

Optional Practical Training for F-1 Students*

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is a form of training, often paid, that directly relates to your program of study. You can apply for OPT during your program of study, which is now a pre-completion OPT, or after you finish your program of study, known as post-completion OPT.

In order to apply for OPT, F-1 students must request approval from their DSO.

- A DSO makes this recommendation in SEVIS and by endorsing a student's Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status."
- The student must then file the Form I-765, "Application for Employment Authorization" and supporting documents with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). **There is a fee to file the Form I-765.**
- If approved, USCIS will issue a Form I-766, "Employment Authorization Document." You cannot begin your training until you receive your [authorization](#) from USCIS.

Pre-completion OPT is limited to 20 hours per week while school is in session, but can be full-time during breaks and annual vacation.

You can apply for 12 months of OPT at each education level, (i.e., you may have 12 months of OPT at the bachelor's level and another 12 months of OPT at the master's level). If you are an F-1 student earning a degree science, technology, engineering or math (STEM), you may be eligible for the STEM OPT extension. For more information, visit the STEM OPT page on Study in the States.

* <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/training-opportunities-in-the-united-states>

STEM Extension Information: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/17-month-opt-stem-extension>

Oklahoma Baptist University – OPT Guidelines

At the present time, OBU recommends that students participating in an internship prior to their graduation request CPT rather than pre-completion OPT.

Students are welcome to apply for post-completion OPT through the process below.

- Request an appointment with the International Student Services Office about OPT
- Review OPT Instruction Guide
- Complete the OPT Request form: the student and his/her adviser must both sign the request form
- Turn in OPT Request form and wait for OPT I-20

After completing the above steps, you will prepare Form I-765 and all required materials for USCIS.

Questions? International.Services@okbu.edu