

What is Pre-Completion OPT?

- Optional Practical Training that takes place prior to completion of academic degree program.
- Enables F-1 students to gain off-campus employment through work or internship in field of study for up to 12 months.
 - If student participates in Pre-Completion OPT, the time used is deducted from overall 12 months of Post-Completion OPT once he/she graduates.
- May be full-time or part-time employment or internship.
- For more information, please go to http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/opt_checklist.pdf.

What are the Guidelines for Pre-Completion OPT (DSU and SEVIS regulations)?

- Must be directly related to current academic field of study.
- Must have a valid/active F-1 visa status.
- Must be pre-approved by current academic advisor and International Student Services before employment.
- Must be listed as a requirement for completion of current academic degree, or approved by academic department as degree program elective, and must receive academic credit hours for Pre-OPT employment/internship.
- Must not exceed 20 work hours per week while school is in session.
- Must be enrolled in academic program for a minimum of one full academic year before beginning employment.
- Must be enrolled full-time (undergraduate-12 hours, graduate-9 hours) throughout Pre-Completion OPT.
- May begin application process 90 days prior to (undergraduate/graduate) completion of one full academic year.
 - If completed one full academic year, you can apply up to 120 days prior to requested employment start date.
- OPT application (I-765) must be received by USCIS within 30 days of recommendation being posted on student's SEVIS account by DSU International Student Services.
- May not begin working with employer/internship until Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card has been received and approved start date has arrived.
- Must notify DSU International Student Services of any changes in employment status or job responsibilities within 10 days.
- If mailing or physical address changes at any point during the Pre-Completion OPT application process, you must notify DSU International Student Services and USCIS within 10 days of change, request an update to SEVIS account, and submit an online Form AR-11 to USCIS.
- Must sign the bottom of this form stating you have read, understand, and agree to follow all rules outlined in this document.
- Must check-in via email with DSU International Student Services at the end of each month.

How Do I Apply for Pre-Completion OPT?

- Stop by International Student Services (Union 308) to let Elise Mallette, Coordinator of International Student Services, know that you are interested in OPT and specify if you would like to apply for Pre-Completion OPT.
- Academic advisor must submit an official letter (on DSU letterhead) to Elise stating the information listed below. A sample letter is available in DSU International Student Services.
 - Academic advisor's approval of Pre-Completion OPT employment/internship
 - Explanation of how Pre-Completion OPT employment/internship directly relates to current degree program
 - If before completion of first full academic year, must state that employment/internship is required by academic program within the first full year of degree program
 - State how many credit hours student will receive for employment/internship
- Complete Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.
 - Form I-765 and instructions are available on the USCIS website, <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>.
 - To apply for electronic updates, you must fill out Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance, <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>.

- Collect all of the following documents and supporting materials:
 - Form 1-94 – photocopy of both sides if two-sided
 - Valid Passport – photocopy of photo page, renewal page if original has expired, and pages showing amendments such as name changes, corrections, etc.
 - Visa (if applicable) – photocopy of visa page (must have an active status)
 - Photocopy of all I-20 forms you have been issued
 - Photocopy of any previous Employment Authorization Documents (EAD)
 - Two identical photographs (photograph instructions in Form I-765 instructions, Required Documentation)
 - Pay \$380 Filing Fee (amount subject to change. Please visit <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765> for current amount)
- Schedule a meeting with Elise to review I-765 and documents listed above to ensure proper completion of Form I-765 and all required supporting documents. Elise will make two copies of the documents: one for you, and one for your student file in DSU International Student Services.
- Once the official academic advisor’s letter is received, Elise will enter an OPT recommendation in SEVIS and will print a new I-20, which has the OPT request listed on page 3. You will need to keep the original for your travel documents and a copy will be submitted with your OPT packet.
- Once academic advisor letter, application, and all supporting documents have been approved and Elise has issued your OPT I-20, you will mail the packet to USCIS. OPT application packet must be received by USCIS within 30 days of recommendation being posted in SEVIS by DSU International Student Services.
- As soon as you receive any notifications from USCIS, you must notify Elise.
 - DSU International Student Services must make a copy of any notifications you receive, of any documents that must be submitted after initial application, acceptance/denial letter, and of EAD card.

What Do I Do Once I Get a Job?

- Once you gain employment, your employer must submit an official letter (on the company’s letterhead) directly to Elise stating the following information. A sample letter is available in DSU International Student Services, and this letter must be submitted to and approved by DSU International Student Services before employment begins.
 - Company name, address, and contact information
 - Start/end date of employment
 - Number of hours required to work per week (full-time/part-time status)
 - If position is paid or unpaid
 - If paid, please list amount and if pay will be salary or hourly.
 - Full list of job responsibilities
 - Explanation of how job responsibilities relate to current degree program
- Employer must sign the bottom of this form stating he/she have read, understand, and agree to follow all rule outlined in this document.
- You cannot begin working until you have received your EAD card and International Student Services has approved the employment.
- You must notify Elise of any changes in employment status or job responsibilities within 10 days.

I have read and understand all information listed above and agree to follow all rules outlined in this document.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Employer Signature _____

Date _____

International Student Services Signature _____

Date _____