

# Employment in F-1 Status During your Program of Study

A presentation of the  
**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS & SCHOLARS OFFICE**

**Spring 2014**

# General Information

- On-campus employment
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
- Optional Practical Training (OPT)

# General Information

- Must have authorization **BEFORE** beginning paid employment of any kind.
- Working without it is a serious violation.

# General Information

- Part-time work, up to 20 hours per week, during academic terms permitted
- Full-time permitted during vacation periods

# On-Campus Employment

# On-Campus Employment

- Work done for a Columbia office or department.
- Eligible once in F-1 status and enrolled at Columbia.

# On-Campus Employment

## **Examples include:**

- Teaching or Research Assistant
- Non work-study “casual employment” paid by the hour
- Libraries, computer labs
- Tutoring and Translation Agency

# On-Campus Employment

- On-campus work is limited by immigration regulations to part-time (a maximum of 20 *hours /week*) during the semester.
- During official school vacation periods there is no limit on the number of hours.

# On-Campus Employment

- Will need to complete I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification form at I-9 Center in Kent Hall.
- Will need to apply for SSN if you don't already have one.

**Social Security Verification Form  
for  
Columbia University International Students**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Last)

(First)

Date of birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ SEVIS# \_\_\_\_\_

Month/date/year

UNI \_\_\_\_\_ Status F-1 or I-1 (Circle one)

**To be completed by the Hiring Official in the Department**

Employing Department or Office \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_ EIN 13-5598093

Beginning Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Hours/Week \_\_\_\_\_

Job Description \_\_\_\_\_

Hiring Official's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

This is to serve as notification that the student listed above has been offered employment. I understand that F-1 students are not eligible to work more than 20 hours per week while school is in session.

**To be completed by the International Student Adviser at the ISSO**

I have verified that this student is enrolled full-time, has been registered in SEVIS and is therefore eligible to accept employment on the Columbia University campus. Per 8CFR 214.2(f)(9)(i), this student is permitted on campus employment up to 20 hours of per week while school is in session. Full-time employment is permitted during vacation periods, provided the student intends to register for the subsequent quarter.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

International Student Adviser / Designated School Official  
Columbia University International Students and Scholars Office  
Phone 212 854-3587 Fax 212 851-1235

# F-1 Practical Training

# F-1 Practical Training

- Benefit of F-1 student status
- Paid work in your field of study
- Off-campus, non-Columbia employer

# F-1 Practical Training

You must be in lawful F-1 student status for one year before you are eligible

# Practical Training

**Two types of practical training:**

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

&

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

# Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

# Curricular Practical Training

- directly related to your field of study
- done with a specific employer
- fulfills a degree requirement or elective course
- academic credit toward the degree
- authorized by ISSO

# Curricular Practical Training

Not all schools and departments at Columbia have the CPT option

It must be “*an integral part of an established curriculum*”

# Curricular Practical Training

Academic degree program must have an  
internship requirement for all students

OR

a credit-earning internship elective course  
listed in its official school bulletin

\*PhD students: CPT work must be directly related  
and integral to completion of your dissertation

# Curricular Practical Training

- Undergraduate students at Columbia College, SEAS and GS are not eligible for CPT
- Graduate students: Please consult with your department and ISSO regarding your CPT eligibility

# Curricular Practical Training

- Authorization is part-time (20 hours per week) during the academic year
- Full-time authorization during vacation periods

# Curricular Practical Training

CPT Authorization is given directly by the ISSO in the form of a new I-20

# Curricular Practical Training

- Time spent on CPT is NOT deducted from 12 months of OPT
- PhD students should not exceed 12 months of full-time CPT\*

# CPT Application

- Since CPT is employer-specific, you must have a written job/internship offer
- You must be registered for the internship course before coming to ISSO
- You must apply with ISSO at least 7 business days prior to your start date
- Instructions: [www.tinyurl.com/ISSOcpt](http://www.tinyurl.com/ISSOcpt)

# CPT Application

## Bring to ISSO:

1. Letter or internship form completed by your academic department stating:
  - the specific internship opportunity
  - the specific degree requirement or elective course (e.g. G7621y) that it satisfies
  - the minimum requirements to complete the internship
  - a reasonable period of time needed to complete the internship (1 semester can be authorized at a time)
  - \*PhD students: Your adviser should provide a detailed letter stating your dissertation topic, what research/work will be carried out, and why it is necessary for the dissertation.

# CPT Application

**2.** Letter offering internship employment from your employer including the following information:

- beginning and ending dates of employment
- how many hours you will work weekly
- a description of duties in sufficient detail to clearly show them as appropriate to meeting the requirements for your degree
- location where employment will take place

# CPT Application

- Always remember to bring passport, previous I-20s and printout of electronic [I-94 admission record](#) when you visit the office.
- In 2-5 business days, ISSO will issue a new I-20 with CPT work authorization on page 3 and e-mail you when it's ready to pick up.
- You must have the new CPT I-20 in hand before beginning work!

# Optional Practical Training (OPT)

# Optional Practical Training

OPT is authorization granted by US Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) for work directly related to your field of study

# Optional Practical Training

- Maximum of 12 months of OPT per educational level (*Example: BS, MA, PhD*)
- OPT can be used before and/or after your program of study

# STEM Extension

Students graduating with a degree in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM), may be eligible for an additional 17 months of OPT.

# Optional Practical Training

## Before Completing Program (Pre-Completion)

- **Annual Vacations:** part or full time work
- **Academic Year:** part-time up to 20 hours/week

\*PhD Students: After completing all requirements *except* dissertation, can work full-time

# Optional Practical Training

Time authorized for OPT during academic program is deducted from 12 month total

# Optional Practical Training

Part-time OPT is counted at half the rate

(Example: 4 months of part-time OPT would deduct 2 months)

# Optional Practical Training

- Must have completed at least one academic year at the time OPT authorization starts
- You may apply up to 90 days in advance of fulfilling the academic year and not more than 90 days prior to the requested OPT start date.

(Example: If you want to begin working June 1<sup>st</sup>, you may apply for OPT as early as March 3<sup>rd</sup> )

# Optional Practical Training

No job offer is required to apply

**BUT**

the authorized time is deducted from  
12 months even if you don't work!

# Optional Practical Training

## **OPT is a 3-part process:**

1. Obtain a recommendation from the ISSO on new I-20 (may take 3-5 business days)
2. Send an application and \$380 fee to USCIS
3. USCIS will process and send student an EAD Card (Employment Authorization Document)

Instructions: [www.tinyurl.com/issoPreOPT](http://www.tinyurl.com/issoPreOPT)

# Optional Practical Training

## 1. Complete Form I-765

You will need to refer to your passport & I-94 to fill in questions

**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 (Circle One) 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 (Street Number and Name) (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	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)(ii), etc.).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Single	Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 ( ) ( ) ( )	
<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (if "Yes," complete below) <input type="checkbox"/> No		
9. Social Security Number (include all numbers you have ever used) (if any)		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.	
10. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or I-94 Number (if any)		Degree: _____	
11. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?		Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (If "Yes," complete below) <input type="checkbox"/> No		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



Address in U.S.

Social Security Number, if any

I-94 Number

Don't forget to sign in blue ink

Check the first box

(C)(3)(A)

# Optional Practical Training

## 2. Complete **OPT Recommendation Request Form**

Request dates of OPT authorization

For office use only	
Trainee Fee	Cash _____ Credit card _____
	I-94 _____ Paper _____ Electronic _____
	I-765 _____
	OPT Adviser Form _____
	G-1145 _____
Remarks _____	

## F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) Recommendation Request Form

This section is to be completed by the STUDENT for all OPT requests.

Students applying for OPT based on completion of a program or based on completion of all requirements except the dissertation (ABD) also must submit a completed OPT ACADEMIC ADVISER FORM (p. 2)

Family Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ CU Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Passport Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Visa Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(mm/dd/yy) (mm/dd/yy)  
Current address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(1) I am requesting a recommendation for:

- PRE-COMPLETION OPT (before completion of degree requirements)
- Part-time OPT (during the summer or during the academic year. <20 hrs/wk)
- Full-time OPT (during vacation period. > 20 hrs/wk)
- Full-time OPT during the academic year. (Available only to students who have completed all degree requirements and have received MPhil but have not yet completed thesis/dissertation)  
*You also must submit a complete OPT Academic Adviser Form on p. 2.*
- POST-COMPLETION OPT (Full-time only)  
*You also must submit a complete OPT Academic Adviser Form on p. 2.*

(2) If you have ever been issued an EAD for OPT before, please provide the following information: start and end dates on the card(s) you have received, full-time or part-time, degree level:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(3) I would like to work from (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_ to (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_  
*NOTE: Once submitted, requested dates cannot be changed. You cannot redeem OPT time even if you don't work. For post-completion OPT requests, the start date must be within the 60-day period following completion of the program. For example, if your completion date is May 21, the OPT start date could be between May 22 to July 20.*

(4) Name and Address of Employer \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

You request duration  
of pre-completion  
OPT



# Optional Practical Training

The ISSO will issue a new I-20 with OPT recommendation on page 3 and e-mail you when it's ready to pick up.

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: \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Employment Authorization:

Employment Status: **FULL TIME** Type: **OPT**  
Duration of Employment - From (Date): **05/31/2004** To (Date): **05/31/2005**  
Employer Name:  
Employer Location:

Comments: **Employment in student's field of study.**

SEVIS



Event History  
Event Name:  
**Registration**

Event Date:  
**08/05/2003**

Current Authorizations:  
**OPT Employment Requested**

Start Date: **05/31/2004** End Date: **05/31/2005**

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 Official	Signature of Designated School Official	Title	Date Issued	Place Issued (city and state)
Ingrid Jordan		Program Officer	02/03/2004	New York, NY
Name of School Official	Signature of Designated School Official	Title	Date Issued	Place Issued (city and state)
Name of School Official	Signature of Designated School Official	Title	Date Issued	Place Issued (city and state)
Name of School Official	Signature of Designated School Official	Title	Date Issued	Place Issued (city and state)
Name of School Official	Signature of Designated School Official	Title	Date Issued	Place Issued (city and state)

OPT  
Recommendation

Travel  
Signature

# Optional Practical Training

Pick-up envelope will include instructions on how to mail complete application to USCIS

# Application Process

Application must be received by USCIS within 30 days from the OPT recommendation date on your I-20

(see Item 10 on your I-20 for date it was issued! )

# Optional Practical Training

**Form G-1145** – This form should be on top of your application so USCIS can notify you by email and/or text message that they have accepted your application.

You can access this form online at <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/g-1145.pdf>

# Optional Practical Training

## USCIS Mailing address

If using US Postal Service (USPS)

USCIS

PO Box 660867

Dallas, TX 75266

If using Express mail or Courier service (FedEx, UPS)

USCIS

ATTN: AOS

2501 S. State Hwy. 121, Business

Suite 400

Lewisville, TX 75067

# Optional Practical Training

**IMPORTANT**

You **MUST** have EAD in hand before beginning any employment!



Normally, you receive 3 pieces of mail from USCIS.

1. Receipt Notice (Within 2-4 weeks)
2. Approval Notice (Within 6-12 weeks)
3. EAD card (By 12 weeks)

Below is what EAD card envelope looks like:



# CPT and OPT: Comparison

## *Curricular Practical Training*

- During program of study only
- For internship/academic credit as part of degree requirement
- Does not affect 12 months of OPT
- Need a job offer
- Authorized by ISSO on I-20

## • *Optional Practical Training*

- Before or after completion of studies
- 12 months maximum per educational level
- Requires application to USCIS
- No job offer required
- Must receive EAD before starting employment

# Social Security Number

Eligible to apply for a Social Security Number 30 days in advance of the start date of the on-campus job or CPT start date.

For OPT, must wait for OPT start date on the EAD.

# Further Information

- Be sure to read your **ISSOnews** e-mail for information on regulations, workshops and deadline reminders!
- CPT Instructions:  
[www.tinyurl.com/ISSOcpt](http://www.tinyurl.com/ISSOcpt)
- Pre-Completion OPT instructions:  
[www.tinyurl.com/ISSOpreOPT](http://www.tinyurl.com/ISSOpreOPT)

# ISSO CONTACT INFORMATION

## Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

10:30 – 4:00 pm.

Closed on Wednesday

## Address and Phone Number

524 Riverside Drive in International House North,  
North of West 122<sup>nd</sup> Street

(212) 854-3587

## Website

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/isso/>

## E-mail Address

isso@columbia.edu