

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Application Guide

For F-1 International Students

Navigating in the Guide

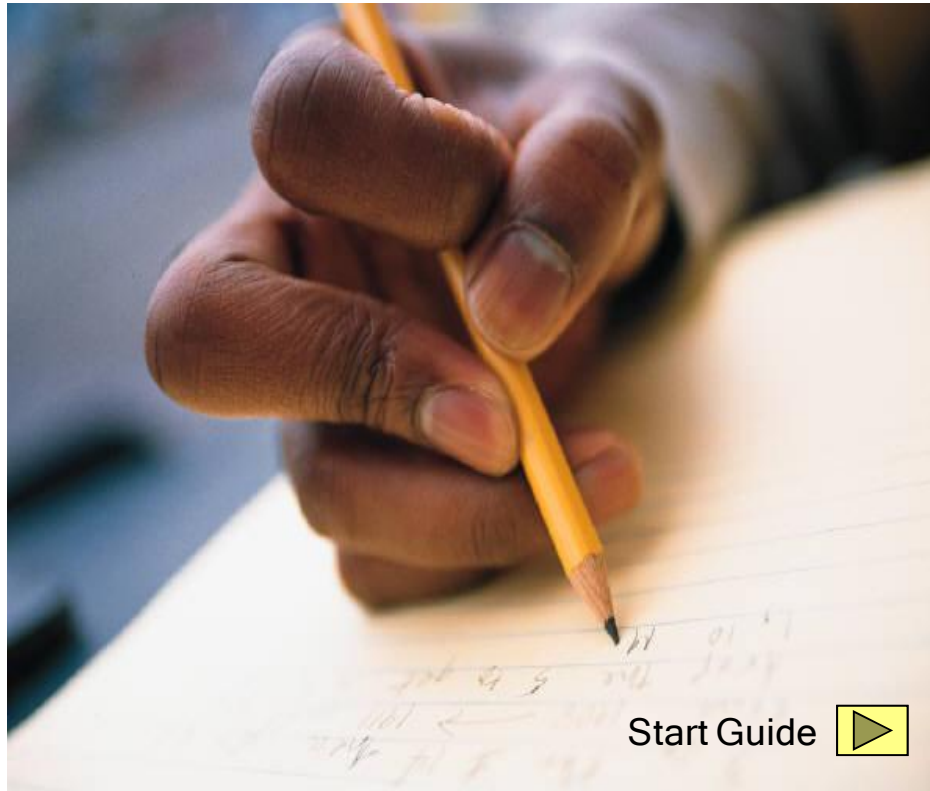
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Start Guide



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What is Optional Practical Training (OPT)?

Optional Practical Training is a benefit of the F-1 students status. It allows students to have work authorization for off-campus employment in their fields of study. To be eligible, you must be in valid F-1 status for one academic year.

The name of the work permit for OPT is the Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

OPT Application Process

The application is completed in three steps:

1. Request OPT I-20

The I-20 will be ready for pick-up 3 business days after submitting your request to the Berkeley International Office.

2. Prepare and Mail your application materials

Allow approximately 1 week to gather and organize your materials for mailing

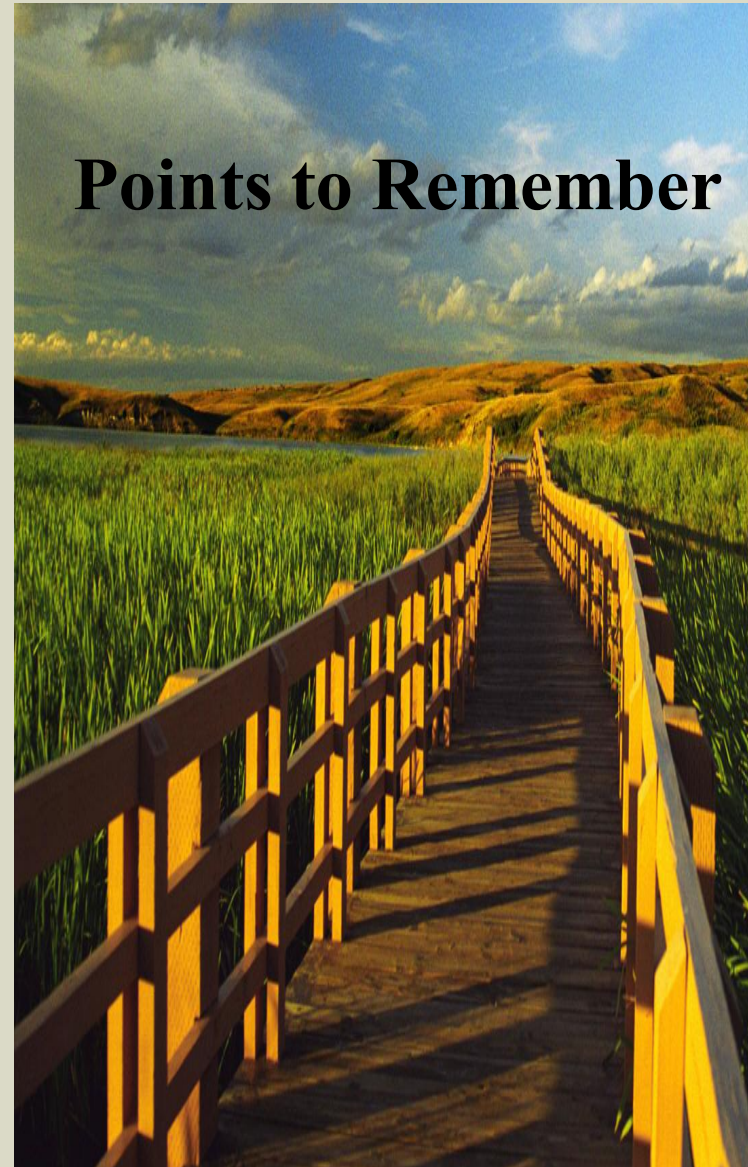
3. Receive your Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

3 months on average after your application has been received by the California Service Center.



Highlights

1. One year of OPT is available after completing each degree program at a higher level. For example, you may use 12 months of OPT after completion of your Bachelor's, then your Master's and then your Ph.D. = 3 years total.
2. OPT is available both before or after completing a degree program.
3. A job offer is not required to apply for OPT.
4. The employment may occur anywhere in the U.S.
5. No special permission is needed from the USCIS or UCB to quit a job or change employers. However, you must notify Berkeley International Office of these changes at <http://ssu.berkeley.edu/>.
6. During the period of OPT, a student remains in F-1 status.
7. An extension of OPT is allowed for up to 17 months if at the time of the extension you have a degree in a Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) field and your employer is enrolled in E-Verify. For more information, see our web page, [17-Month STEM Extension](#).



Points to Remember

Caveats

1. The application for post-completion OPT must be received by the USCIS no earlier than 90 days before program completion and no later than 60-days after your date of completion.
2. It may take up to three months to receive the EAD (Employment Authorization Document).
3. More than 90 days of unemployment during OPT is a violation of F-1 status.
4. Once you complete your degree and your I-20 has expired, you must have a valid EAD to begin working on or off campus.
5. Once the OPT application is submitted to the USCIS, it is impossible to change your selected authorization dates.
6. Canceling the OPT application is very difficult and must be discussed with an Adviser at Berkeley International Office.
7. More than 90 days of unemployment during OPT is a violation of F-1 status.
8. OPT can only be extended beyond 12 months in limited circumstances (see item #7 at left.)
9. Employment must be related to the degree program noted on your I-20.
10. Students are required to report the following information to the Berkeley International Office within 10 days of any change: name, residential address, employer name, employer address, employment status at <http://ssu.berkeley.edu/>.



Types of OPT

Pre-completion OPT

Work permission before degree completion

Post-completion OPT

Work permission after degree completion

When employment occurs	Hours per week allowed to work	Comments
<p>Summer or Winter Break (Pre-completion)</p>	<p>There is no minimum or maximum hours per week a student is required to work on pre-completion OPT.</p>	<p>The amount of time you use for pre-completion OPT will be deducted from your 12-month allowance. Part-time OPT is deducted from the 12 month limit at 50%. For example, if you work part-time for 4 months, only 2 months will be deducted. You will retain 10 months to use at another time.</p>
<p>Fall or Spring Semester (Pre-completion)</p>	<p>Must not exceed 20 hours per week. Graduate student who have advanced to candidacy may work up to 40 hours per week.</p>	<p>Students on Pre-completion OPT are not eligible for STEM Extension OPT or the H1B cap gap extension</p> <p>Curricular Practical Training, is a better option in most cases for working prior to your degree completion.</p>
<p>After degree completion (Post-completion)</p>	<p>Students must work an average of 20 hours per week during post-completion OPT to be considered "employed" and maintaining F-1 status.</p>	<p>No more than 3 months of unemployment are allowed during the 12-month post-completion OPT period. See "Qualifying OPT Employment"</p>

Application Deadlines

Pre-completion OPT
90 days before desired start date.

Post-completion OPT
You can submit your application to the USCIS up to 90 days before the completion date of your program or 60 days after completion as long as you have not left the U.S. We recommend you apply as early as possible to avoid unexpected delays.

For a definition of "Completion of Program" as it refers to OPT, see [page 8](#).



Is OPT right for you?



*If you can answer
“yes” to the questions
on this page, you are
ready to apply for
OPT.*

Yes!

No!

*If you answer “no” to any
of these questions, talk to
a BIO Adviser about your
situation.*

Pre-Completion OPT

Have you eliminated the possibility of using Curricular Practical Training (CPT) instead of pre-completion OPT? For most students, CPT is a better option. It allows you to get work experience in your field of study without using any of the 12 months of OPT time. Reserving the 12 months of OPT time for after your degree completion is a good strategy since most employers would prefer this longer time commitment. See the Berkeley International Office web site for a detailed description of [Curricular Practical Training](#).

✓ ***Have you been in F-1 status for one academic year?*** At UC Berkeley, one academic year means enrollment for consecutive fall / spring or spring / fall semesters. You can count the time you spent at other U.S. schools in degree programs before you came to UC Berkeley as long as your SEVIS I-20 was transferred to UCB.

✓ ***Do you have a job offer?*** If no, do you plan to have one in the next three months? Once you have submitted your application for OPT the time will be deducted from the 12 months allowed to you whether you work or not.

✓ ***Will your job offer still be valid three months from now?*** Getting the OPT permit can take three months. If your employer is not willing to wait for you, then it's not worth the effort to apply for OPT.

✓ ***Do you plan on applying for STEM extension or H1B cap gap extension?*** Please note, only post-completion OPT students are eligible for these two extensions. If you want to apply for either of these extensions, you must submit a second application for post-completion OPT.

✓ ***If you plan to work part-time during a fall or spring semester, will you also be enrolled in full time courses?***

✓ ***Are you willing to use some of the 12 months you are allowed for OPT?*** You will not have a full year of OPT after you graduate if you choose to use some of it for pre-completion employment.

Post-Completion OPT

Have you been in F-1 status for one academic year? You can count the time you spent at other U.S. schools in degree programs before you came to UC Berkeley as long as your SEVIS I-20 was transferred to UC Berkeley. At UC Berkeley, one academic year means enrollment for consecutive fall / spring or spring / fall semesters.

Will you be completing your program of study at UC Berkeley within the next three months? The application for OPT cannot be submitted earlier than 90days before your completion date.

Are you enrolled full-time this semester or authorized by Berkeley International Office to have a reduced course load? You must have approval from Berkeley International Office before you withdraw or for graduate students using Filing Fee.



Step 1

Request your OPT I-20:

1. Complete OPT Request Form
2. Choose authorization dates
3. Submit OPT Request Form to Berkeley International Office.



The OPT Request Form

To request your OPT I-20, you must submit a completed OPT Request Form to Berkeley International Office.

A fillable, downloadable form is available at http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/Current/OPT_I-20_request.doc

Choosing Authorization Dates

On the Request Form, you must indicate what dates you want your work authorization to begin and end before submitting it to Berkeley International Office.

The authorization dates you choose will be noted on your new OPT I-20 and cannot be changed. The dates will also be noted on your EAD.

- The start date is the day on which the EAD becomes valid and you can begin working. The "clock starts ticking" on the start date whether you have a job or not.
- The end date is usually 12 months later, unless you request a shorter period of time or your application is approved 61 days or more after your program completion date.

If you change your mind about your authorization dates.....

You will NOT be able to adjust your OPT authorization dates once you have mailed your application to the California Service Center. Consider the authorization dates carefully before submitting your Request Form to the Berkeley International Office.



2299 Piedmont Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94720-2321

<http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu>

Optional Practical Training Request Form

This is a fillable form available at http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/Current/f1_opt.php. Save a copy of it to your computer, complete the form and print it out. Your Academic Adviser must sign at the bottom before you can submit it to Berkeley International Office (original signature required). See also the reverse side for instructions and regulations affecting the OPT application.

Family Name	Given Name
SEVIS ID Number	Date of current I-20 expiration :
Email address	Telephone
Have you been authorized for OPT in the past? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes-- From : To :	
If you have been authorized for OPT in the past, on which degree level was it based? <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.	
Requested OPT Start Date :	Requested OPT End Date :
<i>"I understand the responsibilities required for maintaining F-1 status during my period of OPT authorization as stated on the reverse and in the OPT Application Guide."</i>	
Signature of Student	Date

Academic Department	Student's UCB ID	-
	Expected Program Completion Date :	Level of Study: <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.
This section must be completed by your academic adviser.	Is the student registered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Has this student applied for filing fee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	For which type of OPT is the student applying? <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Completion <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Completion	
	If the student is requesting "pre-completion" OPT, has s/he completed all required courses? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Undergraduates = college adviser Graduates = faculty adviser	<i>"I hereby confirm that the information provided in this section is true and correct. I would like to recommend that this student be allowed to obtain Optional Practical Training in order to secure a position in his/her field of study."</i>	
	Comments:	
	Adviser's Name	Telephone
	Department	Email
	Signature	Date:



The OPT Request Form

Expected Program Completion Date

The "Completion Date" for OPT purposes is the day you complete your final degree requirements. Your actual completion date may not necessarily be the day of your graduation ceremony or the date on your current I-20 expiration.

- **Undergraduate Students**
The last day of final exams of the semester your degree requirements are fulfilled.
- **Graduate Students**
The day on which all degree requirements are fulfilled, such as filing the thesis or dissertation with the Graduate Division.

If you do not have a research component to your degree program (such as in the MBA program or other professional schools), your completion date would be the last day of final exams of the semester your degree requirements are fulfilled.

If you don't complete your program as expected...

Once your OPT I-20 has been created, changing your completion date can create serious complications for your OPT application. Consider your expected completion date carefully and make every attempt to finish your program on that day. Students who do not complete all coursework by the program end date may extend their program prior to the I-20 end date but they are limited to part time post-completion OPT until they satisfy all degree requirements.

Academic Adviser's Signature

A signature from your Academic Adviser is required on this form. This signature verifies your completion date and your registration status at the time of application.

--Undergraduates should obtain the signature from their College Adviser.

--Graduates should obtain the signature from their Faculty Adviser.



2299 Piedmont Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94720-2321

<http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu>

Optional Practical Training Request Form

This is a fillable form available at http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/Current/f1_opt.php. Save a copy of it to your computer, complete the form and print it out. Your Academic Adviser must sign at the bottom before you can submit it to Berkeley International Office (original signature required). See also the reverse side for instructions and regulations affecting the OPT application.

Family Name	Given Name
SEVIS ID Number	Date of current I-20 expiration :
Email address	Telephone
Have you been authorized for OPT in the past? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes-- From : To :	
If you have been authorized for OPT in the past, on which degree level was it based? <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.	
Requested OPT Start Date :	Requested OPT End Date :
<i>"I understand the responsibilities required for maintaining F-1 status during my period of OPT authorization as stated on the reverse and in the OPT Application Guide"</i>	
Signature of Student	Date

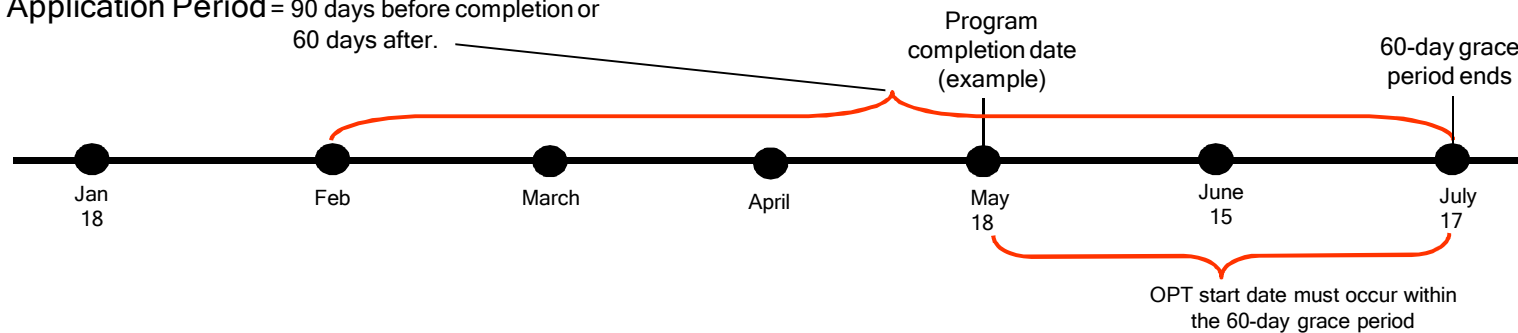
Academic Department	Student's UCB ID	-
	Expected Program Completion Date :	Level of Study: <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.
This section must be completed by your academic adviser.	Is the student registered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Has this student applied for filing fee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	For which type of OPT is the student applying? <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Completion <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Completion	
	If the student is requesting "pre-completion" OPT, has s/he completed all required courses? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Undergraduates = college adviser	"I hereby confirm that the information provided in this section is true and correct. I would like to recommend that this student be allowed to obtain Optional Practical Training in order to secure a position in his/her field of study."	
Graduates = faculty adviser	Comments:	
	Adviser's Name	Telephone
	Department	Email
	Signature	Date:

Was-sis-fst\Bio\SharedFiles\Students\F\OPT\OPT I-20 Request Form.doc



The OPT Application Timeline

OPT Application Period = 90 days before completion or
60 days after.



Points to Consider

- You can submit your application to the USCIS up to 90 days before the completion date of your program or during the 60-day grace period after completion
- If you leave the US during your 60-day grace period and you haven't applied for OPT, you lose your opportunity to apply for OPT
- The USCIS must receive your application no later than 30 days after your OPT I-20 has been issued or your application may be denied
- It can take 3 months or more to receive the EAD from the USCIS
- Your OPT start date can be no later than 60 days beyond your degree completion date
- You cannot start working until you have received the EAD and your start date is current
- If you receive the EAD before your start date has arrived, you cannot work until the start date (noted on the EAD).
- You cannot change your start date once the OPT I-20 has been mailed to the California Service Center.
- As long as you have applied for OPT, your F-1 status remains valid while you are waiting for the EAD even if there is a gap between your completion date and the start date of OPT. During this "gap," you can remain in the U.S. or travel abroad and re-enter as an F-1. More details on traveling while on OPT are discussed on pages 25-26

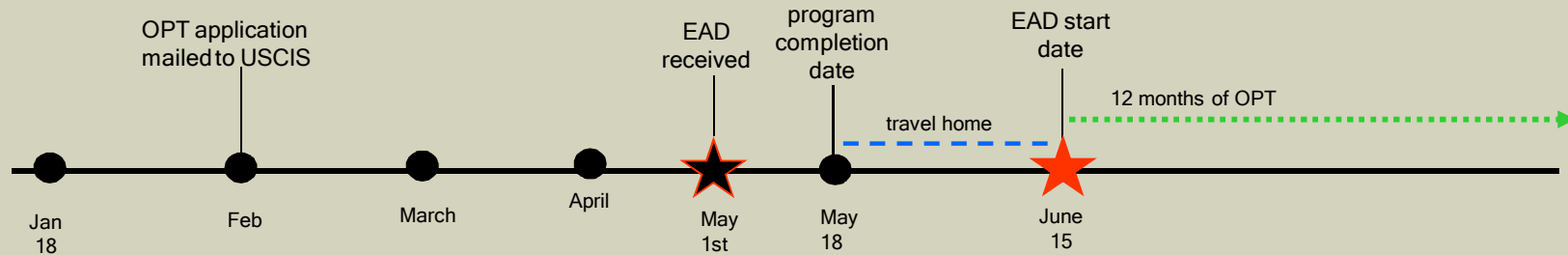
Timelines illustrating two common scenarios can be seen on the next page.



Choosing Authorization Dates --Typical Scenarios

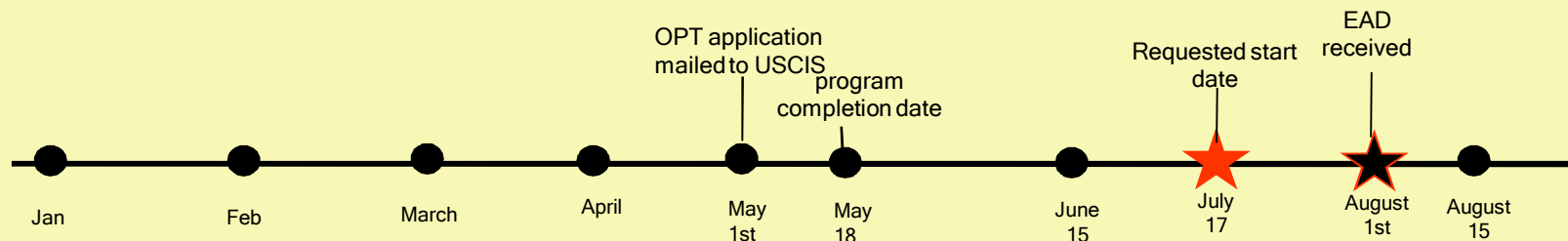
Scenario 1: *Student with a job offer submits her OPT application early*

On Feb. 18, Xingyuan mails her application for OPT to the USCIS. She is completing her program on May 18 and chooses June 15 as the OPT start date because she has a job offer beginning that day. She receives the EAD on May 1. Her employer is pleased to see proof of the work permission early even though she cannot start working until June 15, as noted on the EAD. Xingyuan decides to go home for one month to celebrate her program completion.



Scenario 2: *Student with no job offer submits his OPT application rather late*

George doesn't have a job offer or time to search for one until after he finishes school. He chooses the latest date possible to start his OPT--July 17 --- which is the 60th day after his completion on May 18. He knows that he will be legal to stay in the U.S. as long as he has submitted the OPT application on time. He finally mails his OPT application on May 1. On July 17, George still hasn't received his EAD, so he can't work. George receives his EAD on August 1 and it expires the following year on July 16. George has lost 13 days of his 12 month OPT because his application was approved after the latest available OPT start date.



Your OPT I-20

Three days after submitting your OPT Request Form to Berkeley International Office, you will get a new OPT I-20. This sample shows how your I-20 will be updated for OPT purposes.

Check It for Accuracy!

Page 1

When you pick up your OPT I-20, make sure to check the following items:

Item #4: The education level will be updated if you have changed it. This usually only happens when a Ph.D candidate decides to graduate with a Master's degree. If this is not accurate, contact BIO.

Item #5: The completion date will be updated to match the completion date on your OPT Request Form. It may look like it will expire soon, but don't worry --- the I-20 remains valid for the length of your OPT authorization period

This issue is important to note especially if you plan to travel abroad during your OPT period.

Item #10: Make sure the Adviser has signed it. Also, make sure the I-20 was issued less than 30 days in the past.


Item #11: Sign and date the I-20 after receiving it from Berkeley International Office.

I-20 Page 2: No Changes

This page of your I-20 will not change. It contains a description of the F-1 regulations affecting your stay in the U.S. You should have already read them at some point during your stay in the U.S. If not, it's never to late--read them now!

Please read Instructions on Page 2

This page must be completed and signed in the U.S. by a designated school official.

U.S. Department of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Service		Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status - For Academic and Language Students (OMB NO. 1115-0051)		Page 1
Please read Instructions on Page 2 This page must be completed and signed in the U.S. by a designated school official.			SEVIS	
1. Family Name (surname): your name here		For Immigration Official User		Student's Copy
First (given) Name: your name here Middle Name:				
Country of birth: your country of birth	Date of birth (mo/day/year):			
Country of citizenship: your country of citizenship	Admission number:			
2. School (School district) name: University of California at Berkeley University of California at Berkeley		Sample OPT I-20		
School Official to be notified of student's arrival in U.S. (Name and Title): David Brandt Student Affairs Officer				
School address (include zip code): Services for International Students and 2299 Piedmont Berkeley, CA 94720-2321				
School code (including 3-digit suffix, if any) and approval date: SFR214F00615000 approved on 01/27/2003				
3. This certificate is issued to the student named above for: Continued attendance at this school.		Visa issuing post		Date Visa Issued
4. Level of education the student is pursuing or will pursue in the United States: DOCTORATE		Reinstated, extension granted to:		
5. The student named above has been accepted for a full course of study at this school, majoring in Statistics, General . The student is expected to report to the school no later than 08/26/2002 and complete studies not later than 12/19/2006 . The normal length of study is 60 months.		8. This school has information showing the following as the student's means of support, estimated for an academic term of 12 months (Use the same number of months given in item 7).		
6. English proficiency: This school requires English proficiency. The student has the required English proficiency.		a. Student's personal funds \$ 0.00		
7. This school estimates the student's average costs for an academic term of 12 (up to 12) months to be:		b. Funds from this school \$ 32,673.00 Specify type: Assistantship		
a. Tuition and fees \$ 15,719.00		c. Funds from another source \$ 0.00 Specify type:		
b. Living expenses \$ 15,600.00		d. On-campus employment \$ 0.00		
c. Expenses of dependents (0) \$ 0.00		Total \$ 32,673.00		
d. Other (specify): \$ 0.00		9. Remarks:		
Total \$ 31,319.00				
10. School Certification: I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above in items 1 through 9 was completed 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; the student will be required to pursue a full course of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(b)(6); I am a designated official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.				
Name of School Official: BIO Adviser		Signature of Designated School Official: Student Affairs Officer		Date Issued: 05/04/2006
		Title: Berkeley, CA		Place Issued (city and state):
11. Student Certification: I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay as specified on page 2. 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 course of study at the school named on page 1 of this form. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records which is needed by the INS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status.				
Name of Student		Signature of Student		Date
Name of parent or guardian If student under 18		Signature of parent or guardian		Address (city) (State or Province) (Country) (Date)
Form I-20 A-B (Rev. 04-27-88)N				For Official Use Only Microfilm Index Number



Your OPT I-20

Page 3: Authorization Information and Travel Endorsement

On this page of your OPT I-20, you will see the following information:

- The authorization dates you have selected
- A statement indicating that you are eligible for OPT and you will work in a job related to your major
- This statement means if your application is approved after your requested OPT start date, your OPT expiration date will be no more than 14 months after your program completion date

▪ A new travel endorsement from the Berkeley International Adviser. Traveling while on OPT is allowed, with certain precautions. Details of travel-related issues are covered on pages 25-26 of this Guide.

Page 3

IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR F-1 NONIMMIGRANT STUDENT STATUS AND THE RELATING IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES, PLEASE CONTACT EITHER YOUR FOREIGN STUDENT ADVISOR ON CAMPUS OR A NEARBY IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE OFFICE.


FAMILYNAME: Student FIRST NAME: Joe
 Primary Major: 52.0299 Business Administration, Management and
 Student Employment Authorization:

Employment Status: **FULL TIME** Type: **OPT**
 Duration of Employment - From (Date): **03/24/2008** To (Date): **03/23/2009**
 Employer Name:
 Employer Location:

The Student has met the 1 full academic year requirement.
 Comments: **Student will pursue work related to Financial Engineering. If adjudication date is later, please adjust the dates to indicate adjudication date as the start date and 12 months later as the ending date not to exceed 14 months.**

SEVIS

Student's Copy



Event History
 Event Name: **Registration** Event Date: **04/25/2007**

Current Authorizations:
OPT Employment Approved Start Date: **03/24/2008** End Date: **03/23/2009**

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

Name of School: **Adviser** *Adviser* **International Student & Scholar Advisor** **05/14/2008** **Berkeley, CA**

Name of School Official	Signature of Designated School Official	Title	Date Issued	Place Issued (city and state)

Form I-20 A-B (Rev. 04-27-88)N



Step 2

Preparing and Mailing the Application

1. Gather the required materials
2. Complete the form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization
3. Mail your application package to the USCIS Service Center



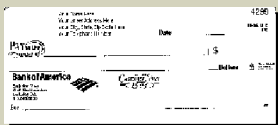
Gather the Required Application Materials

Photocopy each document for your own records.

\$340 Application Fee

Use a personal check or money order made payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security"

Make sure there is a name and address printed on the check (do not use the "temporary checks" often issued by the bank when you open a new account).



Form I-765

Pages 15-18 of this Guide will give you instructions on how to download and complete this form



Photocopy of Your OPT I-20

Include a copy of your new OPT I-20, pages 1 and 3.

Be sure to sign it before copying it.

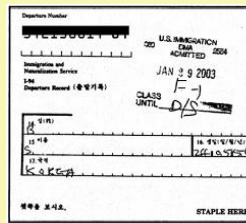
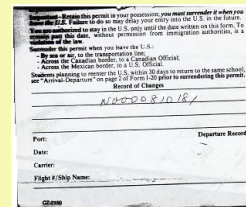
You will keep the original I-20 in your possession.



Photocopy of I-94

This small, white card is usually stapled into your passport.

Include a copy of both sides of the I-94, even though the back side may be blank.



Photocopy of Passport & Visa

Your passport biographical information page and F-1 visa stamp or copies of the front and back of past EAD cards.



2 Photos

OPT photos need to have certain specifications. See Page 19 of this Guide.

Write your name and I-94 number on the back of each photo in case they get separated from your application.



Form I-765: Application for Employment Authorization

The I-765 is the USCIS form you need to submit with your OPT application. A sample I-765 form is shown here.

The I-765 form can be downloaded from this USCIS link:
<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-765.pdf>

Important: You must always use the most current version of the I-765. It is best to download the I-765 right before you mail your application since the USCIS updates their forms frequently.

How to Complete the I-765

Completing the I-765 for OPT is a simple task, but a few items can be confusing. The next two pages will cover how to complete those "tricky" questions so that you can avoid any delays in receiving your work authorization.

OMB No. 1615-0040;
**I-765, Application For
Employment Authorization**

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

Do not write in this block.

Remarks	Action Block	Fee Stamp
A#		
Applicant is filing under §274a.12 _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved. Employment Authorized / Extended (<i>Circle One</i>) until _____ (Date). Subject to the following conditions: _____ (Date). Application Denied. <input type="checkbox"/> Failed to establish eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c). <input type="checkbox"/> Failed to establish economic necessity as required in 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) _____		Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation) _____
3. Address in the United States (Number and Street) _____ (Apt. Number) _____	12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S. (mm/dd/yyyy) _____	
(Town or City) _____ (State/Country) _____ (ZIP Code) _____	13. Place of Last Entry into the U.S. _____	
4. Country of Citizenship/Nationality _____		14. Manner of Last Entry (Visitor, Student, etc.) _____
5. Place of Birth (Town or City) _____ (State/Province) _____ (Country) _____	15. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.) _____	
6. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) _____	7. Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
8. Marital Status <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	16. Go to Part 2 of the Instructions, Eligibility Categories. In the space below, place the letter and number of the category you selected from the instructions (For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.). Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 () () ()	
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? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (If yes, complete below) <input type="checkbox"/> No		
17. If you entered the Eligibility Category, (c)(3)(C), in item 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: _____		

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 Instructions in **Part 2** and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in **Block 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		
			Rec'd	Sent	Approved	Denied	Returned




Completing the I-765

1. Please note the table at the top of the form where it says "Do not write in this block." You do not need to complete that area since it is reserved for the USCIS use only.

2. Check the box indicating that you are requesting "Permission to accept employment."

3. To get a close-up view of items 3-11 [click your mouse](#) now.

Items 3-11

Item #3: Address in the United States

The address you put here is where the EAD will be mailed. This address needs to be valid for at least 3 months, the length of time it may take to process your OPT application. If you think you might move in the months after you mail your application, use a reliable friend or family member's address to receive your EAD. (Click your mouse again to see how to complete #3 if you are using an alternative address. "C/O" means "in care of")

The address you put here must also be in California. If you are moving out of state, talk to an Adviser in Berkeley International Office about how to submit this application outside of California. The Berkeley International Office has direct contact with the California Service Center but cannot contact other centers directly.

Item #9: Social Security Number (SSN)

If you have never worked in the U.S., you may not yet have a SSN. If this is the case, you can leave this space blank. You will be able to apply for your SSN when you get the EAD.

Item #10: I-94 Number

On this item, you will use your current I-94 number. This is an 11-digit number found on the top left corner of your I-94 card (see sample on page 19). As an F-1, you will not have an Alien Registration Number.

Item #11: Previous Employment Authorization

Check "yes" if you have ever received an EAD. Fill in the next two lines (at the top of the right column—shown on next page) with the information related to that previous work permit. A photocopy of that EAD must be included with your application package. (If you have lost it, write "lost EAD" in this space).

If you have never had an EAD, check the "no" box here. If you have worked on campus or have used CPT, you will still check "no" here.

1. Name (Family Name in CAPS) (First)		(Middle)
<hr/>		
2. Other Names Used (Include Maiden Name)		
<hr/>		
3. Address in the United States (Number and Street)		(Apt. Number)
C/O John Smith, 2299 Piedmont Ave., #8		
(Town or City)	(State/Country)	(ZIP Code)
Berkeley, CA 94720		
4. Country of Citizenship/Nationality		
<hr/>		
5. Place of Birth (Town or City)	(State/Province)	(Country)
<hr/>		
6. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	7. Gender	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
<hr/>		
8. Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Single
	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorced
<hr/>		
9. Social Security Number (Include all numbers you have ever used) (if any)		
<hr/>		
10. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or I-94 Number (if any)		
<hr/>		
11. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (If yes, complete below)		<input type="checkbox"/> No



Completing the I-765

Items 12-17

Item #12: Date of Last Entry into the U.S.

This is the date of your most recent entry into the U.S. This entry date can be found stamped on your I-94 card.

Item #13: Place of Last Entry into the U.S.

This is the name of the city where you landed in the U.S. This information is also on the I-94 (usually as a code like "SFR" for San Francisco). If you drove across from Canada or Mexico, write the name and the city where you entered in the blank.

Item #14: Manner of Last Entry

This is the status you had upon entering the U.S. For example, you may have initially entered with an H-1B work visa

Item #15: Current Immigration Status

Your current status should be F-1 student. If not, talk to an Adviser in Berkeley International Office immediately.

Item #16: Eligibility Category

Use the following codes depending on the type of OPT you are requesting:

(c)(3)(A) Pre-Completion OPT

(c)(3)(B) Post-Completion OPT (see sample here)

Please note : the code *(c)(3)(C)* should only be used for 17-month STEM Extensions of OPT for eligible students. You can apply for the STEM Extension only after your 12-month OPT EAD has been issued.

Item #17: 17-Month Extension

Only those individuals who are eligible for the 17-month extension need to complete this section. If you entered *(c)(3)(A)* or *(c)(3)(B)* on item #16, you are not required to fill out this item.

Which USCIS Office?

Date(s)

Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation)

12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S. (mm/dd/yyyy)

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

14. Manner of Last Entry (Visitor, Student, etc.)

15. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.)

16. Go to **Part 2** of the Instructions, Eligibility Categories. In the space below, place the letter and number of the category you selected from the instructions (For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.).

Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (**C**) (**3**) (**B**)

17. If you entered the Eligibility Category, (c)(3)(C), in item 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 _____



Finishing the I-765

Sign your name, fill in your telephone number and the date of your signature at the bottom of the form.

****Please note that your signature must fit between the lines on the form. If your signature is too big, your application will be returned to you and delay your work permission. Be conservative and use a signature smaller than your normal handwriting.**

If You Get a "Request for Evidence (RFE)"

We strongly advise you to see an adviser at Berkeley International Office if you receive an RFE. In most cases, the USCIS will not call you at the telephone number you put on the I-765. If there is a problem with your application, they will send you a notice by mail called the Request for Evidence (RFE).+ An RFE does not mean that your application has been rejected. It simply means that you need to send in additional documents before your EAD can be issued. Please note the deadline to respond to the RFE. If you fail to meet this deadline, your application will be automatically canceled.

Getting an RFE will delay the processing of your application for OPT usually by about one month. For this reason, it is important to make sure that you have completed the I-765 correctly and sent the proper documents to the USCIS.

OMB No. 1615-0040;
**I-765, Application For
Employment Authorization**

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

Do not write in this block.

Remarks	Action Block	Fee Stamp
A#		
Applicant is filing under §274a.12 _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved. Employment Authorized / Extended (<i>Circle One</i>) until _____ (Date). Subject to the following conditions: _____ (Date). Application Denied. <input type="checkbox"/> Failed to establish eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c). <input type="checkbox"/> Failed to establish economic necessity as required in 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) Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation)

3. Address in the United States (Number and Street) (Apt. Number) 12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S. (mm/dd/yyyy)

(Town or City) (State/Country) (ZIP Code) 13. Place of Last Entry into the U.S.

4. Country of Citizenship/Nationality 14. Manner of Last Entry (Visitor, Student, etc.)

5. Place of Birth (Town or City) (State/Province) (Country) 15. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.)

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 (If yes, complete below) No

16. Go to Part 2 of the Instructions, Eligibility Categories. In the space below, place the letter and number of the category you selected from the instructions (For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.).
 Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 () () ()

17. If you entered the Eligibility Category, (c)(3)(C), in item 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: _____

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 Instructions in Part 2 and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Block 16.

Signature _____ Telephone Number _____ Date _____
Your Signature Your Telephone Number The 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		
			Rec'd	Sent	Approved	Denied	Returned





Photo Specifications

The photos you are required to use for the OPT application must meet the specifications of U.S.-style passport photos. To see a full description of these specifications, go to the [U.S. Department of State](http://www.state.gov) web site.

Most places that take passport photos are already familiar with the specifications. However, you may want to print this page, or the pages from the web site above to take with you when you get your photo taken.

Frequently Asked Questions

What type of paper are the photographs to be printed on?
The photos should be printed on thin photo-quality paper.

Do the photos have to be in color?
Yes, the photos must be in color.

How big must the photos be?
The photos must measure exactly 2 inches by 2 inches.

Can hats or religious headgear be worn for the photo?
Unless worn daily for religious reasons, all hats or headgear should be removed for the photo. In all cases, no item or attire should cover or otherwise obscure any part of the face.

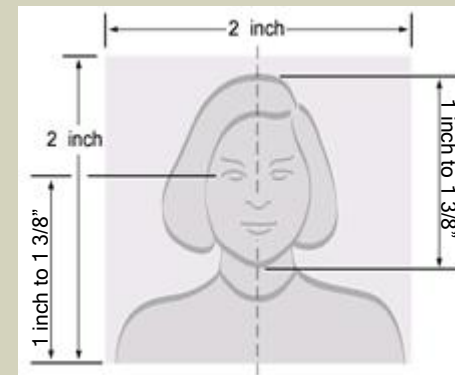
Can eyeglasses be worn for the photo?
Eyeglasses worn on a daily basis can be worn for the photo. However, there should be no reflections from the eyeglasses that obscures the eyes. Dark glasses or nonprescription glasses with tinted lenses are not acceptable unless you need them for medical reasons.



A well-composed photo

7 Steps to Successful Photos:

1. Your photo should show your full face, front view, eyes open.
2. Make sure the photo shows your full head from top of hair to bottom of chin; height of head should measure 1 inch to 1-3/8 inches (25 mm to 35 mm).
3. Your head should be centered head within frame
4. Make sure eye height is between 1-1/8 inches to 1-3/8 inches (28 mm and 35 mm) from bottom of photo
5. The background should be plain white or off-white.
6. There should be no distracting shadows on the face or in the background
7. Make sure you have a natural expression



Write your name and I-94 number *lightly* on the back of each photo in case they get separated from your application.



Preparing and Mailing the OPT Application: Mailing Options

Express Mail (Federal Express)

If you use express mail, use the express mail (courier) address at the USCIS, which is different from the regular mail address (see next page). Federal Express mail service costs about \$10. We recommend Federal Express as the best, most reliable option.

Certified Mail / Return Receipt

"Certified Mail / return receipt" service is available through the U.S. Postal Service. You can request this service at the post office and pay a minimal fee (approx. \$2). With certified mail, you will get a receipt showing what date the USCIS got your application.

A sample of the Certified Mail form and receipt is shown here.

In some cases, it may take up to 10 days for your application sent through the U.S. Postal Service to be officially received.

E-Filing your OPT Application

Currently, it is not possible to E-File OPT applications.

SENDER: COMPLETE THIS SECTION

- Complete items 1, 2, and 3. Also complete item 4 if Restricted Delivery is desired.
- Print your name and address on the reverse so that we can return the card to you.
- Attach this card to the back of the mailpiece, or on the front if space permits.

1. Article/Item Description

USCIS Service Center
P.O. Box 10765
Laguna Niguel, CA

92607-1076

2. Article Number (Manufacturer's service label)

PS Form 3811, March 2001

COMPLETE THIS SECTION ON DELIVERY

4. Return to (by previous First-Class) 5. Date of Delivery

6. Signature

Agent
 Addressee

7. Is delivery address different from item 1? IF YES, enter delivery address below

Yes
 No

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

First-Class Mail
Postage & Fees Paid
USPS
Permit No. G-10

* Sender: Please print your name, address, and ZIP+4 in this box *

Joe Kwon
123 Main Street
Berkeley, CA 94720

**U.S. Postal Service
CERTIFIED MAIL RECEIPT**
(Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)

OFFICIAL USE

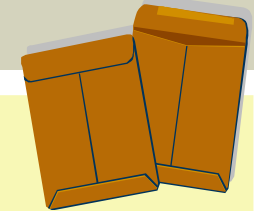
Postage \$
Certified Fee
Return Receipt Fee (Insurance Required)
Registered Delivery Fee (Insurance Required)
Total Postage & Fees \$

Serial, ZIP+4, or PO Box No.
City, State, ZIP+4

PS Form 3811, January 2001



Mailing Your Application: Final Review Before Mailing



Checklist Review

Put the following items in an 8.5" x 11" envelope and mail them to one of the USCIS address noted here.

- Check for \$340 made payable to the "U.S. Department of Homeland Security."
- Form I-765 (original)
- Photocopy of OPT I-20 (page 1-3). Don't forget to sign it!
- Photocopy of I-94 card (both sides)
- Photocopy of previous EAD, if applicable
- Photocopy of your passport biographical page and F-1 visa stamp (if you have one)
- 2 Passport Photos (with name and I-94# printed lightly on back with pencil)

Application Deadline

The USCIS must receive your application no later than 30 days after your OPT I-20 has been issued. The issue date is located next to the Adviser's signature on Page 1 of the OPT I-120. Please account for mailing time.

USCIS Mailing Addresses

- ✓ For Express Mail:

**California Service Center
24000 Avila Road, 2nd Floor,
Room 2312
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677**

- ✓ For Regular or Certified Mail:

**USCIS Service Center
P.O. Box 10765
Laguna Niguel, CA
92607-1076**



Step 3

Receiving Your EAD

1. The Notice of Action from USCIS
2. Traveling Abroad on OPT
3. Applying for a Visa
4. Frequently Asked Questions



The Notice of Action

This is your OPT application receipt from USCIS. It normally takes about 2 to 6 weeks to get it in the mail.

The Notice of Action is a very important document. You will need it to inquire about the status of your OPT application and for travel outside the U.S. If you lose the receipt, there is no way to replace it.

[Click your mouse to zoom in](#)

The "Receipt Number"

This is your case number at the USCIS. You can check the status of your case online through the USCIS web site at www.uscis.gov under "Case Status Online."

If you do not get your Notice of Action within 6 weeks after mailing your application to the USCIS, contact an Adviser in Berkeley International Office for instructions

The Received Date

This is the date when the USCIS begins processing your application. It may not be the actual date they received your application but it is when your case was entered into the system.

The Notice Date

This is the date your Notice of Action was produced.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		
Receipt Number: WAC-07-103-50387		APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION
RECEIVED DATE February 1, 2007	PRIORITY DATE	APPLICANT Your Name Here
NOTICE DATE February 15, 2007	PAGE	
Your Name Your Street Address Your City, State and ZIP		Notice Type: Receipt Notice Amount received: \$180 Class Requested: C031



Traveling Abroad on OPT

Since you will remain in F-1 status during your 12-month OPT authorization period, traveling abroad and re-entering the U.S. as an F-1 is allowed (In fact, if you re-enter in a status other than F-1, you will lose your OPT eligibility). However, be aware that any time you leave the U.S. , there is no guarantee that you will be allowed to re-enter. Being denied entry is more probable for some people than others, although in general, UC Berkeley students have not reported problems. To avoid problems, make sure you have the proper documents as listed here.

Documents Required For Re-entry to the U.S.

The travel documents you will need depend on the timing of your re-entry to the U.S.:

✓ **Before** Completing Your Program
and

✓ **Before** Getting Your EAD

- A valid passport
- a valid F-1 visa stamp
- Your OPT I-20 with a valid travel endorsement signed on page 3 by an Adviser at Berkeley International Office. The travel endorsement is valid for 6 months while on OPT
- The OPT receipt- Notice of Action
- Evidence of continued enrollment (e.g. print-out from Bear Facts)
- Evidence of financial support for the OPT period is strongly recommended (such as a bank statement or letter from sponsor or employer)

✓ **After** Completing Your Program
and

✓ **Before** Getting Your EAD

- A valid passport
- A valid F-1 visa stamp
- Your OPT I-20 with a valid travel endorsement signed on page 3 by an Adviser at Berkeley International Office. The travel endorsement is valid for 6 months while on OPT
- The OPT receipt- Notice of Action
- Evidence of financial support for the OPT period is strongly recommended (such as a bank statement or letter from sponsor or employer)
- If you have employment, a job offer letter from the employer is strongly recommended.

✓ **After** Completing Your Program
and

✓ **After** Getting Your EAD

- A valid passport
- A valid F-1 visa stamp
- Your OPT I-20 with a valid travel endorsement signed on page 3 by an Adviser at Berkeley International Office. The travel endorsement is valid for 6 months while on OPT
- The EAD (Employment Authorization Document)
- Evidence of financial support for the OPT period is strongly recommended (such as a bank statement or letter from sponsor or employer)
- A job offer letter is required.



Frequently Asked Questions

How can I know the status of my OPT application? As soon as you have your Notice of Action, check the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov and click on the "Case Status Online" button. The main information you can get from this is whether your application has been approved yet or is still in process. The processing time indicated is a standard message that often has no connection with actual processing times.

When will I get my EAD? The USCIS will mail the EAD to you at the address you gave on the I-765 form. It should arrive approximately three to five months from the "received" date indicated on the USCIS "Notice of Action."

I never received a "Notice of Action." The USCIS usually sends this within two to six weeks of their receipt of the EAD application. If you have not received the Notice of Action after this time, check your bank account to see if USCIS cashed your check. If so, you can request a copy of the check from your bank that should have your USCIS tracking number printed on it (ten digits beginning with "WAC..."). Keep in mind that it may take up to two weeks to get a copy from the bank. Check the status of your application online at www.uscis.gov with the WAC

How do I contact the USCIS? The number on the Notice of Action (1-800-375-5283) is the National Customer Service line. Be sure to have your "WAC" receipt number ready before you call. Inquiries through the National Customer Service line may delay the processing of your application. Contact an Advisor at BIO first.

Is there any way to change the information on the EAD application (address, dates, etc.) once I have mailed the application? After you have mailed your application to USCIS no changes can be made except for address updates. If you change your address while your application is pending, contact Berkeley International Office for instructions. You will need your Notice of Action receipt number.

How long can I stay in the US after the end date of my OPT? You have 60 days after your OPT ends to leave the US, request a transfer of your I-20, or change your status. You cannot work.

Does my wife or kids get a new OPT I-20 too? When your new OPT I-20 is printed, you should also get an I-20 for your family members with the updated information on it. If you did not receive OPT I-20s for your family, contact Berkeley International Office.

90 days have passed since the Notice of Action receipt date. What can I do? First, verify your case status at www.uscis.gov. If your EAD application has been approved you will need to wait until the card arrives (2-4 weeks after it is approved). If the application is still pending, see an Adviser at Berkeley International Office.

USCIS said that my EAD was approved, but I have not received it yet - can I start working? No. Employers are required to verify that you are eligible to work before they can put you on payroll. You must be able to show them the EAD when you begin employment.

USCIS said that my application was approved over six weeks ago and I still haven't received it. Is there a problem? There may be. Have you moved? If so, did you update your OPT address? See an Adviser at Berkeley International Office for more information.

How do I get an extension of my EAD? Only students who have completed certain STEM majors and have an employer who is enrolled in E-Verify are eligible for [17 Month Extension OPT](#).

Lost my EAD. How can I get it replaced? If you lose your EAD the only way to replace it is with a new EAD application. The process requires the same items as the initial application to USCIS (fee, photos, forms, etc.) and will take three to five months. It is impossible to replace an EAD if you are outside the U.S.

My EAD says "not valid for re-entry" on it. Does that mean I cannot travel abroad and re-enter on OPT? All EADs are marked with this notation. It simply means that you must carry other documents to show proof of your eligibility to re-enter the U.S. such as your I-12 and valid F-1 visa stamp. The EAD alone is not enough to re-enter the U.S.



Frequently Asked Questions

What counts as employment? Immigration has provided many options to satisfy the employment requirement including paid, unpaid, and volunteer work related to your field of study. Please see the Berkeley International Office website's [Qualifying OPT Employment site](#) for more information.

Is there a minimum number of hours I need to work? There is no minimum for students on Pre-Completion OPT. All students on Post-Completion OPT, whether they have completed their degree or not, are required to work 20 hours per week. Students who do not work an average of 20 hours per week are not meeting the employment requirement.

I have been unemployed for 80 days. What is going to happen on the 90th day?

If you accumulate 90 days or more of unemployment, you are in violation of status which may affect your ability to travel in and out of the US in F-1 status, future immigration benefits, and change of status applications.

To avoid the status violation, you may do one of the following before the 90th day:

1. Secure unpaid or volunteer work related to your field of study at least 20 hours per week;
2. Request a 'transfer out' of your I-20 to a new school;
3. Leave the US and report your departure date at

<http://ssu.berkeley.edu>

For more information on the 90 day unemployment rule, please see [OPT Unemployment Allowances](#) on the Berkeley International Office website.

Do I need a Social Security Number to work in the US? Yes. If you plan to work in the U.S. you will need a valid Social Security Number (SSN). To apply, please obtain instructions and directions to the Social Security Office from Berkeley International Office. The Social Security Administration will process your application and mail your Social Security number to you.

Do I need to complete any forms with my employer to begin working? Yes. Within the first three days of beginning work you and your employer must complete a form entitled Employment Eligibility Verification (Form I-9). This form will be kept on file by your employer and must be updated each time you receive a renewal of your work permission. Your employer will provide this form and assist you in its completion.

Can I change employers while on OPT? Yes. OPT work authorization is not job-specific. Therefore, you may change employers, or have multiple employers at the same time, provided that each position is directly related to your major field of study and commensurate with your educational level. You will need to update the employer information with Berkeley International Office within 10 days of the change at <http://ssu.berkeley.edu/>

Do I pay taxes while working on OPT? Students in F-1 status are subject to all federal, state and local taxes that may apply. Check the IRS' web site, www.irs.gov for tax information and to see if your country is one of the few that has a tax treaty with the US allowing students to exclude a limited amount of earned income from federal taxation.

In general, however, F-1 students who have been present in the US for no more than five calendar years are exempt from Social Security (FICA) and Medicare taxes. Be sure to bring this to the attention of your employer, as many employers are unfamiliar with this provision of the tax laws. See publication 519 available for download from the IRS web site www.irs.gov for information on how to claim salary incorrectly deducted for FICA or Medicare.



Frequently Asked Questions - Working on OPT

What if I am not able to complete my degree program by the completion date noted on the OPT I-20? If your application has not been adjudicated, you can withdraw your OPT and request a program extension of your I-20. Your fee will not be refunded.

If you are an undergraduate student: You must extend your I-20 end date if you still have course work to complete. Your OPT will be limited to part time during the semester until you finish your degree. You are still held to the 90 day unemployment rule. See an Adviser at Berkeley International Office before that completion date has passed.

If you are a graduate student: Graduate students finishing their dissertation or thesis cannot change their program end date. They are eligible to work full time before filing and are held to the 90 day unemployment rule. It is important that the student finish their degree before their OPT ends.

What status do I have between my degree completion date and the start of my OPT (EAD start date)? If you have chosen a start date well after your degree completion date, you will still remain in F-1 status. Even though there seems to be a gap in your status, you are still legally allowed to remain in the U.S. or re-enter the U.S. from abroad during this time.

Can I go to school while on OPT? Time spent going to school should only be an incidental part of your stay in the U.S. If you decide to go back to school full-time, you must get a new I-20 from the school and forfeit the remainder of your OPT time. See an Adviser at Berkeley International Office or at your new school if you are considering this option.

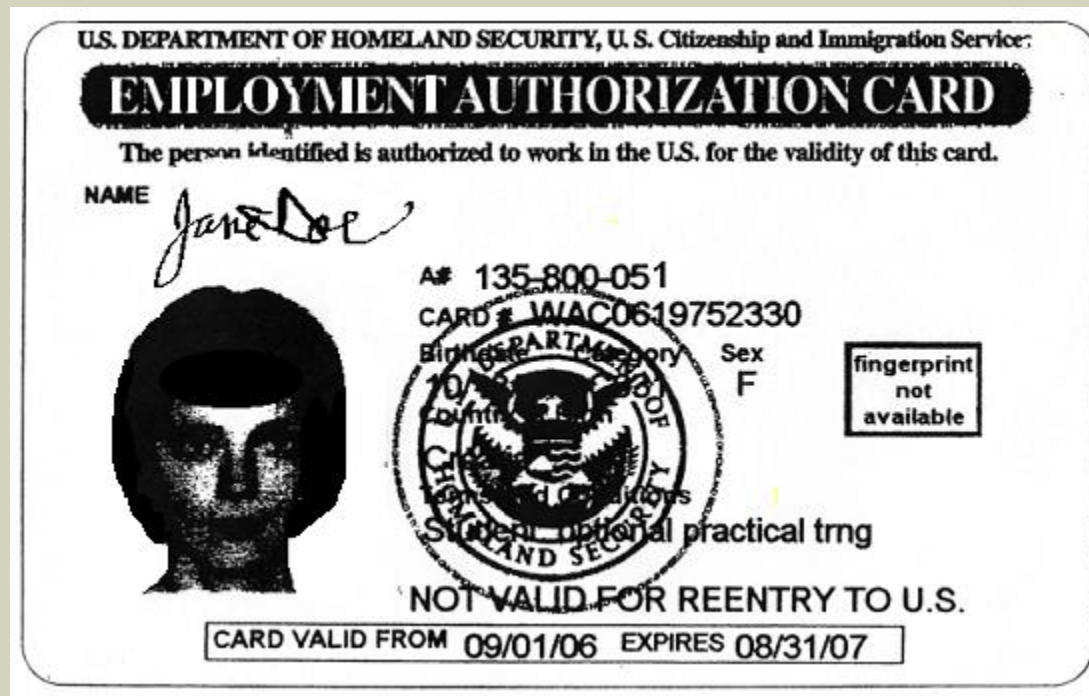
Do I need to do anything with the Berkeley International Office while on OPT? Yes. As a condition of your F-1 status, all students must report any changes in address and employment information on the following website within 10 days of any changes: <http://ssu.berkeley.edu/>

Can I start working without pay while waiting for my EAD? This is generally not a good idea. The USCIS may see it as "employment without authorization" and is a risky situation for you and your employer.

Does my visa need to be valid while on OPT? Your visa only needs to be valid to re-enter the U.S. from abroad. Thus, if it expires while you are still in the U.S., there is no problem. Your *F-1 immigration status* remains valid as long as you have an EAD that has not expired.



The Employment Authorization Document (EAD)



Reporting Requirements on OPT

The following information must be reported to Berkeley International Office at <http://ssu.berkeley.edu> during the OPT period of authorization:

- Your Name
- Your Residential address
- Your Phone and email address
- Employer name
- Employer address
- Start Date of Employment
- More than 10 days of unemployment (During the initial 12-month OPT, students may not accrue a cumulative total of more than 90 days of unemployment. Periods of up to 10 days between the end of one job and the beginning of the next job will not be included in the calculation for the time spent unemployed.)
- Date of exiting the U.S (You need to provide date of exit if you decide to exit the U.S and complete your OPT status prior to the end date of your OPT)

You will also be required to update this information within **10 working days of any changes.**

