

Optional Practical Training

**Office of International Students
and Scholars**

What is OPT?

“Temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student’s major area of study”

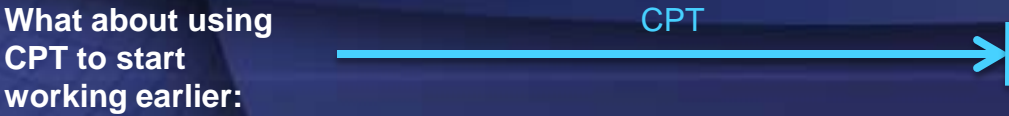
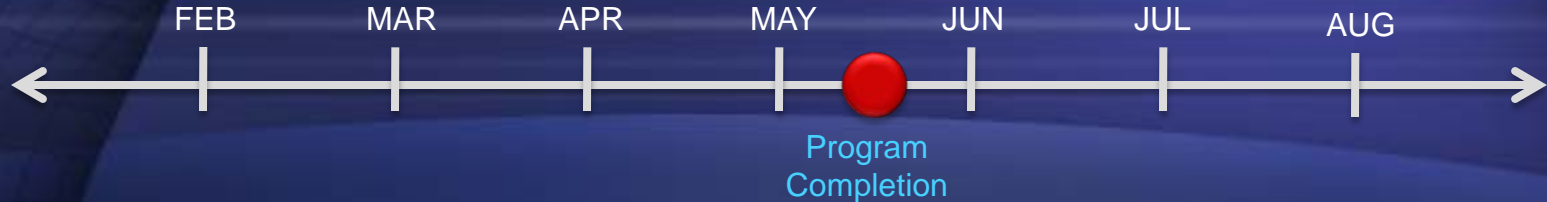
What is Post-Completion OPT?

- **12 months of work authorization**
- **Starting after program completion**
- **Employment in field of study
(Major on I-20)**

Who can apply for OPT?

- **F-1 status for 9 months (one academic year)**
- **Have not received 12 or more months of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

OPT Timeline (Spring Graduation)



OPT Timeline (Summer Graduation)



Program Completion

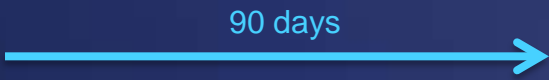
When to apply:



When OPT authorization would start:



How long should it take to receive the OPT card:



What about using CPT to start working earlier:



What if I don't graduate and I applied for OPT?

- **Students can still enroll part-time to complete their degree while on OPT**
- **If coursework is still required during fall and spring semesters only work part-time (20 hours/week)**

90 Day Unemployment Rule

- **You can not accumulate more than 90 days of unemployment during 12-month, post-completion OPT**
- **Your F-1/OPT status ends when 90 days of unemployment are reached.**

How to avoid 90 days of unemployment?

- **Plan your OPT start date**
- **Find other types of employment in your field of study**
 - Part-time paid employment (20+ hrs/wk)
 - Volunteering/unpaid employment (20+ hrs/wk)

How to apply?

- 1. Obtain academic advisor's recommendation for OPT**
- 2. Make an appointment with an advisor at OISS for OPT and bring copies of all documents.**
- 3. The advisor will create a new I-20 requesting OPT and assist you with your OPT packet.**
- 4. Mail the OPT packet to the USCIS and wait for your receipt and card.**

OPT Packet (what to mail)

1. Check for \$340 payable to “USCIS”
2. Two passport style photos
(name and I-94# on back)
3. I-765 (<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-765.pdf>)
4. Copy of I-20 requesting for OPT
5. Copy of passport bio page, visa,
and I-94 (front and back)
6. Copy of all previous I-20s at current education
level
7. Copy of change of status approval notice
(if you changed to F-1 within the U.S.)

I-765

Applicant is filing under § 274a.12 _____

Application Approved. Employment Authorized / Extended (Circle One) _____ until _____ (Date).
 _____ (Date).

Subject to the following conditions: _____

Application Denied.

Failed to establish eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c).
 Failed to establish economic necessity as required in 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)

I am applying for:

Permission to accept employment.
 Replacement (of lost employment authorization document)
 Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach previous employment authorization document).

1. Name (Family Name in CAPS) (First) _____ (Middle) _____	Which USCIS Office? _____ Date(s) _____
2. Other Names Used (Include Maiden Name) _____	Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation) _____
3. Address in the United States (Number and Street) _____ (Apt. Number) _____ OISS-UNR _____ MS 074	12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S. (mm/dd/yyyy) _____
(Town or City) _____ (State/Country) _____ (ZIP Code) _____ Reno _____ NV _____ 89557	13. Place of Last Entry into the U.S. _____
4. Country of Citizenship/Nationality _____	14. Manner of Last Entry (Visitor, Student, etc.) _____
5. Place of Birth (Town or City) _____ (State/Province) _____ (Country) _____	15. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.) F-1 Student
6. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) _____ 7. Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	16. Go to Part 2 of the Instructions, Eligibility Categories. In the space below, place the letter and number of the category you selected from the instructions (For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.). Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (c) (3) (B)
8. Marital Status <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	17. If you entered the Eligibility Category, (c)(3)(C), in item 16 above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number in the space below. Degree: _____ Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify: _____ Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number _____
9. Social Security Number (Include all numbers you have ever used) (if any) _____	
10. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or I-94 Number (if any) 123456789 01	
II. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (If yes, complete below) <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Certification

Your Certification: I certify, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the Instructions in Part 2 and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Block 16.

Signature _____ Telephone Number _____ Date _____

Where to send OPT packet?

**USCIS California Service Center
P.O. Box 10765
Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-1076**

* OISS advises to mail it via some type of tracking method, such as Priority Mail.

What to expect after mailing?

- **2 - 4 weeks you should receive a receipt notice**
- **Check the status of your OPT application online with your receipt number**
(<https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp>)
- **About 90 days you should receive the OPT card**
- **If you receive a Request For Evidence, contact the OISS.**
- **If your card takes more than 90 days from the notice date on the receipt, contact the OISS**

What about travel outside the U.S.?

- **You can travel before the program end date on your OPT I-20 with a travel signature and a valid visa.**
- **If you want to re-enter the U.S. after you program end date, have the following documents with you:**
 - OPT I-20 signed for travel (within 6 months)
 - Valid visa (it is possible to renew a visa during OPT)
 - EAD (OPT) Card
 - Job offer/contract (optional)

OPT Reporting Requirements

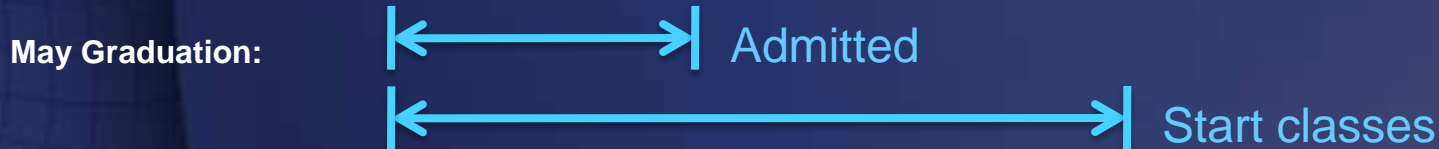
- **Name and Address changes**
- **Employer Name and Address changes**
- **Report within 10 days of change**
- **Contact OISS to change via web/e-mail**

www.unr.edu/oiss

oiss@unr.edu

I'm starting a new academic program/level after I graduate, do I need OPT?

1. Must be admitted to new program/school by end of 60 day grace period
2. New program must start within 5 months



Don't forget the 90 days of unemployment rule!

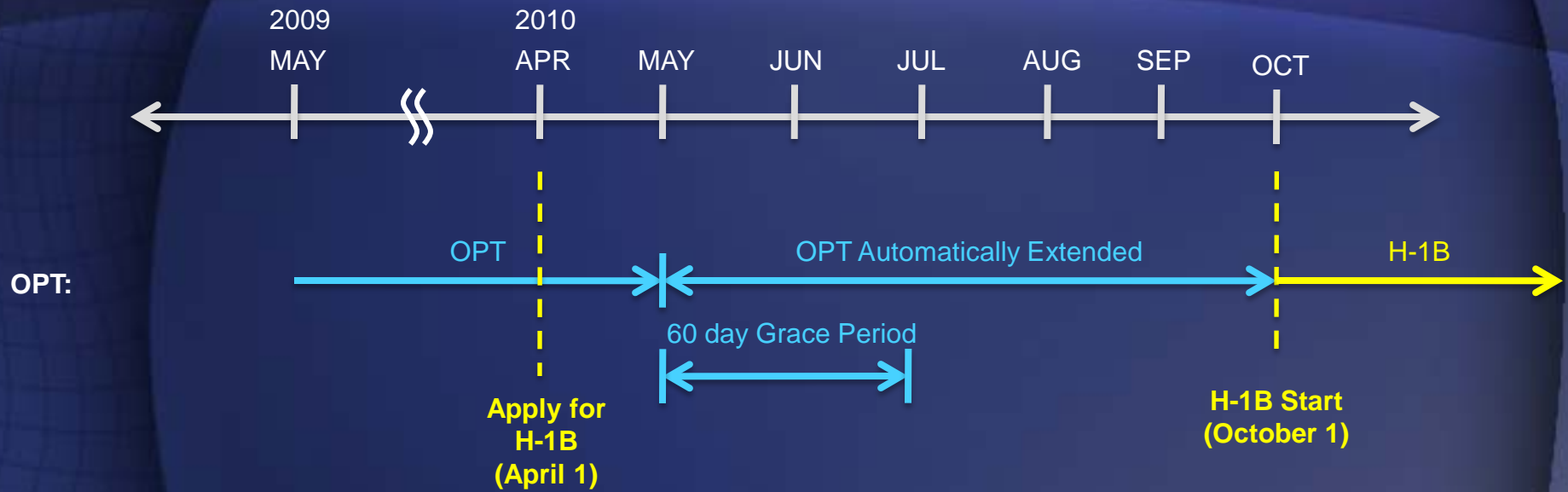
STEM OPT 17 Month Extension

- **F-1 students with STEM field degrees (that current OPT is based on)**
- **Must be working for a U.S. employer in a job directly related field of study (traditional paid employment)**
- **Employer must be registered in E-Verify**
- **File for extension 3 months before 12-month OPT ends**

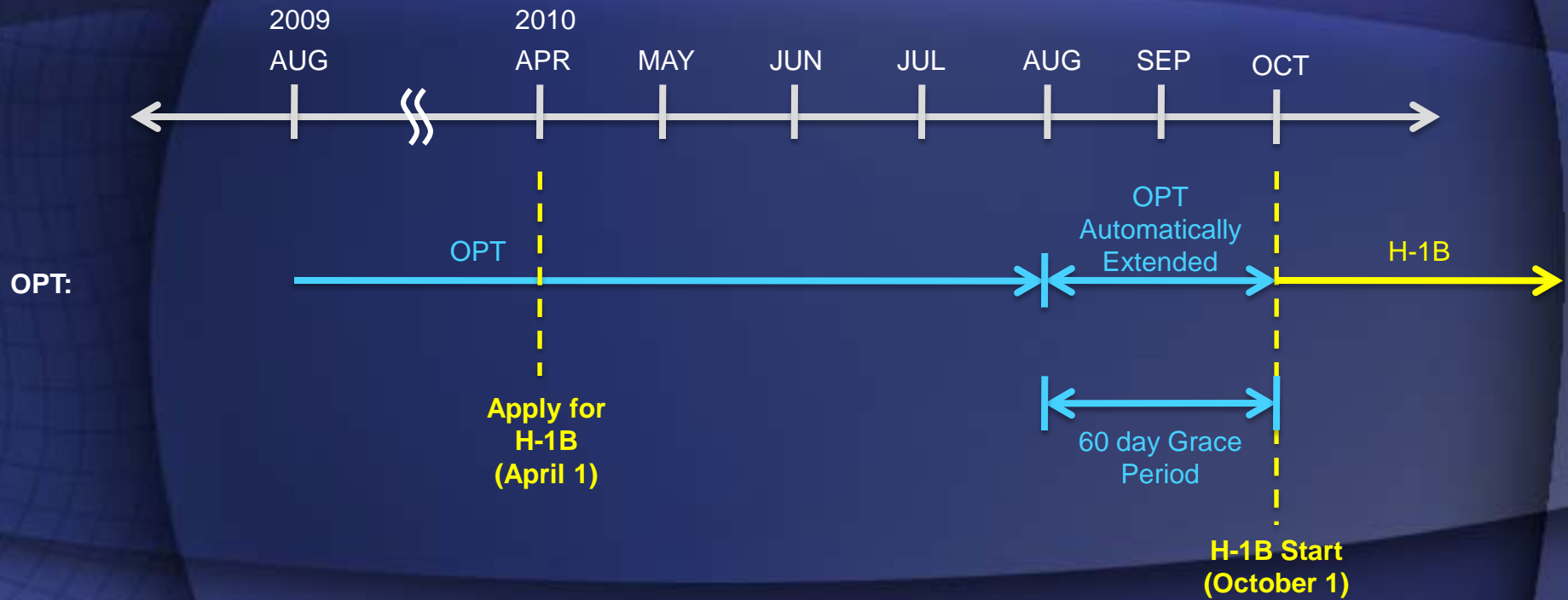
H-1B (Speciality Occupations)

- **Granted up to 6 years**
- **Must have at least a U.S. bachelor's degree (or foreign equivalent)**
- **Will be working in a job that requires at least a bachelor's degree.**
- **Employer must be willing to sponsor a visa petition (usually prepared by an attorney)**
- **H-1B Cap of 65,000 new H-1B approvals each year. Graduates with U.S. advanced degrees (master's or higher) have an additional allocation of 20,000.**

OPT / H-1B Timeline (Spring Graduation)



OPT / H-1B Timeline (Summer Graduation)



OPT and J-1/H-1B in Higher Education

- **J-1 (Researcher/Professor) can be extended to 5 years.**
- **H-1B's are not subject to the quota or the timeline.**
- **Changing status to J-1 or H-1B can take 2-4 months, so OPT is needed to remain in status while changing.**
- **Possible to leave the U.S. apply for new visa and re-enter under the new status.**
- **Consider dependent's work and school options**
 - J-2's can apply to work and engage in full/part-time study
 - H-4's cannot work, but can engage in full/part-time study