

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Definition

Practical training is an opportunity for hands-on experience related to one's field of study. Optional practical training (OPT) may be authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) during the following times:

1. during your annual vacation and at other times when school is not in session, if you are currently enrolled, are eligible for registration and intend to register for the next semester;
2. while school is in session (not to exceed more than 20 hours per week);
3. after completion of all course requirements for the degree, excluding the thesis or dissertation;
4. after completion of degree requirements.

You may be eligible for optional practical training in your field of study if you have been maintaining F-1 status at the time of the request and you have been a full-time student for one academic year. This also includes students who, during their course of study were enrolled in a study abroad program, provided they were enrolled for one full academic term in the U.S. prior to studying abroad.

You may be authorized for up to twelve months of optional practical training. Additionally, you may become eligible for another twelve months of practical training when you change to a higher educational level.

Part-time optional practical training, 20 hours per week or less, will be deducted from the available twelve month period at one-half the full-time rate. (i.e. six months of part-time practical training will equal three months deducted from the total twelve month period.)

It is not necessary to have an offer of employment in order to apply for optional practical training. USCIS currently has no formal provision for revoking practical training authorization once it has been approved.

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 authorization.

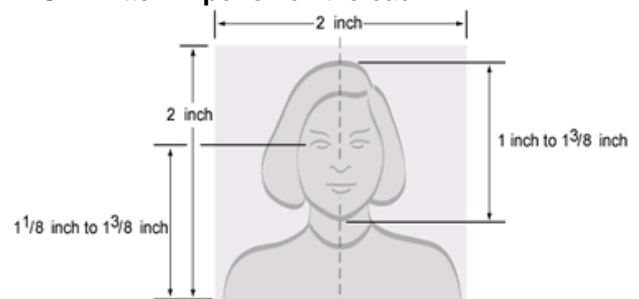
Application Procedures

You will be able to file the OPT application up to 90 days before the degree completion date, and up to 60 days after the degree completion date. However, the OPT application must be submitted to the USCIS within 30 days of the date on which OISS issues an OPT.

STEP I. You must provide the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS) with the following documents:

1. *Application for Optional Practical Training.* You must complete the top portion of the form and if applicable, your advisor must complete the bottom portion, and;
2. Completed and signed form I-765 (note: you may download form I-765 from www.uscis.gov)
Optional: Completed form G-1145 if you would like electronic notification of the receipt of your application;
3. Your passport;
4. Your current I-20 and all previous I-20 forms issued to you;
5. Your I-94 arrival/departure form;
6. Two passport style photographs, with your name and SEVIS # written in **pencil** on the back:

Photo is not drawn to scale. However, please ensure that it meets specified measurements



7. A personal check or money order for **\$410.00** made payable to **U.S Department of Homeland Security**

STEP II. An OISS staff member will:

1. verify your eligibility to apply for optional practical training;
2. if eligible, update the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and make the appropriate recommendation on the I-20;
3. return to you form I-20 showing recommendation for OPT;
4. put the following materials into the following order for mailing:
 - a. Original I-765 (and G-1145 if you would like electronic notification of the receipt of your application)
 - b. Check or money order stapled halfway up the I-765
 - c. Two photos placed back-to-back in plastic bag, stapled to bottom left of I-765
 - d. Photocopy of the OPT-endorsed I-20, pages 1 and 2
 - e. Photocopy of all previous I-20 forms
 - f. Photocopies of any previous EAD cards
 - g. Copy of your I-94 form
 - h. Photocopy of the pages of your passport that have your photo and expiration date.

STEP III. You should mail the application to the *USCIS Service Center* having jurisdiction over your place of residence. If you reside in Louisiana, the application is mailed to:**For US Postal Service deliveries:**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For Express mail/courier deliveries:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121
Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

Make a copy of these materials to keep for your records. We do not recommend that you apply online. We recommend sending the application through the U.S. Postal Service via Certified Mail with a Return Receipt requested to provide confirmation of delivery or by an overnight or express courier service (U.S. Express Mail, Federal Express, DHL or UPS).

If you have used OISS as your mailing address, we will notify you via telephone or e-mail when we have received a receipt notice indicating your application has been filed and when your EAD card arrives. Processing time varies from 2-4 months. You can check the status of your application on-line at www.uscis.gov. Please do not call OISS to check on the status of your application unless it has been pending longer than 90 days.

You may not accept employment until optional practical training has been authorized by the USCIS (you have received your EAD card).

Your Obligations During Optional Practical Training after Completing your Degree

You are required to immediately report any change of name or address, or disruption of employment to OISS for the duration of the authorized training. The information may be sent to oiss@uno.edu. **You can also continue your UNO Health Insurance during your OPT period.**

OISS Obligations During Optional Practical Training after Completing your Degree

OISS is responsible for updating your records in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) to reflect changes in your name, address, or disruption of employment for the length of time practical training is authorized.

Travel Outside of and Re-entry to the U.S.

While you are engaged in optional practical training, you are still in F-1 status and you must have your form I-20 endorsed for re-entry to the United States. At the port of entry, you will be required to present your form I-20 your EAD card, a valid passport and visa and proof of employment in the U.S. You will not be permitted entry unless you are entering to begin or continue OPT employment. Also, while engaged in optional practical training after completion of your degree, the re-entry signature is only valid for 6 months.

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING APPLICATION

Please Print

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Student #: _____ SEVIS #: _____

Current Physical Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

You are generally eligible for up to 12 months of Optional Practical Training (OPT). Your practical training must be completed within 14 months of your graduation. Please indicate the dates during which you would like your OPT to be authorized.

I request that my OPT begin ____ / ____ / ____ and end on ____ / ____ / ____
on:

Please indicate an address, telephone and E-mail where you wish to be notified when your receipt and EAD card arrives. Keep in mind that the USCIS often takes longer than four months to process OPT applications.

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

During your authorized OPT, you are required to notify OISS of any changes in your address, your name or disruption of employment within 10 days of such change. By your signature below you certify that you understand and agree to comply with your reporting obligations.

Signature: _____ Date ____ / ____ / ____

ADVISOR'S VERIFICATION OF GRADUATION

This is to certify that _____ is expected to

graduate on ____ / ____ / ____ with a Bachelors Masters PhD Other
(date)

degree in _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____