



The City University of New York

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICE CENTER

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR CERTIFICATE STUDENTS

**PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF STUDY AND POST-COMPLETION OF STUDY FOR STUDENTS
IN F-1 STATUS**

Current U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations governing Optional Practical Training (OPT) took effect on April 8, 2008. **These regulations apply to all students in F-1 status** (*those who were in the United States on or before that date and those who enter the United States after that date*).

Practical training is defined as, “paid employment **directly related to your major area of study**, following the completion of your academic degree.” **Students in F-1 status must have been enrolled full-time for at least nine consecutive months (one academic year) before they are eligible for Optional Practical Training.**

TO OBTAIN A SEVIS FORM I-20 TO APPLY FOR OPT

In order to receive your SEVIS Form I-20 authorizing OPT you must submit the following:

- Completion letter and transcript obtained from CABP’s academic advisor
- Academic Advisor’s Recommendation form (attached)
- Completed Form I-765 (attached)

WHAT SHOULD YOUR OPT START DATE BE?

Practical training **must** begin no later than 60 days following your semester end date.

LAST POSSIBLE DAY FOR OPT TO BEGIN

FALL I – 2007 GRADUATES:	
Semester End Date: 10/29/2007	Last possible OPT Start Date: 12/27/2007
FALL II – 2007 GRADUATES:	
Semester End Date: 12/20/2007	Last possible OPT Start Date: 02/17/2008
SPRING – 2008 GRADUATES:	
Semester End Date: 04/08/2008	Last possible OPT Start Date: 06/ 06 /2008
SUMMER – 2008 GRADUATES:	
Semester End Date: 07/31/2008	Last possible OPT Start Date: 09/28/2008
FALL – 2008 GRADUATES:	
Semester End Date: 12/11/2008	Last possible OPT Start Date: 02/08/2008

You may choose any date between the Earliest and Last OPT start date.

Post Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT)

A student in F-1 status may apply up to 90 days before the completion date or semester end date and up to 60 days after their completion date. Students **MUST** apply within 30 days of the creation of the OPT I-20 with OPT recommendation. Program completion refers to the date that you have finished all coursework and any project/thesis/dissertation for your degree. **It is not your graduation date. There is no grace period for applying for OPT.**

Optional practical training is **limited to a total of 12 months**. Students in certain “STEM” (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) fields may be eligible for a one-time extension of 17 months of post completion OPT. There is a separate application for filing for this extension. Please speak with an advisor from the ISSC if you feel you may qualify for the extension.

Employment and Unemployment

An offer of employment is not required to obtain approval for OPT. OPT is recommended by the International Student Service Center (ISSC), and authorized by the USCIS. During OPT NO student may be unemployed for an aggregate of more than 90 days* or their status will be put in jeopardy. **For STEM students approved for the 17 month extension the limit on unemployment is raised to an aggregate of no more than 120 days.*

Students are required to report to the ISSC within 10 days:

- **The beginning of employment, with the name and address of the employer.**
- **The termination of employment.**
- **Any change in your personal address.**
- **Any change in your employers Address.**

Studying while on OPT:

- Authorization for OPT is automatically terminated when you transfer your SEVIS record to another school or begin full-time study at a different educational level.

PROCESSING INFORMATION

An application filed without the required fee, all the necessary documents, signature and photographs will be returned to you as **incomplete**. You may correct the deficiency and **resubmit** the application, however, an application is not considered properly filed until the USCIS accepts it. If your application is complete and filed at a USCIS Service Center, you will be mailed a **Notice of Action Form I-797**, receipt notice.

DECISIONS ON YOUR APPLICATION

- **Approval:**
If approved, your EAD card will be mailed to you at your filed address.
- **Request for further information:**
If additional information or documentation is required, a written request will be sent to you requesting further specific information.
- **Denial:**
If your application cannot be approved, you will receive a written notice explaining the basis of your denial. You can appeal by filing an appeal with a “motion to reopen”.

TIME

It will take the **USCIS Vermont Service Center 2-3 months to process your request.** Processing times may vary on the USCIS Vermont Service Center's workload. Employment may **NOT** commence until you have obtained approval from the USCIS Vermont Service Center and you have received your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card.

TRAVEL

The DHS and the U.S. Department of State (DOS) agree that an F-1 student who has timely filed an application for OPT post-completion of study may travel outside the United States while the OPT application is pending, provided that the F-1 student can present the Notice of Action Form I-797, proving that the application has been filed.

However, once the EAD card for OPT is issued to the F-1 student if a student decides to travel abroad, the student can only re-enter the United States to **resume employment.** DHS has clarified that the F-1 student does not need to have already begun actual employment before leaving, as long as the student has a job offer for which he/she is returning.

If you have recently applied for Optional Practical Training and you do decide to travel, you will need the following documents for re-entry:

1. SEVIS I-20 signed by the Designated School Officer at Baruch College
2. Valid EAD card
3. Unexpired passport
4. Valid F-1 visa
5. Letter from a US based employer certifying that you are returning to resume or commence employment

OPT CHECK LIST

All applications must be filed with the documents required below.

You must submit:

- **A copy of your current SEVIS I-20 (with OPT authorization indicated on the 3rd page)**
- **Copies of all your previous I-20's** (1st & 3rd pages).
Important: If you are missing any of your previously issued SEVIS I-20s, you must submit a police report, which states that your SEVIS I-20s were lost or stolen. The ISSC will not provide you with any copies of SEVIS I-20s without a police report.
- **A copy of your Form I-94 Departure Record** (front and back).
- **A copy of your passport identification page** (which includes your photograph).
- **Form I-765** (original)
- **Two photos** with a white background taken no earlier than 30 days before submission to USCIS. They should be un-mounted, printed on thin paper glossy, and un-retouched. See attachment of the Press Release for detailed information about the photos. **Lightly print your name and your Admission number**, if known on the back of each photo with a pencil.
- **A copy of your last EAD, if applicable** (front and back).
- **Fee** Applicants must pay a fee of **\$340.00** to file this form. If the request is denied the fee will not be refunded. Pay in the exact amount. Checks and money orders must be payable in U.S. currency. Make check or money order payable to **“U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services”**. There will be an additional charge and delay if your check is not honored.
- **Where to file** If you live in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, or Pennsylvania, mail your application to:

**Dept. of Homeland Security
USCIS Vermont Service Center
75 Lower Welden Street
St. Albans, VT 05479-0001**

Note: Please be sure to write in the lower left hand corner of your mailing envelope: **Optional Practical Training – Form I-765. See Example below.**

<p>Department of Homeland Security USCIS Vermont Service Center 75 Lower Welden Street St. Albans, VT 05479-0001</p> <p>Optional Practical Training Form I-765</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FORM I-765

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) recommend that you retain a copy of your completed application for your records.

COMPLETE ITEMS 1-16 ON THE I-765 FORM:

- Above Item #1, check the box next to “Permission to accept employment”
- Item # 1-8: Personal information
- Item # 9: Social Security Number, if available.
- Item #10: Alien registration Number or I-94 Number.
- Item #11: You should **only** answer yes if you have ever applied for Economic Hardship or Optional Practical Training employment before.
- Item #12: Date of last entry into the U.S.
- Item #13: Place of last entry into the U.S.
- Item #14: Manner of last entry (As a **Student** or **Tourist** or **Worker** etc.).
- Item #15: Current Immigrant Status (**Student**).
- Item #16: Eligibility Categories - **(c)(3)(i) - F-1 Students Seeking Optional Practical Training in an Occupation Directly Related to Studies. The USCIS adjudicates a request for employment authorization by determining whether an applicant has submitted the required information and documentation, and whether the applicant is eligible. In order to determine your eligibility; you must identify the category in which you are eligible and fill in that category in question 16 on Form I-765.**
- **Certification:** Sign within the white space (do not cross the line), put your telephone number and the date

• **Please do not mail your OPT application package until you receive your SEVIS I-20 with the recommended OPT dates indicated on the third page.**

• **Once you receive your EAD Card you are required to provide the ISSC with a copy of the card. We will then issue you a new I-20 indicating that the OPT has been approved.**

You MUST report the beginning of, and termination of employment to the ISSC within 10 days of the beginning of or termination of employment!!! You must also report any change in your personal address or your employers Address within 10 days.



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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICE CENTER

REGISTRAR'S RECOMMENDATION FORM
FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) FOR CERTIFICATE STUDENTS

The information requested is needed to comply with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations. The international student named below is applying for Optional Practical Training. Practical Training is defined as paid employment directly related to the student's field of study.

(Student completes this section.)

Student Name: _____
(Please print) *First* *Middle* *Last*

Student ID # or Social Security Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Telephone #: _____

Current Address:

Permanent Address in home country:

Previous Periods of Practical Training:

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) <i>Company Name</i>	Dates of CPT	Indicate at what degree level the OPT was granted	Dates of OPT

For EAD Card: Student must select a starting and ending date for the OPT period.

Starting Date: _____

Ending Date: _____

Advisor completes this section: * Please note the date of completion is the date of the semester that the student will complete his/her degree requirements.

***I anticipate that this student will complete all the requirements for the current program of study on or about:**

Fall: _____ Winter: _____ Spring: _____

Summer: _____ (Term 1) _____ (Term 2) _____

The student is currently enrolled: **Full-Time**
 Part-Time

_____ Date: _____
(Please print) Registrar's Name

_____ Telephone: _____
Registrar's Signature

(For Office Use Only)

ISSC Action: _____

Date: _____ Initials: _____ Entered in SEVIS (Date): _____

Student Contacted (Date): _____ SEVIS RTI Screen Printed: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AND ATTACHMENTS TO THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICE CENTER.