

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) APPLICATION

**Before completing this application, the student must read and sign the statement below:**

*I have read the “Regulations on Employment for F-1 Students” and understand the conditions and restrictions for OPT; I agree to abide by those regulations and instructions of the DSO at Louisiana College.*

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Signature of Student

Date

**\*\*Note: Applications for OPT usually take the USCIS Service Center 2-3 months to process; please start the application process at least three months before you wish to begin work. You may not begin employment until your application is approved and you receive your Employment Authorization Document (EAD card) in the mail. For post-completion OPT, you must have everything correctly completed, mailed, and properly received by the USCIS Service Center before your program end date.**

## **What the student must bring to the DSO:**

- Bring all required forms and documents to DSO at least two weeks before mailing deadline
- Completed OPT Certification Form (formerly USCIS Form I-538); request a blank form from DSO
- Photocopies of all prior Forms I-20
- Official (letterhead) documentation from academic advisor indicating the current academic status and expected date of completion of studies
- Completed Form I-765 and supporting documents (DSO will check and then recommend in SEVIS)

## **What the student must prepare and mail to USCIS Service Center (in this order):**

- Completed Form I-765 (download at <http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/formsfee/forms/files/i-765.pdf>)  
FYI... Question #10: provide **11-digit A#** from I-94 card  
Question #16: fill in **(c) (3) (i)** for eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12
- Filing fee (**\$180.00**) paid in U.S. currency by personal check or money order to “Department of Homeland Security.” Write “Form I-765 fee” on memo line. DO NOT send cash.
- Photocopies of front and back of most recent I-94 card and ID pages from valid passport
- Photocopies of new, signed I-20 with DSO recommendation for OPT and any other old I-20’s
- Photocopy of last EAD card, if applicable
- Two standard passport-style color photos with white background taken no earlier than 30 days before submission to USCIS. (See Kinkos or other local businesses.) With a pencil, lightly print your 11-digit A# (from I-94) on the back of each photo. See also page 5 of I-765 instructions.

## **After properly submitting all documents to DSO and correctly compiling Form I-765 according to all instructions, mail the completed application materials to:**

**USCIS Service Center  
P.O. Box 851041  
Mesquite, TX  
75185-1041**

After USCIS has physically received and confirmed your documents, they will mail you a “**receipt.**” This receipt is NOT authorization for employment, but you need to keep it for your records along with photocopies of your application materials. If your application is approved, your EAD card will arrive by mail several weeks later at the address you supplied. You may NOT work until you receive the EAD and the start date is reached. For post-completion OPT, you must keep in touch with the DSO at LC until the OPT ends, after which you have 60 days to leave the U.S. or transfer your SEVIS record to a new school / educational level.