

An aerial photograph of the University of Virginia campus at sunset. The sky is filled with vibrant orange and red clouds, with the sun low on the horizon. The campus is illuminated by warm lights, and the surrounding mountains are visible in the background. The text "OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters.

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

How to prepare your application to USCIS

International Studies Office
lssp.virginia.edu

What is OPT?

Allows for off-campus work authorization for F-1 students in their primary field of study.

- Students must be in full-time F-1 status for at least one academic year
 - *Some students who change visa status to F-1 and who have been continuously enrolled in a full-time degree program for at least 1 academic year may qualify for OPT prior to 1 year in F-1 status*

Eligibility

Pre-Completion OPT

For most students, Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a better option. It allows for off-campus work authorization in your field of study without using any of the 12 months of OPT time. See our web site for a detailed description.

Post-Completion OPT

- You must be continuously enrolled in valid student status for one year or two full semesters (Fall and Spring).
- You apply in your final semester of study no more than 90 days before your program end date.

OPT and CPT Usage

- If you used 1 year or more of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT), during your current degree level, you do not qualify for OPT.
- Part-time CPT should not count towards OPT disqualification.
- Heavy CPT usage either part-time or full-time can cause your OPT application to be subject to additional scrutiny. Be prepared to provide evidence of all prior CPT I-20s, as well as the academic work related to your CPT.

Types of Qualifying Employment

During your 12-month OPT period, OPT employment must be a minimum of 20 hours per week in a job directly related to your degree program. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate relationship between coursework and employment. Here are types of employment permitted:

- Paid employment
- Multiple employers
- Work for hire (commonly referred to as 1099 employment)
- Self-employed business owner (must obtain proper business licenses)
- Employment through an agency
- Volunteers or unpaid interns (Post-Completion OPT only. Not eligible for OPT STEM Extension)

Application Process Overview

1. Review our F-1 OPT webpage and our tutorial
2. Initiate the [OPT Request Process](#) through ISSP Connect. Submit only 1 request. You can return to an incomplete application by logging onto ISSP Connect. Remember to click on the 'submit' button when you have completed the application.
3. You will receive an email when your OPT I-20 has been uploaded to your application. Log onto [ISSP Connect](#) and retrieve your I-20 from the Documents section of your OPT application.
4. Review our OPT Filing Instructions page. OPT I-20 and full OPT application must be in the hands of USCIS no later than 30 days after the OPT I-20's issue date. Do not e-file your application.
 - Do not use an electronic signature on your I-765. Use a wet blue ink for all signature and dates.
 - Obtain a tracking number when mailing your application.

Step 1: Requesting your OPT I-20

1. Complete OPT Request through ISSP Connect
2. We will need your degree completion date electronically verified from your department chair, faculty advisor or association dean.
3. Remember, you can apply for OPT **no earlier than 90 days** before your program end date.

OPT Start Date

- Your OPT start date is the date that your 12 months of work authorization begins.
- OPT start date must be *within the 60-day grace period* after the program completion date.
- The requested start and end dates will be noted on page 2 of your new OPT I-20
- The end date will be 1 year from your start date (i.e. July 2, 2021 to July 1, 2022)

IMPORTANT: Once USCIS receives your OPT application, it is not possible to change your OPT start and end dates.

Check your OPT I-20 for accuracy

1. Check your Educational Level (i.e. PhD candidate decides to graduate with a Masters)
2. Program End Date
3. Student Attestation
4. School Attestation: USCIS must receive your application within 30 days of the “Date Issued” date on Page 1, not the travel signature date.
5. OPT Start and End Dates
6. You will receive a new travel signature at the time you request your OPT I-20

OPT Application Checklist

- ☐ 2 U.S. Passport Photos taken within the past 30 days.
- ☐ USCIS Fee of \$410
 - *Fee increases to \$550 on October 2, 2020*
- ☐ Form G-1145, e-notification form
- ☐ Original Form I-765. Don't forget to sign in wet ink. No e-signatures.
- ☐ Copy of OPT I-20 issued by ISO within the past 30 days. Don't forget to sign in wet ink. No e-signatures.
- ☐ Copy of valid passport biographical page
- ☐ Copy of latest F-1 visa stamp
- ☐ Printout of electronic I-94 record, or copy of paper Form I-94
- ☐ Copies of all previous I-20s (from UVA and previous schools, if applicable)

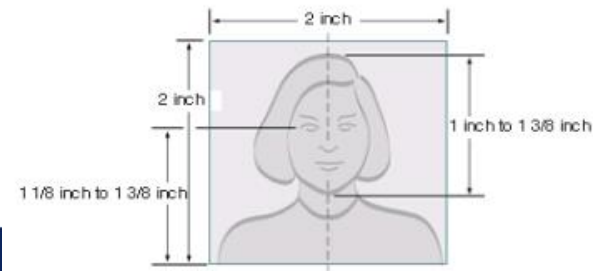
Passport Photo Requirement

The photos required to use for the OPT application must meet the specifications of U.S. style passport photos. To see a full description of these specifications, go to the [U.S. Department of State website](#).

- **Submit two identical color passport photos taken within the past 30 days.**
- **DO NOT use old photos you used for your passport or visa applications. You will get denied.**
- **Write your name and SEVIS number lightly in pencil on the back of both photos. Do not damage the photo surface by pressing hard while writing**

Tip:

USCIS has been strictly examining photos. ISO recommends students have their photos taken professionally. [Bryan's Photo](#) at 2214 Ivy Road Suite 107, Charlottesville, VA 22903.



USCIS Fee

Check, Money Order, or Credit Card for \$410 before October 1, 2020.

Please note, fee increases to \$550 after October 2, 2020.

- Check or Money Order should be made payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security” with SEVIS number in the memo line. Money orders can be purchased as banks, post office, and some local grocery stores. Make sure a name and address are printed on the check.
 - Do not use “temporary checks” often issued by the bank when opening a new account. These check shave no name or address in the upper left hand corner.

Credit Card (not recommended by ISO)

- Submit form G-1450 for the proper amount. Credit card must have U.S. billing address. Ensure you sign G-1450 and that the financial institution will clear your transaction the first time.

Your Name Here
Your Street Address Here
Your City, State, Zip Code, Here
Your telephone number Here

1936
MM/DD/YYYY
DATE

PAY TO THE ORDER OF U.S. Department of Homeland Security \$ 410.00
Four-hundred and ten dollars 00/100 DOLLARS

FOR Your SEVIS ID Number Your Signature Here

⑆000000186⑆ 000000529⑆ 1000

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® POSTAL MONEY ORDER

Serial Number Year, Month, Day Post Office U.S. Dollars and Cents

000000000000 This section will be completed by issuer of money order.

Pay to U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Address USCIS Mailing Address

Memo OPT Application: Your SEVIS ID number

Your name
Your mailing address

⑆000000000⑆ 000000 000000⑆

Form G-1145 (e-Notification)

- Attach to top of OPT application packet
- Use [Form G-1145](#) to request text and/or email notification(s) regarding your application.

WARNING!

If you receive a phone call from a person claiming to work for USCIS or any other government agency, do not provide your personal information to them. Note the person's name, phone number, and email address and contact an ISO advisor before responding.



e-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS
Form G-1145

What Is the Purpose of This Form?

Use this form to request an electronic notification (e-Notification) when U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services accepts your immigration application. This service is available for applications filed at a USCIS Lockbox facility.

General Information

Complete the information below and clip this form to the first page of your application package. You will receive one e-mail and/or text message for each form you are filing.

We will send the e-Notification within 24 hours after we accept your application. Domestic customers will receive an e-mail and/or text message; overseas customers will only receive an e-mail. Undeliverable e-Notifications cannot be resent.

The e-mail or text message will display your receipt number and tell you how to get updated case status information. It will not include any personal information. The e-Notification does not grant any type of status or benefit; rather it is provided as a convenience to customers.

USCIS will also mail you a receipt notice (I-797C), which you will receive within 10 days after your application has been accepted; use this notice as proof of your pending application or petition.

USCIS Privacy Act Statement

AUTHORITIES: The information requested on this form is collected pursuant to section 103(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended INA section 101, et seq.

PURPOSE: The primary purpose for providing the information on this form is to request an electronic notification when USCIS accepts immigration form. The information you provide will be used to send you a text and/or email message.

DISCLOSURE: The information you provide is voluntary. However, failure to provide the requested information may prevent USCIS from providing you a text and/or email message receiving your immigration form.

ROUTINE USES: The information provided on this form will be used by and disclosed to DHS personnel and contractors in accordance with approved routine uses, as described in the associated published system of records notices [[DHS/USCIS-007 - Benefits Information System and DHS/USCIS-001 - Alien File \(A-File\) and Central Index System \(CTS\)](#)], which can be found at www.dhs.gov/privacy. The information may also be made available, as appropriate for law enforcement purposes or in the interest of national security.

Complete this form and clip it on top of the first page of your immigration form(s).

Applicant/Petitioner Full Last Name	Applicant/Petitioner Full First Name	Applicant/Petitioner Full Middle Name
Email Address		Mobile Phone Number (Text Message)

I-765

IMPORTANT: Download the [I-765](#) from the [USCIS website](#). Use the current version. It's best to download the form just before mailing the application since USCIS updates it frequently.

How to fill out Form I-765

- Review I-765 instructions on [USCIS webpage](#)
- Page 3, #27 use code (c)(3)(B) for Post-Completion OPT
- Type within the Form. Sign in wet ink.
- Answer all questions fully and accurately.
- If a question does not apply to you, type or print “N/A” or “None”
- Print and complete all pages.
- Contact ISO with any questions or uncertainties completes the I-765

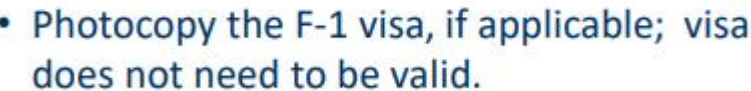
OPT I-20

UVa OPT I-20 (all pages):

- Must be received by USCIS within 30 days of DATE ISSUED on page 1
- Original must be signed by an ISO advisor
- Original must be signed by the student at the bottom of page 1.
- The requested OPT start and end dates will appear on page 2.
- Mail the original OPT I-20. All other I-20's will be mailed as copies

SEVIS ID: N			
SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME		GIVEN NAME	CLASS
PREFERRED NAME		PASSPORT NAME	F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
COUNTRY OF BIRTH		COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	
DATE OF BIRTH		ADMISSION NUMBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE		LEGACY NAME	
SCHOOL INFORMATION			
SCHOOL NAME University of California at Berkeley University of California at Berkeley RETURN OVERSEAS TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL		SCHOOL ADDRESS Berkeley International Office, Berkeley, CA 94720	
International Student & Scholar Advisor		SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE S09214P00415508 27 JANUARY 2013	
PROGRAM OF STUDY			
EDUCATION LEVEL DOCTORATE	MAJOR 1 Political Science and Government, Degree 45.1001	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000	
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH 48 Months	PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient	
PROGRAM START DATE 21 JANUARY 2014	PROGRAM END DATE 16 DECEMBER 2015		
FINANCIALS			
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR 12 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR 12 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 30,903	Personal Funds	\$ 0
Living Expenses	\$ 19,000	Dept. Support	\$ 0
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$ 0	Funds From Another Source	\$ 0
Other	\$ 0	On-Campus Employment	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 49,903	TOTAL	\$ 0
REMARKS			
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 and/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 student's arrival. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student is eligible to pursue a program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(b)(5). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.			
SIGNATURE OF: Scholar Advisor	DATE ISSUED 05 October 2013	PLACE ISSUED Berkeley, CA	
STUDENT ATTESTATION			
I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.5(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.			
SIGNATURE OF: NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN	DATE	DATE	
SIGNATURE	ADDRESS (city/town or previous/nearest)	DATE	

- Photocopy the passport biographic page with photo and passport expiration date. Use a valid passport even if it is not the passport you used to enter the US most recently. (*You will provide information on the expired passport on p. 7.)



Photocopy of I-94

The I-94 can be:

- An **electronic I-94**. Visit www.cbp.gov/i94 to access and print your record
- A **paper I-94 card** stapled into your passport. Include a copy of both sides, even though the back side may be blank.
- A copy of an **I-797 Change of Status Approval Notice** which includes a new I-94

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Securing America's Borders

Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number : 2123456789

Most Recent Date of Entry: 2017 March 06

Class of Admission : F1

Admit Until Date : D/S

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname : WANG
First (Given) Name : WENYI
Birth Date : 1958October26
Passport Number : M123456
Country of Issuance : China

[Get Travel History](#)

► Effective April 26, 2013, DHS began automating the admission process. An alien lawfully admitted or paroled into the U.S. is no longer required to be in possession of a preprinted Form I-94. A record of admission printed from the CBP website constitutes a lawful record of admission. See 8 CFR § 1.4(d).

► If an employer, local, state or federal agency requests admission information, present your admission (I-94) number along with any additional required documents requested by that employer or agency.

► Note: For security reasons, we recommend that you close your browser after you have finished retrieving your I-94 number.

Electronic I-94 Record

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

CBP No. 8888 8888

Departure Record
Admission Number:
123456789 01

18. Family Name
19. First (Given) Name
20. Birth Date (DD/MM/YY)
21. Country of Citizenship

SEP 13 2006
D/S
J1

CBP Form I-94

Paper I-94 (front)

Warning: A nonimmigrant who accepts unauthorized employment is subject to deportation.

Inspection: Retain this permit in your possession; you must surrender it when you leave the U.S. Failure to do so may delay your entry into the U.S. in the future. You are authorized to stay in the U.S. only until the date written on this form. To remain past this date, without permission from the Department of Homeland Security, is a violation of the law.

Surrender this permit when you leave the U.S.:

- By sea or air, to the transportation line;
- Across the Canadian border, to a Canadian Official;
- Across the Mexican border, to a U.S. Official.

Students planning to return to the U.S. within 30 days to return to the same school, see "Arrival-Departure" on page 2 of Form I-20 prior to surrendering this permit.

Record of Changes

Port: _____
Date: _____
Carrier: _____
Flight # / Ship Name: _____

Departure Record

Paper I-94 (back)

Photocopies of all previous OPT and CPT I-20s

- Include copies of all previous I-20s at UVA and previous institutions
- Old and new versions of the I-20 are acceptable
- Copy all pages except the instruction page
- Keep original for your records

U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service

Page 1

Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status

Section 1: Student Information

1. Student Name: _____
2. Date of Birth: _____
3. Date of Issuance: _____
4. Date of Expiration: _____
5. Date of Arrival: _____
6. Date of Departure: _____
7. Date of Return: _____
8. Date of Re-entry: _____
9. Date of Departure: _____
10. Date of Return: _____
11. Date of Re-entry: _____

Section 2: School Information

12. School Name: _____
13. School Address: _____
14. School Phone: _____
15. School Fax: _____
16. School Email: _____
17. School Website: _____
18. School Type: _____
19. School Level: _____
20. School Grade: _____
21. School Year: _____
22. School Term: _____
23. School Session: _____
24. School Start Date: _____
25. School End Date: _____
26. School Session: _____
27. School Session: _____
28. School Session: _____
29. School Session: _____
30. School Session: _____

Section 3: Financial Information

31. Financial Source: _____
32. Financial Amount: _____
33. Financial Date: _____
34. Financial Date: _____
35. Financial Date: _____
36. Financial Date: _____
37. Financial Date: _____
38. Financial Date: _____
39. Financial Date: _____
40. Financial Date: _____
41. Financial Date: _____
42. Financial Date: _____
43. Financial Date: _____
44. Financial Date: _____
45. Financial Date: _____
46. Financial Date: _____
47. Financial Date: _____
48. Financial Date: _____
49. Financial Date: _____
50. Financial Date: _____

Section 4: Remarks

51. Remarks: _____
52. Remarks: _____
53. Remarks: _____
54. Remarks: _____
55. Remarks: _____
56. Remarks: _____
57. Remarks: _____
58. Remarks: _____
59. Remarks: _____
60. Remarks: _____

Section 5: Signature and Date

61. Signature: _____
62. Date: _____
63. Signature: _____
64. Date: _____
65. Signature: _____
66. Date: _____
67. Signature: _____
68. Date: _____
69. Signature: _____
70. Date: _____

Section 1: Student Information

1. Student Name: _____
2. Date of Birth: _____
3. Date of Issuance: _____
4. Date of Expiration: _____
5. Date of Arrival: _____
6. Date of Departure: _____
7. Date of Return: _____
8. Date of Re-entry: _____
9. Date of Departure: _____
10. Date of Return: _____
11. Date of Re-entry: _____

Section 2: School Information

12. School Name: _____
13. School Address: _____
14. School Phone: _____
15. School Fax: _____
16. School Email: _____
17. School Website: _____
18. School Type: _____
19. School Level: _____
20. School Grade: _____
21. School Year: _____
22. School Term: _____
23. School Session: _____
24. School Start Date: _____
25. School End Date: _____
26. School Session: _____
27. School Session: _____
28. School Session: _____
29. School Session: _____
30. School Session: _____

Section 3: Financial Information

31. Financial Source: _____
32. Financial Amount: _____
33. Financial Date: _____
34. Financial Date: _____
35. Financial Date: _____
36. Financial Date: _____
37. Financial Date: _____
38. Financial Date: _____
39. Financial Date: _____
40. Financial Date: _____
41. Financial Date: _____
42. Financial Date: _____
43. Financial Date: _____
44. Financial Date: _____
45. Financial Date: _____
46. Financial Date: _____
47. Financial Date: _____
48. Financial Date: _____
49. Financial Date: _____
50. Financial Date: _____

Section 4: Remarks

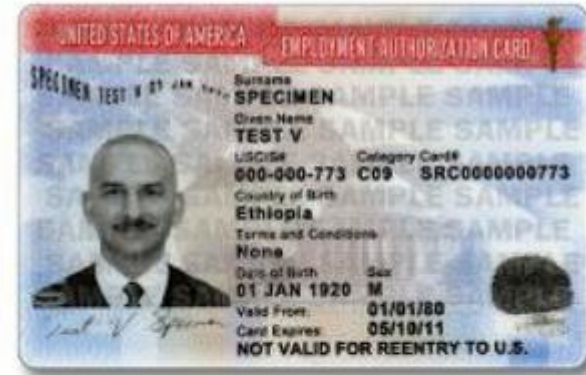
51. Remarks: _____
52. Remarks: _____
53. Remarks: _____
54. Remarks: _____
55. Remarks: _____
56. Remarks: _____
57. Remarks: _____
58. Remarks: _____
59. Remarks: _____
60. Remarks: _____

Section 5: Signature and Date

61. Signature: _____
62. Date: _____
63. Signature: _____
64. Date: _____
65. Signature: _____
66. Date: _____
67. Signature: _____
68. Date: _____
69. Signature: _____
70. Date: _____

Photocopy of Previous EAD(s), if applicable

- If an EAD was received in the past, include a copy of the front and back of card
- Can be from OPT approved at a prior institution or different educational level
- Include previous OPT I-20s and I-797 notice of approval as well, if available.



Example only. Your EAD card will have different categories, dates and information listed

The Application Deadline

- USCIS must receive your complete OPT application no later than 30 days after the OPT I-20 issue date on page 1.
 - The issue date is located next to the advisor's signature on page 1 of the OPT I-20. Please account for mailing time.
- Additionally, USCIS must receive your application before the end of your 60-day grace period.
- Track the status of your mailed application to be certain it was delivered on time.

We recommend that you apply early.

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: **N**

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME	GIVEN NAME	CLASS F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
PREFERRED NAME	PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	
DATE OF BIRTH	ADMISSION NUMBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE	LEGACY NAME	

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL NAME University of California at Berkeley University of California at Berkeley SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL	SCHOOL ADDRESS Berkeley International Office, Berkeley, CA 94720 SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE SPR014P00115000 27 JANUARY 2015
--	--

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & Scholar Advisor

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL DOCTORATE	MAJOR 1 Political Science and Government, General 40.1001	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH 48 Months	PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient
PROGRAM START DATE 01 JANUARY 2014	PROGRAM END DATE 18 DECEMBER 2015	

FINANCIALS

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 12 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 12 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 30,863	Personal Funds	\$ 0
Living Expenses	\$ 18,000	Dept. Support	\$ 48,903
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$ 0	Funds From Another Source	\$ 0
Other	\$ 0	On-Campus Employment	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 48,863	TOTAL	\$ 48,903

REMARKS

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 prior to the submission 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 must be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(8). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to sign this form.

X **DATE ISSUED** 09 October 2015 **PLACE ISSUED** Berkeley, CA

SIGNATURE OF: International Student
Scholar Advisor

STUDENT ATTESTATION

I have read and agree to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of my extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form reflects specifically on me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.

X

SIGNATURE OF: **X** **DATE**

NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE ADDRESS (city/state or previous country) DATE

ICE Form I-20 (3/31/2015)

Page 1 of 3

Mailing your application to USCIS

ISO strongly recommends using an express carrier such as FedEx or UPS to deliver your OPT application.

If the mailing address on the I-765 is in...	Mail your application to:
Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands.	USCIS Phoenix Lockbox For U.S. Postal Service (USPS): USCIS P.O. Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036 For FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries: USCIS Attn: NFB AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034
Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia , U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia	USCIS Dallas Lockbox For U.S. Postal Service (USPS): USCIS P.O. Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266 For FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries: USCIS Attn: NFB AOS 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067

Step 3: Receiving your Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

1. Tracking Your Case
2. Reporting Responsibilities

I-797 Notice of Action & USCIS Case Tracking

- You will receive an I-797 Notice of Action in the mail within 2-4 weeks after mailing your OPT application to USCIS.
- **DO NOT LOSE YOUR I-797.** Make a copy for your records and keep in a safe place.

CASE STATUS ONLINE

Use this tool to track the status of an immigration application, petition, or request.

Enter a Receipt Number ?

CHECK STATUS

[PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT](#)

- You can track the status of your OPT application with your receipt number on your I-797.
- Visit <https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus> to check your case status
- Verify your name, date of birth and address on your I-797 receipt notice. If incorrect, please contact the USCIS service center listed on your I-797.

Application Problems – RFE or Rejection/Denial

Request for Evidence (RFE)

If there is a problem with your application, USCIS may send you a notice by mail. An RFE does not mean that your application has been rejected. It simply means that you need to send in additional documents before your EAD can be issued. Getting an RTI will delay the processing of your application. Contact the International Studies Office immediately so we may assist you with your application.

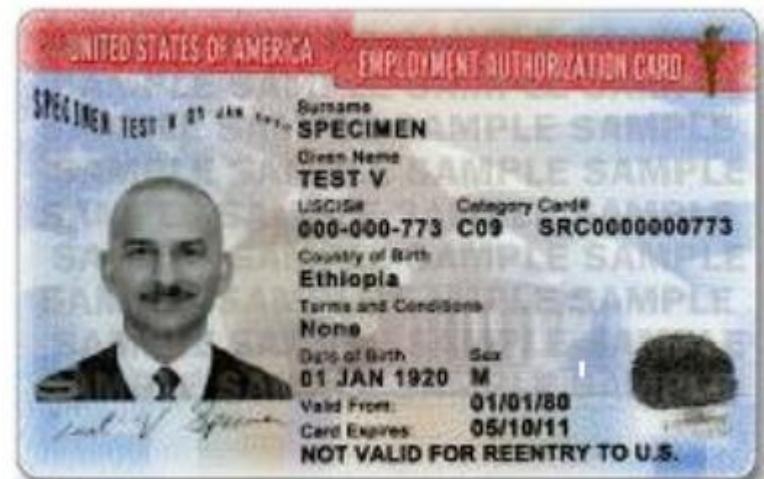
Rejection/Denial

In some cases, if too many items are missing from your application, USCIS will return the entire application to you. If this happens, you must make the corrections and send the application before the end date of your 60-day grace period. Contact the International Studies Office immediately so we may assist you with your application.

To avoid delays, review your application materials carefully for completeness and sign all the forms before mailing to USCIS.

The Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

- Review card to make sure the information is accurate. If not, contact an ISO advisor.
- Present your EAD to employers as proof of your legal work authorization in the United States.
- The EAD is a required document for entry to the U.S. during OPT.



Your Responsibilities During OPT

1. Reporting Requirements
2. Employment Requirements
3. Travel Documents for Re-entry
4. Applying for an F-1 Visa on OPT

SEVP Portal

- The Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has its own “[SEVP Portal](#)” for students on OPT and OPT STEM. You will receive an email with instructions on how to create an account.
- You are required to report any changes in address or employment through the portal within 10 days of change.

Sign In

Attention: Only students who have OPT approved may use the SEVP Portal. You must create an account and set a password before using this log in page. Go to [Portal Help](#) for more information.

Email

Password

Login

[Reset Password](#)

Login page for the [OPT Portal](#)

Beware of scams! SEVP will never ask you for payment to register for the SEVP Portal.

Employment Requirements

- You must work a minimum of 20 hours per week in a position related to your field of study.
- You cannot exceed more than 90 days of unemployment while on OPT. Days of unemployment prior to your EAD start date do not count towards the 90 days of unemployment. It is your responsibility to keep record of your employment history and any periods of unemployment.

Travel Documents for Re-entry to United States

Documents	Before Completing Program and Before EAD Issuance	After Completing Program and Before EAD Issuance	After Completing Program & After EAD Issuance
Valid Passport	✓	✓	✓
Valid F-1 visa stamp (if applicable)	✓	✓	✓
OPT I-20 with valid travel endorsement signed within 6 months by an ISO Advisor	✓	✓	✓
Evidence of continued enrollment (e.g. Enrollment Certificate)	✓		
Evidence of financial support	Strongly recommended	Strongly recommended	Strongly recommended
OPT Receipt: I-797 Notice of Action		✓	✓
Job offer letter from employer		Strongly recommended	✓
EAD (Employment Authorization Document)			✓

Travel Tips

- **Avoid long absences from the US during the OPT period. Time spent outside of the US while unemployed by a US employer counts toward your 90 days of unemployment.**
- **Attempting to re-enter the U.S. close to the expiration date of your OPT can be risky.**
- **You must not enter the U.S. in a status other than F-1. This may result in the loss of your OPT eligibility.**

Travel after Program Completion, but before OPT Card is received

- **There is a higher risk associated with travel and return while your OPT is pending after the program completion date. If there are any problems with your application, you may not be able to respond to USCIS in a timely manner, which could delay processing of your EAD.**
- **If your OPT application is denied while outside the US, you will not be able to re-enter the US in F-1 status and will not be able to reapply.**

Applying for F-1 Visa on OPT

If you are traveling abroad and your F-1 visa has expired, you must obtain a new F-1 visa before returning to the U.S. When going to your visa interview, bring the documents below.

- Valid Passport
- Valid I-20 with travel endorsement from UVA ISO Advisor within the past 6 months from the date of return to U.S.
- Unexpired EAD Card
- Job offer letter or proof of current employment directly related to your field of study
- Evidence of sufficient funds (e.g. a bank statement, a letter from sponsor or a job offer letter)

Completing OPT & Grace Period

- You have a 60-day grace period following the end of the OPT EAD
- Failure to leave the U.S., continue your F-1 status or timely file an OPT Extension or USCIS Change of Status will result in accrual of days of unlawful presence
- If you intend to apply for OPT STEM Extension, you must do so before the expiration date listed on your OPT EAD. Refer to our [website](#) for more information.
- The only additional extension of OPT available is the OPT Cap-Gap Extension for students who have an accepted cap-subject H1B application.

If you do not extend your OPT, and your EAD expires, you have the following options before the end of the 60-day grace period.

- Exit the U.S. within 60 days.
- Continue your F-1 status by transferring your I-20 to continue studies at another school, or request a change of level request to begin new studies at UVA.
- Work with immigration legal counsel regarding a Change of Status application to a new visa category. *You will need to check with your legal counsel regarding your allowed period of stay or required exit date if you have a pending change of status when your grace period ends.*