



F-1 Optional Practical Training Request

OPT Eligibility Requirements

Highlights

- F-1 international students who have been maintaining their status for at least one full academic year are eligible for OPT.
- Students do not need a job offer to apply for OPT.
- 12 months of OPT per each degree level is available. (i.e., one year after a Bachelor's degree, another after a Master's, a third after a Ph.D.)
- Must be used immediately after completion of program.

Things to Remember

- You are not eligible for OPT if you were authorized for 12 months or more of full time CPT at the same degree level.
- The OPT process is started by the ISO but must be authorized/approved by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). If approved, an Employment Authorization Document (EAD card) will be issued to you.
- You **MUST NOT** begin working until you receive the EAD card.
- You may only begin working from the dates the EAD card is valid.
- It may take up to 5 months to receive the EAD card. (ISO processing time: max 10 days; USCIS processing time: 2-5 months) <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>
- You may apply for the Post-Completion OPT up to 90 days before your program completion, but not later than 60 days after your program completion date.
- Employment must be related to your degree program.
- More than 90 days of unemployment during OPT is a violation of F-1 status.
- You are not allowed to pursue a degree program while you are on post-completion OPT.
- Time authorized for employment by the USCIS is considered time used, even if you did not work.
- You must report any changes in name, address, and employer information to keep your F-1 status.
- You cannot split, save, or refund time granted



List of required documents needed to apply for OPT

Document checklist:

- **Completed I-765 form**
 - The form I-765 can be downloaded from <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>. Click "Forms" in the bar at the top of the page. If applying online, the online application IS the I-765. Please refer to the OPT Online Guide.
 - Post-Completion OPT--(c)(3)(B).
 - File Form I-765 up to 90 days before, but no later than 60 days after your program end date. Use Part 6. Additional Information to provide all previously used SEVIS numbers and evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.
 - NOTE: You must file your Form I-765 within 30 days of the date that your DSO enters the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record. If you fail to do so, USCIS will deny your OPT request.
- All **previously issued I-20s** from TCU and prior schools, if applicable (copies)
- Your most recent **I-94 card** (copy)
- **Passport** (copies)
 - Expiration page/Biographic page
- **F-1 visa stamp**

VERY IMPORTANT

You must obtain a new I-20 with an OPT recommendation from the ISO prior to filing with USCIS regardless if you are filing online or by mail. Applying to USCIS without the new I-20 containing the OPT recommendation will result in a denial of your OPT application and the loss of your application fee.



Please complete the following **Optional Practical Training (OPT)** form to request OPT with the ISO.

TCU ID #: _____ SEVIS ID #: _____

Student Name: _____ Major: _____

Program Level: ___ Undergraduate ___ Masters ___ Doctorate ___ Other

School: _____

Anticipated Graduation Term: ___ Fall 20 ___ ___ Spring 20 ___ ___ Summer 20 ___

City of Birth: _____ Country of Birth: _____

Anticipated Program Completion Date: _____

Important: Your Anticipated Program Completion Date is the official last date of final exams for your TCU school. **Note:** This may or may not be the date of your last exam.

Eligibility Confirmation:

___ I confirm I have reviewed all of the OPT guidelines above.

___ I confirm today's date is within 90 days before I graduate and/or 60 days after my anticipated program completion date?

___ I confirm I have you completed 2 consecutive academic semesters at TCU.

___ I confirm this is my first time applying for OPT at my current degree level.

___ I confirm my passport is valid for at least 6 months into the future from the date USCIS will receive my OPT application.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____



Requests OPT Authorization start and end date

You may ask for your optional practical training authorization to begin as early as the day after your program completion date and as late as 60 days after, or any date in between. If you choose dates outside of your eligibility time frame, the ISO cannot process your OPT request.

Your end date should be 12 months from your start date.

Keep in mind that once you submit your OPT application to USCIS, they estimate 2-5 months for processing.

You are not able to begin working until you receive your EAD card in the mail and your start date on the EAD card arrives.

Requested start date: _____

Requested end date: _____

IMPORTANT NOTE

Submission of this form without the academic approval section does not complete your request. The ISO must receive additional information from your academic advisor or advising group before we can process your OPT request. It is your responsibility to monitor the progress of your request and maintain your immigration status.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

___ I understand that I cannot begin working until I receive my EAD card and not until the start date on the EAD card arrives.

___ I understand that upon ISO approval, USCIS must receipt my OPT application within 30 days of ISO Advisor OPT recommendation. If USCIS does not receive my OPT application in the mail within 30 days, I understand my application will be automatically denied resulting in the loss of my application fee.

___ I understand there are only 90 days of unemployment days allotted during my OPT period and that I must obtain a job related to my degree in order to maintain my F-1 status while on OPT.

___ I understand that while the ISO is here to help in the process of submitting my application, the ISO is not responsible for incomplete applications or any errors on my OPT application.

***It is your responsibility to ensure your application is complete, accurate, and correct. ***



Approval Signature from the Academic Advisor

I have reviewed the OPT form and approve the requested OPT request

I confirm the student is making normal progress toward completion of his/her degree.

Expected date of program completion by which the student will have met all course requirements/final exams (Do not put the date of commencement. This date is typically the last date of final exams.):

Student's Major: _____

Do you support this student's request for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training?

Yes No

I have reviewed the student's academic record and certify that he/she is making normal progress toward completion of his/her degree and that the student is expected to complete their program requirements by the expected date listed above.

I attest to the accuracy of the information provided above:

Academic Advisor Name (Please Print): _____

Academic Advisor Signature: _____ Date: _____