

Information on OPT Extension from International Center – April 11, 2008

Here are the basic details on those eligible to apply for a 17 month extension of OPT:

Three basic components

1. Must have a major from the Science, Engineering, Technology or Math areas
2. And - Must be working with a company that uses the Government's E-verify document check system (your employer will know about it, but here's a link)

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=4ee4be0cbcf90110VgnVCM1000000ecd190aRCRD&vgnextchannel=2411c9ee2f82b010VgnVCM10000045f3d6a1RCRD>

OR

1. H-1B cap-gap extension of D/S and work authorization until October 1. OPT work authorization will be extended for a student on OPT, who's employer just filed for an H-1B petition requesting an employment start date of October 1, 2008. This would apply to all students on OPT, not just STEM students. The extension of duration of status and work authorization would automatically terminate upon the rejection, denial, or revocation of the H-1B petition filed on the student's behalf.

For those whose employer has filed for the H1B, no OPT extension application is needed. More instructions will follow if we (ISSS -no longer ISO) will be printing out new I'20's or making other updates in SEVIS.

For those needing to file for the 17 month extension - a new application and OPT fee of \$340 will be needed. You need to apply for the extension before your current 12 month OPT ends.

Much documentation will be needed to file the extension, so you will need to book an appointment with Julie or Cherish. We will try accommodating you the best we can, as we know you maybe working throughout the U.S., so phone appointments and mail can be used if needed. You can schedule the extension appointments by contacting the International Center's Office Manager Cheryl.Azarbod@mnsu.edu<<mailto:Cheryl.Azarbod@mnsu.edu>> Phone (507) 389-1281. She will then look at Cherish and Julie's availability.

Finally- For everyone on OPT the new updates include specific information regarding periods of unemployment. The new regulations state:

- \* Limited Periods of Unemployment to Maintain Status
  - \* During post-completion OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment.
  - \* Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization.
  - \* Students granted a 17-month OPT extension may not accrue an aggregate of more than 120 days of unemployment during the total 29-month OPT period.

Here is more on the Majors eligible. An entire explanation of the OPT changes is at:

[http://www.nafsa.org/regulatory\\_information.sec/29\\_month\\_opt\\_rule\\_updates](http://www.nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/29_month_opt_rule_updates)

\* OPT extension to 29 months for STEM students. The 12-month limit on F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) will be extended by 17 months, for a total of 29 months, for certain STEM degreeholders (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) in the following fields:

- \* Actuarial Science.
- \* Computer Science Applications:
- \* Engineering. .
- \* Engineering Technologies..
- \* Biological and Biomedical Sciences
- \* Mathematics and Statistics.
- \* Military Technologies..
- \* Physical Sciences.
- \* Science Technologies.
- \* Medical Scientist (MS, PhD)