12-MONTH OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING TUTORIAL
WHAT IS OPT?

- Authorization given by USCIS to work up to 12 months in a field directly related to your degree.

- Employment must be full-time (more than 20 hours a week).

- Employment must be commensurate with degree level, for example if you received your Master’s degree then you should apply for a job where a Master’s is strongly desired.

- During OPT you are still an F-1 student and your status is monitored by OISS.
AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

- Must be in F-1 status at time of application
- Completed 1 full academic year (3 consecutive quarters at UCSB).
- Have not been approved for OPT at current education level.
- Have not completed one year (365 days) of full time Curricular Practical Training (CPT).
TIMELINES

• Allowed to apply 90 days before the end of your program.
• USCIS takes 120 days or more to review and approve application. OISS cannot request expedited review of your application.
• OPT start date must fall within 60 day grace period following completion of program.
• 60 day grace period allowed after successful completion of OPT.
TIMELINE (cont.)

OPT Application Timeline

- Degree completion date or graduation date

- Students may apply for OPT
  - 90 days

- Students may start OPT
  - 60 days

Questions? Visit oiss.ucsb.edu
WHAT SHOULD I PROVIDE TO OISS TO APPLY FOR OPT?

- OISS OPT Request Form
  [http://oiss.sa.ucsb.edu/forms](http://oiss.sa.ucsb.edu/forms)
- Form I-765
  [https://www.uscis.gov/i-765](https://www.uscis.gov/i-765)
- I-94 print out
  [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home)
- G-1145
  [https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145](https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145)
- OISS Processing Fee receipt

Questions? Visit [oiss.ucsb.edu](http://oiss.ucsb.edu)
OISS OPT REQUEST FORM

Your proposed practical training start date should be within 60 days of your end date. For example, if your program end date is June 30, your start date should be within 60 days of that date.
Students cannot work beyond the end date of your I-20.

For graduate students, it is the date indicated in this section on the request form.

For Graduate Student Advisors
Date of Defense or Final Exam: ____________ (The I-20 will be shortened to this date. Graduate students CANNOT be employed on or off campus beyond this date until OPT authorization is approved)
Your advisor must complete the Advisor Certification portion of the request form, including the expected program completion date.

Program completion date: For undergraduates, this is the last day of the quarter you will graduate.

Advisor Signature
Undergraduates: College Advisor
Graduates: Academic Department

Questions? Visit oiss.ucsb.edu
The Form I-765 was updated on July 16, 2018. It is now 7 pages instead of 2 pages. OISS Staff have updated information on the OPT Tutorial to help guide you through completing the new form. Please note that the guidance provided within this tutorial is an interpretation of the instructions published within the USCIS Instructions for Form I-765. As information provided in the tutorial is a supplement we have created to answer any questions that may arise while completing the Form I-765, we urge all students to also review the guidance provided by USCIS: https://www.uscis.gov/i-765.
FORM I-765

All information must be typed on a computer!

START HERE - Type or print in black ink.

Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select only one box):

1.a. ☒ Initial permission to accept employment.
1.b. ☐ Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) error.

NOTE: Replacement (correction) of an employment authorization document due to USCIS error does not require a new Form I-765 and filing fee. Refer to Replacement for Card Error in the What is the Filing Fee section of the Form I-765 Instructions for further details.

1.c. ☐ Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)

Enter your name exactly as it appears on the biographical page of your passport.

Part 2. Information About You

Your Full Legal Name

1.a. Family Name
   (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name
   (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name
Use a mailing address where you know you can receive mail for **at least 6 months after submitting your application**. If you are using a friend or family address, you will type their name in the “In Care of Name” field.

Mailing address may not be the same as your physical address (if you are using a friend or family mailing address). Physical address is where you live in Santa Barbara.
Note About Mailing Address:

It is important to note that the mailing address you indicate on this application is where all your important documents will be mailed. This includes your Employment Authorization Document (EAD Card) and Social Security Card (if you opted to receive one). If you are using your current mailing address, please make sure that you are staying in that home for at least 6 months after submitting your application to USCIS.

If you are using a friend or family mailing address, you will want a trusted individual who will look out for your important mail! They should write your name on a card taped to the inside of the mailbox so the mail carrier sees you can receive mail at their home.

Not sure about your future mailing address? You may want to look at a Post Office Box, some are available at the Ucen: http://www.ucen.ucsb.edu/services/post-office
8. / 9. If you do NOT have an alien registration number or a USCIS Online Account Number, leave these blank.

12. Only select yes if you have done OPT or applied for an EAD card in the past.

13.a Only select yes if you have ever been issued a Social Security Card and enter your number in 13b.

14. Select yes if you need a Social Security Number. Select no if you already have one.
Fill this out only if you need a Social Security Number

List all countries of which you are a citizen
### FORM I-765 (cont.)

Your I-94 record can be obtained at: [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94)

This information can be obtained by clicking your travel history on your I-94 record.
The Eligibility Category for all 12-Month OPT Applicants is (c) (3) (B)

Leave these fields blank!
Your signature must not touch any part of the box outline. The signature must be in black ink and cannot be an electronic signature.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant's Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.a. Applicant's Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.b. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE TO ALL APPLICANTS: If you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents listed in the instructions, USCIS may deny your application.

Questions? Visit oiss.ucsb.edu
B. Post-Completion OPT--(c)(3)(B). File Form I-765 up to 90 days before, but no later than 60 days after, your program end date. Use Part 6. Additional Information to provide all previously used SEVIS numbers and evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.

Use Page 7 to:

- Write any information that does not fit in the spaces provided on Pages 1-6. Reference page number, part number and item number then write the information in section d.

- Provide any previous SEVIS ID numbers (From the I-20 or DS-2019 that you have previously held).

- Any previous CPT (full or part-time) or OPT that you have used and the academic level at which you used it (Bachelor, Masters or Doctorate). Make sure you attach copies of the corresponding I-20’s/EAD cards to your application.

- UCSB only has access to SEVIS ID’s for UCSB students. If you attended another school and do not have the required information you may need to contact your previous schools for information or documents.
CHECK OR MONEY ORDER

• Be sure to make check out to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”
• Your name should be written on the top of the check
• Write your SEVIS ID number in the memo portion of the check
• Don’t forget to sign the bottom right of the check!
CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

• If you would rather pay with a credit card, USCIS does offer that option. Please note that they may only try to charge your card one time. If they are unsuccessful they may reject your application.
• It is important that you know your card can be processed in the United States and you have enough money to cover the full $410.
• You must include a G-1450 with your application, make sure you read the instructions carefully. Do NOT send your physical card in your application.
• https://www.uscis.gov/forms/fingerprints/pay-a-credit-card
PHOTOS

• Two identical passport photographs
• Meet U.S. standards (2 inches x 2 inches)
• Photo of applicant only
• Taken within 30 days of application – do not use old photos!
• VERY lightly print your name on the back of each (damaged photos will not be accepted by USCIS)
Be sure to use your personal email address, not your UCSB school email address.
WHAT SHOULD YOUR APPLICATION TO USCIS INCLUDE?

Your application mailed to USCIS should include the following documents in this exact order:

- Paperclip Check (or G-1450 if paying by credit card) and Photos to front of packet
- Form G-1145
- Form I-765
- Copy of passport biographical page
- Copy of F-1 visa (for those that have a physical visa)
- Copy of I-94 printout
- Photocopy of OPT I-20, signed and dated on bottom of page 1
- Copies of all previous EAD cards, CPT I-20's and OPT I-20's if applicable
- 2 U.S. passport size photos taken within 30 days of applying
PENDING EAD APPROVAL

• Patience is your best friend!
• You are still in F-1 student status.
• Allowed (and strongly recommended) to stay in the United States with pending OPT application.
• May take around 120 days for USCIS to approve EAD.
• You can check status of application at www.uscis.gov.
• You cannot work while you wait for approval, forced vacation!
• If your expected program completion date is delayed, you may lose time authorized for OPT. Please see OISS immediately if your graduation will be delayed!

Questions? Visit oiss.ucsb.edu
• Make note of your receipt number— you can use this to track your application’s progress at www.uscis.gov.

• Receipt number will usually start with PSC.
WITHDRAWING OPT

• If you want to withdrawal your OPT application after submission to USCIS, you must withdrawal with a written letter to USCIS
• Once your EAD has been approved it is not possible to withdrawal OPT and you will have used OPT at this education level.
• If you are thinking of withdrawing your OPT, please contact OISS immediately!

Questions? Visit oiss.ucsb.edu
EAD APPROVAL

- You will receive an EAD card that will include your valid employment start and end dates.
- You are still on F-1 student status.
- You cannot enroll as a full-time student while on OPT except for classes recreational in nature.
- You have an aggregate of 90 days from the start date of the EAD card to find a job. If you do not, you may violate your status.
- If you have not used all 90 days of unemployment, you have a 60-day grace period after your EAD card expires to prepare to go home, transfer to a new school, or apply for a change of visa status.
Check card for accuracy!
In order to report updates to your address and employment, you will utilize the SEVP OPT Portal. Access to the SEVP OPT Portal is granted upon approval of your OPT application by USCIS. **All reporting is required within 10 days of the change.**

You will receive an email with instructions on creating a portal account. This email will come from do-not-reply.sevp@ice.dhs.gov. If you do not see the email, check your spam or junk mail folder. If you still do not see it, contact OISS to have the email sent again. You must activate your SEVP Portal within 15 days.

Please note SEVP will never request payment for using the OPT Portal, so please report any suspicious activity to OISS.

Once you have entered your employment information in the SEVP OPT Portal, please send an e-mail to OISS at: OISS@sa.ucsb.edu to let us know so that we can review and print your new I-20 showing your OPT employer.

Additional information regarding the SEVP OPT Portal can be found at: https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help
Any of the following is required to be reported directly to OISS:

- Change in name
- Early Completion of OPT
- Enrolling in a new degree program or transfer to another academic program
- Deciding to return home early
TRAVEL

• Traveling outside the United States while your OPT application is being reviewed is strongly discouraged
• If you need to renew your visa while on OPT, please consult OISS before applying
• Once approved for OPT, you can travel outside the United States with the following:
  ✓ Valid Passport
  ✓ Valid F-1 visa
  ✓ OPT I-20 with employer information and travel signature on page 2
  ✓ Valid EAD card
  ✓ Offer letter or employer verification letter
EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS

- Full-time employment is required while on OPT which is defined over 20 hours per week
- Employment can be paid or unpaid
- You may work for multiple employers but all employment must relate to your UCSB degree
## Acceptable Types of Employment While On OPT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Employer</td>
<td>Most common employment where you work for one company for 40 hours a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Employers</td>
<td>Student allowed to work for multiple employers but all employment must relate to UCSB degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple short-term employers (gigs for performing artists)</td>
<td>You should maintain a list of all gigs including dates and duration of gig (gigs should add up to over 20 hours per week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>Strongly recommended student work with a lawyer when setting up their own business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temp agency</td>
<td>Allowed but need to ensure working over 20 hours a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid/Internships</td>
<td>Check with the Human Resources department at company before accepting unpaid positions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXAMPLES OF DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEGREE AND EMPLOYMENT

• Bachelor’s Degree in Electrical Engineering: I work full time as an Electrical Engineer at ABC Corp., a government contractor. In my job, I analyze client requirements for electrical systems and provide them with cost estimates of such systems. My work requires understanding of electrical circuit theory, which I studied in-depth at the University of ABC.

• Bachelor’s Degree in Business: I work full time as a Loan Officer at a mortgage company, Happy Homes, where I meet with clients and evaluate, authorize and recommend approval of loan applications. On a daily basis, I use the knowledge gained in my credit analysis, sales and marketing classes that I took as part of my major program of study.

EXAMPLES OF DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEGREE AND EMPLOYMENT

• Master’s Degree in Music: I am working at a hospital playing the harp in patient rooms. I also conduct hands-on harp beginner workshops for long-term patients. On average, I work at the hospital 35 hours a week. My duties directly utilize the skills and knowledge I acquired from my coursework and degree in music therapy.

• PhD in Computer Science: I am employed as a Computer and Information Research Scientist at ABC Research Institute. I work as part of a team of scientists and engineers that designs experiments to test the operation of various software systems. My work builds on research in complex algorithms and machine learning, which I studied as part of my dissertation.

24-month extension possible for graduates with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields) as long as the following are met:

✓ Degree must be on the current STEM Designated Degree Program List (available at www.ice.gov/sevis)
✓ Student’s employer must be registered in E-Verify program (www.uscis.gov/everify).
✓ Employer must agree to the terms listed on the Form I-983

Application for 24-month extension must be filed within **90 days before** the expiration date of the current OPT employment authorization.

Instructions for applying can be found on our website:
http://oiss.sa.ucsb.edu/students/opt/stem-extension
STAY CONNECTED!

• SOCIAL MEDIA!
  Facebook
  Instagram
  Twitter

• Walk-In Advising!
  (Check website for hours)

• Email: OISS@sa.ucsb.edu