

F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)

1. Review all information on how to apply for optional practical training – this packet or information on web at www.clarkson.edu/isso
 2. When you have gathered all items necessary for applying (see checklist below) **schedule** an appointment with me to request your training
Checklist (Preferred order)
-

- Completed F-1 OPT Information Sheet (used for advising purposes only – not sent to USCIS)
- Academic Advisor Recommendation For Optional Practical Training
- Completed form I-765 (Tips on back)
- Copies of
 - New I-20 with advisor request for OPT on page 3
 - In addition, **all** previously issued I-20's
 - Visa/Passport
 - Front & back of I-94 (small white card next to your visa)
 - Copy of previous EAD card, **if you have one** for any previously authorized OPT
 - Note – I will prepare copies if you are unable to do so
- Two** passport style photos (photo information can be found at www.clarkson.edu/isso). (Attach to top of I-765)
- Check or money order** made payable to **Department of Homeland Security** for **\$340**

3. Once your application has been reviewed by me – you will mail all documents noted above by **certified mail (return receipt) – UPS – or FEDEX**. Any method is fine – as long as you obtain a tracking number to ensure the Service Center has received your application.
 - a. You must mail your application request
 - i. no more than 30 days after the request is made
 - ii. no more than 60 days after your 'program end date'
 - iii. no more than 120 days before the start date of employment
4. **Mail to** - Department of Homeland Security, Vermont Service Center, 75 Lower Welden Street, St. Albans, VT 05479-0001
(Mail to Vermont Service Center only if your return address is; Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, U.S. Virgin Islands, Vermont, Virginia or West Virginia – see instructions if applying outside this area)

Tips for completing I-765

- Check box '**Permission to accept employment**' and complete lines 1 – 16.

- **#3 Return addresses** – It is strongly recommended that you use the address of the **International Students & Scholars Office**. I will receive your mail and notify you via email once your receipt notice – approval notice – EAD card have been received. It is very important that you list an address that you can receive mail for at least the next 4 months. Using a 'friends' address may not be permitted as some postal carriers will only leave mail for residents of the address only and the Post Office **will not** forward mail.
 - **Special note** – if your EAD card is lost – you will not be able to begin work and will have to apply again for optional practical training. **This is another \$340 application.**
 - **ISSO Address:** c/o Tess Casler, PO Box 5651, Potsdam, NY 13699-5651

- **#17 Eligibility Categories** – it is important that you understand the correct category to place here. For F-1 students there are 3 categories to choose from;
 - For OPT employment **prior** to your program end date – (c) (3) (A)
 - For OPT employment **after** your program end date – (c) (3) (B)
 - For 17-month STEM extension – (c) (3) (C) – (see web for more information on STEM application)

- **Certification** – sign and date I-765

Your Responsibilities While on OPT

- **Required Address/Employment Updates** – immigration regulations mandate that you must continue to update my office with any changes to your address and/or (un)employment during your time in F1/OPT status.
 - **Please send an email to tcasler@clarkson.edu** with any updates as follows:
 - Current US physical address (Reminder – you must notify my office within 10 days of your move)
 - Employer name - address and start date
 - Changes in employment (i.e. ending or changing jobs)
 - Changes in immigration status (i.e. change to H1B visa)
 - Departure from the United States and terminating F1/OPT status

- **Reminders:**
 - **Travel while on OPT** – you must travel with valid passport, current F1 visa, I-20 endorsed within last 6 months, EAD card (or approval notice) **AND job offer.**
 - **NEVER** enter the US in any of immigration status (i.e. B1/2) while on OPT – doing so will terminate your F1/OPT status