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Post-Completion Optional Practical Training 101

What is OPT?

Optional Practical Training

- Temporary employment authorization that is **directly related** to an F-1 student's major area of study
- You can apply for 12 months of post-completion OPT **only once at each level of study:**
 - Bachelor's
 - Second bachelor's students who have already had OPT at the bachelor's level cannot apply again at that level
 - Master's
 - Second master's students who have already had OPT at the master's level cannot apply again at that level
 - PhD
 - Second PhD students who have already had OPT at the PhD level cannot apply for OPT again
- Students in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) may apply for a 24-month extension during Post-Completion OPT if they qualify.

Who can apply? Post Completion OPT

- Any F-1 student who
 - Is in valid F-1 status
 - Has been enrolled full-time for one academic year (two long semesters)
 - Completes **all** degree requirements in the academic program listed on their I-20 and are eligible to receive their degree
or
PhD or master's students who will complete all coursework and are enrolled in thesis/dissertation **only**.*

*Students who choose to do post-completion OPT while working on thesis or dissertation must graduate before the OPT end date. Students who do not graduate in time may be considered out of status.

Employment Authorization Document

- EAD = Employment Authorization Document
 - The card you receive from USCIS when your OPT is approved
- You may only begin work **after** the start date printed on your EAD card

“Can I work before I get my EAD card?”

- You **cannot** work before you have your EAD card and you **cannot** work until after the start date listed on your EAD card.
- Working on-campus is **prohibited** after the program end date listed on your I-20 unless you have received your EAD card and the job is related to your major

“Who decides if the job is related to my major?”

- Students must justify how the job is related to their major
- Ask yourself:
“Is there a clear connection between the job and my major?”

“How do I maintain status for OPT?”

- You **may not** work until you have your EAD card and the start date on the card has passed
- You **may not** go to school to pursue a new degree while on OPT
 - New degrees require a new I-20 and full-time student enrollment
 - Part-time, non-degree study is acceptable while on OPT
- You will be out of status if you have more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT. This means if you take too long to find a job, or if you lose your job, and don't find another one, you may go out of status!
 - Remember, only 90 days total unemployment is allowed during the 12 months of OPT!
- Use your time wisely!

Maintaining Status

- You must report any changes to UNT within 10 days.
- This includes changes to:

- Name
 - Address
 - Employer
 - Employer Address
- Applies to all
OPT students!**

All gaps of unemployment **must be reported**. Gaps cannot accrue greater than 90 days or you will be considered out of status.

Maintaining Status

- Report any employment changes or changes to your address via iNorthTX [here](#).

*Note: Submitting employer updates will not generate a new I-20. If you would like a new I-20, submit a request for a reprint after submitting your employment report.

Maintaining Status

- Employment must be full time (at least 20 hours per week) and related to degree program
- Types of employment:
 - Paid
 - Unpaid
 - Internships
 - Multiple Employers (total hours must be at least 20 hours per week)
- Jobs on campus may not be student positions

Maintaining Status

- **Keep records of all employment**
 - Employer, dates of employment, title, hours worked, relation to your degree, etc.
- You will need this information when applying for future benefits through USCIS (H1B, permanent residency, etc.)

“When can I do OPT?”

- You can participate in post completion OPT when you have **completed your degree program**
 - Completion: the last day of required enrollment
- Completion is **not** when you graduate or “walk across the stage”

Timing

- You may apply up to 90 days before and no more than 60 days after your completion date
- You will select a start date
 - Example: If your completion date is May 13, you can choose to start anywhere from May 15 to July 12
- “Can I change my start date after applying for OPT?”
 - **No.** After mailing your application you cannot change the date.

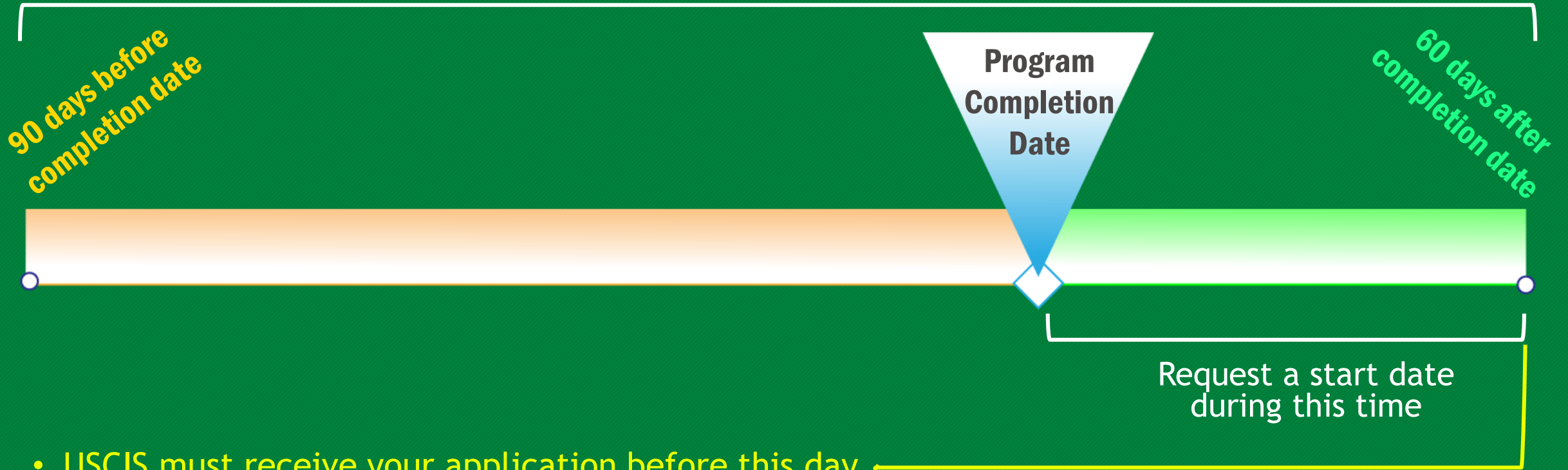
Timing

- **Warning:** If USCIS receives your application before the end of the end of your 60-day grace period but your OPT is approved after your grace period ends, you may not receive the full 12 months of OPT
- A student cannot have more than 14 months between the end of their program and the end of OPT

Apply Early!

Timing

SEND APPLICATION DURING THIS TIME



- USCIS must receive your application before this day
- It can take USCIS about 90 days to process applications

Timing

12 months of OPT

60 day grace period



Apply for 24-month STEM extension if eligible

4 Options

After OPT

After 12 months of Post-OPT you will have 60 days to do one of the following:

- **Change Degree Levels**

- You must apply, be admitted and get a new I-20 during the 60-day grace period

- **Transfer Schools**

- You must receive a new I-20 from the new school during the 60-day grace period
- If you transfer while your OPT is still valid, the remainder of your OPT will be cancelled on the day of the SEVIS release.

- **Change Status**

- OPT is often a transition to an H1B visa
- Contact ISSS if your employer files an H1B application for you

- **Return Home**

After OPT

- If you are eligible for the 24-month STEM extension you must apply **before** your initial OPT expires
- You **cannot** apply for the extension during the grace period

Frequently Asked Questions

- “What is my status while on OPT?”
 - F-1 status
- “Do I still need to get my I-20 signed for travel?”
 - Yes, if you plan to travel outside the U.S. and the I-20 has not been signed within the last 6 months
 - You may [request a reprint](#) from ISSS at least 3 weeks prior to your departure
- “Can I travel while on OPT?”
 - **After completion, but no EAD:** Travel is not recommended
 - **After completion, with EAD:** Travel with valid I-20 endorsed for travel within the last 6 months, passport, visa, EAD and letter from employer

Frequently Asked Questions

- “What if my visa is expired?”
 - Visas do not impact your status while in the U.S.
 - If traveling outside the U.S., you must renew your visa before returning
 - Do not attempt to renew your visa without a job while on OPT
 - To renew your visa you will need:
 1. Valid I-20 endorsed for travel within the last 6 months
 2. Valid passport
 3. EAD
 4. Letter from employer

Frequently Asked Questions

“What if I can’t find a job?”

- You are allowed 90 days of unemployment. **Your SEVIS record will automatically terminate on day 91.**
- Unemployment days begin on the first day of your OPT and is not part of the 60-day grace period

”What if I decide to go home permanently?”

- Notify ISSS by filling out the [Ending Studies form](#)

How to Apply for OPT

- At the end of this presentation take a quiz (must score 100%) and fill out application documents.
- Bring quiz score to ISSS Office (Marquis 110) and apply for an OPT I-20
 - You are required to send your application to USCIS within 30 days of your I-20 being issued
- Pay OPT Case Management Fee online
 - This is separate from the USCIS application fee
 - Must be paid before picking up new I-20
- Send all required documents to address listed on application

Apply for a New I-20

- You must include:
 - Completion Date
 - The dates requested for OPT
 - Employer Name & Address (if known)
- Check the “After completion of degree” box
- Keep other pages for your reference

Choosing Dates for Post-OPT

Consider the following

- The amount of time you need to find a job
- Whether or not you have an employer waiting to hire you
- Whether or not you may want a break after your studies

The I-765 is an application you send to USCIS to apply for OPT.

- There is a \$410.00 filing fee required with the application.
- You will need to submit the application form and additional documents as needed. You can get more information and download the I-765 here: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>



Application For Employment Authorization

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS
Form I-765
OMB No. 1615-0040
Expires 05/31/2020

▶ **START HERE - Type or print in black ink.**


- We will go through each section step by step in the next slides.

Select reason 1.a. if you HAVE NOT had an EAD card before.

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Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select only one box):

- 1.a. Initial permission to accept employment. 
- 1.b. Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of my employment authorization document **NOT DUE** to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) error.

NOTE: Replacement (correction) of an employment authorization document due to USCIS error does not require a new Form I-765 and filing fee. Refer to **Replacement for Card Error** in the **What is the Filing Fee** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for further details.

- 1.c. Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)

Advising
Note:



You must
type or
write your
application
in black
ink!

Select reason 1.c. if you HAVE had an OPT EAD card before. Make sure to attach a copy of your previous EAD card with your application.

Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select **only one** box):

- 1.a. Initial permission to accept employment.
- 1.b. Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of my employment authorization document **NOT DUE** to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) error.

NOTE: Replacement (correction) of an employment authorization document due to USCIS error does not require a new Form I-765 and filing fee. Refer to **Replacement for Card Error** in the **What is the Filing Fee** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for further details.

- 1.c. Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)

Only choose this option if you have had a previous OPT authorization, not if you have had any other employment authorization!

I-765

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Advising
Note:



If you had a previous EAD card for another type of employment, do not select 1.c. Use 1.a. if this your first OPT.

Fill in Part 2, 1.a., 1.b. and 1.c. with your legal name that matches your passport.

Part 2. Information About You

Your Full Legal Name

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name

Fill in lines 2-4 if you have had any previous legal names, or if you have used other names in the past. If you've changed your name for any reason, including marriage, please list your previous names here.

Other Names Used

Provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames. If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in Part 6.

Additional Information.

2.a. Family Name (Last Name)

2.b. Given Name (First Name)

2.c. Middle Name

3.a. Family Name (Last Name)

3.b. Given Name (First Name)

3.c. Middle Name

4.a. Family Name (Last Name)

4.b. Given Name (First Name)

4.c. Middle Name

Part 2. Information About You (continued)

Your U.S. Mailing Address

5.a. In Care Of Name (if any)

ISSS

5.b. Street Number and Name

1155 UNION CIR 311067

5.c. Apt. Ste. Flr.

5.d. City or Town

DENTON

5.e. State

TX

5.f. ZIP Code

76203

[\(USPS ZIP Code Lookup\)](#)

6. Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

Yes No

NOTE: If you answered “No” to **Item Number 6.**, provide your physical address below.

Fill in Part 2, 5.a. - 5.e. with our office address information.

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Enter your address information on lines 7.a. - 7.d.

U.S. Physical Address

7.a. Street Number and Name

YOUR ADDRESS HERE

7.b. Apt. Ste. Flr.

7.c. City or Town

DENTON

7.d. State

TX

7.e. ZIP Code

76203

Other Information

8. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any)

▶ A-

9. USCIS Online Account Number (if any)

▶

10. Gender Male Female

11. Marital Status

Single Married Divorced Widowed

12. Have you previously filed Form I-765?

Yes No

13.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

Yes No

NOTE: If you answered “No” to **Item Number 13.a.**, skip to **Item Number 14.** If you answered “Yes” to **Item Number 13.a.**, provide the information requested in **Item Number 13.b.**

Fill in lines 8 or 9 only if you have previously been issued one of these numbers.

Fill in lines 10-12 with your information.

Fill in line 13.a. with ‘Yes’ if you already have a Social Security number.

If you selected ‘Yes’, go to line 13.b.

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Advising
Note:



If you had a previous OPT, TPS, or economic hardship application, check ‘Yes’ for line 12.

13.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

Yes No

NOTE: If you answered “No” to **Item Number 13.a.**, skip to **Item Number 14.** If you answered “Yes” to **Item Number 13.a.**, provide the information requested in **Item Number 13.b.**

If you have never had a Social Security number,

please answer ‘No’ on line 13.a. and go to line 14.

13.b. Provide your Social Security number (SSN) (if known).

▶

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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14. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card? (You must also answer “Yes” to **Item Number 15., Consent for Disclosure**, to receive a card.)

Yes No

If you answered ‘Yes’ on line 13.a., enter your Social Security Number on line 13.b.

Answer ‘No’ for line 14.

Advising
Note:



Only fill out
this
information
if you have
never had a
Social
Security
number
before.

14. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?
(You must also answer "Yes" to **Item Number 15.**,
Consent for Disclosure, to receive a card.)

Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "No" to **Item Number 14.**, skip to **Part 2.**, **Item Number 18.a.** If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 14.**, you must also answer "Yes" to **Item Number 15.**

15. **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

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to **Item Numbers 14. - 15.**, provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 16.a. - 17.b.**

Father's Name

Provide your father's birth name.

16.a. Family Name (Last Name)

16.b. Given Name (First Name)

Mother's Name

Provide your mother's birth name.

17.a. Family Name (Last Name)

17.b. Given Name (First Name)

If you answered 'No' on line 13.a. you need to answer 'Yes' on line 14.

Answer 'Yes' to line 15.

Fill in your father and mother's names on lines 16 - 17.

Fill in your country of citizenship in line 18.a.

Your Country or Countries of Citizenship or Nationality

List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.
If you need extra space to complete this item, use the space provided in **Part 6. Additional Information**.

18.a. Country

YOUR COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP

18.b. Country

If you hold dual citizenship, enter your second country of citizenship on line 18.b.

Fill in your information on lines 19- 20.


Part 2. Information About You (continued)

Place of Birth

List the city/town/village, state/province, and country where you were born.


19.a. City/Town/Village of Birth

CITY WHERE YOU WERE BORN




19.b. State/Province of Birth

STATE OR PROVINCE WHERE YOU WERE BORN




19.c. Country of Birth

CONTRY WHERE YOU WERE BORN



20. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

11/15/2018



Information About Your Last Arrival in the United States

21.a. Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)

▶ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0

21.b. Passport Number of Your Most Recently Issued Passport

YOUR PASSPORT NUMBER

21.c. Travel Document Number (if any)

21.d. Country That Issued Your Passport or Travel Document

YOUR COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP

21.e. Expiration Date for Passport or Travel Document
(mm/dd/yyyy)

11/15/2018

22. Date of Your Last Arrival Into the United States, On or About (mm/dd/yyyy)

11/15/2018

23. Place of Your Last Arrival Into the United States

AIRPORT OR BORDER CROSSING LOCATION

24. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)

F-1 STUDENT

25. Your Current Immigration Status or Category (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, parolee, deferred action, or no status or category)

F-1 STUDENT

26. Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)

▶ N- 0012345678

Fill in your most recent I-94 number on line 21.a.

If you don't know your I-94, you can get it here: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search>

Enter your passport information on lines 21.b - 22.e.

If your F1 visa was issued in a previous passport, see the instructions for page 7.

Enter your most recent travel information in lines 22-25.

Enter your most recent SEVIS ID Number in line 26.

If you have had more than one SEVIS ID number, see the instructions for Page 7.

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Advising
Note:



You should always carry a copy of your I-94 with you!

For Post-Completion OPT, fill in the eligibility category (c)(3)(B) on line 27.

Information About Your Eligibility Category

27. **Eligibility Category.** Refer to the **Who May File Form I-765** section of the Form I-765 Instructions to determine the appropriate eligibility category for this application. Enter the appropriate letter and number for your eligibility category below (for example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii)).

() () ()



Go to Page 4, Part 3, line 1.a.

If you have had previous OPT authorizations, or any CPT authorizations, please see the instructions for page 7.

Advising
Note:



If you are applying for a STEM OPT extension, please follow the instructions on our website for STEM!

Applicant's Statement

NOTE: Select the box for either **Item Number 1.a.** or **1.b.** If applicable, select the box for **Item Number 2.**

- 1.a. I can read and understand English, and I have read and understand every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question.
- 1.b. The interpreter named in **Part 4.** read to me every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question in

a language in which I am fluent, and I understood everything.
2. At my request, the preparer named in **Part 5.**,

prepared this application for me based only upon information I provided or authorized.

Answer question 1.a.

If you had an interpreter or a preparer help you with your application, follow the instructions for line 1.b. or line 2.

Enter your contact information on lines 3 - 4.

Applicant's Contact Information

3. Applicant's Daytime Telephone Number
4. Applicant's Mobile Telephone Number (if any)
5. Applicant's Email Address (if any)
6. Select this box if you are a Salvadoran or Guatemalan national eligible for benefits under the ABC settlement agreement.

Applicant's Signature

7.a. Applicant's Signature
➔

7.b. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

NOTE TO ALL APPLICANTS: If you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents listed in the Instructions, USCIS may deny your application.

Sign your application!

This must be signed in black ink!

Date your application.

Do not fill in page 5 or 6 unless you have used an interpreter or preparer for your application.

Go to page 7 if you have had a previous passport number, SEVIS ID number, CPT, or a previous OPT.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name

2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number	3.b. Part Number	3.c. Item Number
<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="21.b."/>

3.d. F1 VISA ISSUED IN PREVIOUS PASSPORT

NUMBER A123456.

PASSPORT EXPIRATION DATE 01/01/2013.

If your F1 visa was issued in a previous passport, you will need to list that passport information here.

Fill in page 6 like this.



If your F1 visa is in your current passport, please leave this blank.

Advising Note:



If you have had to renew your passport or if your passport has been lost or stolen since your visa was issued, please list your old passport on your application.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name

2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number	3.b. Part Number	3.c. Item Number
<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="26"/>

3.d. PREVIOUS SEVIS ID NUMBER

N0012345678

BACHELOR'S

ENGINEERING, GENERAL - 14.0101

01/15/2013-05/15/2017

If you have had a previous SEVIS ID number, you will need to list it here.

Fill in page 6 like this. Make sure to include your degree level, major and CIP code (found on your I-20), authorization, SEVIS ID number, and I-20 program dates.

If you have not had any previous SEVIS ID numbers, please leave this blank.

Advising Note:



If you have had to re-enter to correct status, gone on authorized early withdrawal or have studied at another school or degree level in the past, you may have an old SEVIS ID number.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name

2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number 3.b. Part Number 3.c. Item Number

3.d. SEE ATTACHED CPT AUTHORIZATION HISTORY FOR SEVIS ID N0012345678.

If you have had CPT authorizations, you will get a printed history from our office with your OPT I-20.



Fill in page 6 like this, and include the CPT print out with your application to USCIS.

If you have not had any CPT authorizations, please leave this blank.

Advising Note:



If you have had CPT authorizations for your current degree level and you don't get a print out from us, please contact our office before you send your application!

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name

2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number 3.b. Part Number 3.c. Item Number

3.d. OPT AUTHORIZATION

BACHELOR'S

ENGINEERING, GENERAL - 14.0101

FULL-TIME

N0012345678

01/01/2017-12/31/2018



If you have had a previous OPT authorization, you will need to list it here.

Fill in page 6 like this. Make sure to include your degree level, major and CIP code (found on your I-20), part-time or full-time authorization, SEVIS ID number, and approved OPT dates.

If you have not had any OPT authorizations, please leave this blank.

Advising Note:



If you have had both CPT and a previous OPT, you can list all information on page 6 lines 3.d. - 7.a as needed.

Required Documents

- \$410 check or money order payable to *Department of Homeland Security*
- 2 color passport-style photos
 - Lightly* write your name and I-94 number on the back of your photos
- Completed G1145 Form
- Completed I-765 Form
- Signed* photocopy of pages 1 & 2 of the I-20 showing OPT recommendation
- Photocopy of your passport identity, expiry and visa pages
- Photocopy of your electronic I-94 or front and back of your small white I-94
- Previous EAD Cards* (if applicable)
- CPT Screen Shot* (From ISSS- required only if you had CPT at this degree level)

Assembling your Packet

- You will be emailed with your OPT I-20 is ready to be picked up
 - The OPT Case Management Fee must be paid before you can receive your I-20
 - You can make your payment here: <https://international.unt.edu/content/opt-fees>
- Put all your required documents in the order listed on the previous page.
- Bring all required packet documentation when you pick up your OPT I-20
 - An advisor will review the packet to ensure accuracy before you mail it.

Mailing the Packet

- Photocopy the entire packet for your records, and mail using one of the following methods:

USPS Deliveries (Post Office)

- USCIS
P.O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266
- Mail “Certified mail,
return receipt requested”

Courier Service (FedEx, DHL, UPS, etc.)

- USCIS Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Highway 121,
Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

Next Steps

- Immigration will cash your check and send a receipt which helps in 2 ways:
 - [Check your case status](#) (use the YSC number)
 - Confirms they received the application and are working on it
 - Normal processing time is 60-90 days
- Once processed, USCIS will send the EAD

The receipt and card will be mailed to the ISSS office. ISSS will contact you when they are ready to be picked up.

OPT Quiz

- Take this quiz **only** if you are in the **last** semester of your program
- If you take it before your last semester an I-20 will not be processed and you will be required to take the quiz again in the future

Thank You and Good Luck!

- You can find the quiz and all application documents [here](#)
 - Remember, you must score a 100% on the quiz for it to be accepted!

24-Month STEM Extension

- F-1 students who majored in certain STEM fields
- USCIS must have application **before** initial OPT expires
- May apply up to 3 months before the initial OPT expires
 - Contact ISSS for details on how to apply
- Employer for STEM must be registered with [E-Verify](#)
- Allows a 24-month extension of OPT for a total of 36 months
- **Students may only ever apply for a STEM extension twice!**
- Find more information about your STEM extension here:
<https://international.unt.edu/content/24-month-stem-opt-extension>