period dates. The last day of finals is considered the semester end date and your 60 day grace period starts the following day.
Obtain OPT Request I-20

In order to apply for OPT, you will need an OPT Request I-20 from CIE.

**OPT Request Form**

- The form is the last 2 pages in the OPT handout.
- Form must be completed and signed by all required parties.
- Email your completed form to your CIE advisor or cie@csueastbay.edu.
- CIE will process your request and email your OPT Request I-20 to your horizon email.
- You will need to download, print, save and SIGN your I-20. No electronic signatures are permitted.

**IMPORTANT**- USCIS will only accept an I-20 within 30 days of the OPT being recommended in SEVIS by your CIE advisor. Do NOT delay submitting your application.
OPT Request Form

**Student Info**
This section needs to be completed by you. You will indicate your preferred OPT start and end date. Sign

**Academic Info - Undergraduate Students**
You will ask your major advisor and GE advisor (Sam Tran) to complete this section.

**Academic Info - Graduate Students**
You will ask your major advisor and (if necessary) your project/thesis/capstone advisor to complete this section.

**We will accept electronic signatures or emails in lieu of signatures. If you have an approved RCL for the semester you are applying, we can use RCL documentation.**
OPT Request Form

All Students
Please read each statement carefully

APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Please review the requirements and responsibilities below:

- I cannot work on campus beyond my program completion date, usually the last day of finals of your final term.
- I cannot start working until I receive the EAD and the start date indicated on my EAD has been met.
- I am only allowed to work in my field of study only during the dates specified on the EAD.
- I ensure the information provided on my OPT application is accurate.
- My passport must remain valid during my OPT period.
- I must maintain health insurance coverage for myself and dependent(s) during my OPT.
- My OPT will be automatically terminated if I transfer to another school or start a new degree program.
- I cannot be unemployed for more than a total of 90 days during my entire 12 month OPT period, including periods between jobs.
- It is my responsibility to report any changes to the following information within 10 days:
  - U.S. Address and phone number:
  - Changes to your employment information and report loss of employment:
  - SEVP Portal or MyCSUEB account
- I will email CIE ([cie@csueastbay.edu]) a copy of my EAD upon receiving it.
- It is my responsibility to obtain a travel signature from CIE if I am going to travel outside the US while I am on OPT. A travel endorsement is only valid for 6 months. I must have a valid F-1 visa, valid passport, EAD card and a job offer in order to re-enter the US.
- I understand that I am eligible to apply for OPT STEM, my application must be received by USCIS BEFORE my Post Completion OPT EAD expires.
- I understand that I should inform CIE immediately upon receiving any notices from USCIS such as Rejection Notice, Request for Evidence (RFE), Notice of Intent to Deny, or Denial Notice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND SIGNATURE

I have read and now understand the above requirements. It is my responsibility to abide by the regulations governing OPT and to maintain F-1 status. Failure to abide by the requirements is failure to maintain my F-1 status and my result in termination of my SEVIS record and thus my ability to work. In addition, failure to abide by the requirements may potentially affect any future immigration benefit applications filed with USCIS such as H-1B or Permanent Residency.

CIE is able to provide you with general guidance. 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, the USCIS may change its interpretation of these immigration laws/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 you have questions regarding your situation.

Student Name: _______________________
Student Signature: ____________________
DATE: ____________________________

OPT REQUEST I-20

Your OPT I-20 will be electronically signed by our office and emailed to you. Electronic signatures on I-20’s by DSO’s are currently valid per SEVP Guidance. You will be required to print your I-20, sign and date your I-20 with an ink pen and submit a copy of the signed I-20 to USCIS.
OPT I-20 Processing time is currently 2-5 business days. Review your I-20 for any errors (pages 1 and 2). If no errors, print and sign your I-20 on page 1.

**School Attestation**
Make sure there is a CIE Advisor signature. Check the date - USCIS must receive your application within 30 days of the ISSUE date listed on page 1.

**Student Attestation**
You should sign and date the I-20 after you print it. Students 18 and older do not need a parent’s signature.
Page 2 of your OPT Request I-20 shows that OPT is requested and the dates you have requested.

**OPT Request Dates**
Confirm these dates match the dates you requested on your OPT Request Form.
Methods of Applying

You can submit your application to USCIS either by

• **Online Application** - You will submit your application and supporting documents online via [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) – We recommend using this option – This presentation will focus on this method to submit your application

• **By Mail** - you can mail your paper application and copies of supporting documents to USCIS. – If you wish to mail your application, please see our [OPT-Mailing Application to USCIS](http://www.uscis.gov) handout for instructions.
USCIS Form I-765

Why Go Online?

- File a form online
- Access notices we send you
- Ask about a typo or missing mail
- Send us secure messages & get answers
- Check case status & sign up for alerts
- Pay online with via ACH a credit or debit card
- Respond to a request for evidence
- Update your address & contact information
- Access case information 24/7 from any device
USCIS Online Application

Documents we recommend you have scanned and labeled appropriately to upload to your application:

- OPT Request I-20 issued by CIE
- Passport Photo
- Previous CPT and/or OPT I-20’s
- Previous EAD (if applicable)
- I-94
- Passport
Create a USCIS Account

Create your account at myaccount.uscis.gov

Select Account Type
You are an applicant
Welcome To Your USCIS Account
Select What You Want To Do

- Add a paper-filed case
  View your case status and case history by adding your case to your account

- File a form online
  Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online

- Enter a representative passcode
  Review and sign forms prepared for you by your attorney or representative

- Verify your identity
  Answer questions about your immigration history to verify your personal identity

SELECT
USCIS Account

Select the Form

- Filing for OPT requires you to complete USCIS Form I-765

You MUST select “I-765, Application for Employment Authorization”

- Once selected, you will see the different employment categories.
- Post Completion OPT category is (c)(3)(B)

⚠️ Note: You may submit Form I-765 online only if your eligibility category is:
  - (c)(3)(A) - F-1 student, pre-completion OPT;
  - (c)(3)(B) - F-1 student, post-completion OPT;
  - (c)(3)(C) - F-1 student, 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics);
  - (a)(12) - Temporary Protected Status (You are submitting an initial Form I-821 or you have an approved Form I-821); or

Select “Start Form” to proceed
USCIS Form I-765

You MUST read and make sure you understand this section.

- Eligibility
- Fee
- Documents you may need
- Track your case
- Decision

Select “Next” once you have read it
USCIS Form I-765

Completing your Form Online

• Filing Online
• Complete the Getting Started section first
• Provide as many responses as you can
• We will automatically save your responses
• How to continue filing out your form
• Privacy Notices
• Security Reminder

• Select “Start” to begin
What is your eligibility category?

- The category you pick here will determine the rest of the application and the documents you are required to upload.
- Your category for POST COMPLETION OPT is c(3)(B)
USCIS Form I-765

Reason for applying?
- Select Initial Permission to accept employment

Previous I-765?
- If you have ever filed an I-765 form with USCIS before, select yes
- If not, then no
USCIS Form I-765

Preparer and Interpreter Information

The majority of you will select “no”.

CIE is not assisting you with this application, we are not immigration attorneys.
About you

Your Name
- This will be how your name will appear on the EAD card

Have you used any other names since birth?
Other names used may include nicknames, aliases, and maiden names.

- Yes
- No
USCIS Form I-765

**Contact Info**
Use email you check often, doesn’t need to be CSUEB address

**Mailing Address**
This is the address your EAD and any other documents will be mailed. Try not to change this address during the process.

**Physical Address**
If you live someone other than your mailing address, input that address here. It is ok if this address changes during the application process.
USCIS Form I-765

Describe yourself

List your **gender** and Marital Status

What is your gender?
- Male
- Female

What is your marital status?
- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
USCIS Form I-765

Birth Information

List your city and state of Birth. Pick the country from the drop down menu

Date of Birth
Month/Date/Year
USCIS Form I-765

Immigration Information

Pick your country of citizenship for dropdown menu. If you have more than one, select “add country”.

Obtain your I-94 Record number at [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94)

Place of Arrival- airport you went through CBP

Status of Last Arrival- unless you changed your status in the USA, it should state

F1 - Student, Academic Or Language Program.
USCIS Form I-765

Immigration Information

Passport number of your most recently issued passport

Leave Travel Document number blank

Expiration Date of your passport you listed above

Country that issued your passport

• Do not use United States if you renewed in the USA, use the country who issued the passport
What is your current immigration status or category?

F1 - Student, Academic Or Language Program.

What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?

Use the “Additional Information” section to include all previously used SEVIS numbers.

N-

Immigration Information

In order to be eligible for Post Completion OPT, your current immigration status must be F-1

List your SEVIS number from your current I-20. It is located on the upper left corner.
USCIS Form I-765

Other Information

If you have filed a previous application with USCIS, you most likely have an **A-Number**, also known as USCIS #

You will only have a **USCIS Online Account Number** if you have previously submitted a document or application via USCIS online.
Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

- Yes
- No

What is your Social Security number (if known)?

If you have a Social Security Number, select Yes and list your SSN. Since you don’t need another Social Security card, select No.
Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

- Yes
- No

Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?

- Yes
- No

⚠️ You must agree to the Consent for Disclosure:
If you answer “Yes”, you must also answer “Yes” to the Consent for Disclosure.

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

Other Information
If you do NOT have social security number, follow this slide and next.

If you do not have a Social Security Number, select No. If you would like the Social Security Administration to issue you a card, select Yes.

Consent to USCIS to providing your information to the SSA to issue you a Social Security card by selecting Yes.
**Other Information**

Provide your **Father’s and Mother’s Birth Name**. No further documentation is needed.

If you select this method, USCIS will notify the SSA once your EAD has been approved and SSA will issue and mail your Social Security card to your mailing address. Usually takes 2-4 weeks after EAD issuance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given name (first name)</th>
<th>Family name (last name)</th>
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</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>
USCIS Form I-765

Evidence

2x2 Photo
You must provide a photo which meets Department of State’s specifications. This photo will be used on your EAD card.

• Taken within the past 6 months
• Full face view with white background
• In color

2 X 2 Photo Of You
Upload a recent color photograph of yourself that measures 2 inches by 2 inches, with your face measuring 1 inch to 1 3/8 inch from your chin to the top of your head. Your eyes should be between 1 1/8 inch and 1 3/8 inch from the bottom of the photo.

Make sure your whole face is visible, you are facing the camera directly, and the background is white or off-white. Your head must be bare, unless contrary to your religious beliefs.

If you need help understanding the photo requirements or want to resize, rotate, or crop your photo, you can use to the Department of State’s photo composition tools. Please note that we cannot approve your application without your photo.

File requirements
• Clear and readable
• Accepted file formats: JPEG, PNG, or PNG
• No encrypted or password-protected files
• If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator’s certification with each original document.
• Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
• Maximum size 8MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload
USCIS Form I-765

Evidence

I-94 Arrival/Departure Record
You must upload your most recent I-94 record which you obtained at www.cbp.gov/i94
Evidence

Government Issued ID
If you have a previous EAD, upload a copy of the front and back here. If you do not have an EAD, upload a copy of the **bio page from your passport** which shows your photo, name and DOB.

- You do not need to upload multiple types of ID or multiple pages of your passport.
Previously Authorized CPT Or OPT
Upload evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.

File requirements
- Clear and readable
- Accepted formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

Evidence

Previous CPT and/or OPT
This is only applicable if you have had CPT or OPT in the past.

Upload your I-20’s which show your previously authorized CPT periods and/or previous OPT.
Evidence

OPT Request I-20

Upload your most recent OPT Request I-20 which CIE recently issued you.

- No, you do not need to submit any other I-20’s
- Remember it has to be uploaded and submitted within 30 days of CIE recommending your OPT in SEVIS.
Additional Information

If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include the questions that you are referencing.

If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave this section blank.

Only use this section if you have additional information that pertains to this application that you haven’t included already.

• You cannot upload anything in this section. This gives you an area to explain something you wrote or uploaded in a previous section.
USCIS Form I-765

Review and Submit

Confirms the fee $410

The system will review your application and alert you the status. **Green**- good to go **Yellow**- you should review **Red**- not eligible to submit until corrected.
Review and Submit

Your Application Summary
You can print/save a copy of the I-765 form by clicking here.
• Strongly recommend you save a copy for your records

This will show all your responses from the form.
USCIS Form I-765

Review and Submit

Applicant's statement
You must read and agree to the statement below.

☐ 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.

Statement
You must agree to the statement that you can read and understand English and you have understood the questions.
Applicant’s Declaration and Certification

You must read and agree to the certification below. If you knowingly and willfully falsify or conceal a material fact or submit a false document with your application, we can deny your application and may deny any other immigration benefit. You may also face criminal prosecution and penalties provided by the law.

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.

I furthermore authorize release of information contained in this application, in supporting documents, and in my USCIS records, to other entities and persons where necessary for the administration and enforcement of U.S. immigration law.

I understand that USCIS may require me to appear for an appointment to take my biometrics (fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature) and, at that time, if I am required to provide biometrics, I will be required to sign an oath reaffirming that:

1) I reviewed and understood all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application; and

2) All of this information was complete, true, and correct at the time of filing.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that all of the information in my application and any document submitted with it were provided or authorized by me, that I reviewed and understand all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application, and that all of this information is complete, true, and correct.

☐ I have read and agree to the applicant’s statement

Once you have read it and checked the box, a **signature box** will appear. You will type your name and this will be considered your **digital signature**.
USCIS Form I-765

Pay for and submit your application

The final step to submit your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization is to pay the required fee.

Your application fee is: $410.

Refund Policy: By continuing this transaction, you agree that you are paying for a government service and that the filing fee, biometric services fee and all related financial transactions are final and not refundable, regardless of any action USCIS takes on an application, petition or request, or how long USCIS takes to reach a decision. You must submit all fees in the exact amounts.

We will send you to Pay.gov — our safe and secure payment website — to pay your fees and submit your form online.

Here are the steps in the payment and submission process:
1. Provide your billing information on Pay.gov
2. Provide your credit card or U.S. bank account information
3. Submit your payment

When you have paid your fee, your form will be submitted.

Pay.gov will redirect you to a uscis.gov confirmation screen, which will include your receipt number. Please keep a copy of your receipt number for your records. You can track the status of your application through your USCIS online account.

STOP- this is the best time to confirm everything is complete. Once you pay for the application, you cannot alter any of your answers!! Payments are NON-REFUNDABLE

Once you are ready to submit your application and pay, you will be directed to pay.gov to complete the payment.
USCIS Form I-765

Review and Submit

Pay.gov

You will be given 2 options to pay online.
• Via your bank
• Debit or Credit card
USCIS Form I-765

Review and Submit

Pay.gov

Debit or Credit Card Option
USCIS Form I-765

Please provide the payment information below. Required fields are marked with an *

Agency Tracking ID
50KFPGI12ZCWI

Payment Amount
$410.00

* Account Holder Name

* Account Type
Select ...

* Routing Number

* Account Number

* Confirm Account Number

Review and Submit

Pay.gov

Bank Option- Check
Make sure you have enough funds in your account!

Continue  Previous  Cancel
You have successfully submitted your application to USCIS.
• Click on “Go to my cases” to get your receipt!
All notices are posted to your account

- Receipt notice
- Biometrics notice
- Request for Evidence (RFE)
- PDF of completed form
- Decision letter

* Notices are also mailed to the mailing address on file
Application Submitted! What now?

- Access your Receipt Notice (I-797C Notice of Action) immediately online
  - Indicates your application is received, contains your receipt number, provides documentation for your legal stay
  - If USCIS requires any additional information from you, they will issue a Request for Evidence.
  - You will get a notification and it will be located in your online case file.

- USCIS will upload and mail Approval Notice
  - This document does not allow you to work but please keep it for your records

- USCIS will mail the EAD card
  - Usually takes 2 weeks after the Approval Notice

- SSA will issue SSN if you applied with your OPT application
Reporting Responsibilities

You are required to report any changes to your contact information or employment information within 10 days of the change. This includes but not limited to:

- Residential Address Change
- Phone or email change
- Employer Change
  - Beginning employment
  - Ending employment
  - Adding second employment

- Primary method to report all changes is the SEVP Portal
- Reporting Responsibilities listed on CIE Website
SEVP Portal

- The SEVP Portal [http://www.sevp.ice.gov/opt](http://www.sevp.ice.gov/opt) is a tool for you to report your employer information and contact information.
- You should also update your U.S. address and phone number on your MyCSUEB account.
- An email from SEVP (do-not-reply.sevp@ice.dhs.gov) with instructions will be sent after approval.
  - Email generally arrives on EAD start date but can take up to 1 week after EAD start date
  - Check your spam/junk folders
  - If it has been more than a week since your EAD card start date, contact CIE to confirm email has been sent by SEVP and your email address in SEVIS is correct
- Visit the SEVP Portal Help on Study in the States’ (www.studyinthestates.dhs.gov) website for help

PORTAL LINK DOES EXPIRE- Please create login immediately upon receiving email!
Check CIE Website for Info

OPT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Required Reporting
All students on OPT are required to report any changes within 10 days. Failure to comply with any of the reporting requirements constitutes a violation of your legal F-1 status.

SEVP PORTAL - Self Reporting Tool
The SEVP Portal is a tool that F-1 students engaged in post-completion OPT and STEM OPT Extension can choose to use to report certain updates to SEVIS.

You will receive an email from SEVP to create a portal at the same time as your EAD authorization start date.

For more information please visit: https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help

If you are unable to login to the Portal, please email cie@csueastbay.edu with your full name and SEVIS number to request a Portal reset.

Please send a copy of your EAD card to CIE.

Post-Completion OPT Reporting Requirements (12 Months)
Please make sure all information is reported within 10 days of the change. You will not be able to report any changes after 10 days and must contact CIE.
Maintaining F-1 Status

To maintain F-1 status you must:

• **Stay employed**: work at least 20 hours a week in a job related to your major
  – Do on pass 90 days of unemployment

• **Fulfill Reporting Responsibilities**: Report your address/phone/employer information via the SEVP Portal within 10 days of any change

• **EAD**: Send CIE a copy of your EAD card via email

• **Travel Endorsement**: Obtain a travel endorsement at least 2 weeks before departure
Grace Period & Health Insurance

**Grace Period** - You will have 60 day grace period after the OPT end date.
- You must leave the U.S. or transfer to another school to begin a new degree program to maintain your F-1 status
  - If you transfer before your OPT expires, your OPT authorization will terminate on your SEVIS release date

**Health Insurance** - It is very important to have Health Insurance during your OPT period
- Can be employer provided or through CSUEB
Travel Outside the United States

Travel is only recommended after receiving EAD

Documents Needed to Reenter the USA

• A valid passport (6 months into the future)
• A valid F-1 visa
• I-20 with endorsement from CIE
  – Travel endorsement is valid for 6 months
    • Must submit request to CIE at least 2 weeks before departure
• EAD
• Job offer letter or job verification

Evidence of financial support for the OPT period is strongly recommended
Don’t Complete Degree Requirements

• If you have filed for OPT then find out you have not completed your program requirements you have 2 choices
  – Extend your I-20 and withdraw your OPT application.
    • You will not receive your money back, no guarantee the withdrawal will be processed before approval
  – Continue your OPT application
    • Complete the last requirements the next semester while working **PART TIME** (20 hours a week) on OPT
24 Month STEM Extension

Eligibility

• STEM CIP Codes Only
• Employed with E-Verify Employer
• Employer willing to complete and sign I-983 form
• Employment must be paid and at least 20 hours a week

Review OPT STEM Tutorial
https://www.csueastbay.edu/cie/files/docs/pdfs/employment-handouts/stem-opt-tutorial.pdf for additional information

Apply up to 90 days before current EAD expires. Application must reach USCIS BEFORE current EAD expires
REMINDERS

1. You must sign your I-20 before submitting a copy as part of your application.
   • Students are not permitted to sign their I-20’s electronically
2. Application must be submitted within 30 days of CIE Advisor’s signature on page 1
3. You must be INSIDE the USA to apply for OPT
4. Confirm your application is complete and all documents are upload before you pay.
   • Once you pay, you can’t edit any answers. You can submit additional documents in “Unsolicited Evidence”.
5. OPT is a benefit of F-1 status so you must maintain your status while on OPT
   • Working in a job related to your field of study at least 20 hours a week
   • Reporting all changes in a timely manner
Any questions?

Please ask, others may have the same question!