



OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Who is eligible for Optional Practical Training?

OPT may be authorized to an F-1 student who has been lawfully enrolled on a full time basis in a Service-approved university for one full academic year. Students in English language training programs are ineligible for practical training.

How long will I be allowed to work?

A student may be authorized for 12 months of practical training. Post-completion practical training and practical training during the student's annual vacation and at other times when school is not in session allow full-time employment; practical training before completion of course of study or before completion of all course requirements cannot exceed 20 hours a week during the Fall and Spring semester.

When do I apply?

Your application needs to be received by the USCIS - Texas Service Center no more than 90 days before and no later than 60 days after the completion of all course requirements or completion of studies. We recommend you apply between 90 and 75 days prior to your graduation date. This allows sufficient time before graduation to ensure that you will receive the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) in time before your OPT starting date. Applying less than 75 days prior to graduation can lead to you losing months from your OPT and may lead to an invalid driver's license. **A letter or e-mail from your Academic Advisor reflecting the date you are expected to graduate must be submitted to the International Student & Scholar Services (intl@uiwtx.edu) prior to submitting the paperwork.**

Can the OPT be terminated?

Authorization to engage in practical training employment is automatically terminated when the student transfers to another school or begins a course of studies at another educational level.

When can I start working?

An F-1 student seeking practical training may not accept employment until the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) is received and the EAD start date is current.

What is the procedure for applying?

Make an appointment with one of the International Student Advisors at the International Student & Scholar Services. Be prepared that it will take approximately one hour to complete the application. Please prepare the following documents:

1. **A letter or e-mail from your Academic Advisor stating your expected to graduation date**
2. All I-20 Forms you have (3 photocopies of each);
3. 3 photocopies of your passport ID page;
4. 3 photocopies of your visa page (most current visa);
5. 3 photocopies of your I-94 (print from I-94 website: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/request.html>)
6. 2 passport photographs (US passport size, 2"x2") Please write your name and Admissions number (I-94 #) on the back
7. Cashier Check or Money Order. *Currently, the fee is in the amount of **\$380.00** - payable to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** (do not abbreviate)*
8. Fill out Form I-765, date and sign it and make 2 photocopies of it. If you would like, use the ISSS address on the Form I-765: **4301 Broadway, CPO 31, San Antonio TX 78209.** This will help you keep track of your documents if you move after graduation. Download the I-765 from <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf>. Please note that this is a fillable form (you can type your date directly into the form) and, please save the form on a flash drive/memory stick when completed.) Bring the flash drive/memory stick to the appointment, if you need guidance for filling out Form I-765.

Be prepared to discuss the start and ending dates of your OPT with the International Student Advisor since these dates will be entered in SEVIS and a new I-20 will be issued to accompany your OPT application.

At the appointment, the International Student & Scholar Services will provide you with an envelope addressed to the USCIS Texas Service Center where your application needs to be sent. It is the student's responsibility to mail the application package (CERTIFIED MAIL with Return Receipt), no later than 15 days after the appointment.

For an appointment and/or for further information call:

International Student & Scholar Services at 210-805-5705.

We are located at the Dr. Burton E. Grossman International Conference Center, 2nd Floor, Suite 200.