OPT WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Pre-Completion OPT:

- OPT that is authorized to be engaged **BEFORE** the student's end program date.
- Employment must be in the student's area of study and meet full academic year requirement prior request.
- Allows working 20hs or less during the term and up to 40hs **ONLY** during school breaks or vacation term.
- PT- OPT time used shall be deducted from available practical training at one-half the full time rate.

Application Requirements:

- Filing form I-765 up to 90 days before meeting enrollment requirement; 30-90 days processing time
- Only 12 total months can be requested of part- time (max. 24 months of total PT).
- ISSS advisor must recommend the student's pre-OPT request and upon eligibility will endorse a new I-20

TIP: **Have a job before you apply otherwise-risk to lose OPT time and money**

Post- Completion OPT:

- OPT that is authorized to be engaged **AFTER** the student's end program date.
- Employment must be in the student's area of study and meet full academic year requirement.
- Employment can be part-time (no less than 20hrs) paid/unpaid - Volunteer jobs also counts!

Application Requirements:

- Form I-765 can be submitted **no sooner** than **90** days before the end of program date and no **later** than **60** days after your graduation date.
- The ISSS advisor will endorse the form I-20 and make notation in SEVIS system.

TIP: The soonest you apply the faster you will get your EAD at your requested date

17 Month Extension OPT (STEM):

- OPT that is authorized to be engaged **AFTER** the student's end of post-completion OPT
- Applicant can work up to 180 days until he/she gets approved
- Employment must be in the student's area of study, full time paid/unpaid and meet specific criteria:
  - i. **STEM Major** (Science, **T**echnology, **E**ngineering, Math) - **minors do NOT count!**
    (You can find the complete list of majors at: http://www.ice.gov/sevis)
  - ii. The employer must be enrolled in **E-Verify** program
    (Check related info. at: http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify) If employer is changed new E-verify # is Required! **A copy of the new offer letter is necessary to be submitted to ISSS promptly!**

TIP: Don't make any changes (if possible) before you get approved and receive your new EAD card

GENERAL OPT GUIDELINES/INFORMATION:

- The I-20 form will appear to be expired but is valid with your OPT card, valid passport and I-94 card.
- You can register for one or two classes for recreational reasons, but they **cannot** be for a degree-seeking program
- During OPT may have up to **90** days of unemployment from the starting effective date (FT) and **30 extra** days for the approved STEM- **total of 120 days (Standard OPT and STEM)**
- Employers can be changed and be multiple but must be documented-**Report them to ISSS promptly**!
- **TRAVEL**: Student is NOT recommended leaving the country while USCIS is processing the OPT request. With Approved OPT: Valid EAD (OPT) card, Valid F-1 Visa, Passport, I-94 card, Valid travel signature on the form I-20, Proof of employment (original offer letter or verification of employment)

TIP: ANY change(s) during any OPT must be reported to ISSS promptly!

More information about OPT you can find at the ISSS website www.drexel.edu/isss.

Schedule an appointment with an international student advisor at 215-895-2502