

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR PRE-COMPLETION OPT

NAME: _____ **UNC PID:** _____

F-1 students must follow several important procedures and federal regulations while applying for and participating in Optional Practical Training (OPT). Compliance with these rules and procedures is necessary to maintain lawful F-1 immigration status. Please carefully review each item below and sign this form to confirm that you understand and will abide by the rules and procedures set forth in this memorandum. Your signature also confirms your requested OPT dates. A full description of eligibility for Pre-Completion OPT and the application process can be found on the [ISSS website](#).

1. **Eligibility for Pre-Completion OPT:** I understand that I am eligible for practical training only if I have completed one academic year of full-time enrollment. My requested OPT start date must be after the academic year requirement has been fulfilled.
2. **Filing deadlines:** I understand the following:
 - ISSS requires 2-3 weeks to review my request and to process the Form I-20 recommending OPT.
 - My OPT application must reach USCIS no later than 30 days after my Form I-20 recommending OPT has been issued.
 - If I will fulfill the one academic year requirement this semester, I cannot submit my OPT application to USCIS more than 90 days prior to fulfilling this requirement.
3. **Reporting requirements:** I understand that in order to maintain my immigration status while on Pre-Completion OPT, I must:
 - Submit a copy of my EAD (OPT card) to the ISSS office once I receive it from USCIS.
 - Report the start of employment and the relationship between my job and my major area of study by submitting the OPT Employment Reporting Form to ISSS.
 - Update my address and phone number in ConnectCarolina (<http://connectcarolina.unc.edu>) within 10 days if they change.
4. **Working in my major field of study:** I understand that any employment or activity in which I participate must be directly related to my major field of study and must be commensurate with my current level of education. I will keep records verifying this information.
5. **Invalidating OPT:** I understand that if I commence a new program of study and/or transfer my SEVIS record to a new school, any remaining time in my OPT period will be cancelled. I understand that if I engage in unauthorized employment or otherwise violate my F-1 immigration status, my OPT will be invalidated.
6. **Maintaining F-1 status:** I understand that while engaged in Pre-Completion OPT, I must maintain full-time enrollment, when required, and follow all other applicable rules and regulations to maintain my F-1 status, including updating my address and/or phone number within 10 days of any changes.
7. **Limits on periods of OPT:** I understand that I am eligible for 12 months of OPT per education level (Bachelor's, Master's, Ph.D.). If I have been granted 12 months of OPT based on a previous degree, I am eligible for an additional period of OPT only if I am currently studying at a higher educational level. Any authorized period of Pre-Completion OPT will be deducted from the 12-month period of OPT for which I am eligible based on my current degree. I am ineligible for OPT if I have been approved for more than 12 months of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) at my current education level.
8. **Withdrawing my application:** I understand that I can attempt to withdraw my OPT application only if the application has not yet been adjudicated by the USCIS Service Center. I will notify ISSS immediately if withdrawal becomes necessary.

9. **Requested OPT dates and full-time vs. part-time employment:** I understand that I am responsible for choosing the employment dates below which will be recorded by ISSS in SEVIS and on my Form I-20 recommending OPT. I know that I will not be able to change them should the dates become incompatible with a future offer of employment. I understand that I may request only part-time work authorization (20 hours per week or less) during the academic year (fall and spring semesters), unless I am a graduate student enrolled in dissertation/thesis credits only. I may request full-time work authorization during the summer. I understand that I cannot request an OPT period that extends beyond my expected degree completion date.
10. **Beginning employment:** I understand that I may not begin work until I have the EAD in my possession and I may not begin work until the start date on the EAD. I understand that based on USCIS processing time, the start date on my EAD may be later than the requested start date on my Form I-20 recommending OPT.

OPT RECOMMENDATION REQUEST AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

List all previous periods of F-1 Practical Training (CPT or OPT) or write "N/A" if not applicable:

BEGINNING DATE	ENDING DATE	FULL-TIME/PART-TIME	TYPE: CPT/OPT	DEGREE LEVEL

Indicate the OPT start and end dates you are requesting and whether the employment will be part-time or full-time:

START DATE: _____ END DATE: _____

- PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT (20 hrs or less per week) FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT (more than 20 hrs per week)

Confirm your current residential U.S. address and contact information:

NOTE: You must check your [Student Center in ConnectCarolina](#) to make sure your current physical U.S. residential address has been reported under the "SEVIS Immigration Reporting Address" (Imm Rprt Addr) and the phone number you want reported to SEVIS (listed below) has been set to your "Preferred" phone number. If this information is not up to date it may delay the processing of your new I-20.

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

Acknowledgement: *I have read and understand the rules and procedures outlined above and those in the OPT section of the ISSS website and I will abide by them. I verify I have not used any period of OPT at my current educational level or a higher educational level that would disqualify me from the OPT authorization I now seek.*

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT: _____ DATE: _____

****Students should keep a copy of this signed memorandum for their own records. A copy will also be kept on file at ISSS.****