Applying for F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)

February 9, 2021

If you are an F-1 student planning to work in U.S. this summer, it is time to review the eligibility criteria and process for Optional Practical Training (OPT) [1], a temporary employment authorization that provides an opportunity to apply knowledge gained in an academic program to a practical work experience. Please note that you must be physically present in the U.S. to apply for OPT and you do not need a job to apply for OPT.

Here are a few resources to get you started:

- **Watch our new video introduction** [2]: Watch our newly released video for a brief overview of OPT (embeded below or on our Youtube page.)
- **Review our website** [3]: You will find detailed information on eligibility, the application timeline, and process on our F-1 OPT page.
- **Watch a recording of one of our recent OISS OPT workshops**: [4] OISS held several OPT workshops this month to answer questions and to help get you started on the OPT application process.

As it can take 90 days or more for USCIS to approve OPT, it is important to **apply as early as possible** [5]:

- **Are you graduating this May?** You will apply for post-completion OPT and the earliest date you can submit your application is Wednesday, February 24th.
- **Are you a continuing student?** You will apply for pre-completion OPT and you can apply as early as 90 days before your requested employment start date.

Get started now!