

Optional Practical Training - New I-20 Application

A. Biographical Data					
Family Name:		First and Middle Name:		Birth Date:	
Email:			UNT Student ID:		
U.S. Street Address:					
City:		State:	Zip:	Phone #:	
Country of Citizenship:			Immigration Status:		Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Current Degree Level:		Current Major:		Expected Completion (Semester/Year):	

B. OPT Information
<p>Have you ever had CPT at this degree level?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (ISSS will provide you with a screen shot to include with your OPT application.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Type of OPT:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Before Completion of Academic Program (Pre-Completion OPT)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> During vacation period (may be part or full-time)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> During academic year (must be part-time)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> After Completion of Academic Program (Post-Completion OPT)</p>
<p>Dates of Proposed OPT: _____ to _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Start Date) (End Date)</p>
<p>C. Enter the payment information for the OPT Case Management fee. Pay the \$100 OPT Case Management fee before submitting this form or your I-20 will be delayed. Pay online at: https://international.unt.edu/content/opt-fees. Be sure to print out a receipt and submit it with this form.</p>
<p>D. After viewing the workshop presentation, complete the Post-Completion OPT Quiz. The links to the presentation and quiz are on our website in the OPT section.</p>
<p>E. Submit this form to the ISSS Office along with COPIES of the following documents: *Normal processing time is 7-10 business days*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> OPT Case Management fee payment receipt</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Post-Completion OPT Quiz</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of EAD card (<u>only</u> if you received an EAD in the past)</p> <p><i>If you would like an international student advisor to review your OPT application packet prior to submission to USCIS, you may come to drop-in advising or email us at internationaladvising@unt.edu. See the ISSS website for advising hours.</i></p>
<p>APPLICATION RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <p>Your OPT application is your responsibility as an F1 visa holder. ISSS staff will provide information regarding OPT and the application process, however, the contents of your application must be reviewed and approved by you, the student. By sending in your signed OPT application to USCIS, you are verifying that all information is correct and accurate. ISSS is not responsible for any missing or incorrect information found in your application.</p>
<p>NOTIFICATION</p> <p>You are required by U.S. federal immigration regulations to report any change of address and/or employment to ISSS within 10 days. This also means that you must report any end to employment.</p> <p>Note: If on the I-765 form you choose the EAD card to be mailed to the UNT ISSS Office, you authorize ISSS staff to open USCIS correspondence and make a copy for your file.</p>

I have fully completed the above information and understand the regulations regarding this process.

If I have any questions, I will consult with an ISSS Advisor.

Signature	Date:
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12 MONTH OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Temporary Work Authorization for F-1 Students

Optional practical training (OPT) is authorization for employment in the U.S. issued by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for temporary work directly related to your major area of study. It may be used before or after completion of your studies. You are permitted a total of 12 months of OPT for each higher degree.

Eligibility

If you have been enrolled as a full-time student for at least one academic year and are in lawful F-1 status, you may be eligible to apply for OPT.

Part-Time vs. Full-Time Work

For immigration purposes, work for 20 hours per week or less is considered part-time. More than 20 hours per week is considered full-time.

When can I use Pre-Completion OPT?

- During vacation when school is not in session if (1) you are currently enrolled and eligible and (2) intend to register for the next semester. You may request full-time or part-time work authorization. You may apply no earlier than 90 days prior to your requested start date.
- While school is in session and you have not completed course work. This type of practical training authorization is limited to part-time employment (up to 20 hours a week). You may not hold any other type of employment at the same time.
- While school is in session and you have completed all course requirements for the Master's or PhD degree. This is for students in master's or doctoral programs who are working on a thesis or equivalent. Speak with an international student advisor to discuss whether pre-completion or post-completion OPT is a better option for your situation. Pre-completion OPT may be requested on a full-time or part-time authorization basis.

When can I use Post-Completion OPT?

- Post-completion OPT is available after completion of all degree requirements, including submission of a thesis. This is issued for full-time only.

How much OPT am I permitted per academic level?

Your total period of authorization for regular OPT cannot exceed the equivalent of 12 months of full-time employment. Part-time practical training (20 hours a week or less) will be deducted from the available 12 months at *half* the full-time rate. Students who complete an academic program in a STEM major, may be eligible for a 24-month extension. More information about STEM OPT can be found on the ISSS website. *Curricular practical training is different from the optional practical training category. See separate handouts from International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS).*

If I want to apply for part-time, pre-completion OPT for my last semester and full-time post-completion OPT after I graduate, can I do it all in one application?

You will need to submit two applications – one for the part-time OPT and one for the full-time OPT. There will be a fee for each.

I am a PhD dissertator and would like to use some full-time OPT before I complete and the rest of the time after I complete. Can I do this?

In this case, it may be possible to do this as one application. Please see an advisor.

I used my OPT after my Bachelor's degree. Now I am in the Graduate School completing my Second Bachelor's. Can I apply for another 12 months of OPT?

No. Immigration only allows you to apply for OPT again after a higher degree. Since they are both Bachelor's degrees, you would not be eligible. You may be eligible after your Master's degree.

Must I have a job to apply for OPT?

An offer of employment is not required to apply for OPT. However, a job or qualifying volunteer position is required to continue on OPT. Only a total (aggregate) of 90 days of unemployment is allowed during the 12 months.

When can I apply for post-completion OPT?

You can submit your application to USCIS no sooner than 90 days before you complete your course of study and before the end of your 60-day grace period following the completion of your degree requirements. Your application must be received and receipted by USCIS before the end of your 60-day grace period.

How long does it take for USCIS to process my OPT application?

Processing times at USCIS vary. Recently, it has been ranging from 3-5 months, so students are encouraged to apply early.

“Completion Date”

Your completion date is the date you complete all the requirements for your degree. Your completion date is the last date of your **required** enrollment at UNT. Thesis or dissertation students may be eligible to apply sooner. Please check with an advisor if your case varies.

I am finishing in May, but I am going to graduate in August. I do not have to take any courses this summer. Can I use August as my completion date?

No. Immigration considers only the date you complete the last requirement for your degree. They do not count graduation (commencement) day.

I didn't register for graduation in time for the December graduation. My diploma will say May graduation. Can I stay for May graduation and use that as my completion date?

No. As stated above, it is the completion date that immigration considers. You would need to apply for post-completion using the December completion date.

My company says I have to start work, and I applied for the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card a long time ago. If I don't start working, I will lose my job offer. Can I start working?

You may not begin work until you receive the EAD card (Employment Authorization Document) and before the start date listed on your EAD has been reached.

You can check online to see if the OPT request has been adjudicated and approved. On the egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do website, you can do an online case status check if you have your receipt from the service center with your receipt number (it will typically start with YSC).

Must I have a Job?

You are allowed up to 90 days of unemployment during the 12 months of post-completion OPT. You must report the start and end dates of employment to ISSS. Report changes in employment to ISSS via the iNorthTX portal.

Travel outside the U.S.

If you have completed your course of study, you must have received your EAD card before temporarily leaving the U.S. Upon re-entering you should present to the border officials the EAD card, proof of employment, an unexpired F1 visa stamp, a passport valid for at least 6 months beyond your return date, and a valid I-20 endorsed for travel. That travel endorsement signature is valid for multiple entries and is valid for 6 months.

How long can I remain outside of the U.S. and still come back to my OPT?

Technically, if you are outside the U.S. for 5 months on an F-1, you end your status. However, if you stay a long time, you may have a difficult time convincing the port of entry official that you are returning “to resume employment”. Please use good judgment.

My visa has expired, and I really want to go home for a visit. Can I get a new visa while I am on OPT?

Technically, this is possible. However, it could be very difficult. It may be a good idea for you to plan travel at a different time. Please see an advisor to discuss your situation and options and to assess your priorities.

What is an OPT Case Management Fee and why do I have to pay it?



While you are on OPT, ISSS is still responsible for maintaining your immigration record as well as continuing to provide you services after graduation. The OPT Case Management Fee is a substitute for the International Student Fee and is used to subsidize the costs of the mandatory case management for students on OPT.

NOTIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

You are required by U.S. federal immigration regulations to report any change of address and/or employment to ISSS within 10 days. This also means that you must report any end to employment.

HOW TO APPLY FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

STEP 1 - International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Procedures

- Go through the online OPT workshop located here: <https://international.unt.edu/content/optional-practical-training>. Take the quiz and answer all questions correctly to be able to apply to ISSS for your OPT I-20.
- Submit the following to ISSS:
 - o Completed Optional Practical Training application for a new I-20
 - o Copy of \$100 OPT Case Management fee payment receipt (<https://international.unt.edu/content/opt-fees>)
 - o Your completed Post-Completion OPT Quiz
 - o Copy of EAD card (only if you received an EAD in the past)
- ISSS will review your application and prepare a recommendation (New I-20) to USCIS. This may take up to 10 working days.
- During this time, it is advised that you begin **STEP 2** below.
- ISSS will notify you via email when your OPT I-20 is ready to pick up.

STEP 2 - Prepare Your Application for USCIS

Assemble your documents in this order:

- \$410 check or money order payable to *U.S. Department of Homeland Security* OR signed [G-1450](#) Authorization for CC Transactions
 - Two (2) color passport style photos
 - o Guidelines: Color photos with a **white background** taken no earlier than 30 days before submission to USCIS. The photos should be 2X2 inches and a full-frontal pose. Your head should be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order to which you belong. A photographer familiar with "passport photos" can help you. For additional information see the Guide Sheet on the Department of State website for details.
 - o Lightly print your name and your I-94 number, if known, on the back of each photo with a pencil. We recommend you place both photos in a small plastic bag or envelope, so they don't get lost in the rest of the application.
 - Completed Form I-765 form (check www.uscis.gov for most recent version)
 - o Respond to Q #20 by writing (c)(3)(B) within the parentheses.
 - If not applying for standard Post-Completion OPT, please see an advisor for answer to #20.
 - o Be sure to answer Q #1 on page 1, and to sign in black ink Q #7a on page 4
 - Photocopy of pages 1 and 2 of the I-20 showing the OPT recommendation. [USCIS will not return your I-20, so we advise that you send only a copy.]
 - o Make sure to sign the I-20 (the "STUDENT ATTESTATION" on page 1) before you make a copy.
 - o OPT request must have been made by ISSS Advisor in SEVIS within the last 30 days.
 - Photocopy of both sides of your I-94 card (if you have one, it will be a white paper card in your passport), or if you've travelled since April 2013, print out your I-94 card online at <http://www.cbp.gov/i94>.
 - Photocopy of your passport identity and expiry page
 - Copy of F1 visa
 - Photocopies of Previous EAD Cards (If applicable)
 - CPT Screen Shot (Required only if you have had CPT at this degree level)
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- G-1145: This form will allow the Lockbox facility to send you an email or text message when they receive your application. You are not required but are encouraged to include it. Place it on top of your application packet. You can download the form at www.uscis.gov*

****You may bring your completed packet to ISSS for an advisor to review before mailing the application.****

STEP 3 - Mail Your Application to USCIS

- Make a copy of the entire packet for your records
- Mail your complete packet to the Dallas Lockbox:

USPS Deliveries (Mail Certified mail, Return receipt requested)	For Express Mail and courier service Deliveries (UPS, FedEx, DHL, etc.)
USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266	USCIS Attn: AOS 2501 S. State Highway 121, Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067



USCIS will send a receipt letter (mailed to ISSS or address listed under Part 2, Question #5 on your I-765) several weeks after they receive it. *If you choose to use the UNT ISSS Office address, you authorize ISSS staff to open USCIS correspondence and make a copy for your file.*

Prepared to the best of our knowledge in 7/2007 (Updated 11/2019) by the staff of International Student and Scholar Services, (Phone (940) 565-2195). USCIS regulations and procedures are subject to change with little notice. Please inform us of any difficulties you encounter following these instructions.