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Palo Alto University
Post-Completion Optional Practical Training for F-1 Students

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Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) is post-degree work authorization so you may pursue employment is in your area of study. A job offer is NOT required in order for you to apply for or be granted optional practical training. After reading this information, if you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact Lisa Harris at lharris@paloaltou.edu.

You must apply for OPT authorization to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). *You may not begin any employment without USCIS authorization.*

WHEN TO APPLY: Starting **90** days before the program end-date (see item #5 on your I-20) until **60 days** after the program end-date.

WORK AUTHORIZATION DATES: Your Post-Completion OPT can start as early as the day after your program end date (usually your last day of internship), or no later than **60 days** after the program end date or any day in between. *You will specify what start date and end date on this application form.* The period of time allowed for Post-Completion OPT is 12 months, minus any previous periods of OPT that you may have used prior to completing your degree.

Authorization comes in the form of a card called an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) which is mailed to you once your OPT application is approved.

PLEASE NOTE: Twelve months or more of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) disqualifies you for any Optional Practical Training. On-campus employment does not reduce the amount of available Optional Practical Training.

How to Apply:

Do NOT apply 'online'! Doing so will cause more delay. Submit the following **completed** documents to the Associate Director of Student Services at PAU:

- A completed I-765 Form (Application for Employment Authorization): https://www.uscis.gov/i-765 . You may enter data on this form electronically, but must save it to your computer and print out a copy for submission. For step by step instructions on how to fill out the I-765, click here: **https://www.paloaltou.edu/sites/default/files/i-765_with%20comments.pdf**
  DO NOT submit the notes and instructions version to USCIS, be sure to submit the official form!
- Post-Completion Optional Practical Training Application Form, with faculty advisor recommendation (last page of this document).
- Photocopy of current I-20
- Photocopy of any previous employment authorization documents (EAD)

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After receiving these documents, you will be issued a new I-20 form.
You must send your complete Practical Training application to the USCIS within 30 days of the date on the new OPT – endorsed I-20

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The Complete Application includes:

- Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization
  Online fillable form: https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

- Form I-20s
  A photocopy of the new I-20 with Optional Practical Training endorsement located on page 2.

- Photocopy of your passport photo page

- Photocopy of your F-1 Visa

- Photocopy of your I-94 Download your I-94 form (if you don't already have a copy of it) from here:
  https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home

- Fee for processing Form I-765 (Currently it is $410.00). Make the check payable to: **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**. Place it in a small envelope with the photographs described below.

- Two identical full-frontal color passport photographs measuring 2" by 2". The head of the image should measure between 1" and 1 3/8" and it should be a full face, frontal view on a white to off-white background. Your head must be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order of which you are a member. Place the photos in a small envelope or plastic bag and staple the envelope or plastic bag containing the pictures to the front page of Form I-765.

Mail all documents by "certified mail with a return receipt." This will cost extra at the post office but the return receipt will provide you with evidence that USCIS received your documents.

Where to Mail your Application for OPT

If you live in:
Alaska, Arizona, **California**, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

Mail your application to USCIS Phoenix Lockbox:

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:
USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

For Express mail and courier deliveries:
USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

If you live in:

Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia

Mail your application to USCIS Dallas Lockbox

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:
USCIS
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For Express mail and courier deliveries:
USCIS
Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business
Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

After Mailing Your Application

Approximately 2-4 weeks after you mail your application to USCIS, you should receive a "Notice of Action" (form I-797) stating that your documents have been received, and that the "processing time is approximately 90 days from the date of this receipt notice." Employment is permitted only after you receive the EAD (Employment Authorization Document) card, and only during the period specified on the card.

You may check the current processing times for your OPT application by going to:
https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/

Please check your EAD to ensure that the information is correct. Send a photocopy of your EAD to the Associate Director of Student Services.

90 DAY UNEMPLOYMENT RULE = Out of Status

F-1 students on Post-Completion OPT who are unemployed for more than 90 days will be considered out of status. When you are hired, you must report the name and address to the Student Services as soon as possible so she can update your SEVIS record and print out a new I-20 for you. Once your SEVIS record is updated with your employer information, the 90 day clock stops ticking.

USCIS has also advised that unpaid work can be considered as employment, but must be in your field of study.

Traveling Outside the U.S. While on Post Completion Practical Training

If you are planning to apply for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training it is not recommended that you leave the U.S. until you have received your EAD card and have employment. *If you leave the U.S. after you graduate and have not applied for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training completion practical training, you will lose your eligibility to apply.*

Here is a list of documents needed to re-enter the U.S. while on your year of OPT.

- The EAD card

- A valid I-20 with a travel signature on page 3 that is no older than 6 months.

- Valid passport with an expiration date of at least 6 months into the future.

- Valid F-1 visa stamp in passport (Visa stamps may only be renewed outside of the US, ideally in your home country.)

- Evidence of a job offer in the form of a letter from your employer that states that you will be employed by that company for the period indicated on your EAD.

Reporting Requirements after Graduation

During your post completion OPT, you are still in F-1 status. It is your legal responsibility to report the following information to the office of student services:

- Any change in your residence address or name within 10 days of the change occurring.

- The name and address of your employer as soon as you are employed. If you change employers, you must report the name and address of the new employer.

- Your departure from the U.S. prior to the end date of the practical training period if you have decided not to return or will return in another visa status.

- Any change of immigration status

- Addition of an F-2 dependent or termination of an F-2 dependent's status.

- Please remember to send a copy of your EAD to the Associate Director of Student Services

Questions? Contact Lisa Harris Associate Director of Student Services
Email: lharris@paloaltou.edu   Phone: 650-433-3851

Palo Alto University
Post-Completion Optional Practical Training Application Form

Name: _____

Program: ___Ph.D.   ___Psy.D.   ___Business Psychology   ___Psychology and Social Action

Expected Graduation Date _____

Employment/EAD Start date: _____   Employment/EAD End date: _____

List all periods of *previously* authorized employment for practical training:

Practical Training	Start/Ending Dates	Degree	Major Field of Study
a. Curricular Practical Training (CPT)			
Pre and/or Post-Completion OPT			

Signature of Student:_____Date:_____

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FACULTY ADVISOR, PROGRAM DIRECTOR or DCT RECOMMENDATION
For POST-COMPLETION OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

I confirm that the student is in good academic standing and is on track to complete his/her academic program at PAU by the date listed below.

Student Name: _____

Graduation Date: _____

Program Director/DCT/Faculty Advisor/Name: _____

Program Director/DCT/Faculty Advisor /Signature:_____

Please email this completed form to Lisa Harris: Associate Director Student Services
lharris@paloaltou.edu

Post- Completion OPT Handout rev. 2019