



**OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)
for F-1 Students at Augusta University
Post-completion (after completing degree requirements) OPT
(Revised 31 May 2016)**

General Disclaimer: The information contained in International and Postdoctoral Services handouts or packets are for the use of the AUGUSTA U community. Some of the information is very general and some is specific to AUGUSTA U. Information contained herein should not be used as the sole source of information for making decisions that may affect one's legal status in the U.S. or one's right to study, teach, conduct research, or work.

See the USCIS I-765, *Application for Employment Authorization* webpage and forms for most current information.

Regulation: Code of Federal Regulations, Title 8, Section 214.2(f)(10) and Interim Rule - 73 Fed. Reg. 18944 (April 8, 2008)

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is employment authorization which allows F-1 students to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to a practical work experience. **OPT must be directly related to the student's major area of study.**

- Most F-1 students are eligible for up to 12 months of optional practical training per educational level.
- If a student begins a new academic program at a higher level, the student is eligible for another 12 months of OPT.
- Students who earn Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) degrees in areas approved by U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) may be eligible for an additional 17 months of OPT. See STEM extension information.

This information should serve as a general resource and is not a substitute for (USDHS) regulations or directions/instructions found on USDHS forms or on USDHS internet pages.

***U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services web information page
Practical Training for Qualified Students***

- <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/practical-training/>

I-765 Application for Employment Authorization

- www.uscis.gov/I-765

IMPORTANT NOTE: U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) APPROVAL IS REQUIRED FOR ALL TYPES OF OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING. This typically takes 3 months or more to obtain an International and Postdoctoral Services recommends that you apply 3-6 months before you wish to begin employment. Note that application adjudication times vary.

Types of Optional Practical Training

OPT may be used prior to or after completion of studies. OPT taken prior to completion of studies is commonly referred to as "pre-completion practical training," after completion of studies is often called "post-completion practical training." This information sheet focuses on Post-completion OPT.

Post-Completion OPT (After completion of studies)

An F-1 student may be authorized to participate in post-completion OPT upon completion of studies.

After completion of studies is defined as (the completion of studies date for graduate students is typically the student's defense date or the end of the semester; undergraduate and professional school students use the graduation date).

- Must be approved as full-time (but you may work part-time or full-time).
- May be **authorized for up to 12 months** minus time spent in pre-completion practical training, not Curricular Practical Training up to 364 days of full-time CPT.
- OPT, initial post-completion, may be **authorized without job offer**. Post-completion OPT for the initial application at any degree level must be **completed within 14 months of graduation (program completion)**.

Post-Completion OPT Application Deadlines – all degrees

- **Students must apply to United States Customs Immigration Services for post-completion Optional Practical Training during the period 90 days prior to the completion of studies date and before the completion date of their course of study plus 60 days. (Single year program exception: If the student has been enrolled in a 1-year program (e.g., MT certificate student), then the earliest date s/he can apply to USCIS is 90 days prior to the student's completion of studies date.)**
- You are urged to apply for post-completion OPT prior to completing your Augusta University degree program.
- The complete Form I-765 Application for the Employment Authorization Document for post-completion Optional Practical Training **must be received** at the USCIS Dallas Lockbox no more than 30 days after your Designated School Official or the Designated School Official (P/DSO) recommends you for optional practical training on an updated SEVIS Form I-20.

Notes on Travel Abroad and OPT

- **If you intend to travel abroad around the time or after you will complete your studies, you are urged to:**
 - Submit your application and receive your receipt notice before you leave the United States.
 - Apply in advance, 3-4 months before the requested start date of OPT.
- If you leave the U.S. after you complete your studies and you do not apply for OPT prior to leaving the U.S., then **your application for OPT, including OPT endorsed Form I-20, must be received at the USCIS service center no later than the 60th day beyond the end date of your academic program, graduation or degree completion.**

RESTRICTIONS ON POST-COMPLETION OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

The employment must be **directly related to student's field of study.**

OPT may be used only during the following times:

- after completion of all course requirements (but before completion of a course of study), excluding a thesis or the equivalent, if the student is in a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree program; or
- after completion of the course of study.

All OPT requires prior approval from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USICS). *DO NOT BEGIN ANY EMPLOYMENT WITHOUT USCIS APPROVAL.*

USICS approval = (equals) the latest date of either the

- start date noted on Employment Authorization Document EAD (see sample)); or
- date the EAD is issued; or
- date the EAD is received.

Do not begin employment prior to receipt of the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from the United States Department of Homeland Security, (DHS) Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS). The EAD is an identification card laminated in plastic, with your photograph,

Sample Form I-766 Employment Authorization Card/Document

fingerprint (usually), and the expiration date of your permission to work.



◀**Note:** Bring all application documents to your IPSO appointment including, but not limited to your

- *Original OPT support letter from College, Department or Program.
- **Completed OPT Reporting Requirement Certification, page 10 of this information sheet.

All fillable .PDF forms should be completed online and printed for signature where required. Handwritten forms are not recommended. Online fillable forms are designated with * on the packet list below.

Before mailing or providing to IPSO for mailing, COPY all forms and documents for your files.

Application Documents Packet List

1. Completed G-1145, *E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance* *
2. Payment - a check or money order (IPSO recommends a personal check) for **\$380** (effective 23 November 2010) (subject to change, check the USCIS website for up-to-date fee information) (add \$70 biometric fee if you have not been finger printed for another immigration benefit), payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
On the top of the check write your I-94 number next to your name; if not your check write your name and your I-94 number.
On **Memo** or **For** line on check write *I-765 application for OPT*
3. Two (2) passport photos of F-1, that meet specifications in Form I-765 Instructions. **In pencil** *lightly* write your name and your Form I-94 number on the back.
4. Completed Form I-765, *Application for Employment Authorization* *
5. Form I-20 endorsed for OPT (will be issued by IPSO if application is complete.)
6. Copies of the F-1 student's
 - I-94 Arrival-Departure Record
 - Most recent visa stamp page
 - Most recent U.S. Customs and Border Protection arrival stamp (ink pad stamp) in passport
 - Valid passport identity pages
7. A copy of any previous EAD cards (front and back), A photocopy each front and back of any previously issued Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD) with notation on the copy of each previous EAD explaining the circumstances, i.e. J-2 employment authorization; F-1 OPT authorization; or severe economic hardship employment authorization; replacement for lost card.
8. A separate sheet of paper with the F-1 student applicant's name, actual place of residence address and home mailing address (if different from residence address, i.e. Augusta University Box, P.O. Box). Label the addresses accordingly.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Bring the following items to your IPSO appointment:

1. **Post-completion OPT letter.** The letter should contain a recommendation for practical training in the area of your degree program and include the following: your major, degree level, and expected date of completion of your degree program. An offer of employment is not required at the time of application.
 - **From either:**
 - Your academic advisor (or the Dean's designee) for your program; or
 - The administrator for academic affairs in your college
2. **Completed page 9 of this document.**
3. **Form G-1145, *E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance*** completed (<http://www.uscis.gov/g-1145>)
4. **Payment** - A check or money order for \$380 (effective 23 November 2010) (subject to change, check the USCIS website for up-to-date fee information) made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (IPSO recommends using a personal check.)
5. **Photos** -Two identical recent photographs per the instructions from USCIS (see <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/photos/photos.html>) Lightly print your name and Form I-94 number or other A-number in pencil on the back of the photos.
6. **Form I-765, *Application for Employment Authorization*** completed (www.uscis.gov/i-765). Read the I-765 instructions and include any documents not listed below. Use the fillable form, type online and print. Sign in ink.

- Use the address:
Augusta University IPSO
1120-15th St., AA-2013 (*enter AA-2013 in space for apartment number*)
Augusta, Georgia 30912
 - *Please note: sign your name on Form I-765 in ink, date and list your phone number.*
 - IPSO will contact you when your notices, documents and other information are received.
 - If you choose to use an address other than the Augusta U address, Augusta U will not assist you in resolving any application issues that may arise.
 - The items required also vary from one DHS office to another. You should either consult your school's international office or else provide all the items in the following list, and use duplicates unless original documents are specifically requested.
 - On Form I-765, number 16 enter
 - **(c)(3)(B)** - Post-completion Optional Practical Training.
7. **SEVIS Form I-20** Original endorsed for OPT on page 3. Print your name and sign on page page 1.
 8. **Form I-94 copy** - A printout or photocopy of your electronic Admission (I-94) Number Retrieval record or a printout or photocopy of the front and back of your Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Document.
 9. **F-1 visa stamp copy** - A photocopy of the most recent F-1 visa stamp page in your passport (except Canadian citizens) or Change of Status to F-1 Form I-797, Notice of Action.
 10. **USCBP entry stamp copy** – A photocopy of the most recent F-1 entry stamp in your passport
 11. **Passport biographical information page copy** - A photocopy of the of your valid, un-expired passport information page (including your photo and passport extensions if they are on different pages). If your passport will expire within the 12 month period following submission of your application to USCIS, IPSO recommends that you extend or renew your passport prior to applying. Contact your home country embassy or consulate for information on renewing your passport.
 12. **Copies of expired or valid Forms I-766** - A photocopy each front and back of any previously issued Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD) with notation on the copy of each previous EAD explaining the circumstances. I.e. J-2 employment authorized; OPT after a previous degree; severe economic hardship.
 13. **Current U.S. residence address** - A separate sheet with your name and current U.S. residential address (page 7 of this document). This is your home address, not your Augusta U box or a P.O. Box.

Create a packet including items #3 -10 above (except for the original SEVIS Form I-20 endorsed for OPT) to submit to the U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) Dallas Lockbox.

Schedule an appointment with Ms. Beverly Tarver in International and Postdoctoral Services. Bring the packet to your appointment. Ms. Tarver will review your application packet and, if all criteria are met, will issue a properly annotated SEVIS Form I-20 to be submitted with the application.

◀**Note:**

Form I-765 Application for the Employment Authorization Document for Post-completion OPT must be received at the USCIS Dallas Lockbox (Effective 10 March 2010. See the USCIS Form I-765 web page for most current address.) no more than 30 days after the day your DSO issues the Form I-20 recommending you for optional practical training and within the period 90 days before and up to 60 days after your graduation or academic program completion date.

**Sample Post-completion OPT
Eligibility Category ((c)(3)(B)) at Augusta University only**

**Use most recent version of form from USCIS website at
www.uscis.gov/I-765**

OMB No. 1615-0040; Expires 02/28/2018

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

**I-765, Application For
Employment Authorization**

For USCIS Use Only	Fee Stamp	Action Block	Initial Receipt	Resubmitted	
				Relocated	
				Received	Sent
				Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid From _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid To _____ Subject to the following conditions: _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Application Denied - Failed to establish: <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c) <input type="checkbox"/> Economic necessity under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)		
			Approved	Denied	
			A# _____		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant is filing under section 274a.12 _____		

I am applying for: Permission to accept employment. Replacement (of lost employment authorization document).
 Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document).

1. **Full Name**
(Family Name) (First Name) (Middle Name)

2. **Other Names Used** (include Maiden Name)

3. **U.S. Mailing Address**
(Street Number and Name) (Apt. Number)
Augusta University IPSO AA 2013
 (Town or City) (State) (ZIP Code)
Augusta GA 30912

4. **Country of Citizenship or Nationality**

5. **Place of Birth**
(Town or City) (State/Province) (Country)

6. **Date of Birth** (mm/dd/yyyy)

7. **Gender** Male Female

8. **Marital Status**
 Married Single Divorced Widowed

9. **Social Security Number** (Include all numbers you have ever used, if any)

10. **Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or Form I-94 Number** (if any)

11. **Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?**
 Yes (Complete the following questions.)
 Which USCIS Office? _____ Dates _____
 Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation) _____
 No (Proceed to Question 12.)

12. **Date of Last Entry into the U.S., on or about** (mm/dd/yyyy)

13. **Place of Last Entry into the U.S.**

14. **Status at Last Entry** (B-2 Visitor, F-1 Student, No Lawful Status, etc.)

15. **Current Immigration Status** (Visitor, Student, etc.)
F-1

16. **Eligibility Category.** Go to the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the Instructions. In the space below, place the letter and number of the eligibility category you selected from the instructions. For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.
 (c) (03) (B)

17. **(c)(3)(C) Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(3)(C) in Question 16 above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number in the space below.
 Degree _____ Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify _____
 Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number _____

18. **(c)(26) Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(26) in Question 16 above, please provide the receipt number of your I-1B principal spouse's most recent Form I-797 Notice of Approval for Form I-129.

Certification
 I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the instructions and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Question 16.

Applicant's Signature _____
Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) _____
Telephone Number _____

Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Applicant
 I declare that this document was prepared by me at the request of the applicant and is based on all information of which I have any knowledge.
Preparer's Signature _____
Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) _____
Printed Name _____
Address _____

Form I-765 11/04/15 Y

*****Sample, Use most recent version from USCIS website***
 Use Augusta U IPSO 1120 15th St. AA 2013 address**

Family Name, Given name(s)
I-94 #

U.S. Residence Address

Name
Address
Address
U.S.A.
Phone #

Post- Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) Checklist for Application Submission

Before your come to your application appointment with International and Postdoctoral Services Office, you should make sure that you have all required documents. Below is a checklist that should help you complete this process.

Do you have:

- program completion letter from your college, department or program?
- completed G-1145?
- payment check or money order - a form of payment to the Department of Homeland Security in the amount of \$ 380 (subject to change)? (IPSO recommends using a personal check.)
Write your name and I-94 number on the front of the check in the memo section.
- two (2) recent passport photos of yourself with your name and I-94 number or A number or SEVIS identification number written on the back of each picture in pencil? IPSO recommends that you enclose photos in an envelope with this information on the front along with "I-765 Application for OPT." #
- completed Form I-765 (typed online is recommended)? Is the form signed your I-765 in **INK**?
- your most recent Form I-20?
If your documentation is in order, you will be issued two original Form I-20s with OPT approval endorsed. One original must be included in your Form I-765 application packet.
- copy of your electronic Admission (I-94) Number Retrieval record or both sides of your I-94 card?
- photocopy of your most recent F-1 visa?
OR
Copy of your Change of Status to F-1 notice? #
- copies of your passport identification page(s) (with your photo) of your passport? #
If the extension of the validity of the passport is on another page, make sure you attach a photocopy of that page as well. Write your name and I-94 number on each copy.
- photocopies of all previously issued EAD cards? #
- a separate sheet with your name and current U.S. residential (physical or street) address (page 7 of this document)? #

For items marked with #, write your name and I-94 number on each copy.

Make two copies of your entire application. It is easier to resolve concerns if you have a copy of the original application.

◀Note:

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AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY
International &
Postdoctoral Services

Mailing address:
1120 15th Street, AA- 2013
Augusta, Georgia, 30912
t. (706) 721-0670 f. (706) 721-9304
Email: studentdiversity@augusta.edu
www.augusta.edu

Please submit this completed form when you request the Form I-20 endorsed for OPT.

OPT Reporting Requirement Certification

73 Fed. Reg. 18944 (April 8, 2008)

Augusta University is required by federal regulation to continue to maintain your SEVIS record for the full period of Optional Practical Training, including any extension.

By initialing and signing this form below, I certify that the information that I provided as part of my application for Optional Practical Training is true and correct, and that I understand and will comply with the following SEVIS requirements that took effect on April 8, 2008:

_____ Within 10 days of a change I will report the change to Augusta University International and Postdoctoral Services

Changes to my

- name;
- U.S. address;
- e-mail address;
- employment information

_____ I understand that I must report/verify my current contact and employment information with Augusta University International and Postdoctoral Services Office every six (6) months from the date my OPT begins verifying the above information.

_____ I understand that I cannot be unemployed for more than a total of 90 days in the aggregate while on post-completion Optional Practical Training.

Name of Applicant: _____ SEVIS I.D. _____

Augusta U PULSE Student I.D.: _____

Augusta U email: _____ Alternate E mail: _____

Augusta U Phone: _____ Home/Cell/Alternate Phone: _____

Foreign Phone Number: _____

Current Address: _____ Permanent Address in home country: _____

Augusta University Program completion date (Month/Day/Year): _____

Proposed OPT start date: _____ Proposed OPT end date: _____

Your Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date