



# **WORK AUTHORIZATION FOR F-1 AND J-1 STUDENTS**

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## ON-CAMPUS WORK

- F-1 Students – can work on-campus without any prior authorization. 20 hours per week while school is in session; unlimited on official school breaks – fall, winter, spring and summer.
- J-1 students – need work authorization letter from ISSS (or their program sponsor) for on-campus work. After they have the letter, can work 20 hours per while school is in session; unlimited on official school breaks – fall, winter, spring, summer.



# OFF-CAMPUS WORK

- F-1 Students
  - Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
  - Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- J-1 students
  - Academic Training (AT)



# CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

- Purpose: Temporary off-campus work opportunity that is important and integral or required for the degree program
- Example - internships



# CPT ELIGIBILITY

- Valid I-20
- Completed two semesters in full-time student status (not counting summer semester)
- Job offer that is integral to degree program
- Registers for a course that requires or recommends the off campus work opportunity during the semester of the employment



# CPT OPPORTUNITY

- Opportunity
  - Job Specific
    - The student must update I-20 for each job opportunity
  - Part-time
    - Can be applied for any time, up to 1 year at a time (cumulative 20 hours per week, this INCLUDES any on-campus work)
    - Unlimited with correct authorization
    - Thesis credit may only be used for part-time CPT (except in the summer)
  - Full-time
    - During breaks in the school year (summer, winter, spring and Thanksgiving breaks)
    - Available during fall and spring term if required for graduation and/or in other specific internship cases.
    - Limited to 364 days in order to keep eligibility for OPT.



# CPT PROCESS

- Student
  - Student acquires a job or internship related to course of study
  - Registers for a course which requires off-campus employment or thesis hours if appropriate
- Academic Advisor/Department Official
  - Advises for which course the student can register
  - Reviews appropriateness of position
  - Signs off on CPT application
- ISSS
  - Reviews documentation and past CPT registrations
  - Authorizes the request by updating the I-20
  - Timing: five business days; *if all documentation is in order*



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- What if the internship is unpaid...does the student still need CPT?
- If a student wants to do an internship outside of the United States, does he or she still need CPT?
- What if a student wants to work in the United States for an international company – is CPT required?
- Our department doesn't have an internship course...does the student have any other options to do CPT?





# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

## ○ Purpose

- Twelve months work authorization most commonly used after graduation. (pre-completion OPT is available but rarely used – generally only in cases where CPT won't work).
- Opportunity to work in the US to build work experience relating to the degree just earned
- Not job specific; but cannot accrue more than 90 days of unemployment during the twelve months
- OPT available once per educational level



# OPT ELIGIBILITY

- Completed degree (or coursework)
- Studied full time in the US for two consecutive semesters
- Maintained F-1 status
- Complied with past CPT registration requirements, if engaged in CPT
- Maintains valid passport



# OPT DATES/APPLICATION PROCESS

- May apply up to 90 days before program end date and up to 60 days after
- Takes approximately 90 days to process (sent to USCIS)
- OPT can begin the day after up to 60 days after program end date
- ISSS strongly recommends that students either attend an OPT workshop or have an appointment with an advisor prior to applying for OPT.



# OPT APPLICATION PROCESS

- Student attends OPT workshop/appointment at ISSS
- If needed, student meets with academic advisor to discuss program end date
- Student turns in application for OPT I-20 at ISSS front desk
- ISSS advisor recommends OPT on the I-20 and student can pick up new I-20 at ISSS within 5 business days.
- Student mails complete application to USCIS
- Student receives a receipt notice (I-797) then Employment Authorization Document (EAD) for work authorization approval



# PROGRAM END DATES

- **Undergraduates and graduates *without* thesis:**

- Last date of final semester (standard program end dates for December, May and August)

- **Graduate program *with* thesis:**

- Can choose own date but must have completed ALL required coursework

Things to consider when choosing a date:

- 1) The program end date is the last date you can hold student employment.
- 2) Graduate College requires registration in the defending semester.



# TWO OPT EXTENSIONS

- STEM extension
- Cap-Gap extension



# ACADEMIC TRAINING (AT)

- Off campus employment authorization
- 18 months (pre and post completion AT), or equivalent to the duration of J-1 program of study, if it was less than 18 months
- Additional 18 months upon the completion of a doctoral degree
- Must have a job opportunity relating to field of study
- No restriction in the number of hours BUT must be maintaining full time student status if pre-completion AT.
- No specific course registration requirement



# HOW TO APPLY FOR AT

- Student provides an application for a new DS-2019 and a letter of recommendation from their academic advisor on department letterhead, including the following points:
- **Student's name, date of completion or graduation, degree, and field of study;**
- **The goals and objectives of the specific training program, including its location, the name and address of the training supervisor, number of hours per week, and the dates of the training;**
- **How the training relates to their field of study; and**
- **Why the training is an integral or critical part of their academic program.**





# POST-COMPLETION AT

- May be applied for before the end of the program or during the 30 day grace period following the program end date. The job doesn't necessarily have to begin during before the grace period is up but the AT authorization period does.
- Must have a position to apply (no unemployment period)
- 30 day grace period upon the completion of the AT



# SWITCHING EMPLOYERS ON AT

- Requires a new DS-2019
- A new letter from academic advisor including the same key points about the new position



# EXTENDING AT

- Requires a new DS-2019
- Requires a letter from the employer (if extending with the same employer), stating that employee is still working in the same position for the same company and stating the new end date.
- If extending and switching employers, follow the switching employers instructions.



# QUESTIONS? ISSS IS HAPPY TO HELP!

- ISSS
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