OPT PRESENTATION

February 13, 2024

Off Campus Employment -OPT

- To be eligible a student must be in good academic standing.

- Have been registered and in valid F-1 status with a Howard I-20.

- Student must have completed all course work, including comprehensive exams.

- Employment must be related to the student's field of study

Off Campus Employment -OPT

If you are an F-1 student who wants to apply for OPT, you must:

- Request that your designated school official (DSO) at your academic institution recommend the OPT.

- Your DSO will make the recommendation by endorsing your Form I-20 and making the appropriate notation in SEVIS

- Properly file [Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#) with USCIS, accompanied by the required fee and the supporting documentation

STEPS TO APPLY

1. Complete the Howard application form and return it to the OIS. The application can be picked up in our office or we can email it to you.

2. Wait until you receive an I-20 from OIS with the recommended OPT dates.

3. Once you have received the I-20, you can apply online via the USCIS website.

4. You will need to complete the form I-765, upload all of the requested documents and pay the application fee.

What needs to be included with your I-765 application

1. Copy of your passport
2. Copy of your visa
3. I-94 record
4. Copies of all previous I-20's
5. Copies of any previously issued EAD cards
6. Two photographs that meet USCIS specifications
7. $410 application fee.

90, 60, 30 Day Rules

- You are eligible to apply for OPT up to 90 days before your completion date, not before.

- You have a 60-day grace period to apply for OPT or begin your employment.

- You have 30 days from the date that we issue the I-20 and recommend OPT to submit your application to USCIS.

- You are allowed 90 days of unemployment once your OPT has been approved.

Do Not

Do not begin working until you have received your EAD card.

We do not recommend that you travel outside of the US until you receive your EAD card.

Do not submit your OPT application online without an updated I-20 with the OPT recommendation.

Do:

1. Send us a copy of your EAD card when you receive it.

2. Complete the OPT information form from OIS once you have secured employment and return it to us. We can then update your information in SEVIS

3. Create a SEVIS portal when you receive confirmation from USCIS that your application has been received.

4. Keep all the forms that are sent to you from USCIS.

5. Inform us of any changes to your address, email and phone number. SEVIS must be up-to date.

OPT VS. STEM OPT

OPT

- OPT is one year. Once you have completed your OPT, you have another 60-day grace period to either adjust your status or leave the US. You can pursue another degree or change your immigration status. Many employers will be willing to sponsor you for an H-1B visa.

STEM OPT

- If you are in an approved STEM related field, you can apply for an additional two years of employment. You must do this before the completion date of your current OPT and unlike regular OPT you must have a job offer. You will need to reach out to the OIS to apply.

Questions?