

Applying for Optional Practical Training

F-1 students are eligible to apply to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for Optional Practical Training (OPT). OPT is a legal authorization to employ in your field of study up to 12 months while continuing to maintain F-1 visa status. You must apply for OPT before your completion date.

Read the procedures outlined below

A complete application packet consist of the following:

- 1) Form I-765, original, found at www.uscis.gov under immigration forms;
- 2) Check or money order in the amount of \$340.00 made out to *Department of Homeland Security*;
- 3) Form I-94, front and back photocopy;
- 4) I-20 form with recommendation, along with all previous I-20s;
- 5) Two passport-style color photos with a white background taken no earlier than 30 days before submission to USCIS> They should be unmounted, glossy, and unretouched. The photos should show a full-frontal facial position. Your head should be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order to which you belong. The photo should not be larger than 2 x 2 inches, with the distance from the top of the head to just below the chin about 1 ¼ inches. Lightly print your name on the back of each photo with a pencil.

Students must bring the following to the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs:

- 1) Completed Form I-765. It is on the last page (7) of the booklet.
- 2) Two immigration photos (sign your name on the back of each photo).
- 3) Your current I-20 ID; Must have DSO recommendation and signature on back.
- 4) Your passport
- 5) Your visa
- 6) Check or money order made out to the "Department of Homeland Security": in the amount of \$340.00.

***EMPLOYMENT START DATE SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN 60 DAYS FROM GRADUATION
MAY APPLY FOR OPT UP TO 90 DAYS BEFORE PROGRAM END DATE AND UP TO 120
DAYS BEFORE EMPLOYMENT START DATE.***

The Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs Office will mail your application to INS. If your application is approved, you will receive an Employment Authorization Card (EAD) in the mail. It may take up to 60 days to receive the EAD.

Students applying for OPT must remain in the U.S. until the EAD card is received. You need a U.S. address for the card to be sent to upon approval. Students may apply for OPT with an expired visa.