



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

INTERNATIONAL ADVISING

Optional Practical Training

Steps to Apply for OPT

Note: Apply in the semester before completion of courses or during the 60-day grace period following completion of your program. Plan to apply at least 90 days before you plan to work. Do not apply more than 90 days before your graduation or your OPT will be rejected and you will need to reapply.

- 1) If you have been enrolled full time for one full academic year and have never received OPT at your current educational level, complete the Academic Advisor Certification form and Form I-765. You will need to meet with your academic advisor to complete the Academic Advisor Certification form.
- 2) Obtain all documentation listed below
- 3) Turn in the documentation (except your check) to the International Programs front desk.
- 4) An international advisor will review your documentation and, if approved, will issue a Form I-20 recommending OPT.
- 5) We will give your documents back to you in a pre-addressed envelope to mail to USCIS (don't forget to insert your check!)

Required documentation with each application:

- Form G-1145, e-Notification of Receipt available from uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf
- Academic Advisor Certification form (attached)
- \$410.00 – Fee can be paid by a cashier's check, money order, or a personal check made payable to "U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security"
- Copies of previous EADs and OPT I-20s (if applicable)
- Form I-20 endorsed by an International Student Advisor for OPT
- Form I-765 available from uscis.gov/i-765. The answer to #16 is (c)(3)(B)
- A copy of your I-94 Departure Record printed from <https://i94.cpb.dhs.gov/i94>
- A copy of the U.S. visa in your passport
- Two pictures taken within the past 30 days (see important specifications on page 2)
- A copy of the ID page in your passport



Ideal size, background, and pose - the image should follow the U.S. Passport and U.S. Visa Photography Guide available on this website: <http://travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/index.html>.

PHOTOS

Photos should be in the standard passport size 2 X 2 inches and the standard, full frontal face position taken from slightly above the top of the hair to the middle of the chest. Photos should be in color with a white background; taken within the past 30 days; unmounted; printed on thin paper; glossy; and unretouched. Your head should be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order to which you belong. Lightly print your family name on the back of each photo in pencil.

Important Information to know:

- **OPT students are required to report to the Designated School Official:**
 - ◆ The employer's name and address (include start date)
 - ◆ Any interruption or change of employment (include end date of previous job and start date of new job)
 - ◆ Any change of legal name or personal address
 - ◆ Change of visa status
- **During post-completion OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment.** Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization. The only exception is that periods of up to 10 days between the end of one job and the beginning of the next job are not included in the calculation of time spent unemployed. The 10 day exception also applies to the first 10 days from the start date on the student's EAD.
- **Students on OPT are advised to have the following documents prior to any travel outside the United States:** proof of employment, EAD card for OPT, a valid passport, form I-20 endorsed for travel, and a valid visa. If your F-1 visa has expired, speak to an international student advisor before making travel plans. It is more difficult to obtain a student visa while on practical/academic training, as the issue of intent to return to your home country is harder to prove once you have finished your degree and are working in the United States.

- **OPT ends if you transfer to another school, enroll full-time as a student, or begin a new program of study.** Part-time study is allowed as a non-degree student.
- **OPT must be related to your course of study and equal to your level of study.**
- **You must cancel or withdraw your OPT if you do not complete your degree.**
- **You must receive your EAD card before you can begin working.**

Types of employment that are allowed for post-completion OPT:

- **Paid Employment:** Students may work part time (at least 20 hours per week when on post-completion OPT) or full time.
- **Multiple Employers:** Students may work for more than one employer, but all employment must be related to each individual 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.
- **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 an employment relationship. If requested by DHS, students must be prepared to provide evidence showing the duration of the 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 be able to prove that he or she has the proper business licenses and is actively engaged in a business related to his or her degree program. NOTE: This option is unavailable during your STEM OPT extension period.
- **Employment through an agency or consulting firm:** Students on post-completion OPT should 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 practice does not violate any labor laws. The work should be at least 20 hours per week for students on post-completion OPT. A student should be able to provide evidence, acquired from the student's employer, to verify that he or she worked at least 20 hours per week during the period of employment. NOTE: This option is unavailable during your STEM OPT extension period.

Social Security Number

If you do not have a social security number, you will need to take your EAD card and job offer letter to the International Programs Office to request a letter to take with you to the Social Security Administration Office. It may take a few weeks to receive your social security card.



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Academic Advisor Certification for Optional Practical Training

Students: Please fill in the following information before seeing your academic advisor and sign below.

Student's Name: _____

Student's NUID: _____

Major: _____

I understand that if I make any change of program that requires me to get a new I-20, the OPT authorization will be cancelled, and I will not be able to complete the term of OPT. This includes transferring to a different school or changing from an undergraduate program to a graduate program.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Advisors: Please fill in the following information and sign below.

Name of Academic Advisor: _____

Degree Sought: _____

Date that coursework for degree will be completed: _____

Signature:

Academic Advisor

Date

Department

Phone Number