

# SEWANEE

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## THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH

### OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment that is directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study. There are two different kinds of OPT: **Pre Completion and Post Completion**. Under existing rules, an F-1 student may be authorized to receive up to 12 months of practical training either pre and/or post completion of studies. Students are eligible for a maximum of one full year of full-time OPT at each higher level of education (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral). This can be in a combination of pre and post completion. These are the requirements for OPT:

1. Students must have F-1 status
2. Students must have a Form I-20
3. The student's status in the SEVIS system must show as "Active"
4. Students must have completed at least one full academic year of study in the United States.
5. OPT employment must be directly related to the student's major field of study.

#### 1. PRE-COMPLETION OPT:

This type of OPT is for students who want to begin OPT before they graduate. An F-1 student may be authorized to participate in pre-completion OPT after he/she has been enrolled for one full academic year. The pre-completion OPT must be directly related to the student's course of study.

***Please note: All periods of pre-completion OPT are deducted from available periods of post-completion OPT.***

#### Pre--Completion Rules & Regulations

- Pre-completion OPT cannot be full time while school is in session (20 hours/week is part-time).
- Part-time pre-completion OPT may be authorized at all levels of education.
- Full-time pre-completion OPT may be authorized only during holidays or school vacation.
- The pre-completion OPT ending validity date may be the same as the end of studies date. The end date cannot extend beyond the end of studies date as indicated on the I-20

#### 2. POST - COMPLETION OPT:

This type of OPT is for students who want to begin OPT after they graduate. An F-1 student may be authorized to participate in post-completion OPT upon completion of studies. The post-completion OPT must be directly related to the student's course of study.

#### Post-Completion Rules & Regulations

- Once a student is approved for OPT, he/she can stay on OPT status for 12 months.
- A student may apply for OPT up to 90 days prior to the program end date as long as the requested optional practical training (OPT) period does not begin until the student's program end date. Academic studies/graduation must be completed by the time authorization begins.
- A student may apply for OPT for up to 60 days after the program end date. This allows students to ensure that they meet graduation requirements before applying for post--completion OPT.
- After being approved for OPT, students have up to 90 days to find a job. After 90 days of unemployment the student can be considered in violation of maintaining their status.
- Students may apply for an OPT extension at any time prior to the expiration date of their current OPT period.
- Students must follow all reporting procedures to report their employment to their DSO/PDSO.

## APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PRE AND POST-COMPLETION OPT

Submit the documents below in one packet to the Office of Global Citizenship:

1. Form I-765: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

You must complete the form online and print a copy. Full instructions for completing form I-765 may also be found on the website above.

Use these codes for Question 16:

(c)(3)(A), Pre - Completion OPT

(c)(3)(B), Post - Completion OPT

(c)(3)(C), 24 Month Extension STEM extension

2. Copies of your current visa and passport

3. A website printout of your I-94

3. Copy of your SODA (Sewanee Online Degree Audit). You find and print this through Banner.

4. Two (2) passport pictures with name and I-94 number written on back.

5. Any previous EADs (OPT or emergency work authorization)

6. A copy of all previous I-20s, dating from the start of your program at Sewanee, or from the date you began studying in the U.S. (for example, at a high school)

7. Academic Advisor Recommendation Form (next page)

8. Form G-1145 (Optional) <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf>

The G-1145 signs you up for email/text message notification of your application's arrival at USCIS

9. Check or money order (no cash or credit) for \$410, made out to Department of Homeland Security.

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**After receiving the above documents, the Office will do the following:**

10. Review the above materials and issue you a new I-20 with OPT recommendation, along with a copy. You will mail the copy, not the original with your OPT application packet.

11. Write a Cover Letter for your OPT application

12. Return all materials to you as one complete application packet. **You are responsible for mailing all of the materials within 30 days to:**

USCIS  
PO Box 805373  
Chicago, IL 60680  
(USPS deliveries)

USCIS  
Attn: I-765 C03  
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603-5517  
(FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries)

**ACADEMIC ADVISOR'S RECOMMENDATION FORM  
OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)**



Based on the rules and regulations dictated by the Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) the following information is required in order to grant employment for practical training to an international student on an F--1 visa.

**Student Information**

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the date you wish to begin Optional Practical Training? \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor Information:**

Advisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

1. When do you anticipate this student completing his/her studies at Sewanee? Please fill in date (mm/dd/yyyy) and check one of the following categories below:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

- Graduation/Conferral of Degree date
- Completion of semester/last day as registered student
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (explain)

2. It is required that the advisor describe the type of employment the student is seeking.

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

3. Is this type of employment experience related to the student's field of study and appropriate to the student's educational level?

- Yes
- No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
PDSO/DSO Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number