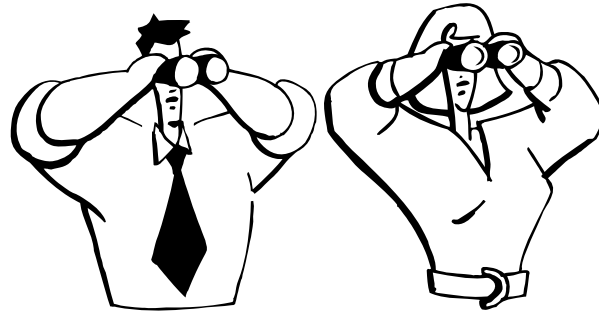


Job Search Guide for the International Student



Looking for a job is seldom easy for any student. For you, the international student, the job search process can be especially confusing. You may lack an understanding of U.S. employment regulations, or perhaps you are unaware of the impact your career choice has on your job search. You may also be unsure about your role as the job-seeker and the resources used by American employers to find candidates.

The following is an overview of the issues most relevant to international students in developing a job search strategy. Additional information about the employment process and related topics can be found through services and resources of the Career Development Center and on the Internet.

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Understanding and Mastering the Basics of the Job Search

Before beginning any job search it is essential that you begin the process by first understanding your skills, abilities, personality and interests. In addition, you need to become familiar with current job market conditions. Are employers hiring or is the job market in a slow down mode? Where are employers most active (industrial classification and geography)?

Once you have taken these basic steps, you should be ready to launch a job search that will result in finding employment opportunities that will satisfy both your personal and professional goals.



Developing Your Network:

Have you ever heard the saying, “it’s not what you know, but who you know?” Well, in today’s world these words still ring clear. Networking is surely one of the best ways to find employment opportunities. Here is an easy checklist to get you started:

- Identify the particular field(s) in which you are interested in working.
- Identify where (geography) where you want to work.
- Identify what it is that you want to do (try to be as specific as possible).
- Talk with faculty, including your advisor, about your post-graduation plans
.... Who do they know?
- Talk with the International Student Advisor. How can he/she help?
- Talk with the Career Development Center to learn about job opportunities.
- Join professional associations to access their network of members.
- Attend a local, state, regional or national professional association meeting.
- Check with the University Alumni Association ... what services do they provide?
- Check the Internet for web sites that address your particular areas of interest.

Continue to develop your network by developing a contact list and leads through the Career Development Center, campus contacts, and referrals. Join civic and ethnic associations. Conduct “Information Interviews” which will allow you to gather information about a specific career field or employer, develop contacts with employers, and place you in front of employers who may not have openings but who are willing to talk to you about their company.

Developing Your Resume and Cover Letter

Essential to every job search are the resume and cover letter. No job search can begin without these two required items. Because these items are critical to your success it is important that they are well designed and well written. You **MUST** take time to prepare these in a manner that suggests that you have a command of the English language, that you understand the job market, and that you can market yourself effectively. Here are some items that foreign nationals should pay special attention to when approaching organizations operating in the American system:

Resume:

- Make sure all spelling is correct and all categories are properly spaced and indented. There is **NO EXCUSE** for careless mistakes on your resume.
- Resumes should be neat and laid out in an easily readable fashion; no more than two pages.
- The resume should always clearly define your career objective, your skills, and knowledge you gained from past work experiences.
- Educate yourself as to the proper resume content and format. Remember that it is acceptable to vary these standards slightly to highlight your particular strengths.
- Phrases may be used instead of full sentences to keep the resume concise and direct.
- Wording should be carefully selected to emphasize the strongest aspects of your background and accomplishments.
- Career objectives should be stated in clear, concise terms. Your objective should also indicate your plans (if any) for practical training and home country employment.
- When applying to U.S. or other foreign firms, be sure to adjust your resume to meet their standards of format and content.
- Under your formal name at the top of the resume, give the English pronunciation. If you have assumed an English name or nickname, indicate this name in parentheses.
- Visa status should be clarified when applying to U.S. employers to indicate your present classification, probable length of stay, and availability for practical training in the U.S.
- Emphasize the practical value of the education and training you received in the U.S. Don't assume that potential employers (U.S. or home country) understand the unique benefits of your U.S. training.
- Though standards may vary from country to country, some may require inclusion of personal data (age, height and weight, marital status, children, etc.) in your resume. If you feel uncomfortable including this information look into whether it is actually needed. In the U.S. this kind of information **SHOULD NOT** be included.
- Outside the U.S., details about elementary school and secondary school performance are often appreciated. This is **NOT** the case in the U.S. and this should be eliminated from your resume.
- References, outside the U.S., unless intentionally known, are seldom contacted. You should be sure to have references that are in the U.S.
- Students should translate course titles and descriptions into their own language when submitting resumes to home country organizations.

Cover Letter:

Each resume should be accompanied with a cover letter that will introduce yourself to employers and briefly outline your interest in a position. With each new resume you should include an original cover letter. The cover letter should mention your U.S. field of study and degree and what your future employment plans are. Mention of particular aspects of your international background and/or intercultural understanding that make you a unique candidate for the position can also prove valuable. Here are some items you should consider when developing your cover letter:

Do

- Include the full address of the person to whom you are sending the letter.
- Address the letter to a specific person.
- Introduce yourself (I am a senior Biology major at Kutztown University...).
- Highlight the skills you can bring to the employer.
- Focus attention on your strengths.
- ALWAYS use spell check and never send letters without proof reading them.

Do Not

- Discuss former employers unless it is in a positive sense. Never “bad mouth” a previous employer!
- Forget to tell the employer that you will be calling them to arrange an interview.
- Apologize for any shortcomings (“while I don’t have the required experience ...”)
- Forget to sign your letter.
- Include information that is not related to either the job search process or the position for which you are applying.

For more detailed information related to resume and cover letter construction, see the “Resume & Cover Letter” Guidebook in the Career Development Center and on the website.



The Interview

Remember, the resume and cover letter will not get you the position...they will help you land the interview. It is through the interview that most candidates will actually get the job offer. It is the interview that will permit you to market yourself to an employer.



Students are often stunned by questions that are asked during the interview. To avoid being surprised it is important that you spend time developing your interviewing technique. Here are some quick tips to help you better prepare for interviews:

- Know yourself. What are your strengths? weaknesses? Do you know what you want to do? Where do you see yourself in 3 years? 5 years?
- Research the employer. You need to know the primary products/services offered by the employer and how your skill sets and degree would fit into their organization.
- Practice!!! You may want to contact Career Development and schedule a mock interview. These interviews can be videotaped, and will give you a chance to practice your interviewing skills.
- Do you have appropriate interviewing attire? Remember, in the U.S. it is mandatory that you wear a suit when going on any interview. You will need to look professional and you will need to present yourself in a polished, professional manner.
- A good, firm, handshake and good eye contact is expected in the U.S. interviewing style. This is true for both men and women. If you are uncomfortable with this approach you may want to practice your introductions, including the handshake.
- Prepare!! You can never be too prepared for an interview. Review the Interviewing Guidebook which has lists of questions that may be asked.
- Prepare a list of questions you want the employer to answer. Questions should relate to the job function and your role on the job. Stay away from questions about salary and benefits. This is especially true during the initial screening interview.
- Remember, in the U.S. the interview is a formal, structured business meeting. Be prepared to answer a series of questions related to your skills, abilities, experiences, and career goals (long & short term).
- Remember, interviewing is a learned skill and you can become better at interviewing through practice and preparation. Take time to review the materials available in the Career Development Center, which were designed to help you through the interview process. Finally, remember interviewing is essential to a successful job search. As such, practice, preparation, and research are essential to your success!

Thank You Letter

Good business etiquette requires that you send a thank you letter immediately after an interview. Letters should be sent within 24 to 48 hours after the interview and should be sent to either the person who organized your interview schedule or to the lead person in the interview. Thank you letters may be handwritten (need to be legible and neat). Email "Thank You" letters are acceptable, but good business practice suggests that you also send a "hard copy" letter.

The letter itself should be short, no more than two brief paragraphs at most, and to the point. Be sure you restate your interest in the position and mention something from your interview discussion. Be sure you thank the employer for inviting you to interview with them and for their time.

If you think you need assistance developing the Thank You letter, check with Career Development. They have sample letters and would be happy to review your work before you send it to any employer.

Follow Up

Conducting business in the U.S. may seem strange to some international students as you may need to be somewhat more assertive than in your home country. This being the case you need to know that **it is okay** for you to follow-up your interview with a phone call if you have not heard from the employer in a timely fashion. Generally, if you have not heard from an employer within two weeks of the interview you should contact them to determine the status of your presentation.

Remember, what you really want from an employer is an indication if they are interested or not interested in you. If and when you call an employer here is a list of things you need to do:

- Introduce yourself:
"Hello, my name is _____ and I had an interview with Ms. Smith last week."
- Ask about the process:
"I am wondering if you can help me. It has been some time since my interview and I am wondering if you may need any additional information from me?"
- Ask about the timing of the hiring process:
"Can you tell me when you will be making a decision about the position?"
- Collect information:
Make sure you get the name (correct spelling) and title of the person you talk with.
- Thank you and follow up:
After the follow-up phone call, make sure you send a thank-you note to the person you spoke with.
- Remember to follow instructions and follow up in a timely fashion. If they tell you they expect to make a decision within the next week Call them if you have not heard from them in that time frame.

Cultural Barriers to an Effective Job Search

Often, in the job search, we find that there are cultural hurdles that students must understand and overcome if they are to be successful.

In the U.S.	In Some Cultures
<p>Self-Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assertiveness ▪ Confidence in openly discussing goals and accomplishments ▪ Follow-up with employers (telephone inquiries about status of application, thank-you notes) ▪ Appropriate dress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unless presented as part of a group activity, citing accomplishments and skills is viewed as boastful, self-serving, and too individualistic ▪ Asking employers directly about status of application is rude
<p>Directness in Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open and direct responses to questions ▪ Eye contact with interviewers, relaxed posture, and appropriate nonverbal behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eye contact, especially with persons of higher status is disrespectful ▪ Appearance of criticism must be avoided to save face
<p>Self-Disclosure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal descriptions of experiences, hobbies, strengths, weaknesses ▪ Answers questions related to personality (e.g. leadership style, problem-solving abilities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal questions about likes, dislikes, etc., are considered an invasion of privacy and are discussed only with close friends and family
<p>Career Self-Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrating knowledge of self, career goals and how they relate to the job ▪ Discussion of long-range plans/goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government or family assigns jobs ▪ Questions about role in company indicate potential disloyalty ▪ Company assigns work responsibilities ▪ Individual must be flexible to accept whatever job becomes available
<p>Individual Responsibility Finding Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of wide variety of resources to identify employment opportunities (friends, family, network, associations, Career Development Center, faculty, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jobs are found through government or family ▪ Dependency relationships in job search are fostered ▪ One resource (e.g. faculty, employment agency) will find appropriate work for the job seeker
<p>Informality in the Interview Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Congenial interviewing environment that encourages openness, some joking, exchange of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sitting with a person of higher status requires deference ▪ The job applicant is very polite and does not ask questions or provide information that may indicate lack of respect for the interviewer's position ▪ Handshaking, touching, using first name, crossing legs, etc., are inappropriate

<p>Punctuality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is appropriate to arrive 10-15 minutes before a scheduled interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal relationships are more important than time ▪ Lateness from agreed meeting time is not insulting
<p>Effective Letters of Application and Resumes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One/two page, error free, concise and attractive outline of work experiences, skills, accomplishments, and academic credentials ▪ Personalized to reflect each individual's qualifications and professional interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resumes are a detailed chronology of academic and formal work experiences and not an instrument for self-promotion
<p>Individual Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Race, age, sex and other personal information should not affect interview relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Males are expected to assume dominance in interactions with females ▪ Younger persons defer to older person
<p>Preparation and Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain as much information as possible about the organization and the job before the interview ▪ Demonstrate awareness of organization in cover letter and during the interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research about the organization may indicate excessive and undesirable initiative or independence

These factors are not necessarily found in all cultures, but represent factors that cut across a variety of cultures and countries.



Working Legally in the U.S.

*To stay in the U.S., in order to continue working,
after completing the F-1 practical training or the J-1 academic training period.*

~ Information from the U.S. Department of State ~
www.state.gov

To do this you can submit an application to change the F-1 or J-1 status to another non-immigrant visa classification or in some cases immigrant visa classification. To change status from one non-immigrant visa classification to another you must be in legal status in the U.S. The most common non-immigrant visa classification for a professional (individual possessing at least a Bachelor's Degree or the equivalent) is the H-1B temporary worker non-immigrant visa.

You can also apply to change your status to become an immigrant based on employment. In some cases this process involves obtaining an Alien Labor Certification where an employer has to advertise and show there are not qualified American workers available. There are some categories that do not require advertising. These categories include documenting that you are doing work in the national interest of the U.S. or that you are an outstanding researcher or professor. It is important to explore these various non-immigrant and immigrant visa options before your practical training or academic period expires as the paperwork involved can take several months. Your international travel plans, salary, and job conditions will determine which type of classification is best for you. If you hold a J-1 and you are subject to the 2-year foreign residence requirement then in most cases, you will have to obtain a waiver of this requirement before you can change your status or become an immigrant.

EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS IN F, J, AND M VISA CLASSIFICATIONS

1) F-1 Student

Who is Allowed to Study in the United States? A nonimmigrant is someone admitted to the U.S. temporarily for a specific purpose. People who are coming to the United States to pursue full-time academic or vocational studies are usually admitted in one of two nonimmigrant categories. The F-1 category includes academic students in colleges, universities, seminaries, conservatories, academic high schools, other academic institutions, and in language training. The M-1 category includes vocational students. For more information on vocational studies in the United States, please see [How Do I Get Approval For Vocational Studies in the United States?](#) If you are planning to study in the United States as an Exchange Visitor, please see the [Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs](#) and the [Department of State](#) Websites. Also, see the Code of Federal Regulations at [8 CFR 214.2](#), [212.7](#), and [22 CFR 514](#).

What Does the Law Say? The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) governs the admission of all people to the United States. For the part of the law concerning temporary admissions to the United States, please see [INA § 214](#). The specific eligibility requirements and procedures for applying for academic student status are included in the Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] at [8CFR § 214.2\(f\)](#).

How Do I Apply for Permission to Transfer Schools? You must be a full time student in good academic standing. You must notify your current school of your intent to transfer. You must ask the school that you plan on attending to give you a new USCIS Form I-20 A-B/ID (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status - for Academic and Language Students). You must complete your portion of the USCIS Form I-20 and give it to your new designated school official (DSO) within 15 days of transferring. The designated school official (DSO) should give you the last two pages, known as Form I-20 ID, and forward a copy of the first two pages, known as Form I-20 A-B, to the USCIS and your prior school.

May I Bring My Spouse and Children with Me to the United States? Your spouse and children may come with you to the United States in F-2 status. They should go with you to the U.S. embassy or consulate when you apply for your student (F-1) visa. They should be prepared to prove their relationship to you. If your spouse or children are following to join you at a later date, they should provide the U.S. embassy staff with a copy of your USCIS Form I-20 ID (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status - for Academic and Language Students) and proof of their relationship to you. The F-2 status of your family will be dependent upon your status as the F-1 academic student. This means that if you change your status, your family must change their status. If you lose your status, your family will also lose their status. (For more information on changing status, please see [How Do I Get Permission to Change to a New Nonimmigrant Status?](#))

How Long May I Stay in the United States? You are allowed to stay in the United States for as long as you are enrolled as a full-time student in an educational program and making normal progress toward completing your course of study. If approved, you also will be allowed to stay in the country up to twelve additional months beyond the completion of your studies to pursue practical training. At the end of your studies or practical training, you will be given sixty days to prepare to leave the country. See [8 CFR § 214.2](#) for more complete time limits.

How May I Extend My Stay as a Student in the United States? You do not need to apply to extend your stay in the United States as long as you are maintaining your student status and making normal progress toward completing your academic course of study. The designated school official (DSO) from your school will write down a completion date on your USCIS Form I-20 A-B (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status - for Academic and Language Students). Under normal circumstances, you should be able to complete your studies by this date. If you need to extend your stay for compelling academic or medical reasons, then you must meet with DSO sufficiently in advance of the current program completion date so as to allow the DSO adequate time to approve the extension and update SEVIS (Student & Exchange Visitor Information System) to complete the extension before the current program completion date.

Will I Get a Work Permit? You may be allowed to work on-campus or off-campus (after the completion of your first year of study) under limited circumstances. Please see the rules on student employment at [8 CFR 214.2 \(f\)](#). You may also wish to discuss employment with the designated school official (DSO) at your school. Your accompanying spouse and child may not accept employment.

May I Travel Outside the United States? Students may leave the United States and be readmitted after absences of five months or less. Upon your return to the United States, you should provide immigration inspectors with:

- A valid passport.
- A valid F-1 entry visa stamped in the passport (if necessary).
- A current USCIS Form I-20 ID (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status - for Academic and Language Students) signed by your appropriate school official (you should have the appropriate school official sign your USCIS Form I-20 each time you wish to temporarily travel outside the United States).
- A new USCIS Form I-20 A-B/I-20 ID if there have been any substantive changes in your course of study or place of study.
- Proof of your financial support.

When making your travel plans, please remember that you must be a full-time student to keep your F-1 student status. You will be considered to be "in status" if you take the annual summer vacation, as long as you are eligible and intend to register for the next school term.

2) F-2 Dependent of F-1 Visa Holder

See above

3) J-1 Exchange Visitor (student)

Exchange Visitors Visas The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) provides two nonimmigrant visa categories for persons to participate in exchange visitor programs in the United States. The "J" visa is for educational and cultural exchange programs designated by the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, and the "Q" visa is for international cultural exchange programs designated by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

The "J" exchange visitor program is designed to promote the interchange of persons, knowledge, and skills in the fields of education, arts, and sciences. Participants include students at all academic levels; trainees obtaining on-the-job training with firms, institutions, and agencies; teachers of primary, secondary, and specialized schools; professors coming to teach or do research at institutions of higher learning; research scholars; professional trainees in the medical and allied fields; and international visitors coming for the purpose of traveling, observing, consulting, conducting research, training, sharing, or demonstrating specialized knowledge or skills, or participating in organized people-to-people programs.

The "Q" international cultural exchange program is for the purpose of providing practical training and employment, and the sharing of the history, culture, and traditions of the participant's home country in the United States.

Background Requirements

Financial Resources Participants in the "J" exchange visitor program must have sufficient funds to cover all expenses, or funds must be provided by the sponsoring organization in the form of a scholarship or other stipend. "Q" exchange visitors will be paid by their employing sponsor at the same rate paid to local domestic workers similarly employed.

Scholastic Preparation "J" exchange visitors must have sufficient scholastic preparation to participate in the designated program, including knowledge of the English language, or the exchange program must be designed to accommodate non-English speaking participants. The "Q" exchange visitor must be at least 18 years old and be able to communicate effectively about the cultural attributes of his or her country.

Medical Education and Training Exchange visitors coming under the "J" program for graduate medical education or training must meet certain special requirements. These requirements include passing the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination in Medical Sciences, demonstrating competency in English, being automatically subject to the two-year foreign residence requirement (after completion of their program), and being subject to time limits on the duration of their program. Physicians coming to the United States on exchange visitor programs for the purpose of observation, consultation, teaching, or conducting research in which there is little or no patient care are not subject to the above requirements.

Forms/Petitions Participants in the "J" program must present a Form DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status prepared by a designated sponsoring organization. Participants in the "Q" program must have the designated sponsoring organization file [Form I-129, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker](#), with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). For more details on how to file for a Q petition, please see the [Temporary Workers](#) section.

Admission through a U.S. Port of Entry Applicants should be aware that a visa does not guarantee entry into the United States. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has authority to deny

admission. Also, the CBP, not the Department of State Consular Officer, determines the period for which the bearer of an exchange visitor visa is authorized to stay in the United States. At the port of entry, a CBP official stamps and endorses Form I-94, Record of Arrival-Departure, specifying the period of time that the alien is authorized to stay in the United States.

For information on Visa Application Procedures and other related information about exchange visitors, please visit the [Visa Services Website of the Department of State](#).

Student and Exchange Visitors Program (SEVP) Also see [Sec. 641](#) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996 ([Pub. L. 104-208](#)). Section 641 of IIRIRA is one of the catalysts behind a new interagency initiative, the Student and Exchange Visitors Program (SEVP). SEVP is designed to improve processes for foreign students and exchange visitors holding F, J and M visas, and schools, colleges and other organizations sponsoring programs for these visa holders.

SEVP will facilitate and automate several processes affecting exchange visitors, such as visa issuance, admission to the U.S., benefit requests and information reporting. Visit the [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System \(SEVIS\)](#) Website on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement website.

4) J-1 Exchange Visitor (short term Scholar, Professor, Research or Specialist)

Individuals in the U.S. are visiting researchers, or professors under the auspices of the Department of State and a Designated Program Sponsor. They may engage only in part-time study related to principal activity provided program can be completed within limitations of stay.

Eligible to receive payment from the organization listed of Form DS-2019 as the source of funds and/or the Designated Sponsor Program for the period of validity as stated on the DS-2019. Under limited circumstances, may receive compensation from other institutions provided prior written authorization from the Responsible Officer of their Designated Program has been secured. Form DS-2019 authorizes employment EAD is not required.

5) J-2 Dependent of J-1 Visa Holder

Those in the U.S. as dependents (spouse or unmarried children under the age of 21) of a J-1 student or scholar. May engage in full or part-time study. Eligible to apply to INS for work authorization. With Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by INS may work for any employer. Employer must verify employment authorization after expiration date on EAD.

6) H-1B Specialty (Professional) Workers – Contact KU Human Resources for additional information

The H-1B program allows an employer to temporarily employ a foreign worker in the U.S. on a nonimmigrant basis in a specialty occupation or as a fashion model of distinguished merit and ability. A specialty occupation requires the theoretical and practical application of a body of specialized knowledge and a bachelor's degree or the equivalent in the specific specialty (e.g., engineering, mathematics, physical sciences, computer sciences, medicine and health care, education, biotechnology, and bus. specialties, etc.).

Current law limits the number of foreign workers who may be issued a visa or otherwise be provided H-1B status. For current information, visit the Department of State website.

An H-1B certification is valid for the period of employment indicated on the Labor Condition Application (LCA), specifically the [Form ETA 9035](#) or [Form ETA 9035E](#), for up to three years. However, a foreign worker can be in H-1B status for a maximum continuous period of six years. After the H-1B expires, the foreign worker must remain outside the U.S. for one year before another H-1B petition can be approved.

Certain foreign workers with labor certification applications or immigrant visa petitions in process for extended periods may stay in H-1B status beyond the normal six-year limitation, in one-year increments. For more information on extended stay possibilities, see the [USCIS website \(www.uscis.gov\)](http://www.uscis.gov).

Optional Practical Training (Sec 3.18.3)

Students who have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for at least 9 months are eligible for optional practical training (OPT) which is temporary employment in their field of study for purposes of gaining practical experience.

Students are eligible for a maximum of only twelve months for all full-time practical training. **(Students do not get twelve months practical training for each degree.)** Students may apply for authorization for optional practical training directly related to their major area of study and commensurate with the student's educational level [8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(D)(1)] in the following cases:

- . During the student's annual vacation as long as the student intends to register for the next semester (recommend student have a job offer before applying in this case);
- . While school is in session, provided that practical training does not exceed twenty hours a week (recommend student have a job offer before applying in this case);
- . After completion of course requirements except thesis, project, or portfolio (recommend student have a job offer before applying in this case); and
- . After completion of the course of study. (This type of practical training must be applied for before the completion of the program. *Also note that because application must be made prior to study completion, students may not apply for less than 12 months of OPT, and the reapply later on for the additional months.*)

* All OPT must be completed within 14 months of completion of the course of study.

The Application Procedure

A. The student should submit the following documents to the DSO (3 months prior to completion of program): (Sec 3.18.3.4.1)

- The original I-20ID Student Copy and photocopies of all previous I20's.
- Letter from the academic advisor indicating the current academic status (i.e. whether student has completed all requirements for the degree but thesis) and the expected date of completion of studies. **Note:** INS does not view the graduation ceremony as completion of studies; completion of studies means completion of course work (non-thesis majors) or the date the final thesis has been submitted.
- I-538 form
- Complete Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, marked with the code“(c) (3) (i) ” at item 16.
- Read detailed information on I-765 (available in PDF format) on INS website: <http://uscis.gov/graphics/formsfee/forms/index.htm>
- A check made to the order of “BCIS” in the amount of \$175 (or amount currently specified on INS website)
- Two ADIT style photos (student must sign and write current I-94 number on back).

- A copy (both sides) of Form I-94.
- Photocopies of the ID pages from student's passport, & any previously-issued EAD
- **Meet with DSO Advisor to have SEVIS I-20 endorsed before mailing information**

B. The DSO will follow these steps: (Sec 3.18.3.4.2)

- Carefully review the information provided by the student.
- Verify the student's eligibility for OPT, including whether the student has been in full-time status for at least one academic year, and the dates of prior periods of curricular and optional practical training previously granted.
- **Before** the student's completion date is reached, updated the student's SEVIS record with the required fields for recommending OPT
- Print an I-20 in SEVIS, which will include a page reflecting the OPT recommendation. Sign the I-20 where the DSO signature is required.
- Make file copies.
- Return the endorsed I-20 to the student, with instructions on how to apply to BCIS for the OPT EAD card.

Websites of Interest to International Students

American Employers Who Have Sponsored the H-1B Visa	http://www.flcdatacenter.com
Employers Who Have Sponsored the H-1B Visa	http://www.h1bsponsors.com
Overseas Job Web	http://www.overseasjobs.com
European Job Searches	http://www.eurojobs.com
Planet Recruit's International Job Searches	http://www.planetrecruit.com
Canadian Job Searches	http://www.jobshark.org
Riley Guide of International Jobs	http://rileyguide.com/internat.html
International Job Searches	http://www.internationaljobs.org
Resource Guide for Living in the United States	http://foreignborn.com
USA Visa and Immigration Sources	http://usavisa.com
International Careers Consortium	http://intlcareers.org
Resource Center for International Students	http://internationalstudent.com
On-line Services for US Visas	http://visanow.com
Jobs Board for Bilingual Professionals	http://bilingual-jobs.com

Your Support Network

Regulations regarding immigration and international student status have changed in recent years and there continues to be change on a regular basis. **You need to be aware** of those changes that may affect you and your student status. **Ultimately you are responsible** for insuring that all required forms are completed and that you are in good standing with U.S. governmental agencies. If you are unsure of your current status or if you have specific questions regarding a particular issue, contact:

International Studies
 204 Stratton Administration Center
 Kutztown University of PA, Kutztown, PA 19530
 610-683-1390
www.kutztown.edu/acad/intlstudies/home.html

If you have questions about the job search, resume/cover letter preparation or interviewing, contact:

Career Development Center
 113 Stratton Administration Center
 Kutztown University of PA, Kutztown, PA 19530
 610-683-4067
<http://careers.kutztown.edu>