

OPT Application Checklist

Please reference the [F-1 Guide to Optional Practical Training](#) handout to learn about the OPT process and general rules.

STEP 1: GATHER

Gather the following before making an OPT application appointment (**do not staple your documents together**):

- Check for \$410 made payable to Department of Homeland Security.** Make sure your name appears on the check. If more than one name appears, circle yours.
- Two Passport-Style Photos.** Photos must be taken within the last 30 days, measure 2 inches by 2 inches, and have a plain white or off-white background. Lightly write your name on the back with a pencil or felt-tip pen.
- Completed G-1145**, downloadable at <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145> (optional, but highly recommended)
- Completed I-765 copy** (download at <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>).
 - o Use a local address that is valid for the next 3 months. USCIS will NOT forward mail.
 - o The code for question #16 is (c)(3)(B)
 - o You must sign within the signature space (white space only; DO NOT cross the lines). If your signature is too large, USCIS will return the application to you.
- Copy of I-94 printout (download at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>)
- Copy of student visa and passport photo pages
- Copies of all previous I-20s in chronological order with most recent on top (do not copy the instructional pages)
- Copies of any prior EAD cards (if applicable)
- Recommended:** Documentation from academic adviser indicating current academic status and expected date of completion of studies. A one to two sentence letter is sufficient.

STEP 2: MAKE APPOINTMENT

- Make an appointment to see your international student advisor** to complete the application process. Please include your availability in your request and plan ahead (provide several meeting options and allow up to 3 days for an appointment).

STEP 3: MEET

- Bring the documents listed above to your appointment
- Know the dates that you want OPT to begin and end (you can request OPT to begin up to 60 days after your last day of classes/completion of the degree)
- Your international student advisor will issue an OPT I-20 and make copies of all of your documents. This OPT I-20 will be the final document required to complete your application.

NEXT STEPS

- Send your OPT application via Certified Mail to USCIS, PO Box 21281, Phoenix, AZ 85036. There is no need to express mail your application unless your deadline to file is less than 2 weeks away; in that case, use the listed address [for express mail](#). **Remember:** your application must be *received* by DHS no later than 60 days after you complete your degree requirements (this is *not* the same day as graduation).
- About two weeks after mailing your package, you will receive a formal receipt from USCIS with your personal application number. **Send a copy of this receipt to international@kgi.edu.**
- You will receive your EAD card within 75-90 days of the date on the receipt. DO NOT start working until you receive your EAD card and the date on the card has been reached. Inform the International Staff if you do not receive your EAD card within 90 days of the date of your receipt. **Send a copy of your EAD card to the International Staff when you receive it.**
- Interested in traveling? Please read the Travel While on OPT section of the [Travel Guidelines](#) handout *prior* to making travel arrangements.

IMPORTANT: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

You are required to continue to report any changes in your address, phone number, or e-mail address to the international office within 10 days of the change. Note: we do not recommend that you move while waiting for OPT approval. You must also update the international office with any and all changes to your employment (including breaks in employment). You can report both types of changes using the [OPT Reporting Form](#).