

To request Post-Completion OPT, you must submit the following documents to International Student Services for review and processing in order to receive the OPT I-20 necessary to complete the USCIS OPT application packet.

- This form (completed, signed, and dated)
- I-765 (<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>) (OPT Category: C3B)
- 2 identical U.S. Passport Photos (Walgreens) taken within the past 30 days
- USCIS Filing Fee (\$410). Personal Check/Money Order payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security."
- Photocopy of all previous I-20's
- Photocopy of visa and passport
- Photocopy of most recent I-94
- Photocopy of social security card (if applicable)
- Optional: Form G-1145 verifying you would like to receive electronic notifications in advance of paper notifications (<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>)

How Do I Apply?

Please put all documents listed above in a file folder/envelope (with your name on the front) and give to Missey Hudson International Assistant Advisor, Union 204. The packet will be given to Elise Mallette, Coordinator of International Student Services, for review and processing. Elise will email you within 3-5 business days to finalize the OPT application process.

When Should I Apply?

DSU suggests applying within 60-90 days prior to degree completion due to the 2-3 month processing period required by USCIS.

What if I Don't Apply Prior to Degree Completion?

DSU updates SEVIS accounts within 45 days of degree completion. If you have not notified Elise of your intension to apply or submitted your OPT application packet to International Student Services, your SEVIS account will be closed. Once the SEVIS account is closed, re-activation is done at the discretion of SEVP, is not guaranteed, and DSU is not liable for denial by SEVP.

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|--|--------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Family Name | First Name | Middle Name | Student ID Number (900#) |
| Email Address (person account, not okramail) | Phone Number | | Graduate Date (mm/yy) |
| Have you been authorized for OPT in the past? _____ | | If so, when? _____ | |
| Yes or No | | From (mm/dd) | To (mm/dd) |
| Requested OPT Start Date (between 1 – 60 days after degree completion): _____ | | | |
| Month Day Year | | | |
| Type of Employment Requesting: <input type="checkbox"/> Full Time (20+ hours per week) <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time (-20 hours per week) | | | |

- I have read, and understand, the responsibilities required of myself and my employer in order to maintain my F1 status during my OPT period as indicated in the DSU OPT Guidelines Form.
- I agree to follow all USCIS and DSU guidelines required of myself and my employer in order to maintain my F1 status during my OPT period as indicated in the DSU OPT Guidelines Form.
- I agree to notify Elise of any notifications I receive from USCIS during my OPT application process and approved OPT period.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

For International Student Services Use Only:

Date Application Packet Received: _____ Date OPT I-20/University Approval Issued: _____

Date OPT Packet Sent to USCIS: _____ USCIS Approved OPT Period (from/to): _____



What Is Post-Completion OPT?

- Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) allows F-1 students to gain off-campus employment in the student's field of study for up to 12 months after degree completion.
 - If student participated in Pre-Completion OPT, the time used is deducted from overall 12 month period of Post-Completion OPT.
 - If student participated in 12 or more months of full-time CPT, he/she is not eligible for Post-Completion OPT.
- May be full-time or part-time.
- May be paid or unpaid.
- For more information, please go to http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/opt_checklist.pdf.

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

- May begin application process 90 days prior to program end date and no more than 60 days after program end date.
 - See "What if I Don't Apply Prior to Degree Completion?" section of attached application for more information.
- OPT application and all employment must be pre-approved by DSU International Student Services.
- DSU International Student Services must enter OPT request in SEVIS before OPT application is mailed.
- OPT application packet must be received by U.S. Customs & Immigration Services (USCIS) within 30 days of OPT Requested I-20 issue date.
- If mailing address changes at any point during the OPT application process, you must notify DSU International Student Services and USCIS within 10 days of change. You will also need to submit an online Form AR-11 to USCIS, <https://egov.uscis.gov/coa/displayCOAForm.do>.

What are the Guidelines for Employment While on Post-Completion OPT?

- All employment, paid or unpaid, must be pre-approved in SEVIS by DSU International Student Services.
 - Any employment that has not been pre-approved is considered unlawful (illegal) employment and is grounds for mandatory OPT/SEVIS/visa termination by USCIS and Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
- Job responsibilities/employment must be directly related to most recently completed academic degree program.
 - Employment unrelated to degree program will not be approved, is considered unlawful employment, counts toward unemployment time, and will cause mandatory OPT/SEVIS/ visa termination through USCIS and DHS.
- To begin working with an employer, paid or unpaid, you must receive each of the following:
 - OPT approval from USCIS
 - Official Employment Authorization Document (EAD card)
 - Updated I-20 with employer and employment start/end date listed on page 2
- You may accrue up to 90 consecutive days of unemployment.
 - If you go over 90 days of unemployment, your OPT status/SEVIS account/F1 visa status will be automatically terminated by USCIS, and you will be required to exit the US within no less than 3 days.
 - Unapproved employment is the same as unemployment and counts toward unemployment time.
- You may be employed through more than one employer while on OPT as long as each has been pre-approved by DSU.
- If you are approved for full-time OPT, your employment must be for 20 or more hours per week.
 - If you have more than one employer, the primary employment must be for 20 or more hours per week. The secondary employment can be considered full or part-time (less than 20 hours per week).
- If you are approved for part-time OPT, your employment must be 20 or less hours per week.
 - If you have more than one employer, each must be for 20 or less hours per week per approved employment.
- If you have any change in employer/employment status/responsibilities/title/location/hours, you and the employer must notify DSU International Student Services within 10 days of the change.
 - You may not begin new responsibilities/hours/employer until changes have been pre-approved by DSU International Student Services.

How Do I Request Employment Approval While on Post-Completion OPT?

- You will need to have your employer submit an official employment letter on official company letterhead (employer signature required) to DSU International Student Services stating all of the following information. A sample letter is available. DSU can accept a scanned copy of the letter (and completed signature form) for temporary use if it is emailed to

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Elise directly from the employer. The original document must be mailed directly to DSU within 10 days of the email submission.

- Company name, address, and contact information
 - Job title
 - Requested employment start/end date
 - Number of hours required to work per week
 - If position is paid or unpaid. If paid, please list amount and if pay will be salary or hourly.
 - Full list of job responsibilities and how they relate to most recently completed academic degree program
 - Supervisor's name and handwritten signature
- You and the employer must both sign and date the Post-Completion OPT Employer Guidelines Form verifying both have read, understand, and agree to follow all guidelines required by DSU and USCIS.
 - Employment, paid or unpaid, may not begin until approval has been granted by DSU and the updated I-20 has been submitted with the employer listed on page 2 of the I-20.
 - Please allow at least 3-5 business days for employment review and processing. Once approved, you and the employer will receive an email stating approval and a screenshot of page 2 of the updated I-20, verifying employment can begin as of the date indicated on the I-20.

Will I Be Allowed to Travel Outside of the U.S. While Pending Post-Completion OPT Approval from USCIS?

- DSU does not suggest traveling internationally while OPT approval is pending with USCIS.
- International travel is not prohibited by USCIS while OPT approval is pending, but it should be done for emergency reasons only because re-entry is at the discretion of U.S. Customs & Border Patrol and is not guaranteed. There is a possibility that USCIS may view the departure as abandoning your OPT request, and the OPT request could be terminated (causing visa to be terminated). If the OPT request is canceled by USCIS, you will not be allowed to re-enter the U.S. and will not be refunded the OPT filing fee.

Will I Be Allowed to Travel Outside of the U.S. After Approved for Post-Completion OPT but Do Not Have SEVIS Approved Employment?

- DSU does not suggest traveling internationally until both OPT and an employer have been approved.
- International travel is not prohibited by USCIS once OPT is approved, even without approved employment. However, without an approved employer listed on the updated I-20, re-entry is at the discretion of U.S. Customs & Border Patrol and is not guaranteed.
- Any time spent outside of the U.S. once OPT has been approved by USCIS without employer approval is considered "unemployment time" and will be deducted from your 90 days of unemployment.
 - If you accrue more than 90 consecutive days of unemployment, your OPT status will be automatically terminated by USCIS, also terminating your SEVIS account and visa, and you will not be allowed to re-enter the U.S.
- Must notify DSU International Student Services of travel plans prior to leaving the U.S.

Will I Be Allowed to Travel Outside of the U.S. Once Approved for Post-Completion OPT and DSU Approved Employment?

- Yes, international travel once OPT is approved by USCIS and employment has been approved in SEVIS is fine.
- If you do not have an official letter from your employer verifying his/her approval for international travel, any time outside of the U.S. will count toward "unemployment time" and will be deducted from your 90 days of unemployment.
 - If you accrue more than 90 consecutive days of unemployment, your OPT status will be automatically terminated by USCIS, also terminating your SEVIS account and visa, and you will not be allowed to re-enter the U.S.
- Must notify DSU International Student Services of travel plans prior to leaving the U.S.

Do I Need to Maintain an Active F-1 Visa Status While on OPT?

- Yes, you must maintain all F-1 visa guidelines in order to maintain your visa status throughout your OPT period.
- If your visa expires while on OPT, you will be able to stay in the U.S. until your USCIS approved OPT end date (unless exceed 90 consecutive unemployment days).
- If you travel outside of the U.S. with an inactive visa, you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. until you receive an updated visa from the U.S. Embassy in your home country.

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Will I Need to Check In with DSU International Student Services While on OPT?

- Yes, you are required to check-in via email with DSU International Student Services at least once every 2 months throughout your OPT period.

Do I need to Update DSU International Service if I Change Anything While On Post-Completion OPT?

- Yes, if there are any changes to the following, you are required to notify DSU International Student Services within 10 days of the change in order to maintain your visa status and SEVIS regulations.
 - Address (physical, mailing, employment)
 - Employer (must be pre-approved in SEVIS before can begin employment)
 - Job title, duties, hours (must be pre-approved by DSU before can begin changes)
 - Phone number
 - Email address
 - Visa status (if applying for change of status or current visa expires)

Can I Take Classes While On Post-Completion OPT?

- No, USCIS does not allow students on Post-Completion OPT to enroll in any courses during Post-Completion OPT period.
- If you do enroll in courses, your OPT status, I-20, EAD, and employer approval will be automatically terminated.

What Do I Do if I Would Like to Begin a New Academic Program?

- Contact Elise before applying for the new academic program, even if you are planning to attend a new university.
- Once accepted to a new DSU program, Elise will need request a “Change of Educational Level” for your SEVIS record.
- If you are going to be attending a new U.S. university, your SEVIS record must be transferred from DSU to the new U.S. university before the new university will be able to issue an updated I-20.
 - You must email Elise a copy of your official acceptance letter from the new U.S. university, along with program acceptance if not listed on the university letter, before the SEVIS record can be transferred.
- Once your new academic program begins, your OPT I-20, EAD, and employer approval are no longer valid.

What Do I Do if I Change My Visa Status/Category?

- Contact Elise prior to requesting a change in visa status.
 - If you do not already have an immigration lawyer, she can recommend one to assist you.
- Once your new visa status has been approved, email Elise a copy of the official approval, so she can update SEVIS record based on the change of status.
- Once approved for a new visa status/category, your OPT I-20, EAD, and related work permission are no longer valid.

Once I Complete My 12 Month Post-Completion OPT Period, When Do I Need to Leave the U.S.?

- You have a 60 day grace period upon completion of your OPT status, which allows you to remain in U.S. during that time. The 60 day grace period allows you to either be approved for/begin a new degree program or apply for a change of status/new visa.
- During the 60 day period after OPT, you may not partake in any form of employment, paid or unpaid.
- If you travel outside of the U.S. during the 60 day period, you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. until you are granted admission to a new degree program (receive new I-20) or change of status is approved and a new visa issued.