

OPT CHECKLIST

For Detailed OPT Information:

- Read the general OPT handout located at www.cgu.edu/intlforms to learn about the process and general rules.
- Please visit the Optional Practical Training Additional Information webpage (link at <http://www.cgu.edu/intlforms>) for information and policies regarding the 90-day Unemployment Rule, H1-B gap provision, and 17-Month STEM Extension. A link to this page is also included in the online OPT handout.

Gather the Following Documents before Requesting an OPT Appointment. 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):

- Two Photos** – passport style. Print your name and admission number (found on your I-94 card) lightly on the back in pencil.
- Copy of student visa, passport photo page, & I-94 card** (both sides), and all previous I-20s (1st and 3rd page)
- Check for \$340.00 US made payable to Department of Homeland Security**
- Completed I-765 copy in blue ink** (you can download an I-765 form at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis> or stop by the international office to pick up an OPT packet)
 - * Attempt to make your signature no larger than 1" wide x ½" tall and do NOT cross the lines. (fit it in the white space). If your signature is too large, USCIS will return the application to you.
- 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.

Once You Have Gathered the Documents Listed Above:

- Make an appointment to see the International Staff** to complete the application process. Please include your availability in your request and plan ahead (allow up to 3 days for an appointment).

When You Meet With the International Staff:

- Bring the documents listed above**
- 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)

The International Staff 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 at the Post Office to USCIS at P.O. Box 10765, Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-1076
- About a week to a week and half after you mail your package, you will receive a formal receipt from USCIS with your personal WAC (application) number. **Bring a copy of this receipt to the International Staff.** You may check the status of your application on-line at anytime by visiting the website listed on the receipt.
- You will receive your 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. **Bring a copy of your EAD card to the International Staff when you receive it.**
- Please read the Travel While On OPT Handout online at www.cgu.edu/intlforms prior to making travel arrangements.
- Very Important:** You are required to continue to report any changes in your address, phone number, or e-mail address to the International Staff while on OPT. Note: we do not recommend that you move while waiting for OPT approval.
- Very Important:** Update the International Staff with any and all changes to your employment (including breaks in employment) using the OPT Employment Notification Sheet found online at www.cgu.edu/intlforms.