Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment authorization that is related to an F-1 student’s academic program. The work done does not count towards course credit; therefore it is the student’s option to engage in employment. OPT is awarded at the completion of each level of degree study. The application process takes approximately three months (120) for both initial applications and renewals. If applying for OPT based on graduation, the OPT application must be submitted to USCIS before the official completion/graduation date.

To be eligible for Optional Practical Training:

- You must have been in full-time status for the twelve months preceding the OPT application.
- You must be in valid F-1 status at the time of application with thirty days left on both the Visa and the Passport.
- If applying for OPT based on graduation, you must apply before the official graduation date.

Bring the following to the International Office:

- Completed Advisor’s / Department Dean Recommendation Form
- Copy of Degree Application
- Valid Passport with valid Visa, Form I-94 and current I-20
- Two (2) passport photos – full frontal, 2x2, on a white/off white background w/glossy finish, no headgear unless religious in nature
- US Money Order made payable to US Homeland Security in the amount of:___________
- Social Security Card
- Completed Form I-765
- Employer information (Company name, address, telephone, supervisor name &
- Previously issued EADs (work permit cards)
- Embassy letters for family members to attend graduation to be mailed in January

Dates of OPT Authorization:

The OPT card is approved for a specific beginning and end date. You are required to submit a preferred beginning and end date for your OPT card. These dates must be given to the International Student Advisor at the time of application.