

NAVIGATING THE U.S. JOB SEARCH

for international students



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Agenda

TOPIC	PRESENTER
Introduction	Jake Koelzer <i>International Center</i>
Putting Together An Effective Strategy	Rachel Zhang <i>University Career Center</i>
Legal/Immigration Issues	John Prescott <i>International Center</i> Beth Hoffman-Lopez <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:*
<http://www.internationalcenter.umich.edu>

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">• May not exceed the amount of time spent in the full course of study• Usual length is up to 18 months cumulative• May have extra 18 months if complete PhD or have STEM degree
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• See International Center website• Final authorization is issued in International Center• Apply before graduation
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">• Begins at 12 months• May be eligible for Cap Gap or 24-Month STEM OPT extension
Application Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Take online OPT training on International Center website2. Gather documentation3. Request OPT I-20 from I-Center (1-2 weeks processing)4. File application with U.S. Government (currently 3 to 4-ish months processing time)
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 - 4 months)

Time: 3 weeks to 5 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 (6 mo)
- Drafting forms, gathering documents
- U.S. Dept. of Labor (Form ETA 9089) (15+ mo)

Time: 23 to 27 months

Immigration Petition for Alien Worker

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

Time: 3 weeks to 8 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**
 - Tuesday, April 1 from 3 - 4 PM
- **Employment-Based U.S. Permanent Residency Information**
 - Tuesday, April 8 from 3 - 4 PM

Q & A