

# OPT – OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

## Guidelines for Eligibility, Approval Process and Work



SEATTLE CENTRAL  
COLLEGE

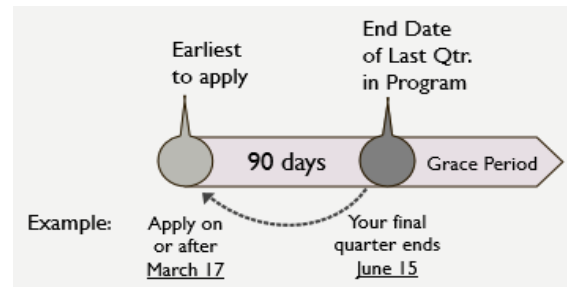
International Education Programs (IEP)

### Eligibility Requirements for Post-Completion OPT

- You have enrolled full-time in the U.S. for at least one complete academic year (9 months)
- You will complete a transfer degree, AAS, BAS, or Short Term Certificate program. *Exception:* Short Term Certificate in General Studies is not eligible. Ask your advisor if you are not sure.
- You have not already done post-completion OPT for the same level of study, or full-time CPT for a year
- You intend to work in a job directly related to your field/focus of study
- Have you violated your F-1 status any time during the past year? You might not be eligible yet; check with an advisor.

### Timeline: Plan ahead!

It will take a short time to hear from an advisor and prepare your application but it may take 3 – 4 months for your OPT application to be approved after you've sent it to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.



### Steps to Apply for OPT

*Keep this page for reference!*

- 1. Attend an OPT Workshop!** Do not wait until your last quarter to do this. A good time to attend would be when you have completed 45 credits of college-level coursework. Check the e-news or IEP Office for dates and times each quarter.
- 2. Submit Request for OPT to IEP Office**
  - We recommend that you submit the OPT request form before Finals Week of the quarter *before* your final quarter, then schedule your OPT appointment during the break or in the first few weeks of your final quarter.
  - Complete all information in the *Student Section* of the OPT request form (attached) and submit it to the IEP Office reception desk. An advisor will review your request.
- 3. Watch Email / Schedule Appointment:** Watch for a message confirming OPT eligibility. Please allow up to one week to process your request. If approved, schedule an OPT appointment with the advisor but be sure to allow enough time for YOU to prepare all the materials needed!
- 4. Application materials:** Prepare all the materials listed on the back of this paper. You must have all documents ready when you come for your OPT appointment with an advisor, so do not schedule your appointment too quickly.
- 5. OPT Appointment / New I-20:** An advisor will review the application with you, and print a new I-20 with the OPT endorsement listed on page 2. Do not send your application without the new I-20!
- 6. Keep copies of all documents for your own record.** We have had cases where students need to re-send something or mail gets lost. It is important for you to have your own copies because we will not provide them for you later.
- 7. Send your application by certified mail to the address listed on back, within two weeks.** USCIS will reject your application if it is not received within 30 days of the date your new I-20 was issued.
- 8. If you do not finish your program (fail classes, drop a class, etc.):** If you do not complete your program after you have already applied for OPT, notify your advisor immediately! It may be possible to withdraw your OPT application, take the necessary class(es) and re-apply for OPT later. If you do not communicate with your advisor, your OPT may be cancelled and you may fall out of status.

Your checklist of items to prepare is on page 2, together with other information.  
Bring this sheet and all documents with you to your OPT appointment.

**IMPORTANT: You may not begin working in an OPT job until after you have received your EAD card!**

**Materials to prepare** for your OPT appointment are listed below. NOTE: If you do not have all materials ready before the appointment, please reschedule your appointment to the following week.

- Completed Form G-1145:** available online at <https://uscis.gov/g-1145>. This form enables USCIS to send you an email and/or text message to confirm your application has been received.
- Completed Form I-765/** Application for Employment Authorization: available online at <https://uscis.gov/i-765>. This will open a PDF document that you can save on your laptop or cloud account.
  - Type your information directly in the PDF, save, and print when you've finished answering all the questions.
  - Many students are unsure how to fill out certain parts of this form. Full instructions can be found on the USCIS website (<https://uscis.gov/i-765>). We also provide information about the form at our OPT workshops; **we strongly recommend attending a workshop one quarter BEFORE you apply.**
- \$410 application fee.** Check or money order payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security". On the check Memo line, you can write "I-765 OPT application" and your SEVIS ID number. The check amount must be exactly \$410. Further details about payment are available online: <http://www.uscis.gov/forms/paying-immigration-fees>
- Two recent color passport photos:** 2" x 2" square; white background only; face fully forward. Photos must not be more than 30 days old! Print your full name and I-94 number on the back of each photo, using *pencil* (not ink pen).
- A **copy of your passport's photo page.** Passport must be valid for at least another 6 months. Include copy of renewal page if original passport has expired.
- A **copy of F-1 visa page.** If you changed status while in the US, bring the copy of your original visa also.
- Printout of electronic I-94,** available at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/> (or copy of the paper I-94 card from passport)
- Information from all previous SEVIS records, if different SEVIS number from your current one.** You do not need to mail copies of the I-20s, but you will need to provide information such as SEVIS ID number and start/end dates on the I-765 if you have had previous SEVIS numbers and/or CPT or OPT in the past: This includes previous school(s).
- Copies of any EADs (work authorization) previously issued to you (front and back), if any.
- If you applied for a change of status from J-1 to F-1, include a copy of your USCIS Notice of Action, DS-2019, and I-94. OR, if you applied for a change of status from other visa categories (e.g. B2), bring a copy of your Notice of Action, original visa, and I-94.
- Copy of I-20 with OPT endorsement. **You will get this from your advisor at the OPT appointment.** (You will keep the original I-20 and send the copy with your OPT application packet.)

**After your OPT appointment,** send your application packet to the address listed below.

- Send by **certified mail** from a US post office— this will cost is less than \$5 and will provide you with tracking of your OPT packet. Ask the post office how to request certified mail.
- USCIS must receive your application within 30 days of the date your new "OPT I-20" was issued

***For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries, including certified mail option:***

USCIS  
PO Box 21281  
Phoenix, AZ 85036

*For overnight or courier deliveries (non-USPS):*

USCIS  
ATTN: AOS  
1820 E Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

You will receive an **OPT Reminders** sheet from your advisor during the appointment. Keep this paper and refer to it for instructions about what you should do later, after your application has been mailed.

Request for  
**OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)**



**SEATTLE CENTRAL COLLEGE**

International Education Programs (IEP)

When should you apply? Plan ahead! It can take 3-4 months to receive your EAD (work card). Keep in mind:

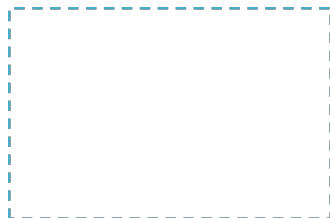
- The earliest to mail your application is 90 days before the end of your final quarter; OK to meet with advisor earlier
- Attend an OPT Workshop (check the e-news) for important information and tips about applying

Part 1: STUDENT INFORMATION -- please print clearly and submit to IEP Office	
Student ID Number	SEVIS Number <b>N</b>
Last (Family) Name	First Name Middle Name(s)
Phone Number	Email Address
I will complete all requirements for my program in: Fall / Winter / Spring / Summer, <b>20</b> _____	
I confirmed that all my personal contact information is up-to-date as listed in MyCentral. <b>NO / YES</b>	
<b>Current Study Program:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer Degree – circle which one: AA / AB / AS-DTA / AS#1 / AS#2 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional-Technical – see info at right >>> <input type="checkbox"/> Short Term Certificate  <b>your major, program name, or focus of study:</b>	<b>Pro-Tech students:</b> We must confirm additional information. Please complete the following steps before submitting this form: <b>A. Circle</b> which type of pro-tech program you are doing: AAS / AAS-T / Certificate (ask counselor/director if unsure) <b>B. Attach a copy of your Program Checklist, signed by program counselor/director.</b> Checklist must be filled out completely, including your name, SID#, the quarter you will complete your program, with signature of your program counselor/director.
<b>Previous work authorizations?</b> (here <i>and any other school</i> ) If “yes”, then circle or fill in answers to all questions. CPT: YES / NO If yes: PT or FT? Degree: Start/end dates: OPT: YES / NO If yes: PT or FT? Degree: Start/end dates:	
STUDENT SIGNATURE:	DATE:

**Part 2: IEP Advisor**

Immigration: Student is in status and meets eligibility requirements to apply for OPT: YES / NO  
 Academic: Program or Pathway will be complete, including enrollment for final quarter: YES / NO  
 Expected degree / certificate completion (circle one): Fall / Winter / Spring / Summer, 20\_\_\_\_\_

Specific courses to complete in final quarter: \_\_\_\_\_



Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Initials

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email student re: eligibility & materials   | <input type="checkbox"/> SEVIS / print new I-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> passed Final Qtr         | <input type="checkbox"/> Reminders email   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed Appl. & Reminders Sheet w/ student | <input type="checkbox"/> DB: Immig note         | <input type="checkbox"/> EAD rec'd/recorded in DB | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Info in SEVIS |