Components Of
Optional Practical Training

1. Final Semester of Study
   Only F-1 students in their final semester of study are eligible to apply for OPT.

2. OPT Application for OPT I-20
   Opens in ISSP Connect
   90 days before program date. Select an OPT start date within 60 days after your program end date.
   Apply Early!

3. Submit Online USCIS application
   DO NOT submit USCIS application until after you receive your Form I-20 with OPT information on page 2. Failure to upload OPT I-20 to your USCIS application will result in denial.

4. Last Day to Submit Application to USCIS
   60 days after program end date

5. Receipt Notice
   You will immediately be provided a receipt notice after your submit and pay for your OPT application on USCIS. Keep this with your records.

6. EAD Card
   3-5 months is the average processing time to receive your approval by means of OPT Employment Authorization Document Card.

7. Reporting Requirements
   Any changes to employment or personal information must be reported to SEVP Portal within 10 days. You must inform ISSP if you decide to end OPT or start new educational program.

Options After Post-Completion OPT

Further Education
OPT is granted once per degree level. OPT STEM can be granted twice, but only once per degree level. Outside of employment, you can remain in the United States by pursuing a new degree program.

OPT STEM Extension
If you are in a STEM program, you are eligible for an additional 18 months of employment. Apply 60 days before your OPT authorization expires. Visit issp.virginia.edu for more information.

Change Your Status
Examples: Change of status to H1B through employer, or change of status to F-2 through spouse. Contact an immigration attorney to learn more about other visa types to remain in the United States.

Depart the United States
After OPT authorization ends, you are permitted 60 days to remain in the United States, after which you must depart or change your status.