STOP: Before you apply for Optional Practical Training, you must read this form in its entirety and sign in the box at the bottom of OPT Statement of Responsibility.

Basic Description:
As an F-1 student, you may apply to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for authorization for 12 months of temporary employment for Optional Practical Training (OPT). The employment should be directly related to your major area of study. To be eligible for OPT, you must be in legal F-1 status at the time of application and have completed one academic year as a full-time student (not necessarily in F-1 status). OPT can be authorized for the following:

- **Pre-Completion:** Before completion of your studies in one of the following three situations:
  1. Part-time (20 hours a week or less) during the fall or spring semesters
  2. Full or part-time during summer vacation if you are currently enrolled and intend to register for the following semester
  Full-time during fall or spring if you have completed all coursework and are in the thesis, dissertation or comprehensive exams only phase of your degree

- **Post-Completion:** After completion of your studies (most students choose this option)

  **IMPORTANT!** If choosing this option, your OPT application must be received by the DHS service center no later than 60 days after your program completion date. However, it is strongly recommended to apply before you complete your studies. Also, your 12 months of OPT must be completed within 14 months of the date of completion of your studies.

  OR

Preconditions
- Student must have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis at a DHS-approved school for one full academic year before being eligible for OPT. Students in English language training programs are not eligible for OPT.

Location
- Students may engage in OPT for any employer for the duration of OPT authorization, as long as the employment qualifies under OPT standards.

Duration
- Standard OPT is available for a cumulative maximum of 12 months per educational level.
- A one-time extension of 24 months (for a total of 29 months) is available to certain STEM degree recipients who are employed by an employer registered with E-Verify.
- 20 hours/week limit for pre-completion OPT done while school is in session and student still has coursework to complete.
- Full-time employment can be requested for pre-completion OPT done during official school breaks, and for students who have completed all requirements for their degree except for thesis or dissertation.
- For post-completion OPT, according to SEVP guidance a student must be adequately employed to avoid limits on unemployment

Hours per week
- Must be directly related to the student’s course of study.

Field of work
- No offer of employment is required to apply for standard OPT, but the student is expected to work during the OPT EAD validity period. Students on post-completion OPT are limited to a maximum of 90 days of unemployment.

Offer of employment
- To apply for a 24-month STEM extension, student must have an offer of employment from an employer registered with E-Verify.

Effect on other work
- Prior use of full-time Curricular Practical Training for one year or more eliminates eligibility for Optional Practical Training

Approval process
- DSO recommends OPT in SEVIS.
- Student files I-765 application for EAD with USCIS Lockbox Facility.
- Work can begin only after receiving EAD issued by USCIS, and on or after the start date on the EAD.
- Special rules govern applications for the 24-month STEM OPT extension.
- If doing pre-completion OPT, must maintain a full course of study during the period of employment (unless done during school breaks).
- Degree candidates that have completed all coursework must continue to make normal progress towards completing the thesis or dissertation required for their degree.

Miscellaneous
Application Procedure

How to Apply:
You apply for OPT to DHS by first making a request for the authorization to a Designated School Official (DSO) in the Texas State International Office. The DSO will make a new I-20 which must be signed and dated by you that certifies you as eligible for OPT. You may apply as early as 90 days before completion of your studies and no later than 60 days after completion of studies, and since DHS processing times may be lengthy, we recommend that you apply early. Before meeting with the DSO you will need to prepare for the appointment. (see below)

Appointment Checklist
Please bring the following documents to your appointment

- The **Statement of Responsibility Form** signed and dated by you
- The **Completion of Degree Form** signed by your department or **Letter of Completion** from the Graduate College
- Complete the **G-1145** form if you would like to be e-notified from USCIS
- A completed **Form I-765** (You may download an electronic version here and save it on a USB drive.)
  - Write “None” or “N/A” (Not Applicable) as needed, **DO NOT leave any questions unanswered.**
  - Question #3, **DO NOT fill in your address.** We will use our office address.
  - Question #16 should be coded:
    - Pre-completion OPT: (c)(3)(A) (**lowercase”c”**)
    - Post-completion OPT: (c)(3)(B) (**lowercase”c”**)
- **Passport**, valid for at least the next six months
- **US Visa** page stamped in passport
- Most recent I-94
- **Most recent I-20** issued by Texas State International Office
- All I-20s which you have been issued with CPT authorization all pages
- **Personal check** payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security” for $410.00 (Do not write “DHS”)
- **2 passport photos** – For photo requirements, review information on link below. [https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/news/picture-perfect-passport.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/news/picture-perfect-passport.html)
- Any **Form I-797A** Notice of Action (if applicable)
- Any previously issued OPT EAD card (if applicable)

**OPT Application Package:**
The International Office will mail the packet for you, however, if you prefer to mail it yourself, mail to:
(I-765 EAD)
USCIS
P. O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

Use this address to mail your application using a courier service (**FedEx, UPS, DHL**)
USCIS
Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121, Business
Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067
OPT Statement of Responsibility

- VERY IMPORTANT: While on OPT under your Texas State I-20 you are required to continue to report any changes on your official name, address, and status of employment including any changes of employer name or address information to the Texas State International Office. Please use the OPT PERSONAL UPDATE form on our website.

- Employment cannot begin until you have received your I-765 Employment Authorization Document (EAD card) and the start date on the card has been reached.

- If you do not complete all coursework by your expected completion date, you may not work more than 20 hours a week (part-time), until all coursework has been completed.

- During post-completion OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment. During any initial 12-month period of post-completion OPT, no student may be unemployed for an aggregate of more than 90 days. Employment during this period can be traditional paid employment, volunteer work, and an unpaid or paid internship over 20 hours a week.

- If you transfer to another school or begin study at another educational level, your authorization to engage in OPT employment is automatically terminated upon the transfer date.

- If you travel outside the United States during your OPT period, upon reentry you must present a valid passport, valid F-1 visa, your I-765 EAD card, and your Form I-20 properly endorsed for travel within six months by a DSO from the International Office. In addition, you will need a letter from your employer or prospective employer indicating that you are returning to resume employment or will begin employment. Students who do not meet these requirements may not be allowed to reenter the United States. Travel following completion of studies and before the EAD is received is not recommended.

- You are allowed one year of OPT per degree level during your time as an F-1 student. You become eligible for another 12 months of OPT if you change to a higher educational level.

- For students with a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) degree who are eligible for the 24-month extension: To apply for the OPT extension, you must be employed by an employer who is registered for E-Verify and apply before your current OPT expires.

- Please give us your preferred beginning and end dates for your OPT. The OPT card is issued for a specific time period (maximum of 12 months per education level). If you are unsure, you can discuss your options during your OPT appointment with the international advisor.

  Start date: ___________________________ End Date: ___________________________

Statement of Responsibility:

I have read the content of this handout and understand the regulations associated with OPT.

Print Name: ___________________________________________ Phone (___) ____________

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Alternative e-mail (necessary after graduation) ___________________________________________
### Optional Practical Training Completion of Degree Form

#### SECTION A: Instructions for Student

Please fill out this section and take this form to your department for the required signature. This form needs to be signed by your Academic Advisor, Dissertation/Thesis Advisor, Chair, or Dean. Check with your college, school, or department to determine who is authorized to sign the form.

Name: _______________________________ Student ID#: __________________

Major: ___________________________ Phone: __________________ Date: ____________

#### SECTION B: Instructions for College/School/Department

F-1 international students may qualify for Optional Practical Training (OPT), which allows them to engage in temporary employment for up to one year to gain practical experience in their field of study. The above named student is applying for OPT. In order for the International Office to be able to recommend this student for this training, we need to know his/her expected date of completion. If you have any questions, please call 245-7966 and ask to speak with an international student advisor.

Please choose the category below that reflects this student’s situation regarding the completion of their degree requirements. Then please sign below and return the form to the student.

- **Category 1:** This student is currently enrolled in classes and expected to complete all requirements for their degree in the following semester:  
  - ☐ Spring 20___  
  - ☐ Summer 20___  
  - ☐ Fall 20___

- **Category 2:** A graduate student who only has their thesis, dissertation or comprehensive exams remaining may apply for OPT while completing their thesis/ dissertation/ comprehensive exams. This graduate student has completed, or will complete, all course requirements excluding their thesis, dissertation, or comprehensive exams. Their required coursework was completed, or will be completed, in the following semester:  
  - ☐ Spring 20___  
  - ☐ Summer 20___  
  - ☐ Fall 20___

- **Special Situation:** If you have completed your thesis or dissertation but missed the initial deadline for submission of your thesis to Alkek Library and your graduation has been postponed to the following semester, you may still be able to begin your OPT prior to your graduation. To do so, **you must obtain a “Letter of Completion” from the Graduate College** to certify that all requirements for your degree have been completed. (e-mail gradcollege@txstate.edu).

Name of Advisor, Chair, or Dean: ______________________________

Title: ___________________________ Phone: __________________

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ____________