Optional Practical Training (OPT) for F-1 Students

Information in this section relates to standard Optional Practical Training (OPT). The following sections describe in detail the requirements for each level of the application process:

- [Applying for Optional Practical Training][1]
  - [OPT Online Workshop][2]
- [After You Have Applied for Optional Practical Training][3]
- [While You Are On Optional Practical Training][4]
- [OPT STEM Extension][5]
- [CAP GAP][6]

The following information is a short description and general criteria to consider before applying for OPT.

**Definition**

OPT is defined in the Federal Regulations as temporary employment directly related to a student's field of study. During OPT, a student remains in F-1 status. The end result of the OPT request process is an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by United States Citizenship and Immigrations Services (USCIS).

**Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for OPT, the student must:

- Be in legal F-1 immigration status
- Be a full-time student for at least one academic year
- Have U-M approved health insurance

*Note:* Post-completion OPT applications are typically denied by USCIS if the Level of Education indicated in item #4 on the I-20 is “non-degree.”

**Maximum Length**

- The standard OPT period is a cumulative maximum of 12 months.
- Part-time OPT is deducted from the 12-month limit at 50%.
- An F-1 may become eligible for another 12 months of OPT if he/she advances to a higher educational level.
Some students may be eligible for an extension of their OPT based on a STEM degree [5].

Source URL: https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/opt

Links
[1] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/apply-opt
[3] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/opt-after
[4] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/on-opt
[5] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/stem-extend
[6] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/cap-gap