

# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

# What we'll cover...

- ▶ What is Optional Practical Training (OPT)?
- ▶ When and how do I apply?
- ▶ Issues
  - ▶ OPT STEM Extension
  - ▶ Unemployment limits
  - ▶ Reporting requirements
  - ▶ Travelling while on OPT

# What is OPT?

F-1 Work  
Authorization

Usually used post-  
graduation

12 months per  
higher educational  
level

Work must  
be related  
to DEGREE

Multiple degree plans at same level?  
May not be possible to split OPT/  
use OPT later  
Talk to an advisor

Still in F-1  
Status

# What is OPT?

“Open Work Authorization”

Do not need a job offer to apply

Full or Part-time

Anywhere in the US

Multiple jobs

Paid or unpaid

# Process

1.

- Attend OPT Session – you're here!

2.

- Complete OPT Checklist

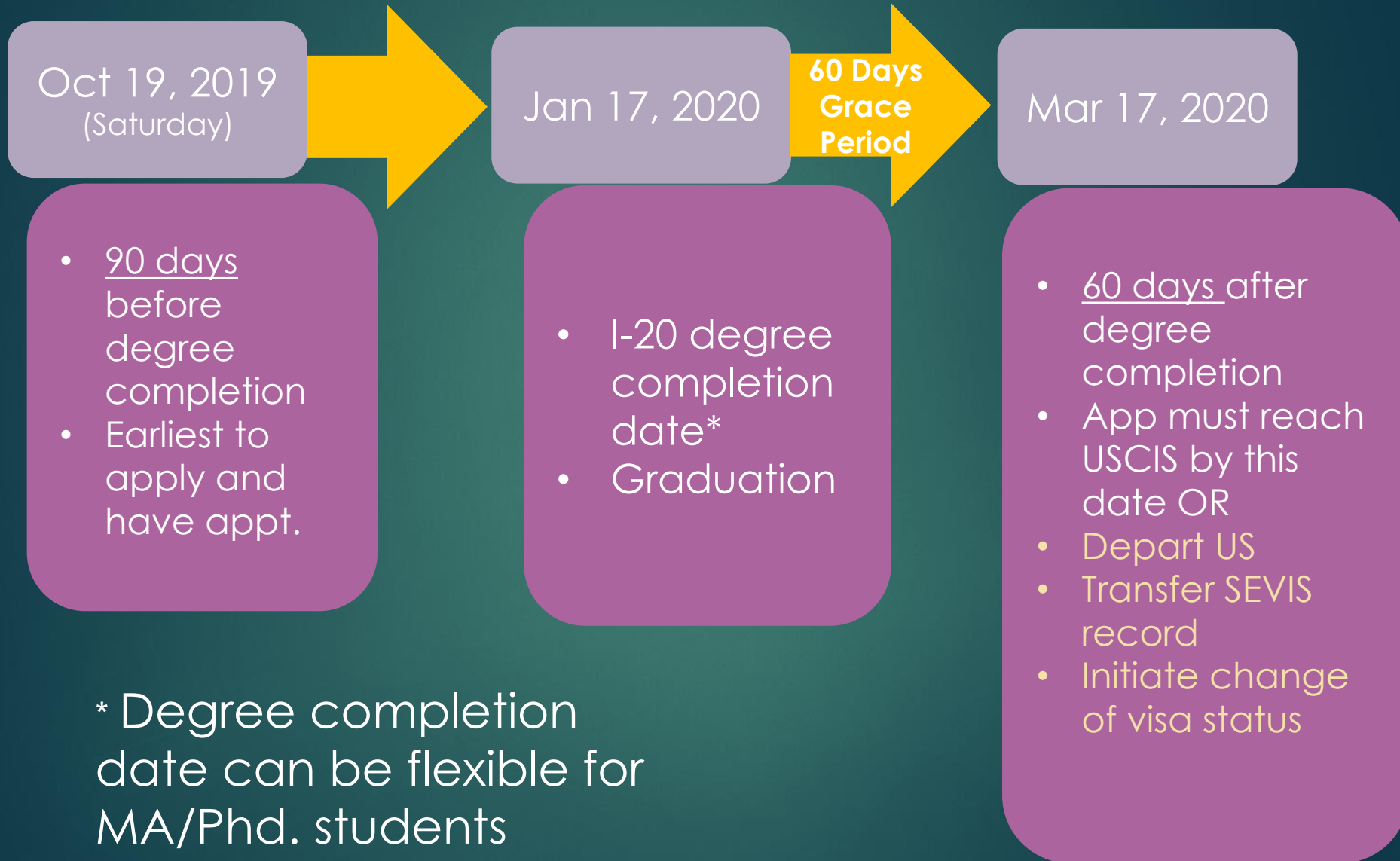
3.

- To schedule a OPT appointment with an advisor
- Call 757-221-3590

4.

- Mail your OPT application

# When Can I Apply?



# When Can I Apply?

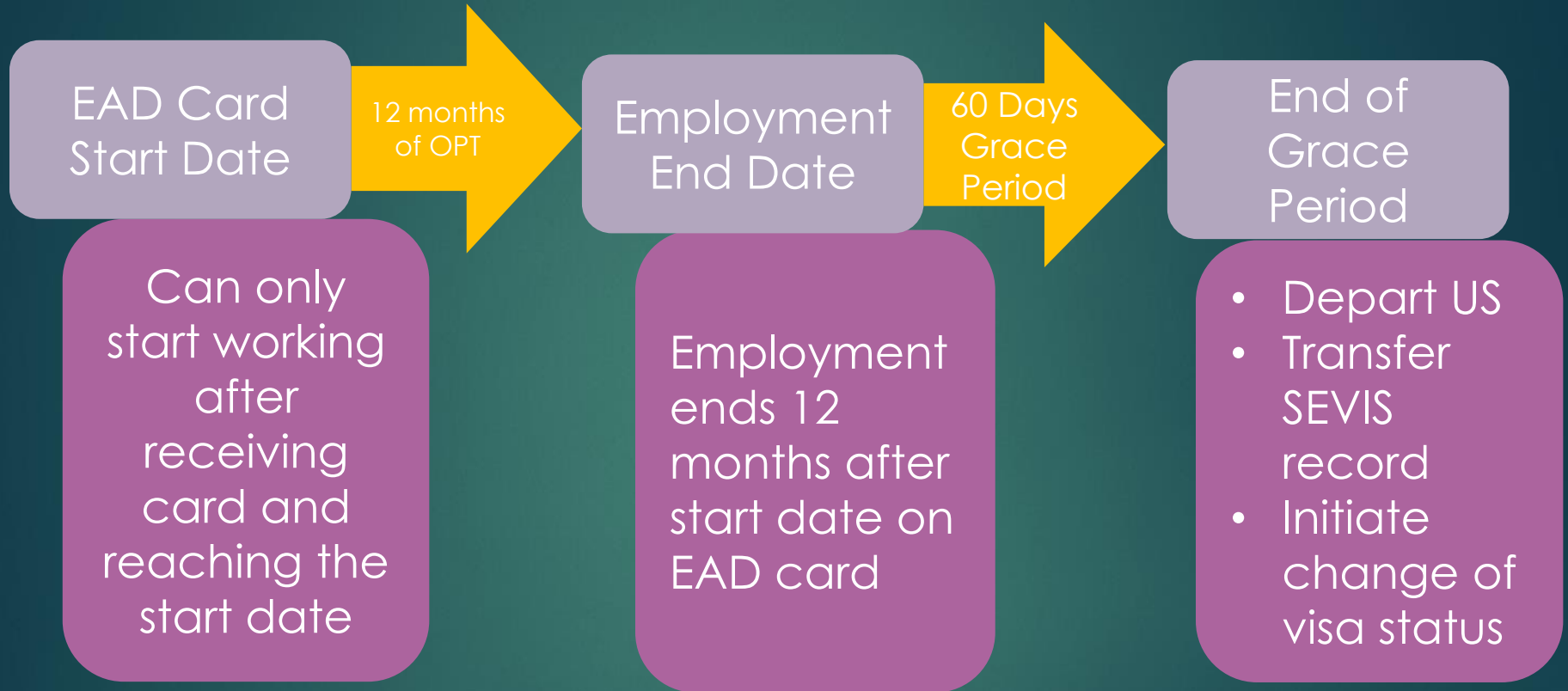
- ▶ Can take **3-5** months or more to approve application.
- ▶ Benefits of applying early
  - ▶ Time to fix errors
  - ▶ Receiving approval early will help to apply for benefits (e.g., extending Driver's License, applying for SSN)
  - ▶ More processing time
- ▶ Executive Order country? Contact Reves

# Then....

- ▶ **10-15 days:** Immigration can send you an e-mail and text message acknowledging receipt of application
- ▶ **2-3 weeks:** Immigration will send you a Receipt Notice
- ▶ **OK to stay in US** before OPT approval
- ▶ **3-5 months or more:** OPT is approved
- ▶ **~1 week after approval:** Create and mail your Employment Authorization Document (EAD/OPT) card
- ▶ **~2 weeks after OPT card arrives:** Your Social Security card may arrive (if you applied). Not always reliable, may need to apply at Social Security Office.



# How Long Can I Work?



## OPT Start and End dates:

January 18, 2020– January 17, 2021	Earliest
March 17, 2020– March 16, 2021	Latest

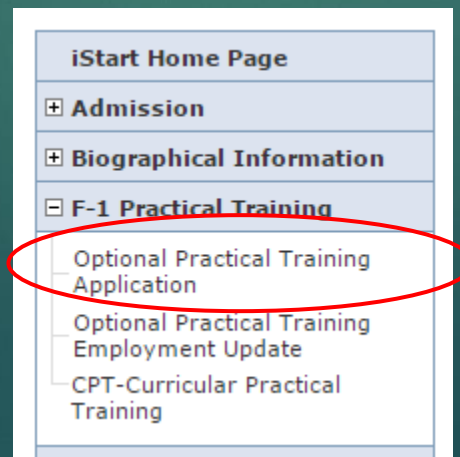
# OPT Checklist (pg.1)

- ▶ Must be completed before appointment!
- ▶ Review of all documents during appointment



# Reves OPT E-Form

- ▶ Access the form in iStart
- ▶ Requested OPT dates
  - ▶ Start date within 60 days of graduation date
  - ▶ Dates finalized at OPT Appointment
  - ▶ Changing dates is typically not possible after you mail your packet
  - ▶ Remember, possible long processing times



# Advisor Section (pg. 2)

- ▶ Advisor section – only for certain **MA/PhD**. Students
- ▶ Only if you...
  - ▶ plan to begin OPT *before* your official graduation date
  - ▶ have finished all required classes, and are doing dissertation/final project

# Check/Money Order (pg. 3)

		1936	
		mm/dd/yyyy	
		DATE	
PAY TO THE ORDER OF	US Dept of Homeland Security	\$	410.00
Four hundred ten and 00/100		DOLLARS	
		 Security Features Details on back	
FOR	OPT application	<i>Your Signature</i>	
⑆000000186⑆ 000000529⑆ 1000			

# Authorization for Credit Card Transactions (pg.4)

- ▶ Type or print
- ▶ US cards only
- ▶ List billing address
- ▶ Don't forget to sign!
- ▶ Save a copy of form for your records

# 2 Color Photos (pg.5)

- ▶ Format is important!
- ▶ Do not use photos submitted for visa
- ▶ AAA Williamsburg, CVS, Walgreens
- ▶ Double check photos before leaving
- ▶ Common errors:
  - ▶ Background too dark (blue or grey tint)
  - ▶ Shadows on face/background



# Coversheet (pg.6)

## Additional Addresses (p. 7)

- ▶ We'll complete the coversheet in your appointment
- ▶ Where to mail your documents if your address is not in Virginia



# Instructions for Completing the Application for Employment Authorization Form (pg. 8-9)

- ▶ Official Immigration Form
- ▶ **TYPE** in information - form will be scanned
- ▶ **Save form**
  - ▶ Download and save copy of OPT packet before you complete the forms
  - ▶ Will allow you to fix corrections after appointment
- ▶ Follow instructions in the OPT packet

# Instructions for Completing the Application for Employment Authorization Form (pg. 8-9)

Common questions:

- ▶ Part 2, 1a – 1c: Your full legal name (Name as it appears in your passport)
- ▶ Part 2, Your US Mailing Address: Option to use our address, or a friend's address (post office cannot forward Immigration mail)
  - ▶ If you use your address and move, you can change addresses on USCIS website.
  - ▶ <http://www.uscis.gov/addresschange>

# Instructions for Completing the Application for Employment Authorization Form (pg. 8-9)

- ▶ #29-31: leave blank
- ▶ **Applicant's Signature:** In the blank space provided.
- ▶ Parts 4-5: leave blank, unless you used an interpreter, or someone else prepared the form.
- ▶ **\*\*You must include all pages of the I-765 when mailing, even if blank.**

# Instructions for Completing the Application for Employment Authorization Form (pg. 8-9)

- ▶ Part 6
- ▶ Only needed if:
  - ▶ You had work authorization before (CPT/OPT)
  - ▶ You had another SEVIS ID number
    - ▶ Leave of absence
    - ▶ Past degree with a gap (i.e. time off between bachelors/masters)
- ▶ **Sign and date sheet** in a blank space
- ▶ Examples of how to complete in packet

# E-Notification (Form G-1145) (pg. 10)

- ▶ Option to receive e-mail and text message informing you that Immigration has received your application.
- ▶ 10-15 days to arrive



# New I-20, from your OPT appointment

- ▶ During your appointment, you'll get a new I-20 that lists your OPT dates
- ▶ You'll sign this, we'll copy it, and you'll include the copy in your packet

Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement		I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status (Form No. 1045-0018)					
SEVIS ID: <b>W004705512</b>							
SEVIS/PRIMARY NAME John Doe-Smith		CLASS <b>F-1</b>					
PREFERRED NAME John Doe-Smith		PASSPORT NAME JOHN DOE SMITH					
DATE OF BIRTH 01 JANUARY 1985		COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP UNITED KINGDOM					
ADVISOR'S REASON ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE		ADMISSION NUMBER J000000000					
SCHOOL INFORMATION SCHOOL NAME SCHOOL ADDRESS SCHOOL PHONE AND ADVISOR'S OFFICE SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL SCHOOL OFFICIAL NAME SCHOOL OFFICIAL PHONE		SCHOOL ADDRESS 1000 University Lane, P.O. Washington, MD 20714 SCHOOL PHONE AND APPROVAL DATE 800.241.4444 01 APRIL 2015					
PROGRAM OF STUDY EDUCATION LEVEL DEGREE NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH PROGRAM START DATE PROGRAM END DATE				MAJOR I Economics 01-0001 01 SEPTEMBER 2015		MAJOR II Finance 02-0002 01 SEPTEMBER 2015	
FINANCIALS ESTIMATED YEARLY COSTS FOR 1 MONTH Tuition and Fees Living Expenses Expenses of Dependents (1) Travel TOTAL				STUDENT'S FUNDS FOR 1 MONTH Personal Funds Financial Aid and Teaching Assistantship Funds from Academic Institute Scholarship/Endowment TOTAL			
REMARKS Demonstration begins 8/28/2015. Please report to ISS upon arrival.							
SCHOOL ATTESTATION I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was obtained before I signed this form and is true and correct. I certified this form to the United States after review and validation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcript, or other records of course taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were inspected by the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named individual meets all conditions for admission to the school and the student will be required to prove to the program of study identified in I-20, 12(c)(1)(B), 12(c)(2) and a designated school official of the above named school and is authorized to issue this form.							
SIGNATURE OF School Representative DATE ISSUED PLACE SIGNED				DATE ISSUED 01 APRIL 2015 PLACE SIGNED			
STUDENT ATTESTATION I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of my extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I have read and understand the United States immigration laws and regulations. I understand the consequences of providing a false program of study at the school named above. I have authorized the named school to release any information directly received by DHS pursuant to I CFR 214.2(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.							
SIGNATURE OF John Doe Smith DATE				DATE			
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE ADDRESS (include or post-office box) DATE							

Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement		I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status (Form No. 1045-0018)	
SEVIS ID: <b>W004705512 (F-1)</b>		NAME: <b>John Doe Smith</b>	
EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION		TYPE	
EMPLOYMENT STATUS		EMPLOYMENT START DATE	
EMPLOYER NAME		EMPLOYER LOCATION	
COMMENTS			
CHANGE OF STATUS/AP-GAP EXTENSION REQUESTED VISIT TYPE REGISTRATION STATUS RECEIPT NUMBER BENEFIT START DATE/REQUEST DATE			
EVENT HISTORY EVENT NUMBER EVENT DATE			
OTHER AUTHORIZATIONS AUTHORITY START DATE END DATE			
TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT This page when properly endorsed, may be used for reentry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each endorsement is valid for one year. SCHOOL OFFICIAL TITLE SIGNATURE DATE ISSUED PLACE ISSUED			



# Additional copies

- ▶ Previous EADs (if applicable)
- ▶ Change of status notice (if applicable)
- ▶ Where can I make copies?
  - ▶ Copy Center (Swem Library)
  - ▶ Law, Business, VIMS library
  - ▶ Not at Reves Center!
- ▶ We will scan app., so **do not staple** your documents





# OPT STEM Extension



- ▶ STEM extension – *24 additional* OPT months
  - ▶ STEM majors only (CIP list)
  - ▶ Can use previous STEM degree
  - ▶ A few other restrictions – more info on Reves website
  - ▶ Master's level student and considering future STEM Master's degree?
    - ▶ Talk with a Reves advisor for options

# Unemployment Limits

- ▶ Cannot have more than a combination of **90 days of unemployment** while on OPT
- ▶ Time before OPT start date does not count
- ▶ What counts as employment?
  - ▶ At least 20 hours/week and related to degree
  - ▶ Volunteering
  - ▶ Unpaid internships
  - ▶ Multiple employers
  - ▶ Employment agency
  - ▶ See website for more info

# Unemployment Limits

▶ Keep records of employment (e.g., offer letter, reference letter)

▶ Update SEVP with employment updates

▶ Update iStart if you've left

▶ Consequences:

▶ Termination of SEVIS record

▶ Denied visa, denied re-entry to US, denied later benefits (e.g., H1-B)

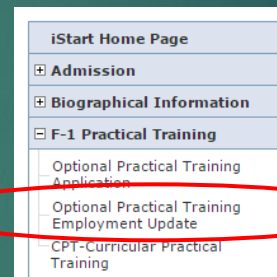


An official website of the United States government  
SEVP Portal | Student and Exchange Visitor Program Portal

**Register**

SEVIS ID

Submit



iStart Home Page

- Admission
- Biographical Information
- F-1 Practical Training
  - Optional Practical Training Application
  - Optional Practical Training Employment Update
  - CPT-Curricular Practical Training

# Reporting Requirements



Address Change



New Employment



How Work Relates to Degree



Changes in Employment

# Reporting Requirements

- Update Immigration within **10 days**
  - ▶ Address and phone changes
  - ▶ Employment changes
  - ▶ Submit updates through SEVP Portal, **directly** through Immigration
  - ▶ During OPT, you will receive email from SEVP. Check junk/spam folders.
  - ▶ Problems? Contact us for help!



An official website of the United States government

 **SEVP Portal | Student and Exchange Visitor Program Portal**

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**Register**

SEVIS ID

Submit

# Reporting Requirements

- ▶ Changed your status? Let us know!
- ▶ No plans to use OPT, left the country – Let us know!

<http://istart.wm.edu>

**iStart**

- ▶ We'll contact you via your **W&M email**, so check it or set up forwarding

# Travel

## Documents To Re-enter the US



Apply before  
leaving US!



Unexpired F-1 Visa

Department of Homeland Security U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement I-907, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status  
800-368-5858

SEVIS ID: (F-1)	NAME:
EMPLOYMENT STATUS:	TYPE:
EMPLOYMENT START DATE:	EMPLOYMENT END DATE:
EMPLOYER NAME:	EMPLOYER LOCATION:
COMMENTS:	

CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP EXTENSION  
REGISTRATION CODE: IMMIGRATION STATUS: RECEIPT NUMBER: REPORT DATE: REVENUE/ISSUE DATE:

EVENT HISTORY:	EVENT NAME:	EVENT DATE:
OTHER AUTHORIZATIONS:	START DATE:	END DATE:

**TRAVEL SIGNATURE**  
This signature must be signed and dated by the student for every re-entry to the United States. Each signature must be signed and dated by the student for every re-entry to the United States. Each signature must be signed and dated by the student for every re-entry to the United States.

Signature:	DATE:
<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>	04/2

ICE Form I-907 (07/2009) Page 1 of 3

Travel Signature Signed  
within last **6 months**



EAD/OPT Card



# Travel

- ▶ Best case scenario – you have a:
  - ▶ Job or job offer (carry employment letter)
  - ▶ Valid F-1 visa
  - ▶ EAD card
- ▶ More risky if missing one of the items
- ▶ Have not heard of problems with alumni
- ▶ H-1B or greencard pending, talk to your attorney or company



# Immigration Scams!



- ▶ Immigration will never ask for personal information or money by email or phone
- ▶ If you receive such an email or call, contact our office!

# Next Steps

- ▶ Call 757-221-3590 to schedule OPT appointment. Easiest way to get appointment!
- ▶ OPT Checklist must be completed! (**Do not staple** documents)
- ▶ After appointment, application must reach USCIS in **30** days or less
- ▶ Processing time for OPT may be long
- ▶ If applying for SSN, will arrive ~2 weeks after OPT card, or may need to apply in person

**Questions?**