LASELL UNIVERSITY

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Application Checklist

Students applying for F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) can use this checklist when preparing an OPT application (pre-completion and post-completion OPT).

To prepare the OPT application, first collect the following materials.
- Lasell OPT Recommendation Form, available for download on the "Applying for OPT" webpage.
- Go to https://www.uscis.gov/i-765 and click on the "File Online" button. Create an account for yourself and write down your password for later.
- New I-20 recommending OPT (this you will receive during our meeting)
- All l I-20s that show work authorization for CPT or OPT *(save as pdf to your desktop)*
- Electronic I-94 (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov) *(save as pdf to your desktop)*
- Color copy of your most recent U.S. F-1 visa (not applicable for Canadian citizens) *(save as pdf to your desktop)*
- Color copy of passport biographical page *(save as pdf to your desktop)*
- Copies of issued Employment Authorization Documents (EAD cards), if applicable* *(save as pdf or jpg to your desktop)*
- Change of status approval notice, if applicable. *(save as pdf to your desktop)*
- 1 standard (2" x 2") passport-sized, recent, color photos. *(scan as jpg to your desktop)*
- Credit card or bank information to pay $410 United States Dollars (USD)

Step 1: Make an hour-long appointment with the Office of International Services to receive an I-20 with OPT recommendation. Have all documents ready to go on your desktop. We can meet in-person with your laptop that is connected to our university Wi-Fi. If you prefer to meet on Zoom, you must have access to a printer and scanner to complete the application as I will have to scan you the I-20 and you must print it and sign it and upload it to your laptop.

Step 2: Submit the online form to the USCIS.

1. **After submitting your OPT application to USCIS, you will receive a receipt notice. Save this somewhere safe for your records.**

2. **Visit the USCIS website and check your status at https://egov.uscis.gov.**
   - This page will inform you when your OPT application was received, when it is approved and delivery information. Consider signing up for an account, as it will enable automatic email and mobile notifications when there is a change to your OPT application.
   - Processing time: USCIS processing of OPT applications averages 90 days

3. **Respond immediately to a Request for Additional Documentation if you receive one.**
   - Occasionally, a student will receive a Request for Further Evidence (RFE) from USCIS. These requests are typically because the application is missing a document or new photographs are required. If you receive such a request (normally a yellow sheet of paper) reply immediately to USCIS with the requested documents, including the original yellow sheet placed on top.
   - If you do not understand the USCIS request, contact the Office of International Services. Be sure to make copies of your materials before you mail them, and send the reply by courier mail.

4. **When Case Status Online Reflects "Approved"**
   - Take any steps possible to ensure delivery of your mail. If you live in an apartment complex, check that your name is on your mailbox. If you have roommates, alert them you are expecting something important.
   - If someone else is receiving the EAD on your behalf, alert that person that a piece of mail should be arriving soon and to notify you as soon as it arrives. Remind the person to put it in a new mail envelope rather than forwarding to you.
   - DO NOT notify USPS to hold mail, forward mail, or process a change of address until you receive the EAD.

5. **When You Receive the I-797 Approval Notice and EAD**
   - Make a copy of the Approval Notice and EAD (front and back) for your records
   - Scan and email a copy of the front and back of your EAD to iss@lasell.edu. We will keep a copy of the EAD in your record in the Office of International Services.
   - Remember: You are not authorized to begin employment until the start date on the EAD arrives, even if you have the card in hand.

6. **During your POST-completion OPT period, ALL students on OPT are required by law to report their address and employment information to the Office of International Services within 10 days of any change.**
   - Please fill out the OPT Employment Information online form on our website to update our office regarding your employment.