Carnegie Mellon University

Pre-OPT Work Permission for F-1 Students
Optional Practical Training

READ THE OPT HANDOUT!

Today we will:

• Outline OPT Basics
• Review Application Process & Timing
• Discuss work options in US after OPT (H-1B, etc.)
• Questions?
Types of OPT

• OPT = Temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student's major area of study.

• Types of OPT:
  – Pre-completion
    • Part-time (less than 20 hours per week) during academic year
    • Full-time during official breaks and vacations
  – Post-completion
    • Full-Time
  – STEM extension
    • Full-Time
Practical Considerations

During OPT period:

• You remain in F-1 status
  • *OPT is not a status, it is a benefit*
• CMU holds your SEVIS record
• OIE still your advisors/visa sponsor!
OPT Usage

• 12 months per *advanced* degree level

• Can be used before or after program completion
  – Full time when school is **not** in session
  – Part time when school is in session (**no more** than 20 hours per week)
OPT Usage

- You choose start and end dates for all periods of OPT.
- Once USCIS grants the work permission the time is “used” and cannot be restored.
- Full-time pre-completion OPT deducted from the 12 months at 100%.
- (can only be used in the summer/official school breaks!!)
- Part-time pre-completion OPT deducted from the 12 months at ½ rate.
OPT Usage

• Post-completion OPT application may need to be filed while waiting for Pre-completion to be approved.

• 2 SEPARATE APPLICATIONS must be filed:
  – 1 for pre-completion OPT
  – 1 for post-completion OPT
  – Same time frame for approval
  – 2 fees!
Employment

What work can you do during Pre-completion OPT?

• *Any/all* – As long as it:
  • Is related to **YOUR** field and level of study
  • Paid, unpaid, volunteer, contract
  • Job title *doesn’t* matter...
  • **BUT** the nature of the work *does*

You can only legally work in the U.S. when:

• Have received the EAD Card
• Within valid dates on EAD
The Application is a Three Step Process

Step 1. Recommendation
• Signed by your advisor & submitted to OIE

Step 2. New I-20
• Goal: new I-20 with Pre-OPT recommendation
• I-20 TIME: 5 to 10 business days at OIE

Step 3. Application
• Mail to USCIS
• Goal: EAD card
• APPROVAL TIME: Up to 90 days
The Application Process: OIE Advisor’s Form

To: Student OPT Applicant
Complete the following information. The OIE advisor will use the information you provide to recommend your OPT.

List Academic Department: Need New I-20 Mailed To You (YES or NO):
Surname/Family Name: Given/First Name:
Date of Birth: Andrew ID:
Do You Have A Secondary MAJOR/Qual Degree? (YES or NO):
Non Andrew Email:

Current US Address:

*Address must also be updated in SIO!

OPT Start Date (mm/dd/yyyy):
OPT End Date (mm/dd/yyyy):
Full or Part Time:
Passport Expiration (mm/dd/yyyy)

Check one: The work, □ WILL or □ WILL NOT directly relate to my field of study/degree program.

Have you applied for OPT before?: □ YES □ NO
If yes, Educational Level: □ Bachelor’s □ Master’s □ PhD

I understand that all periods of pre-completion OPT are deducted from the available period of post-completion OPT. □ YES □ NO
The Application Process: OIE Advisor’s Form

Completed by your academic advisor!!
Your academic advisor signs this section.
The Application Process has IMPORTANT Timelines!!

No more than 90 days BEFORE requested start date

OPT I-20 no more than 30 days old
OPT I-20: The 30 Day Rule!!

- OPT application must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the date your OPT I-20 is issued.
- Be ready to file when you turn in your request!
- I-20 more than 30 days past issuance date = OPT DENIED!

SCHOOL ATTESTATION

I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.

X

SIGNATURE OF: Carly Devineburgh, Foreign Student & Scholar Advisor

DATE ISSUED: 2/19/2019

PLACE ISSUED: Pittsburgh, PA

IMPORTANT!

2/19/2019
I-20 Page 2

Pre-OPT Dates

Valid for 12 Months
New Travel Signature
Choosing Your OPT Start Date

• **Start date:** Start date of employment

• **End date:** End date of employment (can’t go past program completion date)
  
  • Summer: OPT can start after classes/finals end and must end before start of fall term.

• Remember, it will take up to 90 days for approval!

• **CAREFUL** – **CAN’T CHANGE DATES** once sent to USCIS

• **NO WORK without EAD!**
Timing of Your Application

• Be aware of processing times:
  • Up to 90 days to be approved...
  • ..or longer if application is returned, something is missing, etc...

• Cannot Expedite OPT!! Trying can slow the process!
What do I include with my application?

Include **ALL** Materials on PAGE 1 in Pre-OPT handout.
What Do I Include?

✓ **G-1145** form
✓ Check for $410 (payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security) **OR**,  
  ✓ **Form G-1450** – to pay by Credit Card
✓ **Two U.S. passport-sized photos (No Glasses)**
✓ Completed, signed **I-765** form
✓ **Copies** of all I-20s issued to you
✓ Copy of passport
✓ Copy of F-1 visa stamp
✓ Copy of I-94 record ([www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94))
✓ Copy of previous EAD (if you’ve applied for OPT before)

**Items are listed on page 1 of the OPT handout!!**
G-1145 Form

- G-1145 - first page of application
- Free to file
- More like 2-4 weeks...
- Disregard form expiration date – be sure to download fromuscis.gov
Preparing Your Check

US Department of Homeland Security $410.00
Four hundred ten and----------00/100 Dollars

OPT Application Sign Your Name Here
Preparing Your Check

Leave the back **BLANK**
If you wish to pay by credit card – please fill-out at attached the [G-1450 Form](#) to your application.

**Applicant's/Petitioner's/Requester's Information (Full Legal Name)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given Name (First Name)</th>
<th>Middle Name (if any)</th>
<th>Family Name (Last Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Credit Card Billing Information (Credit Card Holder's Name as it Appears on the Card)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given Name (First Name)</th>
<th>Middle Name (if any)</th>
<th>Family Name (Last Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Credit Card Holder's Billing Address:**

- Street Number and Name
- City or Town
- State
- ZIP Code

**Credit Card Holder's Signature and Contact Information:**

- Credit Card Holder's Signature
- Credit Card Holder's Daytime Telephone Number
- Credit Card Holder's Email Address

**Credit Card Information**

- Credit Card Number
- Credit Card Type: □ Visa □ MasterCard □ American Express □ Discover
- Credit Card Expiration Date (mm/yyyy)
- Authorized Payment Amount: $ 

*Type or Print in Black Ink*

“Petitioner is person applying for the OPT

Card Holders Information Can be your information or a friends -> enter that information here.

Make sure “Card Holder” SIGNS the form!
Preparing Your Application: Photos

OIE Cannot Check Photos!

- **Write your name AND I-94 # on back!**
  - Write lightly – don’t damage the photo
- **Make sure they are the correct size!**
- **DO NOT Wear Glasses!**
- **DO NOT USE OLD PHOTO’S!!!**
Preparing Your Application: Tips

• You can include your check & photos in marked white envelope:

• Attach to application – don’t staple photos!
Check the box: “Permission to accept employment...”
## Form I-765

1.a: Last name
1.b: First name
1.c: Middle Name  
(If No Middle Name – Leave Blank)

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### Part 2. Information About You

#### Your Full Legal Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.a. Family Name (Last Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.b. Given Name (First Name)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.c. Middle Name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Other Names Used

Provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames. If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in Part 6.

**Additional Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.a. Family Name (Last Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.b. Given Name (First Name)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.c. Middle Name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.a. Family Name (Last Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.b. Given Name (First Name)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.c. Middle Name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.a. Family Name (Last Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.b. Given Name (First Name)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.c. Middle Name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form I-765

Follow the below instructions **ONLY** if you will use a friend or family member’s address on the I-765.

- If you believe you will change addresses within the next three months, you are advised to list the address of a trusted friend or family member.
- If you choose to enter your friend or family member's address, you **MUST** fill in 5.a, 5.b, 5.c, 5.d, 5.e with this person’s U.S. address.
  - You would then check box “NO”

- You will now enter **YOUR** current U.S. address to where you are living at the time you submit your application to USCIS.

**PLEASE NOTE:**
YOU CANNOT USE OIE’S ADDRESS!
Form I-765

If you know that you **WILL BE** at your current address for 3 to 5 months after submitting your OPT application to USCIS – then follow the directions below.

- Enter a US address (where you will be located in the next 3 to 5 months)

- **You would check box “YES” – if this is the same as your current physical address.**
  - You would check “NO” if this mailing address is not the same as you listed for questions 5.a to 5.

- Enter your current US address – where you are currently living.
Form I-765

8. Leave Blank

9. Leave Blank

10. Check Gender Listed On Your Passport

11. Check Marital Status

12. Have You Filed an I-765 Before? Check Appropriate Answer
Form I-765

13.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered “No” to Item Number 13.a., skip to Item Number 14. If you answered “Yes” to Item Number 13.a., provide the information requested in Item Number 13.b.

13.b. Provide your Social Security number (SSN) (if known).

14. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card? (You must also answer “Yes” to Item Number 15., Consent for Disclosure, to receive a card.)

☐ Yes  ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered “No” to Item Number 14., skip to Part 2, Item Number 18.a. If you answered “Yes” to Item Number 14., you must also answer “Yes” to Item Number 15.

15. Consent for Disclosure: I authorize disclosure of information from this application to the SSA as required for the purpose of assigning me an SSN and issuing me a Social Security card.

☐ Yes  ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered “Yes” to Item Numbers 14. - 15., provide the information requested in Item Numbers 16.a. - 17.b.

13.a: Do you have a Social Security Number? Check Appropriate Answer

13.b: Enter SSN Number

**ONLY if you answered NO for 13.a, and would like an SSN Number and will be at address used on I-765** -> Then complete questions **14, 15, 16.a to 17.b**
Form I-765

18.a: Enter Country of Passport

18.b: Leave Blank – *Unless* – You Hold Two Passports

19.a: to 19.c: Enter Needed Information

20: Enter Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)
Form I-765

21.a: Write in I-94 Number
https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home
21.b: Passport Number
21.c: Leave Blank
21.d: Enter Country on Passport
21.e: Passport Expiration Date
22 and 23: Refer to your latest port of entry stamp in your passport

Please Note:
ANY U.S. Point of Entry outside the U.S. - Where you enter through immigration

24: “F-1 Student”
25: “F-1 Student”
26: SEVIS Number
27: Write Pre-Completion OPT code: (c)(3)(A)

**Information About Your Eligibility Category**

27. Eligibility Category. Refer to the Who May File Form I-765 section of the Form I-765 Instructions to determine the appropriate eligibility category for this application. Enter the appropriate letter and number for your eligibility category below (for example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii)).

   □ □ □ □ □ □

**SKIP Questions 28 through 31.b**

*Check Options 1.a to 2 As They Apply To You*

3: Current US Phone Number
4: Current US Mobile Number
5: Current “Personal” Email Address – NOT Your Andrew Email
Form I-765

Please Note: You should **ONLY** complete pages 5, 6 and 7 *IF* they apply to you (See next slide!).

If they DO NOT apply, then Leave Blank.

However, INCLUDE ALL 7 PAGES OF THE I-765 IN YOUR OPT APPLICATION TO USCIS.

Sign within lines in **dark blue** ink

**NOTE TO ALL APPLICANTS:** If you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents listed in the Instructions, USCIS may deny your application.
If you have had:
• Curricular Practical Training (CPT) AND/OR
• Optional Practical Training (OPT) AND (if applicable)
• A Previous SEVIS ID # in the past -> then complete 1.a, 1.b, and 1.c -> Leave #2 Blank and then follow the sample picture
> 3.a. and 4.a write:
  *Page Number – 3
  *Part Number – 2
  *Item Number – 27
>(if applies to you) 5.a write:
  *Page Number – 3
  *Part Number – 2
  *Item Number – 26

If ALL or NONE of the above applies to you,
**INCLUDE ALL 7 PAGES OF THE I-765 IN YOUR OPT APPLICATION TO USCIS.**
Required **Photocopies** of Documents

- I-94 printout
  ([https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home))
  **OR** White I-94 card (front & back)

- Photo page of passport

- Most recent F-1 visa stamp

- **ALL I-20s ever issued** (including OPT)
  - Sign all I-20s before copying
Optional Cover Letter

Sample OPT Cover Letter

[DATE OF REQUEST]

[STUDENT NAME]:
[SEVIS ID NUMBER]:
[OPT REQUESTED: PRE or POST-COMPLETION or STEM]
[OPT DATES REQUESTED]:

Dear USCIS Officer:
Please accept this cover letter for my F-1 [PRE or POST-COMPLETION or STEM] Practical Training request. I am writing this letter because [REASON FOR LETTER].

Enclosed, please find my [PRE or POST-COMPLETION or STEM] application materials

Please contact me if you require additional information or documentation to process this request.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE OF STUDENT]

[NAME OF STUDENT]

• Cover letter **not required**, unless something is missing or further explanation is required:
  • Missing I-20
  • Missing EAD
Dependents in F-2 Status

• F-2 dependents will receive a new I-20

**F-2 documents NOT submitted in OPT application**

• F-2(s) Must ALWAYS Travel with:
  • New F-2 I-20
  • Copies of F-1’s Documents (OPT I-20, EAD card(s), Job Offer Letter)
Make A Copy of **ENTIRE** Application!!

You will need this information in the future!
Scan, copy, etc...
But make sure it is a copy of the *entire application*
Mailing your Application: FedEx/UPS

On I-765 (#3), if you use an address in:

Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, DC, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

USCIS
Attn: NFB AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121
Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067
On I-765 (#3), if you use an address in:


USCIS
Attn: NFB AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Mailing your Application: FedEx/UPS

If you mail your application with ANY SERVICE other than FedEx or UPS...

Please find that specific lockbox here

DO NOT MAIL Regular Mail!
What Happens After You Send In Your Application to USCIS?

You should receive from USCIS:
• Text message or email with case number
  o (within 2 to 4 weeks)
• Paper Receipt Notice
  o (within 4 weeks)
• Approval Notice
  o (up to 90 days)
• EAD card
  o (up to 90 days)

Remain Patient!!
If You Make a Mistake on Your Application...

DON’T PANIC!

Contact OIE!
And **NEVER** Send in Duplicate Applications!
Case Status Online: www.uscis.gov

Case was received on November 3, 2014. For your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, Receipt Number EAC: and sent you the receipt notice that describes how we will process your case. Please follow the instructions in the notice. If you do not receive your receipt notice by December 3, 2014, please call Customer Service at 1-800-375-5283. If you move, go to www.uscis.gov/addresschange to give us your new mailing address.
Keeping Records & Maintaining Status

Job **must** be related to level & field of study at CMU

Keep documentation of employment for **your** records:

- Employer/company
- Employer address
- # hours per week
- Job description
- Supervisor contact info
Keeping Records & Maintaining Status

• Paid work: Offer letter, Paystubs, W-2 forms, etc.
• Unpaid work: Employer letters
  – NOTE: Employer MAY NOT be able to write letter for unpaid work – check before starting job!
• F-1 students on OPT MUST keep local & permanent addresses current
• Must notify OIE within 10 days of a move
• How?
  • Update SIO: https://www.cmu.edu/hub/sio/about.html

**Unemployment days do not “count” on pre-completion OPT**
Social Security Number (SSN)

- Use Pre-completion OPT I-20 and EAD to apply for an SSN

- Instructions on OIE Website!

- Apply in person at SSN office

- Card mailed in 7-10 days – keep in safe place!
Social Security Number (SSN)

- Do not apply more than 30 days before the EAD start date.

- Apply anywhere in the US!

- SSN is not work authorization – you can start work without it as long as you have your EAD.
Adding to your I-20 “collection”

- Pre-Completion I-20 is your new I-20
- Valid even after Pre-Completion OPT period is over
- KEEP all I-20s! Needed for Post-Completion OPT
Travel

“I’m traveling before/after my Pre-OPT...”

- If you have applied for Pre-OPT and travel outside the U.S....

You will travel with the usual:

- Passport
- I-20 (New OPT I-20)
- Unexpired Visa
- Enrollment Verification Letter from The HUB (Optional)

“But when I travel after I have applied for Pre-OPT – my I-94 record will change...”

- This is expected – And does not impact your Pre-OPT Application
OIE Web Resources
Posner Hall, 1st Floor
Office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00
412-268-5231
www.cmu.edu/oie
oie@andrew.cmu.edu