FACULTY/ACADEMIC ADVISOR’S RECOMMENDATION FORM

Please submit it to the ISSO after completion. Within 3-5 business days, the ISSO will provide you with a new Form I-20 recommending practical training employment authorization (a copy which you must send to USCIS, along with the other required application materials).

Section A: To be completed by the student for either PRE-POST or STEM OPT

Student’s Name: ___________________________________ TU ID#: _______________________________________

Log in to your Online Services account and update your personal information to reflect a non-Towson University email address that you will use after your TU address expires. Additionally, write the address below.

Non-TU Email Address: ________________________________________________________________

Section B: Requested Dates of OPT (Choose one of the following):

Please indicate your desired employment start and end date: (Note: post-completion OPT must begin and end within 14 months of completing one’s degree. Therefore, the start date must be within 60 days of the program completion date. Employment is not permitted until the EAD card has been received and the dates are current. Be aware that it can take the USCIS up to 90 days to approve/deny your application.)

Pre-Completion (Part-Time): ________ Part-Time means 20 hours per week or less

Post-Completion (Full-Time): ________ Full-Time means more than 20 hours per week

Start Date: _______/_____/_______ End Date: _______/_____/_______

Month Day Year Month Day Year

Section C: To be completed by Faculty/Academic Advisor for Post-Completion OPT only

In order to request employment authorization from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the International Student & Scholar Office must prepare a new Form I-20, recommending employment authorization, for the student.

When will the student complete his/her studies at Towson University? _______/_____/_______.

Month Day Year

Please fill in a date above and check one of the following boxes below. The date below should not be the student’s commencement date; please indicate the date by when all degree requirements will be completed.

☐ completion of semester/last day as registered student

☐ completion of Computer Science project and presentation or Applied Information Technology case study

☐ completion of Master’s thesis/dissertation and presentation/defense

☐ other (please explain): ________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________ Date Phone Number

Advisor’s Signature

Pre-Completion OPT for Thesis/Dissertation Students- see reverse side
FULL-TIME/PRE-COMPLETION OPT FOR THESIS/DISSERTATION STUDENTS
This form confirms that the student meets the requirements to apply for pre-completion OPT before having completed thesis/dissertation requirements.

Section A: To be complete by student

Student's Name:_________________________  TU ID#__________________________

I understand the following conditions for my pre-completion OPT application:

- I may apply and be approved for full-time pre-completion OPT before submitting my thesis/dissertation.
- Once I am approved for OPT, I may not apply for a program extension. This means that if I do not complete my degree during the approved OPT period, I must depart the US and complete my degree from abroad.
- Because I have applied for post-completion OPT, I may not be unemployed for more than 90 days.

______________________________  __________________  __________________
Student Signature                Date                         Phone Number

Section B: To be completed by student (Requested OPT dates)

Please indicate your desired employment start and end date. Employment is not permitted until the EAD card has been received and the dates are current. Be aware that it can take the USCIS up to 90 days to approve/deny your application.)

Start Date:    _____ / _____ / _____   End Date:   _____ / _____ / _____
Month        Day        Year               Month        Day        Year

Section B: To be completed by Faculty Advisor

I confirm that the above-mentioned student has completed all coursework for his/her degree and must only submit thesis/dissertation to complete degree requirements.

When will the student complete his/her studies at Towson University? _____ / _____ / _____.

______________________________  __________________  __________________
Advisor’s signature                Date                         Phone Number
OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Pre-Completion OPT
- Post-Completion OPT
- 17-Month Extension (STEM) OPT

Instructions

1. Attend a mandatory OPT workshop (this is not necessary for those applying for STEM extension). Workshops are held Fridays at 3pm.
2. Pick up the appropriate OPT packet (regular or STEM) and read all associated materials.
3. Log in to your Online Services account and be sure to add a non-Towson University email address.
4. Have your academic advisor complete the Faculty Advisor’s Recommendation Form. (STEM Extension applicants do not need to submit the Advisor’s form.
5. Submit all the required documents to ISSO for review and endorsement of your new I-20 with OPT requested.

Required Documents

- A double-sided photocopy of your new SEVIS Form I-20 with a recommendation for OPT on the reverse side. (This will be provided by the ISSO). Be sure you have signed it on line 11 before the photocopy is made for your application. You should keep the original I-20. The new OPT I-20 must be mailed within 30 days of being created or your OPT will be denied.
- $380.00 check payable to: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security. You should include the notation “OPT application” and your I-94 admission number on your check.
- Two color photographs (write your name and I-94 admission number on the back of each picture; put the pictures in an envelope which you may staple to your application materials)
- Photocopy of the photo/biographical page(s) of your passport and photocopy of another photo ID if your passport photo does not closely resemble your two new color photographs
- Photocopy of all previously issued I-20s, including your most recent Form I-20, as you will be given a new I-20 with the OPT recommendation on the back
- Photocopy of your visa
- Photocopy of your I-94 (both sides if it is the white card)
- Photocopy of previously issued EAD(s) (if you have any)
- If you completed a degree in a STEM field and are applying for an OPT extension, please include an official or unofficial transcript, demonstrating that you have been awarded your degree.

Mailing

Make sure you send a complete OPT application to the USCIS. We recommend that you send it by Express Mail so there is evidence of when your application is received. Mail your application to the USCIS at:

For US Postal Service Deliveries
USCIS
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For Express Mail & Courier Service Deliveries
USCIS, Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business, Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

Additional Notes

- You may check the status of your application online by visiting http://www.uscis.gov. If you have waited more than 90 days to receive your work permit, please contact the ISSO.
- After your application is approved, you will be mailed your EAD card. Please scan or photocopy your EAD card and email it to the ISSO.
- If your F-1 visa has expired and you plan to apply for a new visa before returning to the U.S., you should be aware that obtaining a new visa can be difficult during OPT. Consult an ISSO advisor for more information about this situation. We will need a photocopy of your EAD card to give you a travel signature after completion of your studies.
- If your application is pending and you have not yet received an EAD, travel may be possible. Please speak with an ISSO advisor about this option.
OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING PHOTOGRAPHS & CHECK

How to take successful photos:

- Make sure photos are the EXACT size as specified by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Check your pictures before leaving the store.
- Center the head with the frame.
- The person in the photo should have a neutral expression and be facing the camera.

![Photo Composition Template]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 1/8 inch to 1 3/8 inch</th>
<th>2 inch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 inch to 1 3/8 inch</td>
<td>2 inch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Composition Template</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The height of the head (top of hair to bottom of chin) should measure 1 inch to 1 3/8 inches (25 mm - 35 mm).
- Make sure the eye height is between 1 1/8 inches to 1 3/8 inches (28 mm - 35 mm) from the bottom of the photo.

Below are some local places that offer passport photographs:

- CVS (www.cvsphoto.com/Passport-Photos)
- Walgreens (http://photo1.walgreens.com/walgreens/storepage/storePageId=Passport-Photos)
- Wal-Mart (http://www.walmart.com/ip/Passport-Photos/19766552#ProductDetail)

Cost: approximately $8 - $12 for 2 photos

After you have taken your photos:

- You will need 2 photos
- Write your name and admission number (from your I-94) on the back of each photograph
- Put your photos in an envelope and write your name and I-94 number on the front of the envelope. This will help ensure that your pictures do not become separated from your application in the USCIS mailroom.

Note: ISSO is not responsible for any rejections due to incorrect photos

Form I-765 Fee Payment

- The check or money order must be drawn on a bank or other financial institution located in the United States and be payable in U.S. currency. Make the check or money order payable to: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security