

# Optional Practical Training (OPT) Workshop

Spring 2024

International Students and Scholars (ISS)  
900 University Ave, Student Services Building (SSB), 2nd Floor  
Riverside, CA 92521  
951-827-4113  
[internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)

*This information does not constitute legal advice*





**Please save your questions for after  
the presentation**



## OPT Tutorial Note

Please be advised that this tutorial is only used for instructional purposes only.

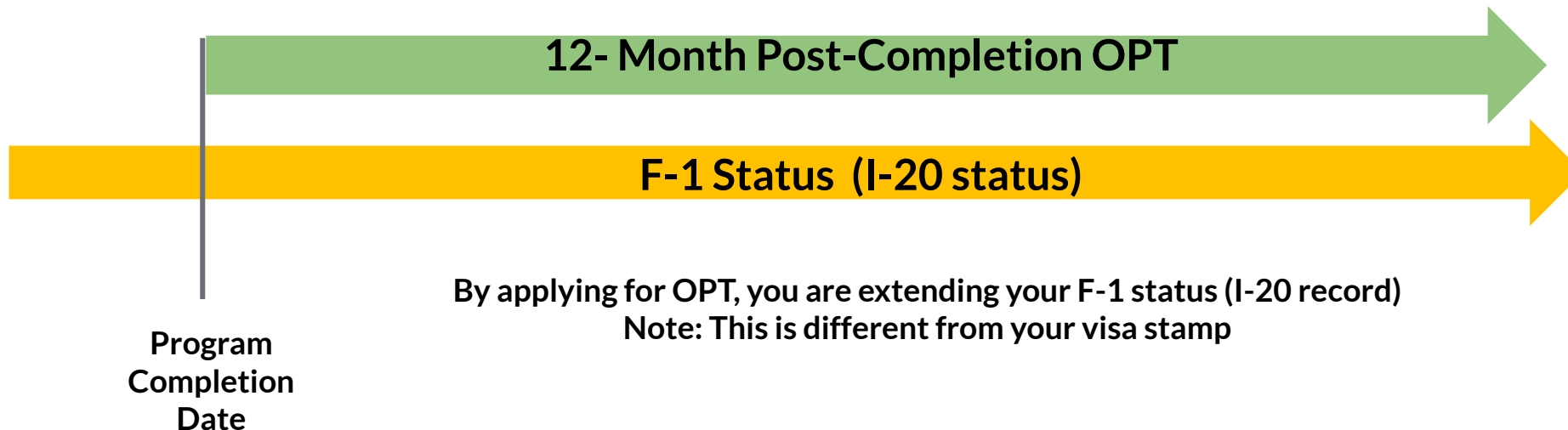
The student is responsible for their own personal application and the timing of the application. The student will need to make sure that the OPT application has full documentation and is timely filed while understanding the F-1 regulations on OPT.

Please contact the ISS Office if you have any additional questions.

# General OPT Information

## What is Optional Practical Training?

- Permission to work or train in the U.S. in your field of study
- Employment Benefit of F-1 student status
- It is a maximum of 12 months
- Authorized by USCIS
- It begins after completion of your academic program

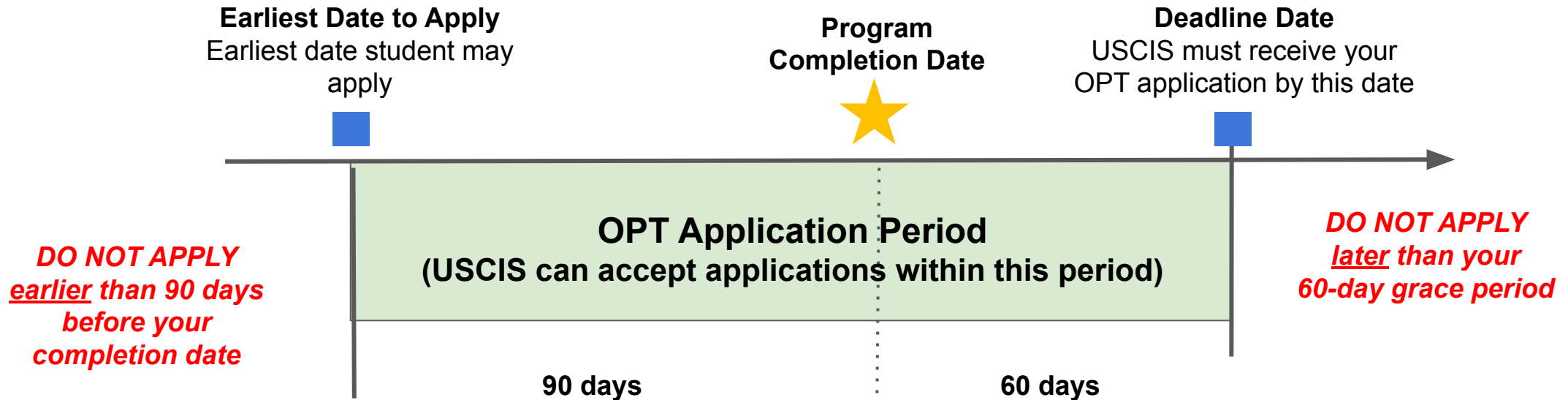




## Am I eligible to apply for OPT?

- Strongly recommended to attend the OPT workshop
- Must be enrolled as Full-Time student for one full academic year (3 quarters) and in F-1 status
- Must have completed all course requirements prior to the start of OPT
- Must have approval from your academic department or Academic Advisor/Graduate Advisor
- Only one period of OPT may be used at each degree level
- 1 year of Full-Time CPT will make you ineligible for OPT
- You do NOT need a job offer at the time of OPT application
- Job while on OPT must be directly related to your field of study
- Must have an OPT I-20 (that includes an OPT recommendation by ISS advisor)

# When Should I Apply for OPT : Application Timeline



- Recommended to apply early
- Check USCIS website for [Current Processing Times](#) 2-5 months
- ISS Processing Time: 2-3 Weeks
- As long as USCIS received OPT application within application window, you may continue to stay in the U.S. while waiting for approval

## NOTE

USCIS will deny applications that are sent outside of this application period  
You don't need a job offer to apply for OPT



## Program Completion Date vs Graduation Date

- Your F-1 I-20 status is generally based on your enrollment in your academic program and not necessarily on your graduation date
- The graduation date is ceremonial in purpose and does not reflect when you have completed your program
- Your I-20 end date must reflect when you completed your program

### **How does this affect my OPT application?**

- If you completed your program in Spring 2024, your I-20 program end date will align with this date.





# OPT Application Process



# How to Apply for OPT

## 1) Internal Process

## 2) External Process

## Final: USCIS Decision

- Before sending your application to USCIS
  - OPT I-20 Request from ISS



- After you send your application to USCIS



- USCIS final decision on OPT application



# How Do I Apply?

**You cannot apply for OPT with USCIS without a new OPT I-20 from ISS**

1. Request your OPT I-20 from ISS
2. Receive your OPT I-20 with OPT recommendation
3. Submit your I-765 to USCIS
4. Wait for USCIS to approve OPT
5. Receive Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card
6. Begin working on or after the start date on your EAD card and report your employment

# Internal Process

***Before sending your application to USCIS***

## Step One

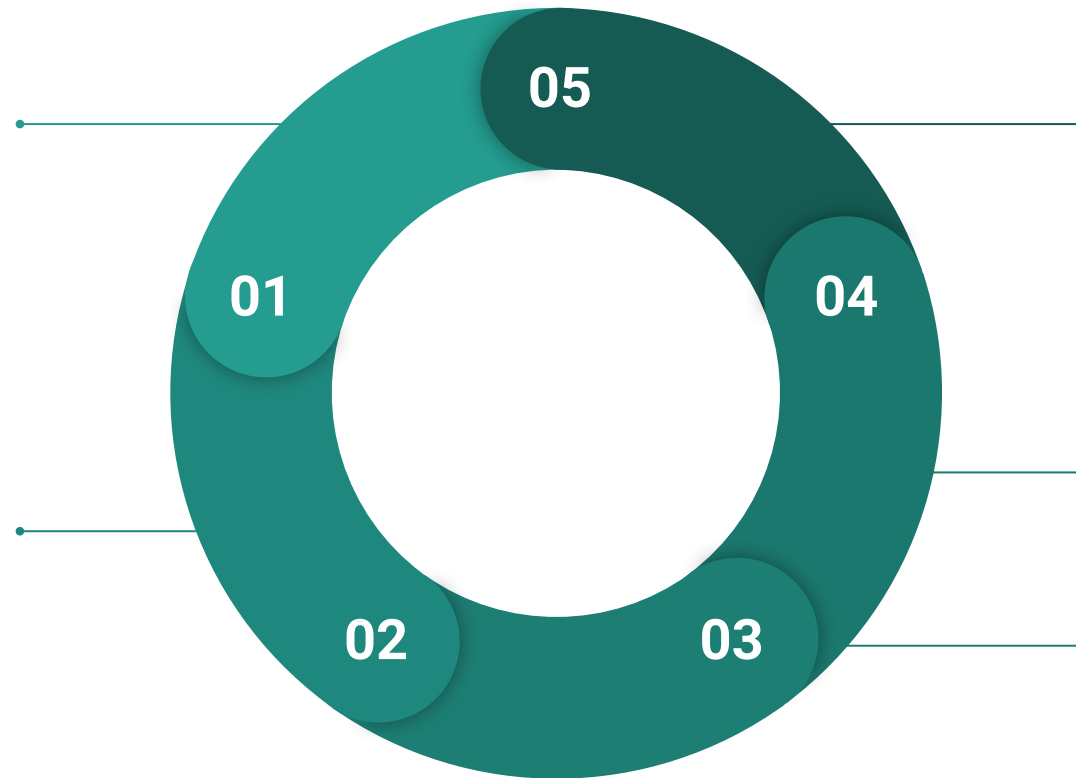
### Attend an OPT Workshop

For upcoming OPT workshops, check out the [ISS Events Calendar](#)

## Step Two

### Complete OPT Request Form

Ask Advisor or Graduate Advisor to sign your OPT Request Form



## Step Five

### Assemble OPT packet to mail to USCIS or file online

OPT application should be mailed within 30 days of the date the DSO recommends OPT in SEVIS

## Step Four

### ISS Advisor issues OPT I-20

ISS Advisor will review OPT documents and issue OPT I-20 (10-12) business days)

## Step Three

### Submit OPT Docs to ISS

Email documents to [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)

# OPT Application Checklist



## Post-Completion OPT Application Checklist

Before applying for OPT, please attend an [OPT Workshop](#) or review the F-1 OPT guidelines on the [ISS OPT Page](#). If you have any questions, please set up a meeting with an ISS Advisor by emailing [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu).

### Application Window

The earliest USCIS can accept your application is 90 days before your program completion date (not graduation date) and no later than 60 days after your program completion date. USCIS will deny applications outside of this application window. Students may apply via paper mail or online method, please only choose one method.

### OPT Application Steps

**1. Request an OPT I-20 from the ISS Office.** Please gather the following items and email them to [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu). Please allow 7-10 business days for an ISS Advisor/DSO to review your documents to determine if you are eligible to apply for OPT.

- [OPT Request Form](#)
  - Signed by your Academic Advisor (Undergraduate Students) or Graduate Advisor (Graduate Students)
- [Form I-765](#) (Optional Practice Draft)
  - We recommend downloading the latest paper version to practice filling out the I-765 form before submitting it to USCIS.
  - **Do NOT submit an I-765 to USCIS until you receive an OPT I-20 from the ISS Office.** You must have an OPT I-20 before submitting your I-765 to USCIS.
  - You can refer to our [Sample I-765](#) as an example. The sample is for general instructional purposes only and USCIS may update the I-765 edition version directly on the website.

- Copy of your most recent [Form I-94](#)
- (If Applicable) Supporting Documents: Copies of previous CPT I-20, EAD cards, OPT I-20, I-20 with different SEVIS number, or other relevant documents.

**2. Pay \$100.00 ISS OPT Fee.** ISS will review your OPT packet. Once ISS has determined that you are eligible to apply for OPT, ISS will provide you with ISS OPT Fee payment instructions.

**3. Receive your OPT I-20 from the ISS Office.** Once you have paid the OPT fee and submitted your payment receipt to ISS, an ISS Advisor will email your OPT I-20 to your UCR email. Please review your OPT I-20 and sign it at the bottom. If you would like to meet with an ISS Advisor to review your documents, please reach out to [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu).

**4. Gather Final OPT (I-765) Application Documents to Submit to USCIS.** Please be sure to submit your documents to USCIS within the application window and within 30 days of the date that the International Student Advisor entered your OPT recommendation into SEVIS. Here are the documents that USCIS will require:

- [Form I-765](#)
- OPT I-20 (**MUST BE ISSUED BEFORE THE I-765 IS SUBMITTED TO USCIS**)
  - The OPT I-20 must have OPT Recommendation from a DSO on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page. OPT recommendation is required before the I-765 Application is submitted to USCIS.
  - The OPT STEM I-20 must be submitted to USCIS within 30 days of issuance
- Passport Photos
  - For Online Applications: 1 Digital Copy of your U.S. Passport-style photo
  - For Paper Applications: 2 Hard Copies of your U.S. Passport-style photos (Please lightly write your name and SEVIS ID or I-94 Number on the backs of each photo)
- Government Identification

- For Online Applications: Digital copy of a previous EAD card, valid passport, or most recent F-1 visa
- For Paper Applications: Hard copy of valid passport and F-1 visa
- [Form I-94](#)
- [Form G-1145](#) to receive eNotifications (Only for Paper Applications)
- Supporting Documents (if applicable): Copies of previous CPT I-20, OPT I-20, EAD card, I-20 with different SEVIS ID number, or others
- \$410 [USCIS I-765 Fee](#) (Review [USCIS Fee Schedule](#) for any Fee Changes)
  - Online Applications: Credit Card or Electronic Bank Transfer
  - Paper Applications: Personal Check, Money Order or Cashier's Check  Payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security"
- \$1,500 [USCIS Premium Processing Fee](#) (Optional & Review [USCIS Fee Schedule](#) for any Fee Changes)
  - Decisions on OPT applications are made within 30 days of submission.

### Mailing the I-765 Application to USCIS (Only for Paper Applications)

- Filing address under 'Foreign Students' on the [I-765 Direct Filing Address page](#)

### Filing the I-765 Online (Only for Online Applications)

- **REMEMBER:** You must first receive the OPT I-20 from the ISS Office
- Step One  [I-765 Website](#)
- Step Two  Scroll down the I-765 page and click 'File Online'
- Step Three  Create USCIS Online Account

### After Submitting the OPT Application to USCIS

- USCIS will issue an OPT Receipt Number and mail you a paper I-797 Receipt Notice.
- You can track your case through your [online USCIS account](#) or use the receipt number to [track case status](#)
- **Within Approximately 3-5 Months:** USCIS will mail the final OPT decision
  - If USCIS sends you a Request for Evidence (RFE) or a Denial Notice, please make an appointment with an ISS advisor [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)
  - If your OPT is approved, USCIS will deliver your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card to your mailing address.
    - Send scan of EAD Card to ISS [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)
    - If you applied for an SSN, SSA will mail you your SSN card separately.

### After OPT Approval

#### Set up Your SEVP OPT Portal

Once you are approved for OPT, you will need to set up your SEVP OPT Portal account. The OPT Portal is an important tool to maintain your F-1 status by reporting your employment and personal information during your OPT period. From the start date of your EAD card, you will receive an OPT Portal link through your UCR email to set up your portal account. If you do not receive this link or it has expired, please contact the ISS Office [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu) to reset the OPT portal link. Once your OPT portal is set up, you must report any changes [within 10 days](#) of that change.

### Unemployment Rule

USCIS allows 90 days of unemployment time during the 12-month Post-Completion OPT period. Unemployment days are counted from the start date on your EAD card/your approved OPT start date. In order to stop the unemployment clock, please be sure to report your employment information through your OPT Portal account. It is important to report your OPT Employment before your unemployment time has passed to avoid falling out of F-1 status.

### International Travel during OPT

When traveling internationally during your OPT period, please carry the following items to enter back to the U.S. To request for an updated travel signature, please email [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu).

- Valid Passport (must be valid for at least 6 months at time of entry to the U.S.)
- Valid F-1 Visa Stamp (Canadian nationals are exempt)
- OPT I-20 with Travel Signature (only valid for 6 months)
- OPT EAD Card
- Employment Verification Letter or Job Offer Letter

To access checklist, [click here](#) or scan below





## Items to Submit to ISS to Receive OPT I-20 (Internal Process)

- ❑ [OPT Request Form](#)
- ❑ [Form I-765](#) (Optional Draft)
- ❑ Document Copies (passport, visa, I-94)
- ❑ Pay the \$100 ISS OPT processing fee. A link for payment will be sent after your documents are reviewed.

*ISS Processing Time  
10-12 business days*

Email documents to  
[internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)



## OPT I-20

### **Required to submit with your OPT application**

The OPT I-20 must be issued before a student submits an OPT (I-765) application. Students must also submit the OPT I-20 with the OPT recommendation at the same time that the OPT I-765 application is submitted. If it is not submitted at the same time, USCIS will deny the OPT application.

### **What is an OPT I-20?**

The ISS office must recommend eligible F-1 students for OPT in the [SEVIS immigration system](#). A Designated School Official (DSO) or an ISS advisor from the ISS office will produce a new I-20 with an OPT recommendation on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the I-20.

# Example of OPT I-20

Page 1

Department of Homeland Security I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0001234567

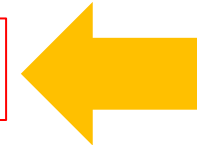
SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Bear	GIVEN NAME Scotty the	Class of Admission <b>F-1</b>  ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
PREFERRED NAME Scotty the Bear	PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH Scotland	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	
CITY OF BIRTH	DATE OF BIRTH	
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE	ADMISSION NUMBER	
<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>		
SCHOOL NAME University of California, Riverside University of California, Riverside	SCHOOL ADDRESS INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS INT L STUDENTS SCHOLARS SKYE HALL 321, 900 University Avenue, RIVERSIDE, CA 92521	
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Heidi Nam International Student Advisor	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE L05214F00177000 28 JANUARY 2023	
<b>PROGRAM OF STUDY</b>		
EDUCATION LEVEL DOCTORATE	MAJOR 1 Computer Science 11.0701	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient	EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE 20 AUGUST 2016
START OF CLASSES 19 SEPTEMBER 2016	PROGRAM START/END DATE 19 SEPTEMBER 2016 – 10 DECEMBER 2021	
<b>FINANCIALS</b>		
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS
Tuition and Fees	\$	Personal Funds \$
Living Expenses	\$	University Funds \$
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$	Funds From Another Source \$
Other	\$	On-Campus Employment \$
TOTAL	\$	TOTAL \$
<b>REMARKS</b>		
<b>SCHOOL ATTESTATION</b>		
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 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 execution 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 will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.		
X	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
SIGNATURE OF: Heidi Nam, International Student Advisor	30 October 2021	RIVERSIDE, CA
<b>STUDENT ATTESTATION</b>		
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 refers specifically to 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 214.5(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.		
X	DATE	
SIGNATURE OF: Scotty the Bear		
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS (city/state or province/country) DATE

Page 2

Department of Homeland Security I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0001234567 (F-1) NAME: Scotty the Bear

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS				
TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
POST-COMPLETION OPT	FULL TIME	REQUESTED	01 FEBRUARY 2022	31 JANUARY 2023
CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION				
AUTHORIZED REDUCED COURSE LOAD				
CURRENT SESSION DATES				
CURRENT SESSION START DATE			CURRENT SESSION END DATE	
23 SEPTEMBER 2021			10 DECEMBER 2021	
TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT				
This page, when properly endorsed, may be used for re-entry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each endorsement is valid for one year.				
Designated School Official	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
		X		
		X		
		X		
		X		



DSO Recommendation for OPT is required

OPT Application must be submitted within 30 days of the date the advisor makes the recommendation in SEVIS





# OPT I-20 Request Form

## Student Completes

### Student Completes - Student Information

Family Name(s)		Given Name(s)	
Mobile #		Student ID	
Major		Degree	

**Section 1**  
Basic Student  
Information

### Student Completes - OPT Request Information

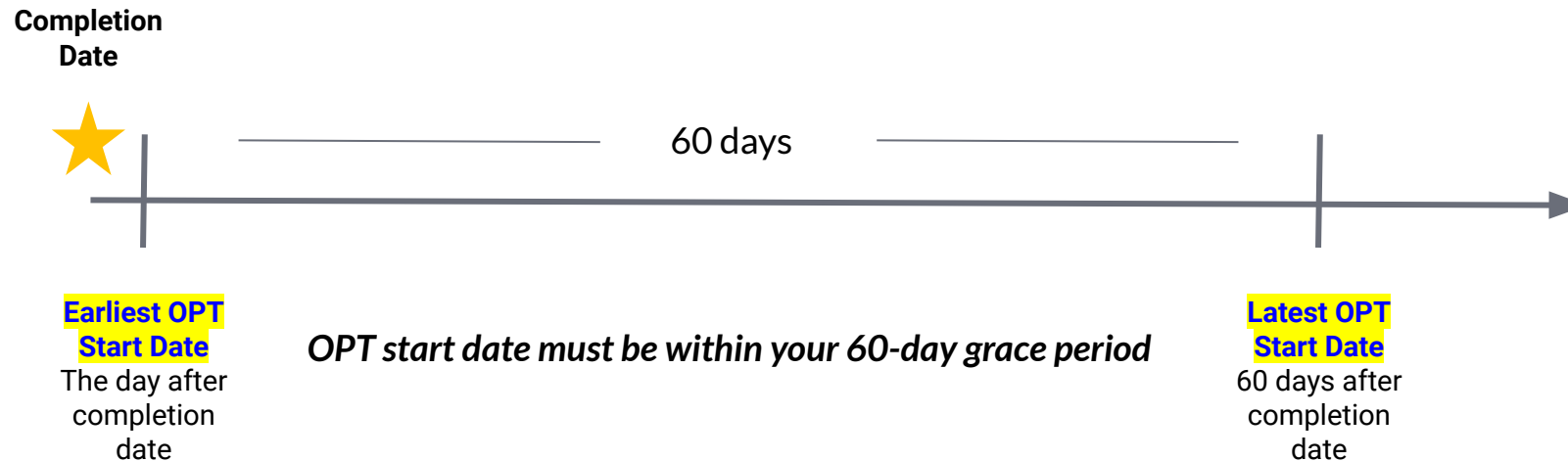
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OPT Start Date must be within 60 day grace period after your completion date</li><li>• OPT End date is 364 days after your OPT Start Date</li></ul>			
Requested Start Date		Requested End Date	
Date You Completed OPT Workshop (if attended)		Have you Applied for OPT Before?	
If any, List Previous Authorized Employment & Include Copies of I-20s			
CPT or OPT	Part-Time or Full-Time	Start Date	End Date

**Section 2**  
OPT Information

### OPT Request Dates

- Dates that you are requesting to start your OPT
- Depending on timing of application, USCIS may or may not grant your OPT request dates
- Cannot issue OPT I-20 without these dates

# Selecting OPT Dates



## Tips on Choosing an OPT Start Date

- Estimate when you want to start working and consider OPT processing time
  - USCIS may take 3-5 months to process
- Do NOT wait until you get a job offer to apply for OPT
  - You do NOT need a job offer to apply for OPT
- Useful resource to calculate OPT dates

<https://www.timeanddate.com/date/dateadd.html>

# Selecting OPT Dates



## Selecting an OPT End Date

- Once you choose your OPT start date, your OPT end date will be one year later and one day before

## 14-Month OPT Rule

- All Post-Completion OPT must be completed within the 14 month period following the completion of study
- If you submit OPT application later, you will lose some OPT time due to 14 month rule
- Recommended to apply as early as possible to maximize on OPT Time

# OPT Request Form

## Section 3

Academic Advisor/Graduate Advisor

To be Completed by  
Academic Advisor  
(Bachelor)

Graduate Advisor  
(Masters and  
Doctorate)

### Note

If you are unsure who your advisor is, check your Banner Student profile

#### Academic/Graduate Advisor Completes

Student Named Above is Expected to Complete their Degree requirements by	Department Name
Advisor Name	Advisor Title
Advisor Signature	Date
Comments	

### Program Completion Date

- Advisor will indicate your academic program completion date
- Date you will be completed with your program requirements, not your graduation ceremony date
- I-20 program end date will be adjusted to this date

### Advisor Signature

- We accept eSignatures, wet signatures, or email confirmation from advisor with information above



**Submit your I-765 to USCIS**



## Filing I-765

There are two options to file for the Form I-765

**Option 1:** Online Filing (Recommended)

**Option 2:** Paper Filing

### Reasons ISS Recommends Online Filing

- Cost effective, online is \$470 and paper filing is \$520 + cost to use courier services (FedEx, UPS, etc.)
- Immediate tracking of process
- Validation Tool for Addresses, etc.



# Filing Form I-765 Online

Welcome to your USCIS Account

Select what you want to do

Edit My Profile

Editing your profile includes email, password, phone number, security questions, two-step verification and backup code.

Login to a USCIS Service

my USCIS

Apply for immigration benefits, find tools and resources to assist in preparation for naturalization, and search for doctors in your local community.

FIRST

Submit, manage and receive Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

myE-Verify

Confirm your records for employment eligibility, track E-Verify or Self-Check case status, and protect your identity by locking your Social Security Number (SSN).

## Filing I-765 Online

### Step One

- Go to [I-765 website](#) and click 'File Online'
- Create USCIS Account
- Two-Factor Authentication
- Cannot file for anyone else



# Filing Form I-765 Online

Welcome To Your USCIS Account  
Select What You Want To Do

-   
Add a paper-filed case  
View your case status and case history by adding your case to your account
-   
**File a form online**  
Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online
-   
Enter a representative passcode  
Review and sign forms prepared for you by your attorney or representative
-   
Verify your identity  
Answer questions about your immigration history to verify your personal identity

## Step Two

- Click on 'File a form online'



# Filing Form I-765 Online

## File A Form

Once you start your form, we will automatically save your information for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.

Select the form you want to file online.

- Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (I-90)
- Request for a Hearing on a Decision in Naturalization Proceedings (N-336)
- Application for Naturalization (N-400)
- Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document (N-565)
- Application for Certificate of Citizenship (N-600)
- Application for Citizenship and Issuance of Certificate Under Section 322 (N-600K)

**Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)**

Only certain F-1 students seeking optional practical training (OPT) may file Form I-765 online. This includes:

- Pre-completion OPT - (c)(3)(A) eligibility category;
- Post-completion OPT - (c)(3)(B) eligibility category; or
- a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (c)(3)(C) eligibility category.

For all other eligibility categories, you must submit a paper [Form I-765](#).

- Petition for Alien Relative (I-130)
- Application To Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status (I-539)

Start form

**Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)**

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- Post-completion OPT - (c)(3)(B) eligibility category; or
- a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (c)(3)(C) eligibility category.

For all other eligibility categories, you must submit a paper [Form I-765](#).

Start form

## Step Three

- Click on 'Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)
- Click 'Start form'
- Read through notes



# Filing Form I-765 Online - Sections

## Getting Started

- Basis of Eligibility
- Reason for Applying
- Preparer and Interpreter Information

## About You

- Your Name
- Your Contact Information
- Describe Yourself
- When and Where you were Born
- Your Immigration Information
- Other Information

## Evidence

- One 2x2 Passport Photo of You
- Form I-94
- Employment Authorization Document (if applicable)
- Previously authorized CPT or OPT (if applicable)
- Form OPT I-20

## Additional Information

- Additional Information

## Review and Submit

- Review your Application
  - \$470 payment (Credit Card or Bank Transfer)



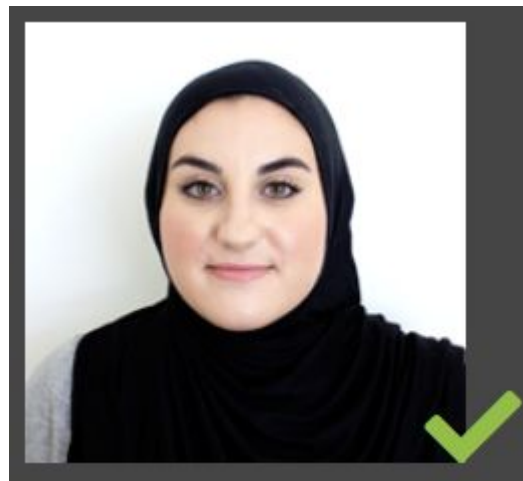
## What to Upload in the 'Evidence' Section on the Online I-765

<b>2x2 Photo of You</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upload 1 Passport Style Photo</li></ul>
<b>Form I-94</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upload your most recent I-94 (of your most recent entry to the U.S.). Downloadable from <a href="#">I-94 website</a></li></ul>
<b>Employment Authorization Document Or Government ID</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upload either your most recent EAD card (<i>if applicable</i>) or</li><li>• Upload your Valid Passport or your most recent F-1 Visa Stamp (does not have to be valid)</li></ul>
<b>Previously Authorized CPT or OPT (<i>if applicable</i>)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upload only if applicable</li><li>• Upload your CPT I-20s (for your current degree program) and/or</li><li>• Upload your Previous OPT I-20 (if you were previously authorized)</li></ul>
<b>Form I-20 (<i>OPT I-20</i>)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upload your Current OPT I-20 (signed by you and an ISS Advisor)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ OPT I-20 expires 30 days from the date OPT is recommended</li></ul></li><li>• <b>OPT I-20 must be issued BEFORE the I-765 is submitted</b></li></ul>



# U.S. Passport-Style Photos

- Must meet specifications on [U.S. Department of State website](#)
- Must be a recent photo (taken within 30 days)



## Where can you take passport photos ?

- U.S. Postal Service
- Local drugstores (i.e. Walgreens, CVS, Rite Aid)

## Correct Passport Size and Position

- 2 x 2 inches (51 x 51 mm)

## Background

- Plain and white or off-white
- No shadows

## Shadows and Lighting

- Clear and in color
- No shadows
- Not digitally altered

## Accessories

- No glasses
- No hats or head coverings (unless for religious or medical purposes)

# I-94 Record



## Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number: [REDACTED]

Most Recent Date of Entry: 2015 September 09

Class of Admission: F1

Admit Until Date: D/S

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname: [REDACTED]

First (Given) Name: [REDACTED]

Birth Date: [REDACTED]

Passport Number: [REDACTED]

Country of Issuance: [REDACTED]

[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.

CBP No. 1051-0111  
Expiration Date: 09/30/2018

[For inquiries or questions regarding your I-94, please click here.](#)

[Accessibility](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

To access your most recent digital copy of I-94, [click here](#)



# OPT I-20 Issued by ISS

## When you receive your OPT I-20,

- OPT I-20 will include:
  - OPT Recommendation by ISS
  - Travel Signature
- Double-check information before signing
- Make photo copy

## Keep in mind the 30-Day Rule!

- OPT recommendation must be less than 30 days old by the time USCIS receives your application
  - Confirm with ISS Advisor for recommendation date. **The recommendation date is not always the issue date on the I-20.**
- USCIS is very strict about this rule
  - Automatic OPT Denial
  - Keep this in mind for USCIS RFEs

OPT I-20 ISSUE DATE

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: [REDACTED]			
SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME [REDACTED]	GIVEN NAME [REDACTED]	Class of Admission <b>F-1</b>	
PREFERRED NAME [REDACTED]	PASSPORT NAME [REDACTED]	ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH CHINA	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP CHINA		
DATE OF BIRTH [REDACTED]	ADMISSION NUMBER [REDACTED]		
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE	LEGACY NAME [REDACTED]		
<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>			
SCHOOL NAME University of California, Riverside University of California, Riverside		SCHOOL ADDRESS INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS INT L STUDENTS SCHOLARS SHYE HALL #21, 900 University Avenue, RIVERSIDE, CA 92521	
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Heidi Nam International Student Advisor		SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE LOS214F00177000 28 JANUARY 2008	
<b>PROGRAM OF STUDY</b>			
EDUCATION LEVEL DOCTORATE	MAJOR 1 Environmental Science 08.0104	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000	
PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient	EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE	
START OF CLASSES 28 SEPTEMBER 2018	PROGRAM START/END DATE 28 SEPTEMBER 2018 - 14 SEPTEMBER 2019		
<b>FINANCIALS</b>			
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 29,749	Personal Funds	\$ 10,000
Living Expenses	\$ 15,044	University Funds	\$ 58,080
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$	Funds From Another Source	\$
Other	\$	On-Campus Employment	\$
TOTAL	\$ 44,793	TOTAL	\$ 68,080
REMARKS			
[REDACTED]			
<b>SCHOOL ATTESTATION</b>			
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 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 execution 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 will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue <b>for return</b>			
X	SIGNATURE OF: Heidi Nam, International Student Advisor	DATE ISSUED 05 September 2019	PLACE ISSUED RIVERSIDE, CA
<b>STUDENT ATTESTATION</b>			
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 refers specifically to 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 214.2(f) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.			
X	_____ SIGNATURE	_____ DATE	_____ DATE of Signature
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN		SIGNATURE	ADDRESS (city/state or province/country) DATE

# OPT I-20 Issued by ISS

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: [REDACTED] (F-1)

NAME: [REDACTED]

## EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
POST-COMPLETION OPT	FULL TIME	REQUESTED	10 AUGUST 2020	09 AUGUST 2021

## CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION

## AUTHORIZED REDUCED COURSE LOAD

## CURRENT SESSION DATES

CURRENT SESSION START DATE	CURRENT SESSION END DATE
30 MARCH 2020	12 JUNE 2020

## TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT

This page, when properly endorsed, may be used for re-entry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each endorsement is valid for one year.

Designated School Official	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
[REDACTED]	Int'l Student Advisor/DSO	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Riverside, CA
		X		
		X		
		X		

OPT Requested Dates



DSO Travel Signature







## Filing Form I-765 Online - Tips

- **Please do NOT submit your online application until you receive your OPT I-20!**
- Draft forms are saved for 30 days from the last time you worked on your form.
- Format of Form
  - Photos: JPG, JPEG, or PNG
  - Documents: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
  - Foreign Language documents must have English translation
  - Maximum size: 6 MB per file
  - Do not use special characters for file name
- Review your entries before you pay
- Once you make your payment, your application will automatically be submitted and cannot make corrections
  - At this stage, you also cannot change the dates on your OPT I-20
- Once you submit your application, you can track your case through your account
- USCIS does have discretion for Biometrics Appointments



**Waiting for approval**



# External Process

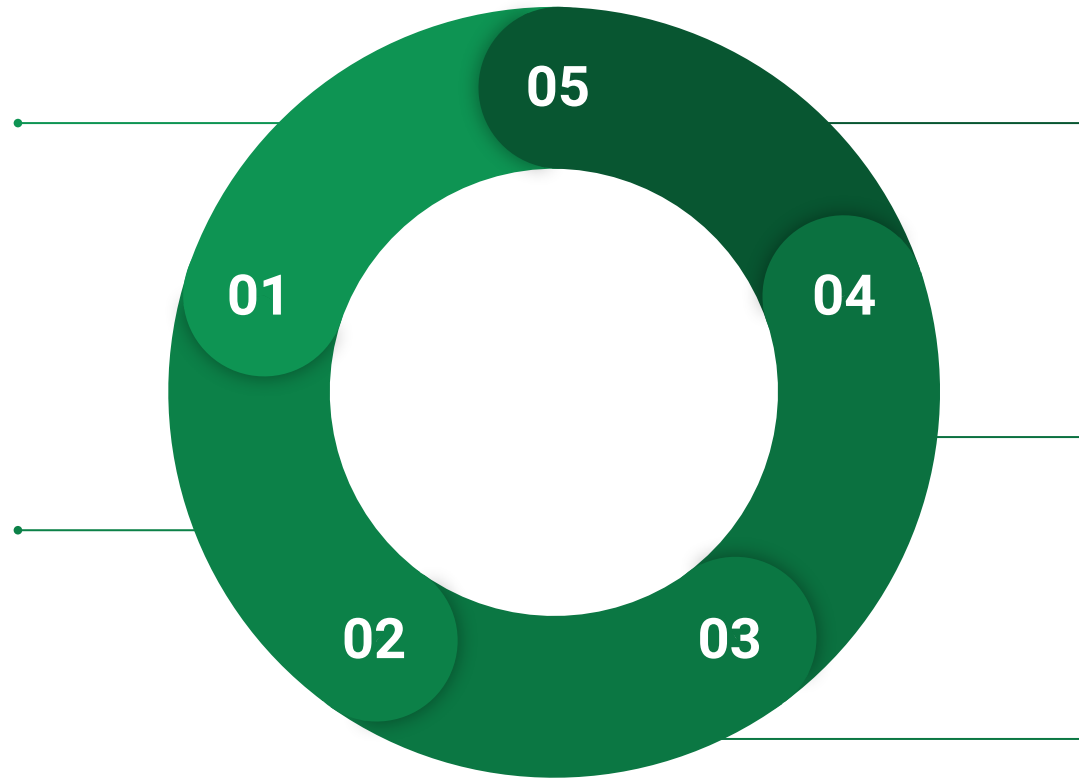
**After sending your application to USCIS**

**Step One**  
**USCIS Receives OPT Filing**

USCIS reviews your application, processes payment

**Step Two**  
**USCIS will send I-797 Receipt**

USCIS will mail a paper I-797 Receipt Notice with case number.  
**(within 14-30 Days)**



**Step Five**  
**Set up OPT Portal & Start working**

OPT Portal link will be emailed to UCR email. Students can start working on EAD card start date.

**Step Four**  
**SSN Card Sent**

If SSN card was requested, SSA office will mail SSN card  
**(14-30 days)**

**Step Three**  
**USCIS will Deliver EAD card**

USCIS will mail EAD card and approval notice.

**(within 3-5 months)**  
**May be some delays**



# OPT Receipt Notice (I-797C): Check Your Application Status

USCIS will mail you a Form I-797C, Notice of Action. This is your receipt for your OPT application. It will take around 3-4 weeks.

## USCIS Case Status Online

- Track your application by entering the receipt number
- Link for [USCIS Case Status Online](#)

## USCIS Processing Time

- Check the latest processing time for your type of application
- Link for [Case Processing Time](#)
  - If you will be mailing to the Chicago Lockbox, your case is being handled by 'Potomac Service Center'

## Change of address

- You must update your address by filing [Form AR-11](#) (*click here*) directly with USCIS



## While OPT Application is Pending...

### Keep in mind

- USCIS Processing Time: 3-5 months
  - You can apply for Premium Processing for a \$1,685 fee
  - USCIS Expedited processing is very difficult to get approved
- Do not work/volunteer (on or off-campus) while you are waiting for EAD card if your program has ended
  - Once your I-20 program end date has passed, your on-campus or off-campus authorization ends.





# International Travel and OPT

# International Travel and OPT

## While OPT is Pending

- Not Recommended during OPT application process
  - RFEs must be responded to on time
- Higher Risk dependent on the CBP officers

## After OPT is Approved

- Recommended to travel after OPT is approved

## Important Travel Documents to carry upon return to the U.S.

- Valid Passport (For at least 6 months at time of entry)
- Valid F-1 Visa Stamp (Canadian Nationals are Exempt)
- Form I-20 with Travel Signature
- EAD Card
- Supporting Documents:
  - Employment Verification Letter or Proof of Job Interview
  - Financial Support Documents





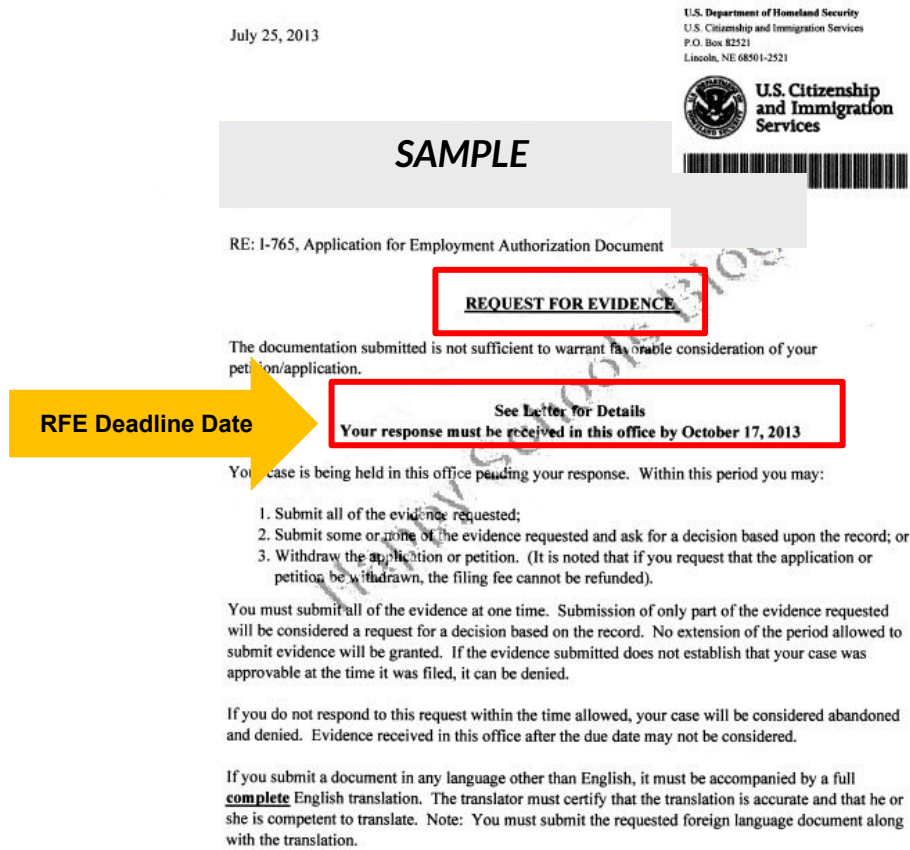
# USCIS Decision



# Request for Evidence (RFE)

If USCIS needs more information/evidence, they will send an RFE

- Contact ISS office and work with an International Student Advisor
- Remember! RFEs must be answered by deadline date on letter
- Check OPT I-20 recommendation date before mailing RFE
  - If outside 30 day window, request for a new OPT recommendation I-20



**Please contact ISS office to review required RFE documents**

# OPT Denials

## Common Reasons for Denials

- USCIS receives OPT application too early or too late
- Payment problems
- RFE was not received by deadline date
- RFE was answered but, OPT I-20 was already past 30 days of recommended date
- Application was received on time but, OPT I-20 was past 30 day recommended date
- I-765 was not signed or had incorrect information

August 30, 2017

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
2200 Potomac Center Dr. Stop 2425  
Arlington, VA 20198-2425

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

YSCREDACTED

**SAMPLE**

RE: I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

**DECISION**

This notice refers to your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, filed on June 35th, 2001, in which you are requesting employment authorization pursuant to Title 8, Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR) 214.2(f)(1)(i)(B)(2). Upon consideration, it is ordered that your application be denied for the following reason(s):

The instructions for the Form I-765 state, in pertinent part:

F-1 Student seeking Optional Practical Training in an Occupation Directly Related to Studies (c)(3)(i). File your EAD application with a Certificate of Eligibility of Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status (Form I-20AB) endorsed by a Designated School Official within the past 30 days.

Title 8 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 214.2(f)(1)(i)(B)(2) states:

For post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT), the student must properly file his or her Form I-765 up to 90 days prior to his or her program end-date and no later than 60 days after his or her program end-date. The student must also file the Form I-765 with USCIS within 30 days of the date the DSO enters the recommendation for OPT into his or her SEVIS record.

You are applying for post-completion OPT. Your application did not include a Certificate of Eligibility of Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status (Form I-20 AB) endorsed by a Designated School Official within 30 days of filing your Form I-765 with USCIS.

Your Form I-765 application was received by USCIS on June 35, 2001 and the date the DSO entered your recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record was May 06, 2001. You have failed to submit Form I-20 endorsed by the DSO within 30 days of filing Form I-765 with USCIS.

For this reason, your application must be and hereby is denied.

NOTICE: USCIS regulations do not provide for an appeal to this decision. However, you may file a motion to reopen or reconsider an adverse decision. A motion must be filed using Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion. Form I-290B must be filed within 30 days from the date of this notice (33 days if this notice was received by mail) with the appropriate filing fee and other documentation in

1 of 2

www.uscis.gov

**Please contact ISS office immediately to discuss F-1 options**

## OPT Approval & EAD Card

- Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card
  - Actual OPT start date
    - Can start work from EAD start date
  - Make sure information is accurate!
  - 90 Days of Unemployment
- Email copy to [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)
- Required for reentry to the U.S.
- Access to set up [SEVP OPT Portal](#)



EAD Card (Proof of Work Authorization)

# OPT Reporting Requirements



# SEVP OPT Portal

## Once OPT is Approved

- SEVIS will email you link to set up [SEVP OPT Portal](#)
  - Email will be sent to UCR email around EAD start date
  - If link expires, contact ISS
- Easy & convenient way to update
  - Employer information
  - Personal information
- Important for OPT Reporting Requirements
  - Update any changes within 10 days
  - Do not need to update through ISS



SEVP Portal | Student and Exchange Visitor Program  
Portal

### 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](#)



# SEVP OPT Portal

## Set up OPT Portal Account

- Close to EAD card start date, SEVP will send you OPT Portal link.
- Check your UCR email address
- Check junk mail
- [SEVP Portal Account guideline](#)

## If link expired, contact ISS

- If the portal link expired, contact ISS ([internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu))
- DSO will reset your OPT Portal link
- For other technical issues, contact SEVIS Help Desk (1-800-892-4829)

## Report OPT information

- Maintain OPT reporting responsibilities through OPT Portal
- Update personal information
- Update employment information
- Cannot exceed more than 90 days of unemployment
- **Must be updated within 10 days of change**



## Reporting OPT Employment

**F-1 OPT students must provide a description on how the employment position has a direct relation to their major of study.**

**Tip: Obtain your employment offer letter**

### **Examples**

**Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering:**

I work full time (Type of Position) as an Electrical Engineer (Position title) at ABC Corp. (Company Name), a government contractor. In my job, I analyze client requirements for electrical systems and provide them with cost estimates of such systems (Job Duties). My work requires understanding of electrical circuit theory, which I studied in-depth at the University of ABC. dissertation (explaining relation to major of study).



## Reporting OPT Employment

### Examples Continued...

#### Master's degree in Kinesiology:

I am working 25 hours a week (*Position Type*) in a health food store as a consultant (*Position Title*) for Self-Made Inc. (*Company Name*), designing and teaching exercise classes that are incorporated into a customer's overall nutrition and exercise plan (*Job Duties*). My designs and customer instruction draw upon my studies and classwork in exercise therapy and physical reconditioning (*Relation to Study*).

#### PhD in Computer Science:

I am employed as a full-time (*Position Type*) Computer and Information Research Scientist (*Position Title*) at ABC Research Institute (*Company Name*). I work as part of a team of scientists and engineers that designs experiments to test the operation of various software systems (*Job Duties*). My work builds on research in complex algorithms and machine learning, which I studied as part of my dissertation (*Relation to Study*).



## 90 Unemployment Days

- May have up to 90 days of unemployment
- Unemployment days start from EAD card start date
- Do not accumulate more than 90 days of unemployment
  - Jobs that are less than 20 hrs per week will count towards unemployment days
- Remember to update OPT Portal

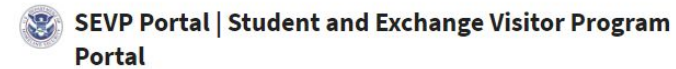


EAD Card (Proof of Work Authorization)

90 day unemployment time begins  
from official OPT EAD card start date

## Allowable Employment Positions During OPT

- Position must be directly related to field of study
- Part-Time or Full-Time
  - At least 20 hrs per week
- Employment Types:
  - Paid or Unpaid/Volunteer
  - Self-Employed Business Owner
  - Multiple
  - Short-Term
  - Through a Third-Party Agency



### 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](#)

**Remember to update employment information through OPT Portal!**

## After your OPT Ends

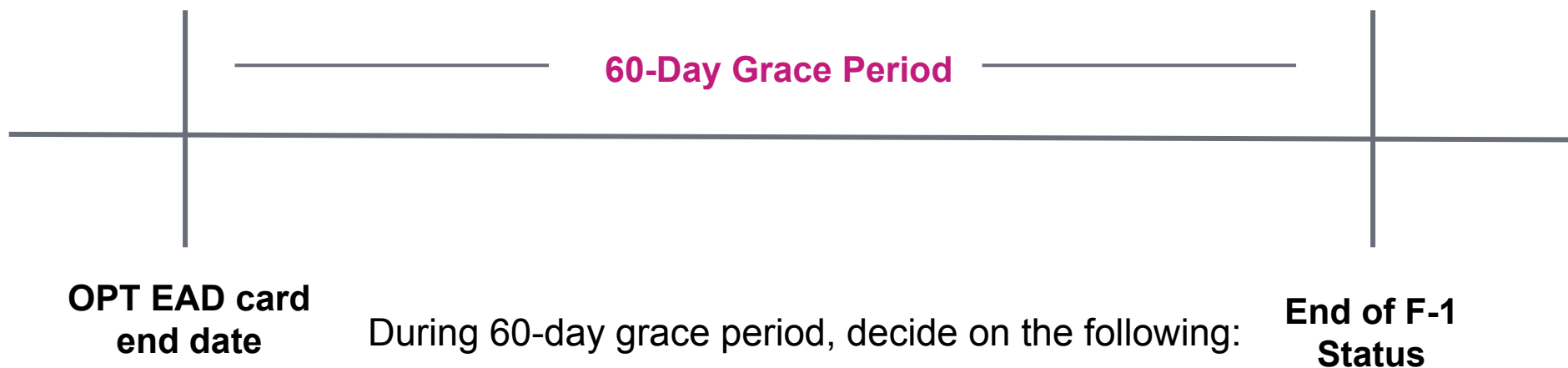
When your 12- Month OPT ends, F-1 students will have a [60-day grace period](#) to decide on their steps. During the 60-day grace period, students may decide on the following options:

- Start a new program at UC Riverside
- Transfer to another university
- Apply for a change of visa status
- Return to home country
- Apply for 24-Month STEM OPT Extension
  - Must apply before OPT EAD card expires






## 60-Day Grace Period



During 60-day grace period, decide on the following:

- Start a new program at UC Riverside
- Transfer to another university
- Apply for 24-Month STEM OPT Extension
- Apply for a change of visa status
- Return to home country



# OPT Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



## OPT FAQs

- **Do I have to have a job offer to apply for OPT?**

No, you do not have to have a job offer in order to apply for OPT.

- **How is unemployment counted?**

Unemployment days are counted from the start of the EAD card start date.

- **What if I can't find a job?**

Fortunately, you have 90 unemployment days. Allowable employment during OPT include paid and unpaid positions that are directly related to your field of study at UCR.

- **What will happen if I accumulate more than 90 days of unemployment during OPT?**

We recommend keeping an eye on how many days of unemployment time you accrue. Once you obtain a position, please be sure to report your employment to the OPT Portal to stop the unemployment clock. Exceeding more than 90 days of unemployment will put you out of F-1 status.



## OPT FAQs

- **Can I work on-campus after my completion date while I wait for my OPT approval?**

No, please do not work on or off-campus after your I-20 completion date until you receive your OPT EAD card.

- **When can I start working?**

You may start working once you receive your EAD card and from the start date indicated on your EAD card.

- **Can I cancel my OPT after I have applied?**

This may depend on where you are in your OPT application process. If you decide to cancel your OPT application, please make an appointment with an ISS Advisor.

- **Can I track the progress of my application?**

Yes, you can track your OPT application through [USCIS Case Status Online](#) by entering in your USCIS case number from your I-797 Receipt Notice.



# Things to Remember





## Beware of Employment Scams

Check out UCR Career Center's page on how to [Avoid Employment Scams and Fraud](#)

### Common Scams Themes:

- Sending you a check before you begin your job
- Asking you for payment for equipment, certification, training materials, etc.
- Overpayment scams
- Pyramid Schemes

### Be Careful:

- If posting does not indicate company information or it is difficult to find information on company
  - Do your research on companies before committing
- If company sends you an unexpected check and asks you to cash it in
- If company asks you to transfer money from one account to another
- Makes you an offer without interacting/interviewing with you



## How to Report Scams

- Make an appointment with an ISS Advisor at [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)
- If you suspect a position is fraudulent, please contact the Employer Relations Team
  - [careerrecruiting@ucr.edu](mailto:careerrecruiting@ucr.edu) or 951-827-3631
- If you believe you are the victim of fraud resulting from a job listing, please contact the local police as well <http://police.ucr.edu/>

### Learn More

- [How to Avoid Scams and Fraud \(UCR Career Center\)](#)



# Things to Remember

## Application Details

- Must submit your OPT I-20 at the time of your OPT I-765 application
- USCIS will deny any applications outside of application window
- OPT application must be received within 30 days of ISS advisor recommendation in SEVIS
- OPT application should be mailed/submitted within the U.S.
- **\*IMPORTANT:** Form editions and fees are subject to change
  - **It is ultimately the student's responsibility!**

## While Waiting for EAD Card

- Do not work or volunteer
- Not recommended to travel internationally
- If you receive an RFE or Denial, contact ISS immediately



## OPT Pop Quiz

1. **TRUE or FALSE. Your I-20 dates is based off of your academic program and not the graduation ceremony date.**
2. **How many months of Post-Completion OPT can you be approved for?**
3. **What is the earliest time you can apply for Post-Completion OPT?**
4. **TRUE or FALSE. I do not need an OPT I-20 for the I-765 OPT application.**
5. **Do you need a job offer at the time of the I-765 OPT application?**
6. **TRUE or FALSE. I must leave the U.S. after I apply for OPT.**
7. **How many days of unemployment time can I have during my OPT period?**
8. **Where do I report my OPT employment information?**
  - a. **DMV**
  - b. **SSN Office**
  - c. **SEVP OPT Portal**
  - d. **TikTok**



# Resources



# Helpful Resources

## ISS - [Employment & Taxes Webpage](#)

### Forms/Handouts from ISS Office

- [OPT Request Form](#)
- [OPT Application Checklist](#)

### Government Forms

- [Form I-765](#)
- [Form G-1145](#)
- [Form I-907](#)

### Government Resources

- [USCIS - OPT](#)
- [Study in the States - Training Opportunities](#)
- [SEVP OPT Portal Help](#)
- [USCIS Processing Time](#)
- [USCIS Case Status Online](#)

### COVID-19 Resources

- [UCR COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [SEVP Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Study in the States - COVID-19](#)



## Who Can Help?

### International Students and Scholars (ISS)

- Email** [internationalstudents@ucr.edu](mailto:internationalstudents@ucr.edu)
- Office Phone** 951-827-4113
- Office Hours** 10:00AM - 12:00PM, 1:00PM - 4:00PM
- Advisors are available through
- Email
  - Phone
  - Zoom

