OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) APPLICATION PACKET

READ BEFORE YOU BEGIN THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR OPT

In order for you to maintain your status as an F-1 student on OPT you must comply with the following regulations:

MANDATORY

As an F-1 student you are required to report the following information to the Center for International Education office (CIE) during your OPT:

1. Address – complete home address where you are currently living even if it is temporary. You must update us EVERY time you move to a new address.
2. Employer’s name and complete mailing address – you must find a job and report the address of the employer within 90 days of the start date of your OPT.
3. Any periods of unemployment – list specific dates that you are not employed.
4. New employment – you must report a new employee address within 10 days of changing jobs.

PLEASE ALSO PROVIDE

1. Any and all phone numbers
2. Any and all E-mail addresses

International Student Advisors are responsible for updating the SEVIS records for all international students to reflect any and all changes. The regulations governing these reporting requirements are MANDATORY. If we do not comply with these reporting requirements, you may be considered out of status as an F-1 student and subject to arrest and deportation.

YOU MUST KEEP IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH US DURING OPT SO WE CAN UPDATE YOUR SEVIS RECORDS
Optional Practical Training Agreement

I understand that in order to remain in status with the USCIS during my OPT I **cannot be unemployed for more than 90 days during the 12 months of my OPT**; therefore, if I do not begin employment within the first 90 days of my OPT I will be illegally present in the United States and must return home. I also understand that any time spent outside of the U.S. during my OPT is also considered unemployed time unless the travel is a part of my employment requirements.

I understand that during my OPT I must inform the CIE office via the OPT Update form **within 10 days when any of the following information changes:**

1. My complete home address, **where I am currently living**, even if it is temporary.
2. Any and all E-mail addresses where I can be reached.
3. Any and all phone numbers where I can be reached.
4. My employer’s name and complete mailing address.
5. The dates of my employment as well as dated that I was unemployed.

I understand that I also need to inform the CIE office if I am approved for a Change of Status (H1b for example) or if I decide not to use the entire year of my OPT and leave the country or return to school on a new I-20.

I understand that all information can be reported to the CIE office via E-mail at ipsupdates@siu.edu or by calling 618.453.5774.

Print name ________________________________________________________________

Signature _______________________________ Date ______________________________

List All E-mail address(es): ________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Cell/landline phone number(s): ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

02/23/2015
Optional Practical Training (OPT) is designed to provide you with an opportunity to gain practical experience in your field of study. As an F-1 student you may apply for OPT in the following cases:

OPT can be used in the following situations:

- Full-time, minimum 20 hours per week, during the annual summer vacation. You must be enrolled during the spring prior to and fall after your OPT period.
- Part-time, maximum 20 hours per week, while school is in session. You must be enrolled as a full-time student.
- Full-time, minimum 20 hours per week, at the end of your academic program.
- Special application deadlines apply to graduate students who have completed all their coursework. Once your course work is complete, you may apply for OPT while you are working on your thesis or dissertation.
- After completion of the course of study, or, for a student in a Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctoral degree program, after completion of all course requirements for the degree (excluding thesis or equivalent). Continued enrollment, to complete your thesis or dissertation, after all requirements for the degree have been met does not preclude eligibility for OPT.

Requirements:

- You must have been enrolled as a full-time student for one full academic year, currently maintaining a full-time program of study, in valid F-1 status, and intend to work in a job directly related to your major field of study.
- OPT is limited to one twelve month period for each progressive degree level you complete. One year for a Bachelor’s, one for a Master’s, and one for a Ph.D.
- Part-time OPT, 20 hours per week or less, is deducted from the twelve months at a rate of half time.
- The filing period begins at a maximum 90 days before you complete your academic program, or, in the case of a graduate student who has completed all course requirements excluding thesis/dissertation, 90 days before you would like your practical training job to begin. While it is possible to apply for OPT during the 60-day grace period following the end of your program, we advise against applying this late as it can take up to 3 months to obtain the OPT approval card.
- Any employment that is at minimum 20 hours per week, within your field of study, and paid or unpaid, is considered full-time employment while you are on OPT. If you are working in an unpaid position it is advised that you keep a log of your hours and have it initialed by your supervisor in lieu of payroll records. For your assistance, we have an OPT Unpaid/Volunteer Time Recording Sheet that is available upon request. There is debate about unpaid internships and volunteer work being accepted as employment. Please be advised, that unpaid internships and volunteer work may not be accepted as approved employment for OPT in the future.
- You CANNOT WORK until you have the EAD in your possession.
- An F-1 student authorized by the USCIS to engage in OPT is required to report any change of
  - Name
  - Address
  - Change, interruption, or termination of employment.
  - Email address or phone number

These changes must be reported within 10 days via the OPT Update form available at the following link: http://www.cie.siu.edu/_common/documents/Current-CIE-Docs/opt_stem_update_form

IMPORTANT:

02/23/2015
• Your receipt, Notice of Action I-797C, will indicate the date that your application was received by USCIS. Standard processing time is less than 90 days. In rare instances where the processing time has exceeded 90 days, please contact our office so that we may investigate further.

• Once you have your application for OPT there (at USCIS) it is very difficult to cancel the request, and in many cases results in issues when re-applying for your OPT later. Always give very careful thought to your decision to apply for OPT so that you will not lose this valuable experience if you change your mind.

• You may take an occasional class during your OPT. However, you cannot be a full time student or hold a student work position or a graduate assistantship. Authorization to engage in OPT employment is automatically terminated when the student transfers to another school or begins study at another educational level.

• Do not travel outside of the U.S. while your OPT application is pending as Immigration states that port of entry officers have been advised to deny entry on your return to the U.S. The only time travel is advised during your OPT period is after you have your EAD card and have begun working for an employer. You should carry proof from your employer that they have authorized your leave and expect you to continue your employment upon your return to the U.S. You will need to get an updated signature on your OPT I-20 before you leave the country, so a month prior to your departure date mail us your I-20 to us with a letter listing your dates of travel, locations of travel, and the address where we should send the I-20 back to you.

• You have a sixty day grace period after your OPT ends. If you plan on staying in the U.S. to begin a new academic program, you will need to obtain a new I-20 before the end of your grace period to remain in status. Any change to a new status also needs to be applied for before the end of your grace period.

• The USCIS shall adjudicate the Form I–765 and issue an EAD on the basis of the recommendation from the DSO unless the student is found otherwise ineligible. The USCIS shall notify the applicant of the decision and, if the application is denied, of the reason or reasons for the denial. The applicant may not appeal the decision.

How to Apply:

• Complete all forms in full and collect the required documents listed in the OPT Application Procedures.

• Call 618-453-5774 to schedule an appointment no earlier than 90 days prior to your graduation.*

*If you are not in Carbondale you can submit your application for OPT by mail. Send originals of all of the required forms, photos and check. Do not send originals of your I-20s, passport, visa, or I-94, but send very clear, readable copies instead. Mail everything to:

Center for International Education
ATTN: OPT Application
860 Lincoln Dr, NW Annex B 119
Carbondale, IL 62901-4333
F-1 Optional Practical Training
Application Procedure

Bring the following to your OPT appointment at the Center for International Education:

REQUIRED FORMS
- **Form I-765** (attached) - The form must be completed, signed and dated. The address fields have been completed so that your EAD will be sent to CIE. When your EAD arrives you will be contacted so that you can pick it up or we will send your EAD card to you at your current address via UPS. Leave Question 16 blank. We will complete it for you in your appointment.
- **I-765 Fingerprint Signature Card** (attached) - Sign your name (blue ink) in the signature box provided. We will assist you with the fingerprint portion during your appointment. If you are not in Carbondale and are mailing your application, please use a black ink pad and place a print of your right index (pointer) finger in the square box provided.
- **Optional Practical Training Advisor Recommendation** form (attached) - The form must be completed and signed, indicating that you have been a full-time student every semester at SIUC and the date that you will complete your academic program.
- **Optional Practical Training Agreement** (attached) - Complete and sign the form.
- **G-1145** – This will be used by USCIS to notify you when they receive your application.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS
- **Form I-20 (s)** – all prior I-20s, especially the original entry I-20 with the Homeland Security stamp in the upper right hand corner from the first time you enter the U.S. as a student.
- **Passport** - We will make photocopies of your biographical information page(s).
- **I-94 Card** - Make sure that you bring your printed I-94 card. This may be retrieved at: [http://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html](http://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html)
- **VISA** – Your most recent, expired or unexpired, visa you used the last time you entered the U.S.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS
- **$380.00 processing Fee** – You may use a personal check or money order. It must be made payable to: U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Be sure to write it exactly as it is written here. See attached example in this packet for clarification.
- **Passport Photos** – Two passport style, natural color photos, which were taken within the last 30 days and not previously used for any other documents. Photos must be clear with no discernible pixels or dot pattern. Additional guidelines and information can be obtained at: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotoreq/pptphotoreq_5333.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotoreq/pptphotoreq_5333.html)
- **EAD(s)** – (If applicable) bring all previous EAD cards or copies from previous employment.
- **Job Offer Letter** – (If applicable) bring a copy of your formal offer letter printed on company letterhead.

During your appointment an advisor will create your new OPT Form I-20 for you. After your appointment you will need to send your application for OPT to the USCIS office in Phoenix, AZ. The application **must** reach the USCIS office within 30 days of the time that the I-20 is created on the day of your appointment.

If you are sending your application via the U.S. Postal Service (Certified, Express Mail) you must send it to the following address:

**USCIS**
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ  85036

If you are sending your application through a courier service (such as UPS or FedEx) you must send it to the following address:

**USCIS**
Attn: AOS
1820 E Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Optional Practical Training Advisor Recommendation

TO BE COMPLETED BY FACULTY ADVISOR OR DEPARTMENT CHAIR

To: Center for International Education (CIE)
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale 62901-4333

From: __________________________________________, __________________
Print Name __________________________
Title __________________________

Department Address and Mail Code

Re: Optional Practical Training Recommendation For:

__________________________________________, __________________________
Print family name, given name __________________________
ID Number __________________________

This memo serves to confirm that the above-named student is currently, or was, a student in the Department of __________________________ at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale specializing or majoring in the field of __________________________. The practical training sought by this student is directly related to their field of study, commensurate with their educational level, and is recommended by this department.

This student:

 o has maintained full-time enrollment status during each semester.
 o has not maintained full-time enrollment status due to the following reason:

__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

This student (please check only one):

__________ is interested in practical training while school is in session (work must not exceed 20 hours per week).
STUDENT MUST MAINTAIN FULL TIME STATUS.

__________ has completed all course requirements and is expected to complete thesis or dissertation by _______/_______/_______

__________ has completed, or is expected to complete, the course of study and graduate on _______/_______/_______

Signature __________________________ Date: __________________________
I-765 Fingerprint Signature Card

Signature HERE (stay inside lines)

Place RIGHT INDEX Fingerprint HERE

Use THIS Finger

Your completed check should looks like this:

If this area is not already pre-printed with your information, please print your full name here

DO NOT sign or write anything on the BACK of the check
What Is the Purpose of This Form?

Use this form to request an electronic notification (e-Notification) when U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services accepts your immigration application. This service is available for applications filed at a USCIS Lockbox facility.

General Information

Complete the information below and clip this form to the first page of your application package. You will receive one e-mail and/or text message for each form you are filing.

We will send the e-Notification within 24 hours after we accept your application. Domestic customers will receive an e-mail and/or text message; overseas customers will only receive an e-mail. Undeliverable e-Notifications cannot be resent.

The e-mail or text message will display your receipt number and tell you how to get updated case status information. It will not include any personal information. The e-Notification does not grant any type of status or benefit; rather it is provided as a convenience to customers.

USCIS will also mail you a receipt notice (I-797C), which you will receive within 10 days after your application has been accepted; use this notice as proof of your pending application or petition.

USCIS Privacy Act Statement

AUTHORITIES: The information requested on this form is collected pursuant to section 103(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended INA section 101, et seq.

PURPOSE: The primary purpose for providing the information on this form is to request an electronic notification when USCIS accepts immigration form. The information you provide will be used to send you a text and/or email message.

DISCLOSURE: The information you provide is voluntary. However, failure to provide the requested information may prevent USCIS from providing you a text and/or email message receipting your immigration form.

ROUTINE USES: The information provided on this form will be used by and disclosed to DHS personnel and contractors in accordance with approved routine uses, as described in the associated published system of records notices [DHS-USCIS-007 - Benefits Information System and DHS-USCIS-001 - Alien File (A-File) and Central Index System (CIS), which can be found at www.dhs.gov/privacy]. The information may also be made available, as appropriate for law enforcement purposes or in the interest of national security.

Paperwork Reduction Act

An agency may not conduct or sponsor an information collection and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at 3 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions and completing and submitting the form. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Regulatory Coordination Division, Office of Policy and Strategy, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20529-2140. OMB No. 1615-0109. Do not mail your completed Form G-1145 to this address.

Complete this form and clip it on top of the first page of your immigration form(s).

<table>
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<th>Applicant/Petitioner Full Last Name</th>
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E-mail Address | Mobile Phone Number (Text Message)
Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

I-765, Application For Employment Authorization

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<th>Fee Stamp</th>
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A: 

Applicant is filing under §274a.12

[ ] Application Approved. Employment Authorized / Extended (Circle One) until (Date).

[ ] Application Denied.

- Failed to establish eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c).
- Failed to establish economic necessity under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)

I am applying for:

- [ ] Permission to accept employment
- [ ] Replacement of lost employment authorization document
- [ ] Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach previous employment authorization document)

1. Name (Family Name in CAPS) (First) (Middle) Which USCIS Office? Date(s)

2. Other Names Used (include Maiden Name)

c/o Center for International Education

3. U.S. Mailing Address (Street Number and Name) (Apt. Number)

860 Lincoln Dr NW Annex B Wing MC 4333

(Town or City) (State/Country) (ZIP Code)

Carbondale IL 62901-4333

4. Country of Citizenship/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 [ ] Widowed [ ] Divorced

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

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

11. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?

[ ] Yes (Complete the following questions.) [ ] No (Proceed to Question 12.)

Certification

Your Certification: I certify, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, 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.

Signature Telephone Number Date

Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Above: 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.

Print Name Address Signature Date

Remarks Initial Receipt Resubmitted Relocated Completed

Received Sent Approved Denied Returned

Form I-765 04/01/13 V