Application for Employment Authorization

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Office of International Student Services
St. Francis College
180 Remsen Street
Brooklyn Heights, NY 11201
(718) 489-3486 or 3486

In order to apply for OPT, you must have been in status and enrolled on a fulltime basis for one full academic year.

Update 01/24/2013
Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment authorization that gives F-1 students an opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to a practical work experience off campus. Most students are eligible to apply for 12 months of OPT. An additional 12 months may be available to a student who pursues a second degree at a higher education level. Students who have received a degree in government designated STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) may qualify for an additional 17-month period.

**OPT Eligibility**

To be eligible for the initial 12-month OPT period, the student must:
- Be a full-time registered student for at least one full academic year at SFC
- Be physically present in the United States
- Be maintaining valid F-1 status at the time of application
- Intend to work in the position directly related to the major field of study. No offer of employment is needed at the time of applying

**DSO OPT Recommendation I-20**

- Your application will be reviewed and a recommendation will be submitted by updating your record in SEVIS. The SEVIS system will produce a new I-20 which you will need to sign before it is sent to the USCIS Processing Center.

**When to File**

- Students may file the form I-765 up to 90 days prior to the end of study and up to 60 days after the completion of study
- It is recommended to file 90 days prior to the completion of study to allow for processing time. USCIS has 90 days to respond to your OPT request. The later in the semester an application is submitted, the longer the response time.

**Dates of Authorization**

- The OPT card is approved for a specific beginning and end date. The start date of OPT must be within 60 days of the end of study.

**Graduation Audit**

- Prior to applying each student must complete a graduation audit. A program evaluation can be printed out via Terrier Web. This is to ensure that all required classes for your degree have been completed.

**Reporting Requirements**

- When a student gains employment, an official letter from the employer must be submitted. The letter must be an official company letter head stating the dates of employment, hours worked weekly, pay and job duties.
Student must report the following changes within 10 days of the change
- Legal Name
- Residential or mailing address
- Employer name and address
- Termination or loss of employment
- Transfer to another F-1 program
- Change of education level

Unemployment
- Students approved for the 12 month post-completion OPT may not accrue more than 90 days of unemployment during the approved OPT dates. Periods of up to 10 days between the end of one job and the beginning of another job will not be included in the time spent unemployed. To be considered to be actively using your OPT you must engaged in employment.

Employment
Students may work fulltime during the approved dates of OPT. Employment may not begin until the OPT card has been received and/or on the approved start date. Employment can be paid or unpaid.
- **Multiple employers.** A student may work for multiple employers, but all employment must be related to the major field of study.
- **Self-employed business owner.** Students on OPT may start a business and be self-employed. In this case the student must be able to prove that he or she has the proper business license and is actively engaged in a business related to the student’s academic degree program.
- **Unpaid employment.** A student may work as a volunteer or unpaid intern, where this does not violate labor laws. The work must be at least 20 hours a week. Proof of working a minimum of 29 hours a week must be provided to the college.

H-1B Cap-Gap Extension of OPT
- Duration of status of OPT work authorization will be automatically extended until October 1st for a student on OPT who is the beneficiary of a timely filed H-1B petition requesting change of status from F-1 to H-1B. An updated I-20 will be provided to you if you notify us and provide evidence of a timely filed H-1B petition (receipt of approval notice). The extension of duration of status and work authorization will be automatically terminated upon rejection, denial, or revocation of the H-1B petition filed on the students behalf.

Travelling on OPT
- All travelling while OPT request is in process is at the risk of the student. When travelling after OPT is authorized, a student must travel with the following documents:
  - I-20 endorsement no older than 6 months that has current OPT position on 3d page
  - EAD/OPT card
  - Valid Visa and Passport
  - Proof of job or job offer
Optional Practical Training Request Form

Name: ____________________________ Date: __________________

Last First

Local Address: _________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Phone: __________________ E-mail: ____________________ Student ID #: _____________

Degree Program: ________________________ Major: ________________________________

Expected or Actual Date of Completion of Studies: _________________________________

TYPE OF OPT YOU ARE APPLYING FOR:

☐ After Completion of Studies

Starting ____________________________ Your start date could be as early as the expected or actual date of
completion of studies you put above, or any other date within the 60-day grace period following it.

Ending ______________________________ You may use as much of the 12-month benefit as you want, or
have left. If you chose to use the full amount, your ending date cannot be later than 14 months after your expected or actual
date of completion of studies.

Describe your proposed employment responsibilities for optional practical training.

CHECK OFF EVERY DOCUMENT THAT YOU HAVE ATTACHED:

☐ Form I-765
☐ Two color photos, according to the USCIS photo standards, with your name and SEVIS I-20
  # printed in pencil on the back
☐ $380 Fee payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security (no abbreviations)
☐ Black and white photocopies of all previous Forms I-20 you have ever received
☐ Color photocopy of any EAD cards you have received
☐ Color photocopies of Passport and F-1 Visa identification pages and I-94 card (front and
  back)
During your period of authorized Optional Practical Training, you are continuing your F-1 status and the legal responsibilities. Please carefully read the below responsibilities and sign the Acknowledgement below stating you understand them.

1. Only work in your major field of study and within the date that you have been authorized on your EAD card.

2. “During post-completion OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment. Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment…” [8CFR 214.2 (f)(10)(ii)(E)]

3. You are required to report the following:
   - Change of name,
   - Change of address,
   - Employment information, supported by a formal letter from your employer as required by USCIS regulations,
   - Visa and passport changes.

4. Travel during the OPT application process is at the student’s own risk.

5. USCIS has 90 days to respond to your OPT application. The later in the semester you apply for OPT, the longer the response time.

I have read and understood my F-1 student status responsibilities while I am on OPT. I understand that I am completely responsible for properly filing my OPT application with USCIS, tracking its processing through the USCIS Case Status System at www.uscis.gov

___________________               ________________________               ________________________
Name (print)                                                Signature                   Date