

Applying for OPT

If all eligibility requirements are met, OGI will recommend you for OPT in SEVIS and update your I-20. You will then need to submit the following documents to USCIS:

- Completed I-765 online form
 - Eligibility codes:
 - (c)(3)(A) for Pre-Completion OPT
 - (c)(3)(B) for Post-Completion OPT
 - (c)(3)(C) for 24-Month STEM OPT Extension
- Scan of signed I-20 with OPT recommendation
- I-94, Arrival/Departure Record
- Scan of valid passport picture page
- Scan of current F-1 visa
- Scan of degree or transcript (for 24-Month STEM OPT Extension only)
- Scan of front & back of any previous EAD (if issued)
- Passport photo
- Credit card for payment of \$410 I-765 fee (fee subject to change)
- Scan of I-20s for any prior CPT/OPT authorizations

You must meet with a DSO before submitting an application to make sure that it is complete and that you have all the documents you need.

Once authorized, OPT dates cannot be changed.

Have Questions?

Contact:

Ms. Sarah Epling

903.233.3173

SarahEpling@letu.edu

Dr. Alan Clipperton

903.233.3171

AlanClipperton@letu.edu

Ms. Suma Jayakar

903.233.3175

SumaJayakar@letu.edu



Optional Practical Training (OPT)

**For Students
with F-1 Status**

What Is OPT?

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

is temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student's field of study.

Who is eligible to apply for OPT?

- Students who have been enrolled on a full-time basis for at least one academic year
- Students who have not had more than 12 months of full-time CPT

How long can I do OPT?

- Students can apply for a total of 12 months per academic level of education
- Students have 14 months after completion of studies to complete OPT
- Students in STEM* fields can apply for a 24-month extension

When can I start OPT?

- Work is only permitted during the dates on the USCIS-issued Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
- Employment may not begin until the EAD is received

What if I can't find a job?

- Unemployment is limited to 90 days for Post-Completion OPT and 150 days (aggregate) with the 24-Month STEM* OPT Extension

Pre-Completion OPT (Not Recommended)

- Can take place when school is not in session, if the student is currently enrolled or intends to register for the next session
- Cannot exceed 20 hours per week while school is in session
- On campus employment and assistantships may be supplemented with OPT only if the total employment does not exceed 20 hours per week
- Work time is deducted from the 12-month OPT allotment (part-time Pre-Completion OPT is taken at 1/2 full time rate)



When to apply:

Up to 90 days before the end of the first full academic year, provided employment does not start prior to completion



Academic study while on OPT:

OPT authorization is terminated if a student's SEVIS record is transferred to another school or changed to another academic level



Travel while on OPT:

Travel is permitted while on OPT, but travel is NOT recommended if employment has not begun or while the OPT application is pending

3 Types of OPT

- Pre-Completion OPT
- Post-Completion OPT
- 24-Month STEM OPT Extension

Post-Completion OPT

- Follows completion of studies (program end date on I-20)
- Authorized for 12 months initially, minus any time spent in Pre-Completion OPT



When to apply:

Up to 90 days before and 60 days after the program end date

Please Note:

After the DSO submits your OPT recommendation in SEVIS, USCIS must receive your application within 30 days for Post-Completion OPT or within 60 days for 24-Month STEM* OPT Extension

24-Month STEM OPT Extension

Students with STEM* field degrees may apply for an additional 24 months of employment beyond the 12-month OPT period.

Criteria for the 24-month extension:

- Employer must be enrolled in the E-Verify program
- Student must be working in a STEM* field related to their major



When to apply:

Before the expiration of the student's current Post-Completion OPT, but not sooner than 90 days before that date