

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Informational Packet

Plan Ahead

It takes approximately **90 to 150 days** for USCIS to process an OPT application, and if approved issue the Employment Authorization Document (EAD). An EAD card with approved OPT authorization dates is required before eligible to begin work.

What is Optional Practical Training?

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is available to F-1 students who have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis in an SEVP approved university for one full academic year. 12 months of OPT is available for each degree level attained. OPT applications do not require a job offer; however any job accepted must be directly related to your degree program field of study.

Application Procedure

1. Attend a GGU OPT Application Lab
2. Review OPT Information Packet & additional resource links
3. Submit GGU OPT Agreement Form
4. GGU DSO will issue your OPT I-20. USCIS must receive your OPT Application within 30 days from OPT I-20 issuance
5. Compile documents from the Application Checklist (below)
6. Pay the \$150 GGU post-graduation administrative fee to receive your OPT I-20
7. Meet with your DSO by [scheduling a virtual appointment](#) to review your OPT application materials
8. Mail OPT Application to USCIS

Application Checklist

- Two (2) full front facing/ US passport style photographs
- Personal Check, Cashier's Check or USPS money order payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" in the amount of \$410 USD. **Note:** as of 10/27/2020, \$410 USD is the required fee. Make sure to confirm with your DSO the applicable fees at the time you apply.
- [Form G-1145](#)
- [Form I-765](#), marked with Eligibility Category code for post-completion OPT: **(c)(3)(B)**
- Photocopy of Passport Biographical Information page
- Photocopy of Passport F-1 Visa sticker page
- Photocopy of your [I-94 Admission Number](#) document
- An updated I-20 with OPT Authorization Dates - issued by your DSO. The OPT I-20 will be received after OPT application review appointment with DSO
- Photocopy of all previous I-20 documents
- Photocopy of any previous Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) - if this is the first application for work authorization, there will be no previous EADs

For GGU University Advising Center Only

- GGU OPT Agreement Form - This is for GGU ONLY and not required by USCIS

GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY

It is recommended that you send your application by US priority mail. You should mail your entire application packet to:

USCIS Phoenix Lockbox
P.O. Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

Important Information & Resources

Note: It is your responsibility to understand the immigration rules and regulations while on OPT. Please contact your DSO or the University Advising Center if you have any questions.

- Information related to government regulations for F1 students and OPT application: www.uscis.gov
- Information about travel guidelines, visa application and renewals: www.travel.state.gov/
- Information about maintaining status, benefits and responsibilities while on OPT:
<http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/working-in-the-united-states>

Travel During OPT

You should have the following with you when you travel outside the US:

- Passport valid at least 6 months into the future
- Valid F-1 visa
- Most recent OPT I-20 with travel endorsement signature on page 2 (no more than 6 months old)
- Unexpired OPT EAD card
- Official letter of U.S. employment or job offer letter

For more information about travel, visit <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel>