

**Optional Practical Training (OPT)** gives F-1 students 12 months of “temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student’s major area of study.” [8 CFR § 214.2(f)(10)(ii)] OPT is available to F-1 students who have been in full-time student status for at least one academic year in the U.S. OPT does not require a job offer. A student may be eligible for a new 12-month period after completing a new degree program at a higher education level.

## STEPS TO APPLY FOR OPT

**STEP 1:** Attend one of the many OPT workshops held by OISS each semester. Review OPT Tutorial and current schedule at <http://oiss.rice.edu/studentwork>

**STEP 2:** Make an appointment to see an OISS advisor if you have follow-up questions or if there are no workshops before you would like to apply for OPT. You may contact OISS by phone at 713-348-6095, by email at [oiss@rice.edu](mailto:oiss@rice.edu) or stop by the office in Lovett Hall.

**STEP 3:** Complete these three forms and return them to OISS:

- Student Form: Includes requested OPT dates and a Statement of Understanding to initial and sign. Form is found in this packet.
- Faculty Advisor Form: Student fills in the top section; Rice faculty member / advisor completes the bottom section to verify when degree requirements are expected to be met. Form is found in this packet.
- Form I-765: On <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>, click “Download Form I-765”, fill in the PDF (do not handwrite answers), and print a hard copy. Please refer to the attached sample I-765 with notes how to fill in properly.  
*Note: DO NOT click “File My Application Online (E-Filing)”. Filing your application and paying online may result in an unnecessary delay in your application.*

**STEP 4:** An OISS advisor will create your new OPT I-20, print your SEVIS CPT history, and email you when everything is ready (usually within 1 week). At that point, you may schedule your final OPT appointment.

**Please bring the following with you to the final OPT appointment:**

- A check or money order for \$410.00 to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”
- Two passport-style photographs *taken within the past 30 days* with your name and I-94 number written in pencil on the back of each photo (see <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/photos.html>)
- Photocopies of your passport, visa, and I-94 card or printout: <http://www.cbp.gov/>
- Photocopy of previous EAD card(s), if any
- Recommended* G-1145 E-notification <http://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf>
- Recommended* Cover letter (see attached template)

If you bring all of these documents to your final appointment, you will be able to mail your OPT application immediately to USCIS. OISS recommends applying for OPT as early as possible since USCIS averages 90 days to process applications. Students can start applying 90 days before their program end date and must apply no later than 30 days after their program end date. Students do not need a job offer to apply for OPT.

Please download the Word document file of this cover letter, edit it with your information (see all highlighted sections), and bring it to the OPT pick-up appointment along with the rest of your documents!

Today's Date

Your Full Name

Your Address (use same address as the one listed on I-765)

USCIS

Attn: I-765 for Post-completion OPT

P.O. Box 660867

Dallas, TX 75266

Re: Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization for [LAST NAME, First Name] I-94 #: [write out I-94 #]

Dear USCIS Officer:

I, [Your Name], am an F-1 student applying for an EAD in order to partake in Post-completion Optional Practical Training (c)(3)(B). My requested start date for OPT is [list start date as it is indicated on your I-20]. Please find my I-765 Application for Employment Authorization enclosed with the following documentation:

- 2 passport-style photographs;
- Check/money order of \$410 made out to U.S. Department of Homeland Security;
- Form G-1145; E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance; – remove this line if you're not submitting the Form G-1145 with your OPT application
- Form I-765; Application for Employment Authorization;
- Copy of Form I-20;
- Employment history printout from SEVIS;
- Copy of passport;
- Copy of visa; – remove this line if you do not have an F-1 visa stamp (e.g. if you are a Canadian citizen)
- Copy of Form I-94;
- Copy of previous EAD card – remove this line if you do not have any previous EAD cards

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Your Signature

Your Full Name

Application For Employment Authorization  
Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services



USCIS Form I-765  
OMB No. 1611-0040  
Expires 03/31/2018

Fee Stamp

Initial Receipt

Received	Reimbursed	Start
Completed	Approved	Disputed

Application Approved:  Application Denied:  Filed for re-examination:  Eligibility under:  Economic security under:  I-765(a)(1)  I-765(a)(2)  I-765(a)(3)  I-765(a)(4)  I-765(a)(5)  I-765(a)(6)  I-765(a)(7)  I-765(a)(8)  I-765(a)(9)  I-765(a)(10)  I-765(a)(11)  I-765(a)(12)  I-765(a)(13)  I-765(a)(14)  I-765(a)(15)  I-765(a)(16)  I-765(a)(17)  I-765(a)(18)  I-765(a)(19)  I-765(a)(20)  I-765(a)(21)  I-765(a)(22)  I-765(a)(23)  I-765(a)(24)  I-765(a)(25)  I-765(a)(26)  I-765(a)(27)  I-765(a)(28)  I-765(a)(29)  I-765(a)(30)  I-765(a)(31)  I-765(a)(32)  I-765(a)(33)  I-765(a)(34)  I-765(a)(35)  I-765(a)(36)  I-765(a)(37)  I-765(a)(38)  I-765(a)(39)  I-765(a)(40)  I-765(a)(41)  I-765(a)(42)  I-765(a)(43)  I-765(a)(44)  I-765(a)(45)  I-765(a)(46)  I-765(a)(47)  I-765(a)(48)  I-765(a)(49)  I-765(a)(50)  I-765(a)(51)  I-765(a)(52)  I-765(a)(53)  I-765(a)(54)  I-765(a)(55)  I-765(a)(56)  I-765(a)(57)  I-765(a)(58)  I-765(a)(59)  I-765(a)(60)  I-765(a)(61)  I-765(a)(62)  I-765(a)(63)  I-765(a)(64)  I-765(a)(65)  I-765(a)(66)  I-765(a)(67)  I-765(a)(68)  I-765(a)(69)  I-765(a)(70)  I-765(a)(71)  I-765(a)(72)  I-765(a)(73)  I-765(a)(74)  I-765(a)(75)  I-765(a)(76)  I-765(a)(77)  I-765(a)(78)  I-765(a)(79)  I-765(a)(80)  I-765(a)(81)  I-765(a)(82)  I-765(a)(83)  I-765(a)(84)  I-765(a)(85)  I-765(a)(86)  I-765(a)(87)  I-765(a)(88)  I-765(a)(89)  I-765(a)(90)  I-765(a)(91)  I-765(a)(92)  I-765(a)(93)  I-765(a)(94)  I-765(a)(95)  I-765(a)(96)  I-765(a)(97)  I-765(a)(98)  I-765(a)(99)  I-765(a)(100)

START HERE - Type or print in black ink.

- I am applying for:
- Permission to accept employment.
  - Replacement (of lost employer authorization document).
  - Renewal of any permission to accept employment (attach a copy of your previous employer authorization).

1. Full Name: Family Name, First Name, Middle Name

2. Other Names Used (include Maiden Name): Family Name, First Name, Middle Name

3. U.S. Mailing Address: Street Number and Name, Town or City, State, ZIP Code

4. Country of Citizenship or Nationality

5. Place of Birth: Town or City, State/Province, Country

6. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): Gender  Male  Female

7. Marital Status:  Single  Married  Divorced  Widowed

Mark "Permission to accept employment" for the next four months—do not use a friend's address! You may use the OISS address: 6100 Main St. MS-365 Houston, TX 77005

9. Social Security Number (include all numbers you have ever used, if any)

10. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or Form I-94 Number (if any)

11. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?  Yes (Complete the following questions): Which USCIS Office? Date: Result: (Granted or Denied; attach all documentation.)  No (Proceed to Question 12)

12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S., on or about (mm/dd/yyyy)

13. Place of Last Entry into the U.S.

14. Status at Last Entry (B-2 Visitor, F-1 Student, No Lawful Status, etc.)

15. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.)

16. Eligibility Category: Go to the "Who May File Form I-765" section of the instructions. In the space below, place the letter and number of the eligibility category you selected from the instructions. For example: O&B, O&B7(a), etc. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Enter I-94 number

"Yes" if you have applied for OPT. OPT does not count.

Post-completion OPT: (c)(3)(b)  
Pre-completion OPT: (c)(3)(a)

17. (a)(9)(C) Eligibility Category: If you entered the eligibility category (a)(9)(C) in Question 16 above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number in the space below. If you are not currently employed by your current employer, list your degree and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number in the space below.

18. (a)(9)(B) Eligibility Category: If you entered the eligibility category (a)(9)(B) in Question 16 above, please provide the number of the Form I-140 beneficiary's Form I-797 Notice of Approval for Form I-129.

19. (a)(9)(A) and (a)(9)(D) Eligibility Category: a. If you entered the eligibility category (a)(9)(A) or (a)(9)(D) in Question 16 above, please provide the number of the Form I-140 beneficiary's Form I-797 Notice of Approval for Form I-140. b. Have you EVER been arrested for and/or convicted of any crime?  Yes  No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to Item Number 19 b, refer to Item Number 4, Item H, or Item I in the Who May File Form I-765 section of these instructions for information about providing court dispositions.

Applicant's Signature (Don't forget to sign!) Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) Telephone Number Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Applicant Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) Printed Name Address

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.

Make sure to sign in blue ink

Leave blank!



# F-1 Optional Practical Training STUDENT FORM

OISS recommends applying for OPT as early as possible since USCIS averages 90 days to process applications. Students can start applying 90 days before their program end date and must apply no later than 30 days after their program end date. Students do not need a job offer to apply for OPT. **Please print clearly.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Applying For (check one):                      Pre-Completion OPT                      Post-Completion OPT

Requested OPT Start Date\*: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date\*\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
*\* Start date for Post-Completion OPT can be 1 - 60 days after 1-20 completion date.                      \*\* End date for Post-Completion OPT is typically 12 months after start date (1 year later, 1 day less).*

Your OPT start and end dates are locked-in once your application is received by USCIS.

Preferred Email while on OPT (non-Rice email): \_\_\_\_\_ Major(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Level (check one):    Bachelor's       Master's (Non-Thesis)       Master's (Thesis)       Doctorate\*

### \*Important Note for Doctoral Students

If you are a Doctoral student, are you on an RA or TA? (check one):    Yes       No  
*If yes, please note that your 1-20 end date will be updated to match the completion date indicated on this form. This change will impact your student status and on-campus work eligibility. To maintain your RA/TA stipend, you may need to use the semester end date as your completion date.*

### Student F-1 OPT Statement of Understanding

As a condition of your F-1 OPT status, please read carefully, initial each statement, and sign at the bottom.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I have attended an OPT workshop or reviewed the online OPT Tutorial PowerPoint.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I understand I must bring or scan a copy ([oisss@rice.edu](mailto:oisss@rice.edu)) of my EAD card to OISS within 10 days of its arrival.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I understand that I must report any personal address changes through OISS' [OPT reporting site](#) within 10 days. If I do not comply with this requirement, I could lose my F-1 status. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(12)(ii)(A)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I understand that I must report any employment changes through OISS' [OPT reporting site](#) within 10 days. This would include starting a job, leaving a job, or any periods of unemployment. If I do not comply with this requirement, I could lose my F-1 status. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(12)(ii)(A)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I understand that I must report any changes in visa status through OISS' [OPT reporting site](#) within 10 days of the approved status change. I understand that it may also be a good idea to contact an OISS advisor regarding the change as well. If I do not comply with this requirement, I could lose my F-1 status. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(12)(ii)(A)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I understand that I cannot get paid for an on-campus student work position after my program end date. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(11)(i)(D)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I understand that once I mail the OPT application; it may not be possible to edit or cancel it.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I understand the practical training I receive while on OPT must be directly related to my major field of study as well as commensurate with my degree level. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(12)(ii)(A)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I understand that if I transfer to another university, my OPT will terminate and I must stop working immediately. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(B)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I understand that I cannot have more than 90 days of unemployment while on OPT. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(E)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I understand that I must work at least 20 hours per week to not accrue days of unemployment. ([http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/opt\\_policy\\_guidance\\_04201\\_0.pdf](http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/opt_policy_guidance_04201_0.pdf))
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I understand that I have a 60-day grace period at the end of my OPT in which I cannot work but I may travel within the U.S., transfer to another institution, pursue another degree level at Rice, or change my status. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(D)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I understand that although OISS will not require me to have health insurance while on OPT it is strongly recommended.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I understand that although technically I can apply within my 60-day grace period, it is not advisable due to potential processing complications. I understand that the best time to apply is as close to 90 days before the end of my program as possible for the best chance of having my application approved by my requested OPT start date. 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(11)(i)(B)(2)

By signing below, I understand and have read the F-1 OPT Statement of Understanding and agree to comply with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) immigration regulations throughout my time in F-1 status. I will adhere to these guidelines and contact OISS if I have any questions.

Printed Name

Signature

Date



F-1 Optional Practical Training
RICE FACULTY ADVISOR FORM

This part is filled out by the STUDENT:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applying For (check one): Pre-Completion OPT Post-Completion OPT

Degree Level (check one): Bachelor's Master's (Non-Thesis) Master's (Thesis) Doctorate\*

\*Important Note for Doctoral Students

If you are a Doctoral student, are you on an RA or TA? (check one): Yes No

If yes, please note that your I-20 end date will be updated to match the completion date indicated on this form. This change will impact your student status and on-campus work eligibility. To maintain your RA/TA stipend, you may need to use the semester end date as your completion date.

This part is filled out by the RICE FACULTY ADVISOR:

The above student is planning to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) authorization from the Department of Homeland Security. OPT allows international students in F-1 visa status to work and gain practical experience for up to one year in a field related to their Rice degree. In order to process immigration paperwork and recommend this student for OPT authorization, we need to know his/her completion date.

What should the completion date be? Please check one of the following and fill in the appropriate date:

POST-COMPLETION OPT

For 1) all undergraduate students and 2) graduate students in a non-thesis degree program, the I-20 completion date will be the end of semester/commencement date.

Please check the appropriate box.

- End of semester/commencement for Spring 2017
End of Summer 2017
End of semester for Fall 2017

For thesis/dissertation graduate students, please identify your student's completion date (check only one):

- Thesis/dissertation defense date (specify date here)\*
Thesis/dissertation submission date (specify date here)\*
Commencement/ Last day of final semester Spring 2017 Summer 2017 Fall 2017

(Please see statement above in student section regarding TA/RA stipends for doctoral students.)

\*Students who wish to have a completion date during the semester after oral defense or while completing their thesis, will be required to register for full-time research hours. Since the selection of a completion date can depend on a variety of factors, students are encouraged to meet one-on-one with an OISS advisor, in addition to their faculty advisor, to develop an OPT timeline and strategy.

PRE-COMPLETION OPT (only for exceptional circumstances when students start optional practical training before completing studies at Rice)

The student will complete all coursework on \_\_\_\_\_ and will be enrolled until that date. I have no objection to the student beginning OPT employment before the date of graduation.

I have reviewed the degree requirements for this student and certify that the student is expected to meet said requirements on the date indicated above. In addition, I understand this information will be used to update the program dates in the student's immigration record.

Faculty Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_
Printed Name Signature Date