

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING For F-1 STUDENTS

PRE COMPLETION OF STUDY and POST-COMPLETION OF STUDY

Practical Training is defined as, “paid employment directly related to your major area of study, following the completion of your academic degree.” **Students in F-1 status must have been enrolled full-time for at least nine consecutive months (one academic year) before they are eligible for Optional Practical Training.**

HOW TO OBTAIN A SEVIS FORM I-20 TO APPLY FOR OPT?

Email the following documents to OPT.ISSC@BARUCH.CUNY.EDU in order to receive your SEVIS Form I-20 authorizing OPT:

1. [Graduation Application Receipt](#) from the Registrar’s Office (receipt verifies that you are eligible for graduation this academic year).
2. [Academic Advisor’s Recommendation Form](#) (Attached)
3. [ISSC Request Form](#)
4. Completed Form I-765 available at: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

***DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR OPT APPLICATION TO USCIS UNTIL YOU RECEIVE YOUR SEVIS I-20 WITH THE RECOMMENDED OPT DATES INDICATED ON THE SECOND PAGE *
YOUR OPT I-20 SHOULD HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
POST-COMPLETION OPT	FULL TIME	REQUESTED	23 JULY 2022	22 JULY 2023



WHAT SHOULD YOUR OPT START DATE BE?

**Post Completion OPT must begin no later than 60 days following your semester end date.
You may choose any date between the earliest possible OPT start date and last possible OPT start date.**

FALL 2022 GRADUATES

Applications open: 09/24/2022 Applications close: 02/12/2023
Earliest Possible OPT Start Date: 12/22/2022 Latest possible OPT Start Date: 02/19/2023

WINTER 2023 GRADUATES

Applications open: 10/26/2022 Applications close: 03/19/2023
Earliest Possible OPT Start Date: 01/25/2023 Latest possible OPT Start Date: 03/25/2023

SPRING 2023 GRADUATES

Applications open: 02/22/2023 Applications close: 07/15/2023
Earliest Possible OPT Start Date: 05/24/2023 Latest possible OPT Start Date: 07/22/2023

SUMMER I 2023 GRADUATES

Applications open: 04/14/2023 Applications close: 09/04/2023
Earliest Possible OPT Start Date: 07/14/2023 Latest possible OPT Start Date: 09/11/2023

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) WORKSHOPS

It is mandatory that an F-1 student requesting OPT attend at least one the International Student Service Center's (ISSC) OPT Workshops. Several OPT Workshops are held each semester. For OPT Workshop times and dates, please visit our website and make sure to review your Baruch Email Account often. Messages about the "*Immigration 101 Workshops*" are sent by the ISSC office during the semester.

POST COMPLETION OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (Post OPT)

A student in F-1 status may apply up to 90 days before the completion date or semester end date and /or during the 60 days grace period after completion of your program. Students **MUST** file their application to USCIS within 30 days of the creation of the Form I-20 with the OPT recommendation. It is important that all students understand that program completion refers to the date that you have finished all coursework and any project/thesis/dissertation for your degree. **It is not your graduation date.**

Optional Practical Training is **limited to a total of 12 months**. A student becomes eligible for another 12-month period of OPT after they complete a degree at a higher educational level.

An **Extension of OPT** (24-month period of temporary training) is possible only if you have completed a **STEM degree** and accepted employment with a company enrolled in the E-Verify Program. The extension must be requested up to 90 days before the expiration date of the EAD Card. Not during the 60-day grace period. A copy of your diploma reflecting the conferred degree as well as your major of study must be submitted. A new application fee is also required. The extension can be requested if you have earned a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree. You may be eligible to use a previous STEM degree from a U.S. institution of higher education to apply for a STEM OPT extension.

An offer of employment is not required to obtain approval for OPT. OPT is recommended by the International Student Service Center (ISSC) and authorized by the USCIS.

Studying while on OPT:

- As per F-1 regulations, authorization to engage in optional practical training employment is automatically terminated once you transfer to another school or begin study at another educational level.

PRE-COMPLETION OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (PRE-OPT)

A student in F-1 status may apply for Pre-OPT and begin employment prior to the completion of their study. Students engaged in Pre-OPT can work a maximum of 20 hours per week while school is in session*. During annual vacations and while school is NOT in session, students can engage in Pre-OPT on full basis.

***If you are authorized to work on-campus and also choose to engage in Practical Training (CPT or Pre-OPT), please seek advice from ISSC.**

Pre-OPT employment does NOT constitute a reason for a student to be enrolled for a reduced course load. Time granted to a student for Pre-OPT is deducted from the 12 months of Post Completion OPT eligibility. For each month of Pre-OPT that the student is authorized for full-time employment, a month is deducted from the students Post Completion OPT. For every two months of Pre-OPT that the student is authorized for part-time employment, one month is deducted from the students Post Completion OPT.

NOTE: Other employment categories, such as Curricular Practical Training or Off-Campus employment based on Economic Hardship may be better choices than Pre-OPT, provided that the student qualifies for the type of employment. These categories permit the student to work while still enrolled; yet in most cases, the student will still be eligible for the full 12 months of Post Completion OPT.

TRAVELING

The DHS and the U.S. Department of State (DOS) agree that an F-1 student who has timely filed an application for OPT post-completion of study may travel outside the United States while the OPT application is pending by providing the following documents for **re-entry**:

- Pending OPT SEVIS I-20 signed by the Designated School Officer at Baruch College
- Notice of Action Form I-797
- Unexpired passport
- Valid F-1 visa

However, once the EAD card for OPT is issued to the F-1 student if a student decides to travel abroad, the student can only re-enter the United States to **resume employment**. DHS has clarified that the F-1 student does not need to have already begun actual employment before leaving, as long as the student has a job offer for which he/she is returning.

If you have been approved for OPT and decide to travel, you will need the following documents for **re-entry**:

- SEVIS I-20 signed by the Designated School Officer at Baruch College
- Valid EAD card
- Unexpired passport
- Valid F-1 visa
- Letter from a U.S. based employer certifying that you are returning to resume or commence employment

NEXT STEPS TO REQUEST OPT I-20

1. Review the checklist (page 1) and make sure that you have all required documents
2. Complete a ISSC [Request form](#)
3. Your documents and supporting evidence should be submitted as ONE PDF attachment

Select the appropriate ISSC email address

Each of the customized emails below is dedicated to fast track our most in-demand services:

OPT Application



OPT.ISSC@baruch.cuny.edu

CPT Application



CPT.ISSC@baruch.cuny.edu

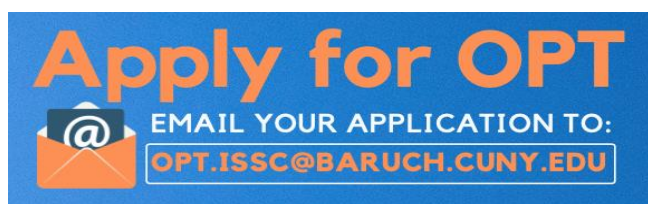
On-Campus Employment Application



OCE.ISSC@baruch.cuny.edu

Please allow approximately 7-10 business days for review and processing.

If you have any other questions, concerns or request further guidance, please contact ISSC@baruch.cuny.edu



WHERE TO FILE YOUR APPLICATION?

After the step above is complete and you have received a new SEVIS I-20 with the recommendation for OPT on the second page, please follow the steps below to mail the OPT application.

Option 1: The information regarding on-line filing is available at: <https://www.uscis.gov/news/news-releases/f-1-students-seeking-optional-practical-training-can-now-file-form-i-765-online>.

You must first create a USCIS online account at <https://myaccount.uscis.gov/>.

You must have all required documentation ready to be submitted: Color passport photo that meets USCIS specifications, scanned copy of your passport, most recent I-94, scanned copies of all your I-20 in addition to the I-20 recommending for OPT and a credit card with which you will be paying the I-765 processing fee. Specifications about the photographs can be found at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply/photos.html>. You should be extremely careful when submitting the online application and ensure that all required documents are included before you click submit.

Option 2: Baruch College International Students living in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, or Pennsylvania, should mail OPT applications to:

U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries

USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03
P.O. Box 805373
Chicago, IL 60680-5374

FedEx, UPS, and DHL Deliveries

USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03 (Box 805373)
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-5517



Please be sure to write in the lower left-hand corner of your mailing envelope:

Optional Practical Training – Form I-765.

- Mail your OPT application and supporting documentation via Certified Mail (FedEx, UPS, DHL).
- Once you receive your EAD Card you must provide the ISSC with a copy of the card (front and back). We will then issue you a new SEVIS I-20 indicating that OPT has been approved.



The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) recommend that you retain a copy of your completed application for your records.



Please **do not submit** your OPT application package until you receive your SEVIS I-20 with the recommended OPT dates indicated on the second page.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

DECISIONS and PROCESSING TIMES

An application filed without the required fee, all the necessary documents, signature and photographs will be denied by the USCIS. You must be sure to submit a complete Optional Practical Training application to the USCIS. Additionally, all Optional Practical Training applications must be received by the USCIS **no later than 30 days from the creation of your Optional Practical Training Form I-20.**

DECISIONS ON YOUR APPLICATION

- **APPROVAL**
If approved, your EAD card will be mailed to you at your filed address.
- **REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**
If additional information or documentation is required, a written request will be sent to you by USCIS, requesting further specific information. Please notify the ISSC immediately.
- **DENIAL**
If your application cannot be approved, you will receive a written notice explaining the basis of your denial. You can file a “motion to reopen” requesting USCIS to reconsider their decision. A processing fee is required.

PROCESSING TIMES

It will take the **USCIS Service Center approximately 90 days to process your request.** Processing times may vary on the USCIS Service Center’s workload. Employment may NOT commence until you have obtained approval from USCIS and you have received your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card.

You MAY ONLY begin working only as of the start date listed on your EAD Card, NOT before.



issc@baruch.cuny.edu



<https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/issc>

OPT CHECKLIST FOR USCIS

All applications must be filed with the documents required below:

- Copy of your recently issued SEVIS I-20** - with OPT authorization indicated on the 2nd page
- Copies of all your previous I-20s with employment authorization (CPT, OPT, etc)**
 - For the new I-20 format send copies of the 1st & 2nd pages
 - For the previous I-20 format send copies of the 1st & 3rd pages
 - **Important:** If you are missing any of your previously issued SEVIS I-20s, you must submit a police report, which states that your SEVIS I-20s were lost or stolen. The ISSC will not provide you with any copies of SEVIS I-20s without a police report.
- A copy of your I-94 Arrival/Departure Record**
 - Retrieve a copy of your I-94 Arrival/Departure Record via: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>
- A copy of your passport identification page** - which includes your photograph
- Form I-765**
 - You may download the application via: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- Two passport sized photos**
 - Photos should have a white background taken no earlier than 30 days before submission to USCIS. They should be un-mounted, printed on thin paper glossy, and un-retouched. See attachment of the composition checklist for detailed information about the photos.
 - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos/photo-examples.html>
 - If filing by mail, lightly print your name and your admission (I-94) number on the back of each photo with a pencil.
- A copy of your last EAD, if applicable - front and back**
- \$410.00 Application Fee**
 - If filing by mail, make check or money order payable to: **“U.S. Department of Homeland Security”**
 - There will be an additional charge and delay if your check is not honored.
 - Pay in the exact amount. If the request is denied the fee will not be refunded.
 - If filing online, you may pay via credit or debit card only.

REMEMBER: Your application must be received by the USCIS **no later than 30 days from the creation of your Optional Practical Training Form I-20.** If unable to file within the 30 days, please contact ISSC immediately.

COMPLETING YOUR FORM I-765

INSTRUCTIONS

OPT Applications **MUST** be completed in black ink.

Part 1, Page 1

Reason for Applying: Check the correct category

Part 2, Pages 1 - 3

Item # 1-11: Personal Information

Item # 8: An Alien Registration (or A Number) is typically given to a person that has applied for immigration benefits (i.e. Permanent Residency). Generally, if you have not made a request to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) for Permanent Residency or Political Asylum, you will not have an A Number. If you do not have an A Number, leave question 8 blank.

Item # 12: Have you ever submit a form I-765 (Application for employment Authorization) to USCIS?

Item #13-17: Social Security Information

Item #18-20: Countries of Citizenship and place/date of birth

Item #21.a: Form I-94 Number. Find your latest I-94 number by visiting: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>

Item #21.b. Passport number

Item #21.d. Country that issued your passport

Item #22: Date of Last Entry into the U.S.

Item #23: Place of Last Entry into the U.S.

Item #24: Status at Last Entry (As an **F-1 Student** or **B-2 Tourist** or **Worker, etc.**)

Item #25: Current Immigrant Status (As an **F-1 Student**)

Item #26: Current SEVIS ID number as listed on your most recent I-20

Item #27: Eligibility Categories - **(c) (3) (B)** - *F-1 Students Seeking Post-Completion Optional Practical Training in an Occupation Directly Related to Studies. The USCIS adjudicates a request for employment authorization by determining whether an applicant has submitted the required information and documentation, and whether the applicant is eligible. In order to determine your eligibility; you **must** identify the category in which you are eligible and fill in that category in question 27 on Form I-765.*

**For Pre-OPT the code is (c) (3) (A). For STEM OPT Extension, the code is (c) (3) (C).*

Part 3, Pages 4 – 5

Item #1: Certify English language proficiency for questions and answers to the I-765

Item #3-5: Applicant contact information

Item #7: Applicant Signature: Sign within the white space (do not cross the line) and date

Part 6, Page 7

Item #4 Additional Information: Students that have previously been authorized for CPT, Pre Completion OPT or Post-Completion OPT must use “Part 6. Additional Information” (page 7) to list all SEVIS numbers and all previously authorized CPT and/or OPT. Students must also state the academic level at which the CPT, Pre-Completion OPT or Post-Completion OPT was authorized. Additionally, Students requesting Pre-Completion OPT must include proof of lawful full-time enrollment for one full academic year. ISSC recommends that you include a copy of your official transcripts as proof when applying for Pre Completion OPT.

*When providing information to the USCIS regarding previous Pre or Post -Completion OPT participation, please be sure to include Page Number: 3, Part Number: 2 and Item Number: 27 above your responses to Part 6 of the Form I-765.

Revised Nov 2022



**ACADEMIC ADVISOR RECOMMENDATION FORM
FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)**

The information requested is needed to comply with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations. The international student named below is applying for Optional Practical Training. Practical Training is defined as temporary employment directly related to the student's field of study.

STUDENT COMPLETES THIS SECTION
(PLEASE TYPE)

				N00
Student Name (Last, First Middle)	EMPL ID#	SEVIS ID#		
Student Telephone	Email Address			
Student Address	Apt/Unit	City	State	Zip

Please select your request: Pre-Completion OPT Post-Completion OPT

Previous Periods of Curricular Practical Training (CPT)	
CPT Company Name	CPT Start Date and End Date (MM/DD/YY)

Previous Periods of Optional Practical Training (OPT)	
Indicate the Academic/Degree Level under which OPT was granted	OPT Start and End Dates (MM/DD/YY)

EAD Card

Please enter your requested OPT start and end date.

Note: These dates are requested and the official date will be later determined by USCIS.

Starting Date: Ending Date:

**ACADEMIC ADVISOR RECOMMENDATION FORM
FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)**

Academic Advisor Completes This Section

➔ Please note the date of completion is the date of the semester that the student will complete his/her degree requirements.

The Student named above, *will complete/has completed* all requirements for: (check one)

Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree Ph.D. Degree

Field of Study:

**I anticipate that this student will complete all the requirements
for the current program of study on or about:**

Fall 20__ Winter 20__ Spring 20__ Summer Term I 20__ Summer Term II 20__

The student is currently enrolled: Full-Time Part-Time

The student is currently enrolled for the following courses:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Academic Advisor's Signature:	
Academic Advisor's Print Name:	
Date:	