

# Navigating the U.S. Job Search

## *for International Students*

March 10  
2:30 - 4:00 PM  
Virtual

Scan Here to Check In:



# Agenda

TOPIC	PRESENTER
Introduction	<b>Jake Koelzer</b> <i>International Center</i>
Putting Together An Effective Strategy	<b>Rachel Zhang</b> <i>University Career Center</i>
Immigration/Legal Issues	<b>John Prescott</b> <i>International Center</i>  <b>Beth Hoffman-Lopez</b> <i>International Center</i>

# Employment Options for F-1/J-1 Students Before Graduation



- ❑ On Campus Employment
  - ❑ Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
  - ❑ Optional Practical Training (OPT)
  - ❑ Academic Training (AT)
- ❑ *For detailed descriptions of on-campus employment, CPT, OPT and AT, please visit our website at:  
<https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/iss/wor>*

# Employment Options for F-1/J-1 Students After Graduation



- **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**
- **Academic Training (AT)**

*Review International Center (IC) website first!*

# J-1 Employment Before & After Graduation - Academic Training



Definition	Work, training, or experience related to a student's field of study
Timing	Before or after completion of studies
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May not exceed the amount of time spent in the full course of study</li><li>• Usual length is up to 18 months cumulative</li><li>• May have extra 18 months if complete PhD or have <a href="#">STEM degree</a></li></ul>
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• See International Center website</li><li>• Final authorization is issued in International Center</li><li>• Apply before graduation</li></ul>
Cost	None

# F-1 Employment after Graduation:

## Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Definition	Temporary employment directly related to a student's field of study
Timing	Typically for after completion of studies; Maximum 90 days unemployment time
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begins at 12 months</li><li>• May be eligible for Cap Gap or 24-Month STEM OPT extension</li></ul>
Application Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Take online OPT training on International Center website</li><li>2. Gather documentation</li><li>3. Request OPT I-20 from I-Center (1-2 weeks processing)</li><li>4. File application with U.S. Government (currently 3 to 4-ish months processing time)</li></ol>
Cost	Application fee(s) to USCIS, including Premium Processing option

# Post-Completion OPT Timing

- 1) When will you file your OPT application with USCIS?  
*Up to 90 days **before** I-20 completion date, or up to 60 days\* **after** I-20 completion date*
- 2) What requested OPT start date will you use?  
*As early as 1 day after the I-20 completion date, or as late as 60 days after the I-20 completion date*

# 24-Month STEM Extension of OPT

- 1) Check if your current or recent program/major is on the list
  - Find CIP code on page 1 of your I-20
  - Look up the official STEM list:  
<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/stemList2024.pdf>
  
- 2) Ask your employer if they are enrolled in E-Verify. If yes, then review the [Form I-983](#).

# H-1B – Temporary Worker in Specialty Occupations

## Basic Procedure Flowsheet\*\*\*

### Information/Evidence Gathering

- Department and employee fill out forms
- Gather supporting documents/letters

**Time: 1-2 weeks**



### Wage Determination

- Employer obtains prevailing and actual wage
- Employer files LCA with the Department of Labor

**Time: ~2 weeks**



### H-1B Petition

- Employer prepares and files I-129 with USCIS
- USCIS adjudication (15 days - 9 months)

**Time: 6 weeks to 10 months**

### Note:

- *Credential evaluation, if relevant degree was earned at an institution outside of the U.S.*
- *J-1 exchange visitors may need waiver of 212(e) - two year home residency requirement.*

### Note:

- *Wage offered to the alien must be 100% of the prevailing wage or actual wage (whichever is higher).*

### Note:

- *Approval can be for change/extension of status or consular processing*
- *USCIS approval does not include visa sticker.*

**\*\*\*Flowsheet for UM Cap Exempt H-1B's, will differ for private sector cap-based H-1B's**

# Permanent Residency (“Green Card”)

## Basic Procedure Flow Sheet

### Application for Labor Certification (PERM)

- Advertisement & recruitment results (2+ mo)
- Prevailing Wage Determination filed (4 mo)
- Drafting forms, gathering documents  
U.S. Dept. of Labor (Form ETA 9089) (15+ mo)

**Time: 21 to 27 months**

### Immigration Petition for Alien Worker

- Preparation of additional forms/documents
- File Form I-140 with USCIS

**Time: 3 weeks to 2 months**

### Adjustment of Status (AOS)

- Prepare and file Form I-485 with USCIS or immigrant visa at U.S. Consulate abroad, dependent on Priority Date\*

**Time: 6 months to unknown**

### No Labor Certification Needed For:

- *Extraordinary Ability (EB-1A)*
- *Outstanding Professors/Researchers (EB-1B, requires employer sponsor.)*
- *National Interest Waiver (EB-2)*

### Note:

- *Employment Authorization possible for H-4 dependent prior to filing AOS*
- *\*Priority Date must be current on Visa Bulletin to apply for AOS or immigrant visa*

# Cultural & Immigration Issues in Job Search



- [Common cultural barriers to the job search](#)
- [Interview fashion and grooming tips](#)
- [International Student Employment: Answering Questions about the Need for “Employment Visa Sponsorship”](#)
- [How, why, and when to share your immigration status on job interviews](#)

# Resources

- [English Language Institute](#)
  - Academic English courses, Counseling and Advising, and events/programs
- [Sweetland Center for Writing](#)
  - Writing workshops and courses
- **H-1B Temporary Worker in Specialty Occupations Basics**
  - Postponed until more clarity on situation
- **Employment-Based U.S. Permanent Residency Information**
  - Tuesday, March 31 from 3 - 4 PM

Q & A