



F-1: OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is employment directly related to a student's field of study and is intended to provide hands-on practical work experience complementary to the academic program. An F-1 student is eligible for a **MAXIMUM OF 12 MONTHS**. However, if a student begins a new academic program at a higher level (e.g. masters after bachelor's degree or PhD after masters), the student is eligible for another 12 months of OPT. While on optional practical training, individuals are still considered to be F-1 students at Jackson State University even though they may be working elsewhere in the United States. Therefore, **students are required to report within 10-days any changes in name, address, employer's information and periods of interruption in employment.**

PRE-REQUIREMENTS:

- Be an F-1 student visa holder who has been enrolled full-time for at least one full academic year prior to submitting an OPT application
- Be maintaining lawful F-1 status
- Intend to obtain employment in a position directly related to your major field of study.
- Have not completed more than 364 days of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT).
- Have not utilized an equivalent of 12 months of OPT work authorization in current degree level.
- Have not already completed a degree at this level (e.g., second bachelor's degree) or at a higher level. Are not in an English language training program.

APPLICATION TIME FRAME:

- The I-765 and OPT I-20 must be received by USCIS no sooner than 90 days before the program end date and no later than 60 days after the program end date.
- In addition, the Form I-765 and I-20 in support of post-completion OPT must be received by USCIS **no later than 30 days after the DSO updates SEVIS with the OPT recommendation.**

Program completion is defined as the day that you complete all requirements for your degree. This is normally the graduation day, but in some cases may be earlier if, for example, a graduate student defends his/her thesis/dissertation early in the semester.

APPLICATION FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

JSU Global assists with processing OPT applications and materials; however actual employment authorization is given by U.S. Citizenship and immigration Services (USCIS). Once all documentation listed below has been gathered, please submit them to JSU Global ISSS office.



OPT APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Application needs to be received by the USCIS within 30 days of OPT I-20 issue date.

1. Complete Form I-765

(Note for Post-Completion OPT ONLY: for question #16, write (c) (3) (b).)

2. Complete OPT Applicant Contact Sheet

3. Memo from academic department stating students name, degree, major and graduation date (see attached)

4. Unofficial academic transcript of all course work at Jackson State University

5. The following items are required for the submission of your OPT application to USCIS.

- Two (2) photographs: On the back of each photo, write your full name and I-94 #.
- Passport and VISA
- Copy of Social Security Card, if you have one
- Print out your I-94 card.
- Make a photocopy of ALL previously issued I-20s
- Photocopy of Change of Status I-797 receipt if you changed status to F-1 inside the U.S. (if applicable)
- Photocopy of previous EAD cards (if applicable)
- Check or Money Order for \$410.00 (effective December 23, 2016) made payable to:
U.S Department of Homeland Security

An ISSS advisor will review your application packet and issue two new I-20s with the OPT recommendation (one for your personal record, and one to be signed and mailed with your application).

Mail all application materials with new signed I-20 with OPT recommendation to
USCIS Dallas Lockbox

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:

USCIS
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS
Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business
Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067



MUST BE ON JSU LETTERHEAD
SAMPLE MEMO

To:

From: Faculty Advisor, Department of Major

Date: ENTER CURRENT DATE

Subject: Graduation International Student/OPT Request

Please accept this memo on behalf of **STUDENT NAME** (STUDENT J#). **STUDENT NAME** is expected to complete degree requirements for the **DEGREE LEVEL** in **STUDENT MAJOR** no later than **EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE**.

Should you have further questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at **ADVISOR'S PHONE NUMBER**.

Thank you,



OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

Student Request Form

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT REQUESTING OPT

Full Name

J Number

SEVIS ID

Phone Number

Complete Mailing Address

Email

- I understand I must find employment within ninety (90 days).
- I understand that SEVIS will automatically terminate my record after ninety days
- I understand that it is my responsibility to update JSU Global ISSS office if any of the above information changes.
- I understand that once approved for OPT I must submit a copy of my Employment Authorization Card to JSU Global for my file.
- I understand that I must report any change of name or address, or interruption of such employment to the DSO for the duration of the authorized training.

Student signature

Date