

# **I'm graduating from Oxy...Now what?**

**Visa's after graduation!**

## Options after graduation:

- ▶ Return home
- ▶ Go to graduate school
- ▶ Post-completion optional practical training ~ paid work for a year in the US

## 1. Return home

- ▶ 60 day “grace period” to pack up
- ▶ Must leave the US by the 60<sup>th</sup> day
- ▶ If you leave the US before that 60 day grace period, and wish to return to the US, you need to return on another kind of visa (i.e., visitors visa)



## 2. Go to graduate school

- ▶ Grad school **OUTSIDE** the US, leave within 60 days.
- ▶ Grad school **INSIDE** the US, transfer SEVIS record to new school (program must begin within 5 months)
  - ▶ E-mail IPO a scan of the acceptance letter to new school and start date of classes.
  - ▶ IPO transfers your SEVIS record to new school after finals
  - ▶ New school makes a new I-20 for you
  - ▶ If you travel home during the summer, you must re-enter the US on new schools I-20



### 3. One year of paid work anywhere in the US!

Post completion optional practical training:

- ▶ 12 months of paid work in the US
- ▶ Not job dependent ~ but work must be in field of study
- ▶ Application process through USCIS ~ I-765
- ▶ Takes up to 90 days to process and get EAD card
- ▶ Apply no earlier than 90 days before end date (graduation)
- ▶ Still in F1 status with OXY ~ reporting requirements
- ▶ Available after each increased level of education - a year after BA, another after MA, another after Ph.D!




## Eligibility

- ▶ Maintained lawful status
- ▶ Been at Oxy for minimum of one full year  
- all of Senior year.
- ▶ Have not used 12 months of full time Curricular Practical Training.

# Preparing to apply

- ▶ READ OPT Information
- ▶ DOWNLOAD OPT Packet
- ▶ REQUEST a new I-20 with OPT recommendation
- ▶ SUBMIT to IPO completed STUDENT INFORMATION FORM

**OPT & Graduation**



The International Programs provides meetings regarding your options after graduation from Oxy. Whether you decide to return home or stay in the U.S., see what next steps you must take to prepare.

**International Programs**

- International Students
- Current Students
- Work & Internships
- Maintaining Immigration Status
- Traveling Advisory
- OPT & Graduation**
- Multinational Students
- Exchange Students
- New Students
- Parents 父母
- Equity, Inclusion & Justice
- Compare Programs
- Study Abroad
- Richter Research Abroad
- Global Projects

**Applying for Post Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

**This information is current as of 01/15/2021.**  
Check the USCIS website for updates of applications, fees and procedures.

Post Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) is the opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to a practical work experience in your major field of study after graduating from Occidental. OPT is authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This authorization takes at least 90 days or more to obtain. The maximum amount of time granted to work in F-1 practical training status is 12 months per degree level (plus two 24-month extensions for those with qualifying STEM majors). OPT must be completed within 14 months of graduation.

While on OPT, you are still connected to Occidental. This is not a work-visa, but a benefit of the F1 student-visa. It is an opportunity to gain work experience in your field of study. You may apply for and engage in OPT after each increased educational level – bachelor degree, master degree, Ph.D. **Certain STEM majors** may apply for a 24-month extension during standard OPT period.

**Eligibility:**

- Completing your academic program or graduating from Occidental.
- Have completed the **entire final year at Occidental.**
- Maintained lawful F1 status.
- Seeking employment only in a field directly related to your major.

**Process Overview:**

- Scan and email a **COMPLETED and SIGNED** application packet to IPO for processing by **Early September 2020 for December '20 graduates/February 10, 2021 for May '21 graduates.**
- IPO will issue a new I-20 recommending you for post-Completion OPT.
- Corrections to the I-765 and a new I-20 recommending you for OPT will be sent to you.
- Student sends complete application packet to USCIS no more than 30 days after the date the new I-20 recommending you for OPT was issued.

**STUDENT OPT INFORMATION FORM**

Please complete and submit this form with your completed I-765 and supporting documents to IPO for processing. (NOTE: do not submit the check or photos to IPO). IPO will issue a new I-20 recommending you for OPT.

STUDENT'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ MAJOR: \_\_\_\_\_

SECOND MAJOR: \_\_\_\_\_ MINOR: \_\_\_\_\_

END Date on I-20 document: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
For the SEVIS Record: In order to make the OPT recommendation, please provide the following information.

EMPLOYMENT START DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

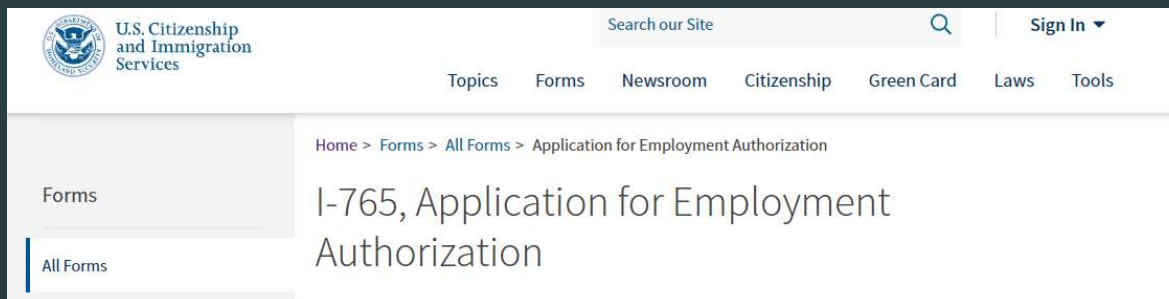
EMPLOYMENT END DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**START & END DATES:** The start date of the OPT period must be no later than 60 days from the end date of your program, as listed on your I-20. If your I-20 end date is May 16, your employment start date can be no later than July 15. The end date can be no more than 12 months within 14 months of the end date on your I-20. It can take 3 – 5 months for USCIS to process your application.

The US mailing address you provide on your I-765 is where all communications from USCIS will go. If you provided the IPO address on your OPT application, all receipts/documents will come to the IPO Office. We provide reliable contact information during the process.

# Application

- ▶ Online through USCIS
- ▶ Upload required documents -I-20's authorizing CPT, new I-20, I-94, passport ID page, F1 visa affixed to your passport
- ▶ Pay application fee (currently \$410 - credit or debit card from US bank)
- ▶ Submit no earlier than 90 days before end date of your program
- ▶ Submit no later than 30 days after new I-20 issued



The screenshot shows the USCIS website interface. At the top left is the USCIS logo and the text "U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services". To the right is a search bar labeled "Search our Site" and a "Sign In" dropdown menu. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for "Topics", "Forms", "Newsroom", "Citizenship", "Green Card", "Laws", and "Tools". The main content area shows a breadcrumb trail: "Home > Forms > All Forms > Application for Employment Authorization". Below the breadcrumb is a sidebar with "Forms" and "All Forms" links. The main heading is "I-765, Application for Employment Authorization".



# While on OPT

While on OPT, you must report to IPO & SEVIS system:

Address where you live

Employer name, address, start date, position, and how work relates to your major

- ▶ No more than 90 days of unemployment
- ▶ Work must be in your field of study
- ▶ Cannot start working until the start date AND your card is in hand!



## Travel while on OPT

- ▶ If you travel while the application is in process, please use the address of a trusted friend or IPO who you authorize to open any mail from USCIS.
- ▶ You may travel outside US - must have EAD card, letter from employer, valid F visa stamp and valid passport to re-enter.
- ▶ RFE's, actual EAD card

## Next steps.....

- ▶ IPO Website - International Students
- ▶ OPT Packet - gather components, make an appointment with IPO
- ▶ REMEMBER: Can't apply more than 90 days before the end date on your I-20 AND no later than 30 days after new I-20 issued AND no later than 60 days after the end date on your I-20!



90 Days Before I-20 end date



Anytime in-between



30 Days After New I-20 Issued



60 Days After I-20 end date

**QUESTIONS?**