

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) allows you to work in a job directly related to your academic major for 12 months after completing your certificate.

In order to apply for OPT, you must do the following:

1. Complete at least 2 academic quarters at UCSC Extension and be enrolled in your final quarter to receive your certificate.*
 - Apply for your Certificate at ucsc-extension.edu and pay the \$75 certificate application fee. This must be done before requesting OPT.
 - Register for your final classes
2. Send the International Student Advisor the following:
 - Confirmation from your Academic Advisor or your contact in the Program Support Department confirming that you will complete your certificate at the end of the quarter (please send this request by e-mail to ia@ucsc-extension.edu with "OPT Confirmation of Certificate Completion" in the title)
 - OPT Request Form with payment for the \$250 OPT Application Fee
3. The International Student Advisor will then set up an appointment to review your OPT package. Bring all OPT materials (and two copies of all materials) to the appointment. The packet will need to include the following:
 - Completed I-765 form
 - Your passport
 - Your visa
 - Your I-94 (copy of front and back)
 - All I-20s issued to you (copy all pages)
 - Two small photos of you with your name and SEVIS ID printed on the back of both photos. (Photos should be 2 inches by 2 inches)
 - A check or money order made out to the Department of Homeland Security for the application fee of \$380. Please print your SEVIS ID on the "memo" section of the check.
 - A photocopy of any previously issued Employment Authorization Document (EAD) if you have received work authorization from USCIS at another time.
4. At the meeting, the International Student Advisor will:
 - Review your packet
 - Print you a new I-20 endorsed for OPT
 - Answer any questions you have about your OPT application

5. You will then send your completed OPT application and new I-20 endorsed for OPT to USCIS.

If you are sending this packet via the US Postal Service (USPS), send it to:

USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

Be sure to send this package with a return receipt option so that you have proof USCIS received your package.

If you are sending this packet via a private courier (UPS, FedEx, etc), send it to:

USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

6. In 7–30 days you will receive a "notice of action" (Form I-797) in the mail.
 - This is your official receipt from the USCIS
 - This will include a WAC number
 - You can use your WAC number to check the status of your application online at www.uscis.gov
 - You must submit a copy of your I-797 (via mail or in person) to the International Student Advisor as soon as you receive it.
 - **Do not leave the U.S. between the completion of your program and the time when your EAD card is issued. You may not be readmitted into the U.S.**
7. You will receive your EAD (Employment Authorization Document) within 90 days from the date on your receipt (or "notice of action"). The EAD is a small laminated card which looks like a driver's license.
 - **You may not begin working until you receive your EAD card**
 - When you receive your EAD card, you must send a copy of the front and back to your International Student Advisor

*** Please note:**

The OPT application process typically takes up to four months after OPT applications are submitted to USCIS. Students must apply for OPT between 90 days before their program end date and 60 days after their program end date. Students have 14 months after they complete their certificate to complete OPT and 12 months of work authorization. Please carefully consider when you wish to be employed when deciding when to apply for OPT.