



ACADEMY *of* ART
UNIVERSITY

FOUNDED IN SAN FRANCISCO 1929
BY ARTISTS FOR ARTISTS



AAU Post-Completion OPT Guide



We strongly encourage you
to read the OPT Tutorial
from START to FINISH
as you are responsible to follow
policies and procedures related to
OPT, employment and your F1
status!



Overview

1) Understanding PC-OPT

2) Collecting your Documents

3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

6) Frequently Asked Questions



1) Understanding PC-OPT

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1) Understanding PC-OPT

What is PC-OPT?

- Stands for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training
- Short-term work authorization for 12 months after program completion
- Purpose is to gain job experience in your major field of study
- Employment may occur anywhere in the US
- It is a benefit of the F1 status, it is not a separate visa type



1) Understanding PC-OPT

When is PC-OPT Available?

- PC-OPT is available once per higher degree level
 - Example 1: student completes coursework for B.F.A., is eligible
 - Example 2: student had PC-OPT following B.F.A. degree, has completed coursework for M.F.A. degree, is eligible for a second time
 - Example 3: student completed B.F.A. degree and used PC-OPT, then completed coursework for A.A. degree after B.F.A. degree, student is not eligible because the second degree is lower than the first degree



1) Understanding PC-OPT

What is the Eligibility for PC-OPT?

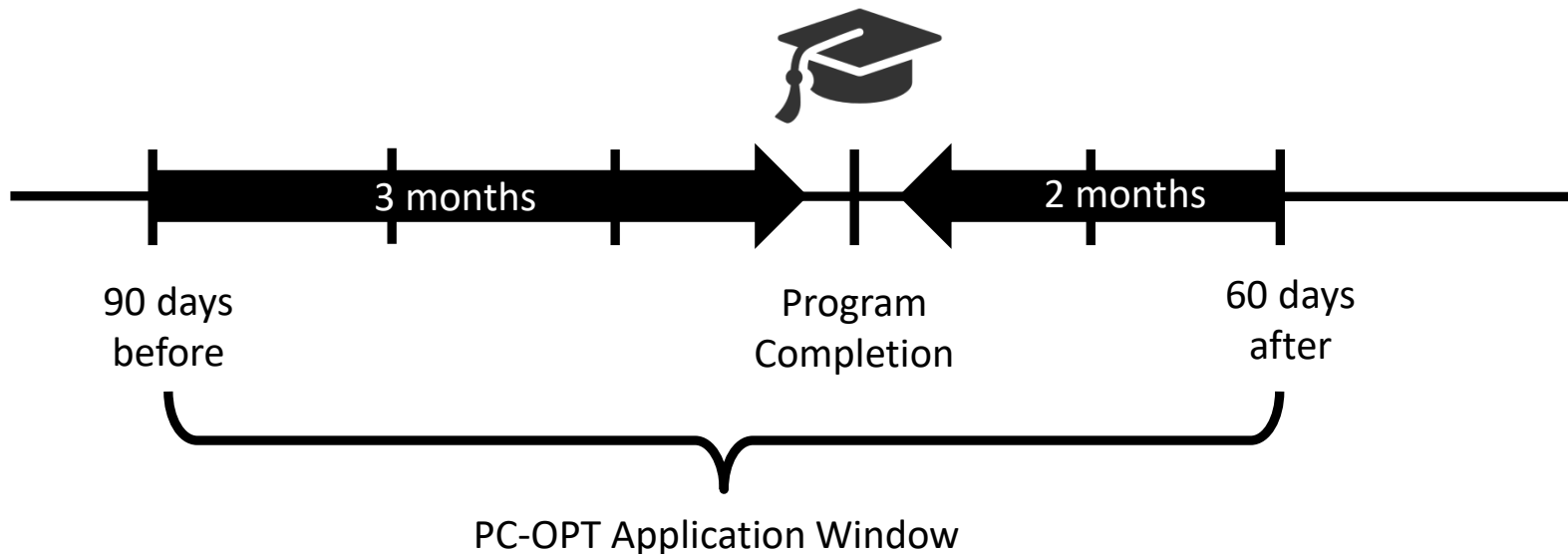
- You must complete your academic program
- You must maintain F1 status for at least one academic year
- M.F.A. students must complete all required degree units but are not required to have completed their thesis
- A job offer is not required to apply for PC-OPT
- Students in the personal enrichment program (PEUG) do not qualify for PC-OPT



1) Understanding PC-OPT

When should I apply for PC-OPT?

- Your window of time to apply is 90 days before to 60 days after the program completion date
- The program completion date is the last day of class in your final semester

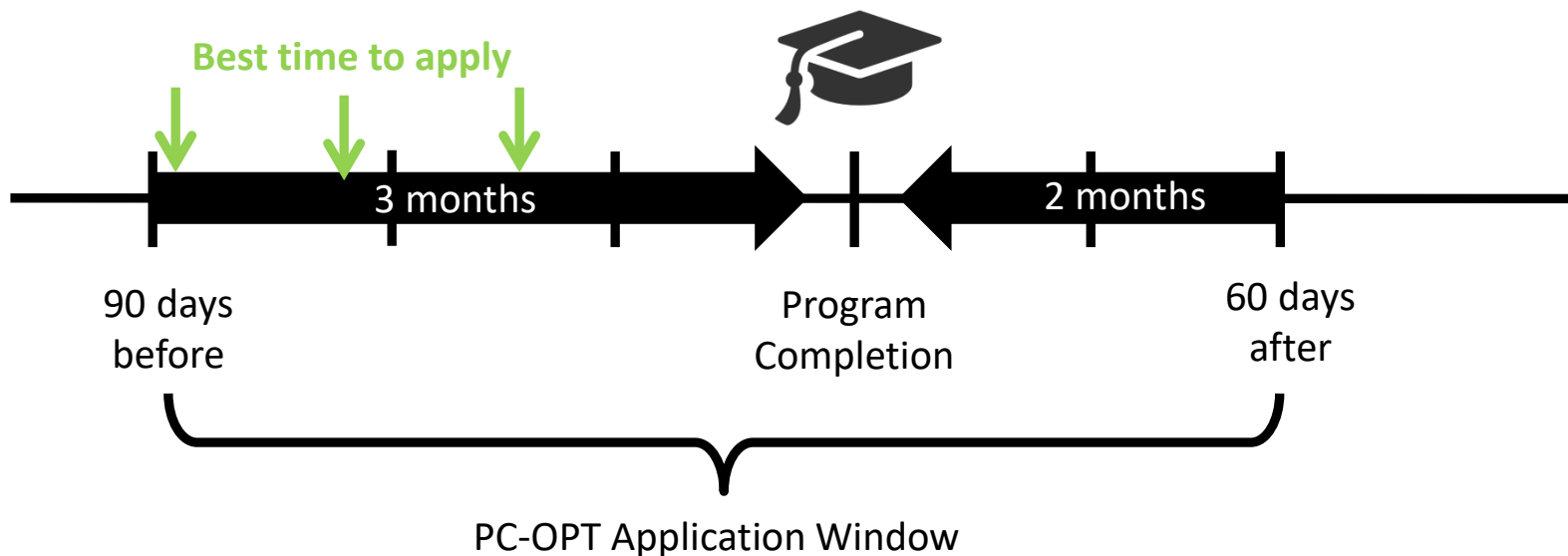




1) Understanding PC-OPT

When should I apply for PC-OPT?

- USCIS averages 90 days to process your PC-OPT Application Packet so it is best to apply as early as possible within your Application Window to avoid employment delays

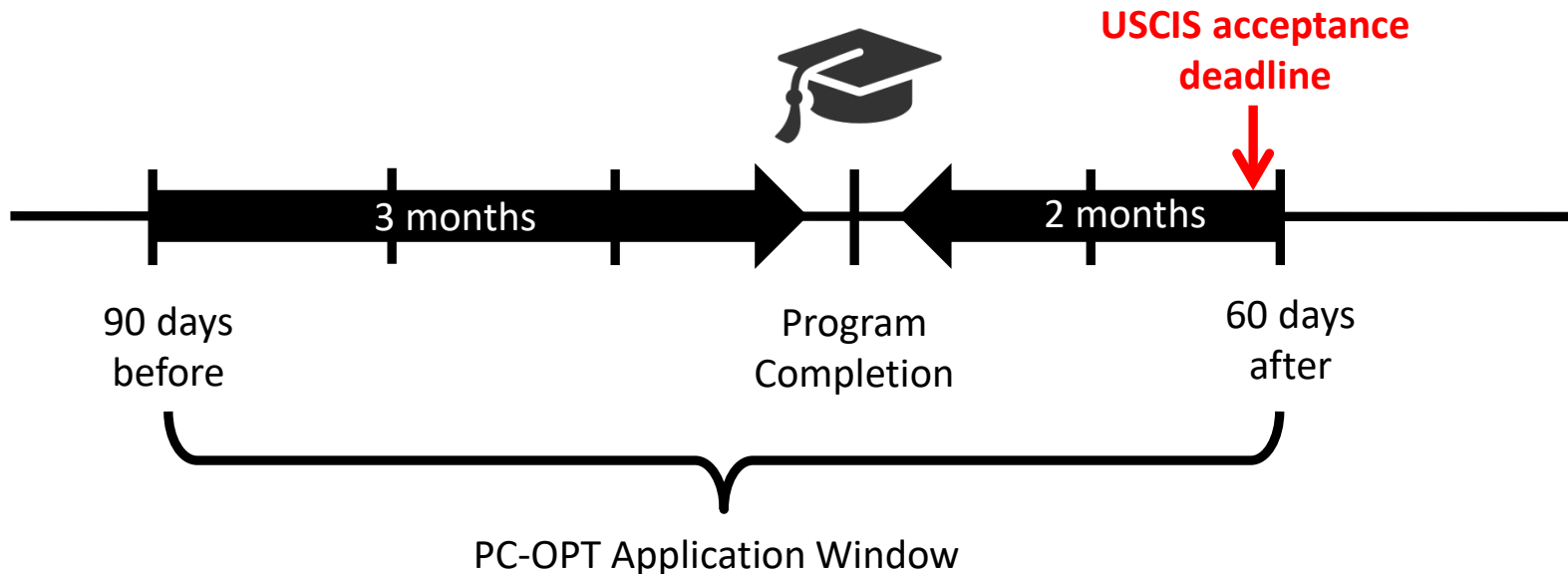




1) Understanding PC-OPT

When should I apply for PC-OPT?

- Important: USCIS must receive your PC-OPT Application Packet and accept it for processing before the end of the PC-OPT Application window or you will be denied

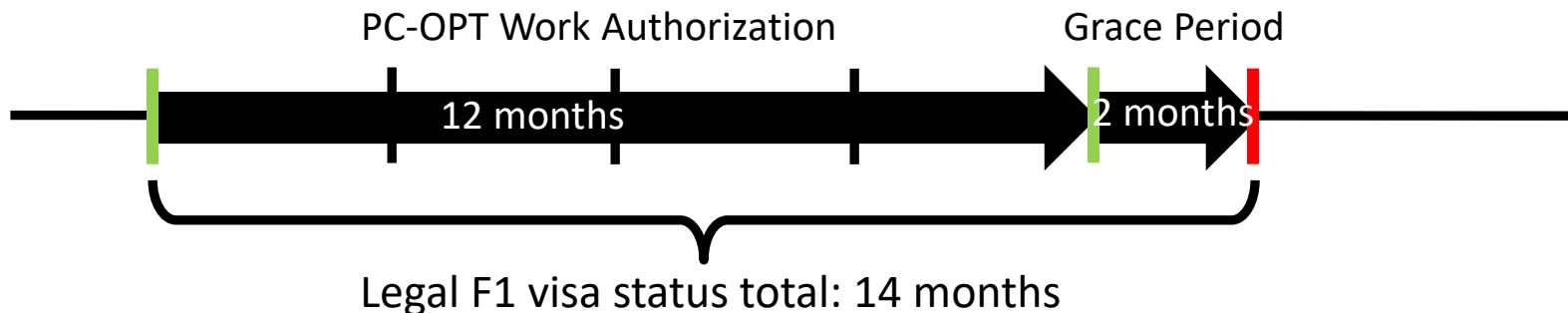




1) Understanding PC-OPT

How long is my PC-OPT?

- PC-OPT is for 12 months of work authorization
- However, your PC-OPT grants you 14 months of legal F1 visa status
 - 12 months work authorization
 - 2 months grace period after last day of PC-OPT





1) Understanding PC-OPT

How do I maintain my PC-OPT?

- Secure employment directly related to your major
- Work a minimum of **20 hours** per week
- **Immediately report all employment and personal changes and updates to AAU**

OPT Employment Report

- Keep total unemployment time under **90 calendar days**



1) Understanding PC-OPT

How do I know what jobs I'm eligible for?

- Employment must be directly related to your degree program
- If you are able to clearly explain how your major is related to your job responsibilities, you can accept the job. If you cannot, then chances are the position does not fit your major.
- Examples:
 - Degree in Interior Architecture & Design: Cannot work at Starbucks as a Barista, but can work at Starbucks designing the interior of stores
 - Degree in Animation with focus in 3D Modeling: Can accept any form of employment directly related to Animation and Visual Effects, such as compositing, texturing, etc.



1) Understanding PC-OPT

What kind of jobs can I accept?

- USCIS is not concerned with your salary, so your job can be paid or unpaid
- All the following types of employment are valid:
 - Regular full-time/part-time positions
 - Internship
 - Freelance/Independent contracting
 - Project work (doesn't include school projects or assisting a friend with a thesis project)
 - Volunteering with non-profit, church or charity organization
 - Self-employment with a valid business license
 - Employment through agency or consulting firm



1) Understanding PC-OPT

What are the hours per week requirements?

- You must work at least 20 hours per week
- If you have a variable work schedule, you should average to 20 hours per week each month
- This requirement includes freelance/independent contracting and project work
- Examples:
 - 1 part time job of 20 hours per week
 - 2 part time jobs averaging 20 hours per week, both jobs must be related to your major



1) Understanding PC-OPT

Unemployment during PC-OPT?

- Yes, USCIS allows you to be unemployed for up to 90 cumulative calendar days (that includes weekends) anytime throughout the 12 months of your PC-OPT
- It is **your responsibility to track** your unemployment time and you should use any form of tracking system you are comfortable with.



1) Understanding PC-OPT

What if I exceed 90 days unemployment during PC-OPT?

- You will be considered **out of status**. Therefore, you must do either of the following before the end of the 90 days :
 - Depart the US and inform the International Office
 - Apply for a change of status with USCIS
 - Maintain your F1 status by continuing your education in the US
 - At AAU and obtain a change of level I-20
 - At another school and obtain a transfer I-20



1) Understanding PC-OPT

How do I report employment during PC-OPT?

- **You are required to report** all changes in employment within 10 days of their occurrence to the AAU International Office.
- You can update any changes in employment **online** by completing the **OPT Reporting Form**:

[OPT Employment Report](#)

- The International Office will receive an email with your new employer information and report any updates to SEVIS.



1) Understanding PC-OPT

- The International Services Office will continue to be your contact to report your OPT employment and contact information updates.
- You may also update your employer information through the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) Portal, a tool that allows F aliens participating in post-completion practical training to report accurate and timely information directly to SEVP.
 - <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help>



1) Understanding PC-OPT

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2) Collecting your Documents

What documents will I need?

1. OPT I-20 (from AAU, mail photocopy only)
2. I-765 (from USCIS, mail original)
3. G-1145 (from USCIS, mail original)
4. 2 Passport Photos
5. Photocopy of 1-94
6. Photocopy of visa page
7. Photocopy of passport page
8. Photocopy of all previous I-20's
9. Photocopy of any previous EADs
10. Personal Check, Cashiers Check or Money Order



2) Collecting your Documents

Where do I get my PC-OPT I-20?

- Fill out the Online OPT I-20 Request Form at:
[OPT I-20 Request](#)
- The AAU International Office will then generate and issue your official I-20 within three (3) business days
- You will get a scanned version of OPT I-20 by email and also your application can get reviewed by email.



2) Collecting your Documents

ATTENTION

You **must** have an **OPT I-20** to file your OPT packet with USCIS!

Do not file before Int'l service department reviews your documents.



2) Collecting your Documents

How do I do I fill out the online OPT I-20 Request Form?

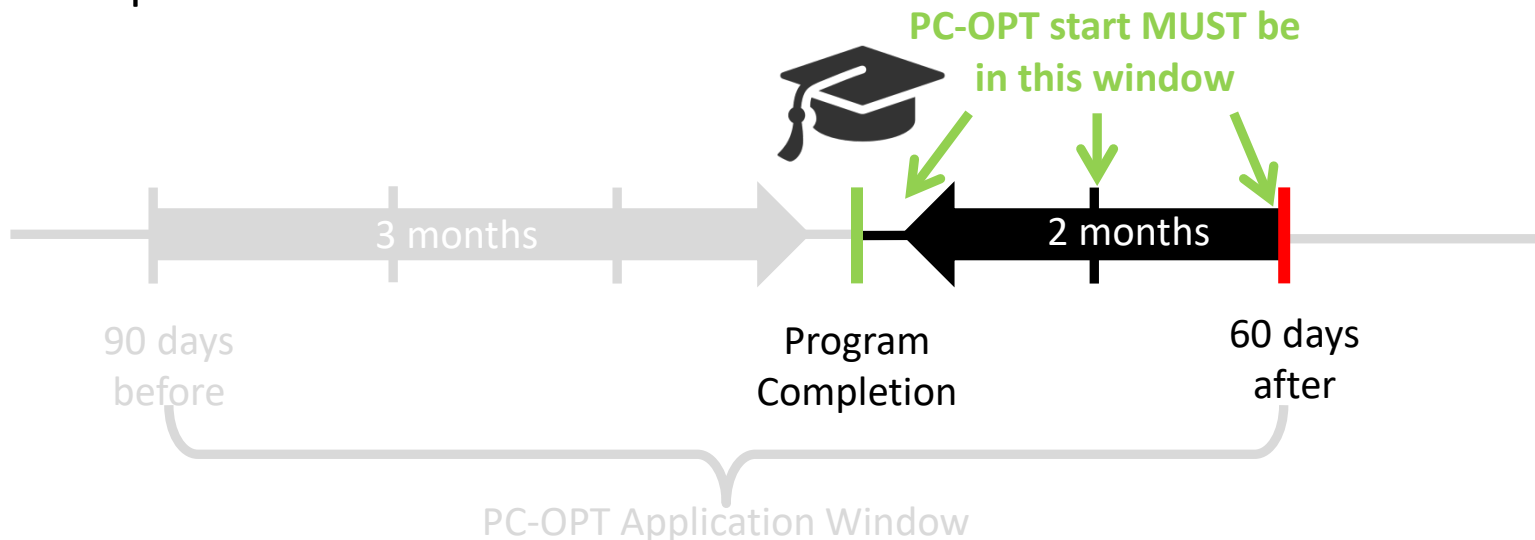
- Enter expected completion date, which is the last day from the semester you complete all your course requirements.
- The requested OPT start date must be within 60 days of your expected program completion date at AAU.



2) Collecting your Documents

How do I pick my Start Date for the OPT I-20?

- The earliest you can start your PC-OPT is one day after your program completion (one day after the last day of the semester).
- The latest you can start your PC-OPT is 60 days after your program completion.





2) Collecting your Documents

What do I look for when I receive my OPT I-20?

- Your requested employment start and end date must be indicated on the second page of your I-20. Make sure the OPT start date on your I-20 is correct.
- You must sign the first page of your OPT I-20.
- USCIS must receive your application within 30 days of the day your I-20 was issued.
- After you mailed your application and submitted it to USCIS for processing, it is not possible to change your OPT start date.



2) Collecting your Documents

ATTENTION

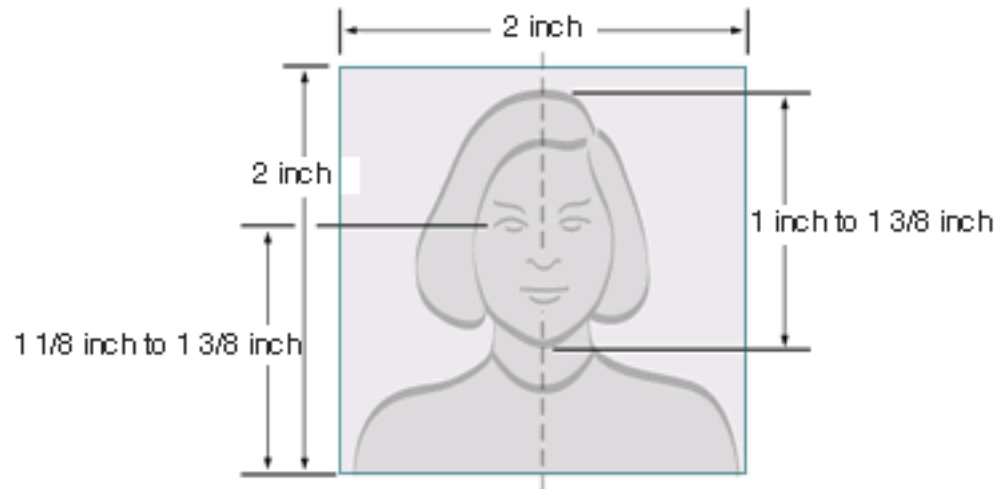
Be sure to sign your I-20 on the first page!



2) Collecting your Documents

What are the passport photo requirements?


- For more detailed information go to:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply/photos.html>
- Take your picture in front of a white background.
- Do NOT wear a white shirt.
- Your shirt must be in color.
- Take picture at Walgreens or Kinkos.





2) Collecting your Documents

What about the check/money order?

- Please use only **ONE** method of payment
- You may use **G-1450** <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1450>
- Use a money order or cashier's check (can be purchased at banks, post offices and some grocery stores)
- Use a personal check
- Fill it out  like this
- USCIS application fee is \$410



YOUR NAME
123 YOUR STREET
YOUR CITY, STATE, ZIP
(123)456-7890

9-5678/1234 0301

Date **Date here**

Pay to the order of **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** \$ **410.00**

Four hundred ten dollars and ^{no}/₁₀₀ Dollars

YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION
ANYTOWN, USA

For **Your signature here**

⑆ 123456780⑆ 0301 1234567⑆



2) Collecting your Documents

ATTENTION

When using a personal check, make sure your bank account is still open and \$410 are in the account!



1) Understanding PC-OPT

2) Collecting your Documents

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3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

Where do I get my Form I-765 and G-1145?

- You can download both forms on the USCIS website:

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

<https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145>

- Please be sure to use **the most current** USCIS version of the I-765 from **USCIS website** directly.



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

ATTENTION

You **must** have an **OPT I-20** to file your OPT packet with USCIS!

Do not file before Int'l service department reviews your documents.



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

ATTENTION

- **Do not** start your application for OPT by filling out and submitting the I-765 form directly on the USCIS website **until** you have been issued an OPT I-20 and have a complete application that has been reviewed by the International Services Office.
- You will need to **download** the I-765 form as a pdf file to save on your computer so you can then fill it out and then attach it to the OPT I-20 request form so your I-765 form can be reviewed before your OPT I-20 is issued to you.



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

How do I complete Form I-765?

- Complete this Form with black pen and write clearly.
- Your last name and first name must match your passport information.

Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select only one box):

- 1.a. ☐ Initial permission to accept employment.
- 1.b. ☐ Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of my employment authorization document **NOT DUE** to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) error.

NOTE: Replacement (correction) of an employment authorization document due to USCIS error does not require a new Form I-765 and filing fee. Refer to **Replacement for Card Error** in the **What is the Filing Fee** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for further details.

- 1.c. ☐ Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)

Part 2. Information About You

Your Full Legal Name

- 1.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 1.b. Given Name (First Name)
- 1.c. Middle Name



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

How do I complete Form I-765?

- Put the address your EAD card should be mailed to once it has been issued.
The address must be valid for 5 months.
If you plan to move, use a friends or relatives address instead (c/o: John Smith)



Part 2. Information About You (continued)

Your U.S. Mailing Address

5.a. In Care Of Name (if any)

5.b. Street Number and Name

5.c. ☐ Apt. ☐ Ste. ☐ Flr.

5.d. City or Town

5.e. State

5.f. ZIP Code

[\(USPS ZIP Code Lookup\)](#)

6. Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

☐ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered "No" to **Item Number 6**, provide your physical address below.



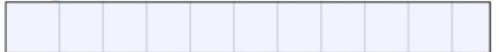

3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

How do I complete Form I-765?

Information About Your Last Arrival in the United States

- This is your 11-digit I-94 admission number
- This is the date you arrived in the US, not left your country
- Usually the first airport you arrived in in the US
- Usually F1 (sometimes H4, B2 or other, if you did a change of status in the US)

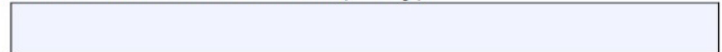
21.a. Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)



21.b. Passport Number of Your Most Recently Issued Passport



21.c. Travel Document Number (if any)



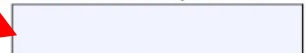
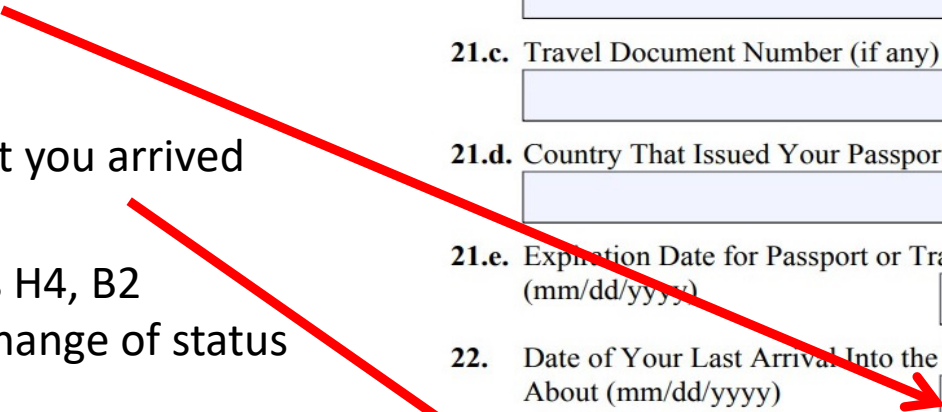
21.d. Country That Issued Your Passport or Travel Document



21.e. Expiration Date for Passport or Travel Document (mm/dd/yyyy)



22. Date of Your Last Arrival Into the United States, On or About (mm/dd/yyyy)



23. Place of Your Last Arrival Into the United States



Example: San Francisco

24. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)



F1 Student



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

How do I complete Form I-765?

- This is the code for the OPT
- Do not enter anything in below number #28, it only applies to STEM applicants

Information About Your Eligibility Category

27. **Eligibility Category.** Refer to the **Who May File Form I-765** section of the Form I-765 Instructions to determine the appropriate eligibility category for this application. Enter the appropriate letter and number for your eligibility category below (for example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii)).

(**C**) (**3**) (**B**)

28. **(c)(3)(C) STEM OPT Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(3)(C) in **Item Number 27.**, provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 28.a - 28.c.**

28.a. Degree

28.b. Employer's Name as Listed in E-Verify

28.c. Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

How do I complete Form I-765?

If you have done any CPT/OPT/EH or had different SEVIS ID in the past, please provide the information under part 6.

- Write your name
- Write USCIS# on EAD card (if you had OPT in the past)
- Write page, part, item number
- Write previous CPT/OPT/EH information Or Previous SEVIS ID

Part 6. Additional Information

If you need extra space to provide any additional information within this application, use the space below. If you need more space than what is provided, you may make copies of this page to complete and file with this application or attach a separate sheet of paper. Type or print your name and A-Number (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the **Page Number**, **Part Number**, and **Item Number** to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name

2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number	3.b. Part Number	3.c. Item Number
3	2	27

3.d. **Example: CPT**
Bachelor
CPT start date / end date
Company's name



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

ATTENTION

**Please make sure that your signature on I-765
is a "**wet**" signature (print first, then **hand** sign),
not a *digital* one.**



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

How do I complete Form G-1145?

- Your name on the form must match the name in the passport

Paperwork Reduction Act

An agency may not conduct or sponsor an information collection and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at 3 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions and completing and submitting the form. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Regulatory Coordination Division, Office of Policy and Strategy, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20529-2140. OMB No. 1615-0109. **Do not mail your completed Form G-1145 to this address.**

Complete this form and clip it on top of the first page of your immigration form(s).

Applicant/Petitioner Full Last Name Your Family (Sur) Name	Applicant/Petitioner Full First Name Your First Name	Applicant/Petitioner Full Middle Name
E-mail Address Your email address		Mobile Phone Number (Text Message) Your phone number



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

What about the OPT I-20?

- Make sure your OPT I-20 is signed by AAU and you.
- Make sure you mail your I-20 within 30 days of the Date I-20 was issued.
- Make sure the OPT Start Date on the second (2) page is correct.
- Make a photocopy of your OPT I-20 and all previous I-20's

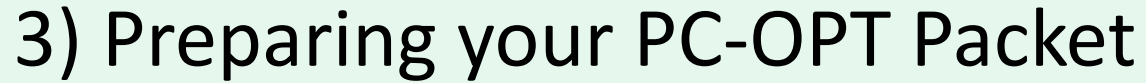
Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement		I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status OMB NO. 1653-0038	
SEVIS ID: N0004705512			
SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Doe Smith		GIVEN NAME Joan	CLASS F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
PREFERRED NAME Joan Doe-Smith		PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH UNITED KINGDOM		COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP UNITED KINGDOM	
DATE OF BIRTH 01 JANUARY 1990		ADMISSION NUMBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON INITIAL ATTENDANCE		LEGACY NAME Joan Doe-Smith	
SCHOOL INFORMATION			
SCHOOL NAME SEV2 School for Advanced SEVIS Studies SEV2 School for Advanced SEVIS Studies		SCHOOL ADDRESS 9002 Nancy Lane, Ft. Washington, MD 20744	
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Helene Robertson FDSO		SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE SAL214F4444000 03 APRIL 2015	
PROGRAM OF STUDY			
EDUCATION LEVEL DOCTORATE	MAJOR 1 Economics, General 45.0601	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000	
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH 72 Months	PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient	
PROGRAM START DATE 01 SEPTEMBER 2015	PROGRAM END DATE 11 MAY 2021		
FINANCIALS			
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 23,000	Personal Funds	\$ 3,000
Living Expenses	\$ 6,000	Scholarship and Teaching Assistantship	\$ 29,000
Expenses of Dependents (1)	\$ 3,000	Funds From Another Source	\$
Other	\$	On-Campus Employment	\$
TOTAL	\$ 32,000	TOTAL	\$ 32,000
REMARKS Orientation begins 8/25/2015. Please report to I-20 upon arrival.			
SCHOOL ATTESTATION I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(c)(6). I am a designated school official authorized to issue this form. AAU Signature X SIGNATURE OF: Helene Robertson, FDSO DATE ISSUED 21 April 2015 PLACE ISSUED Ft. Washington, MD			
STUDENT ATTESTATION I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(c)(6). I am a designated school official authorized to issue this form. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18. Your Signature X SIGNATURE OF: Joan Doe Smith DATE NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN X SIGNATURE ADDRESS (city/state or province/country) DATE			



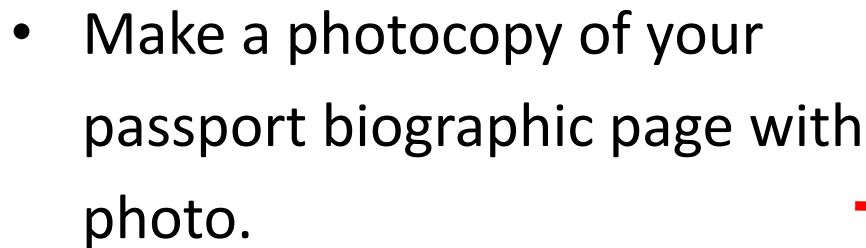
3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

ATTENTION

USCIS must receive your OPT application within 30 days of I-20 issuance, otherwise your application will be denied!



- Make a photocopy of your F1 visa, if applicable.



- Your passport must be valid.





3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

What about my I-94?

- Your I-94 will be either:
 - 1) a white card stapled in your passport like this
 - or -
 - 2) a digital form that you can download online from the following link:

<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search>

Departure Number: 0000000000 00

OMB No. 1651-0111

DATE OF ADMISSION: Day you entered the U.S.

CLASS OF ADMISSION: Your visa status

ADMITTED UNTIL: The last day you can in the U.S.

After May 7, 2013, you will no longer get a paper I-94 like this one at the airport.

This information will now be in your passport.

14. Family Name: S T U D E N T

15. First (Given) Name: I M A

16. Birth Date (Day/Mo/Yr): 0 1 0 1 1 7 0 1

17. Country of Citizenship: A N Y C O U N T R Y

CBP Form I-94 (10/04)

See Other Side

STAPLE HERE

Note: If you have the I-94 stapled in your passport, you must include a copy of the back and front of your I-94.



3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

What about previous I-20's and EAD's?

- You must include a photocopy of all your previous I-20's. If you no longer have all your previous I-20's then only include the most recent ones.
- The photocopy of your PC OPT I-20.
- If you previously received CPT, you must include a photocopy of all your I-20's with the CPT authorization.
- If you were issued an EAD before, because of previous OPT or Economic Hardship work authorization, you must include a photocopy of the back and front of your previous EAD.



1) Understanding PC-OPT

2) Collecting your Documents

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4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

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6) Frequently Asked Questions



4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

Where do I mail my documents?

- Please mail your application to the USCIS Chicago Lockbox:
 - For Regular mail (USPS):
 - USCIS
PO Box 805373, Chicago, IL 60680
 - **For Express mail (FedEx or UPS):**
 - **USCIS, Attn: I-765 C03**
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor, Chicago, IL 60603-5517



4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

When do I mail my documents?

- USCIS **must** receive and accept your application for processing **within 30 days** of the issuance of your OPT I-20.
- It is highly recommended to mail your application packet **as soon as possible** to avoid a denial of your application.



4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

ATTENTION

You **must** have an **OPT I-20** to file your OPT packet with USCIS!

Do not file before Int'l service department reviews your documents.



4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

If you would like to apply for OPT online, please click “File online” on USCIS website. Please make sure that you have an OPT I-20.

The screenshot shows the USCIS website interface. At the top, there is a search bar and a 'Sign In' button. Below the header, the main navigation menu includes 'Forms', 'News', 'Citizenship', 'Green Card', 'Laws', and 'Tools'. The left sidebar contains a 'Forms' section with a list of links: 'All Forms', 'Explore My Options', 'Filing Guidance', 'Filing Fees', 'Forms Updates', and 'Department of State (DS) Forms and Other Non-USCIS Forms'. The main content area is titled 'I-765, Application for Employment Authorization'. It features a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Forms > All Forms > Application for Employment Authorization'. Below the title, there are three alert boxes. The first alert mentions a change in filing location for Form I-765. The second alert discusses a preliminary injunction from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California regarding the USCIS Fee Schedule. The third alert discusses a preliminary injunction from the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland regarding the removal of the 30-day processing provision for asylum applicants. At the bottom of the page, there is a blue button labeled 'File Online'.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Search our Site

Sign In

Forms News Citizenship Green Card Laws Tools

Home > Forms > All Forms > Application for Employment Authorization

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Forms

All Forms

Explore My Options

Filing Guidance

Filing Fees

Forms Updates

Department of State (DS) Forms and Other Non-USCIS Forms

On Jan. 8, we adjusted the filing location for certain foreign students filing Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization. Please review our [Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765](#) page to see where you should file your application.

Alert: On Sept. 29, 2020, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California in *Immigration Legal Resource Center et al., v. Wolf, et al., 20-cv-05883-JWS*, preliminarily enjoined DHS from implementing or enforcing any part of the [USCIS Fee Schedule and Changes to Certain Other Immigration Benefit Request Requirements rule](#).

While the rule is preliminarily enjoined, we will continue to:

- Accept USCIS forms with the current editions and current fees; and
- Use the regulations and guidance currently in place to adjudicate applications and petitions. This includes accepting and adjudicating fee waiver requests as provided under Adjudicator's Field Manual (AFM) Chapters [10.9 \(PDF, 2.87 MB\)](#) and [10.10 \(PDF, 2.87 MB\)](#).

[For more information, please refer to the Federal Register Notice, dated Jan. 29, 2021.](#)

Alert: USCIS is implementing the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland's Sept. 11 preliminary injunction in *Casa de Maryland Inc. et. al. v. Chad Wolf et. al.*

This preliminary injunction provides limited injunctive relief to members of two organizations, CASA de Maryland (CASA) and the Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP), in the application of the [Removal of 30-day Processing Provision for Asylum Applicant-Related Form I-765 Employment Authorization Applications Rule](#) and the [Asylum Application, Interview, and Employment Authorization for Applicants Rule](#) to Form I-589s and Form I-765s filed by asylum applicants who are also members of CASA or ASAP.

Please see the section on our [Form I-765](#) webpage, Preliminary Injunction Impacting CASA and ASAP members.

Alert: Applicants for Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Long-Term Resident Status: You must submit Form I-955 with your Form I-765. You may only apply for CNMI long-term resident status until Aug. 17, 2020.


File Online




4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

- Please create USCIS account and click “File a form online.”
- Your category is form I-765, and **C 3 B**.

Official website of the Department of Homeland Security [Here's how you know](#) ▼


 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

 My Account


My Account ▼ Resources ▼ Sign Out

Welcome To Your USCIS Account


Select What You Want To Do




Add a paper-filed case
View your case status and case history by adding your case to your account



File a form online
Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online



Enter a representative passcode
Review and sign forms prepared for you by your attorney or representative



Verify your identity
Answer questions about your immigration history to verify your personal identity



1) Understanding PC-OPT

2) Collecting your Documents

3) Preparing your PC-OPT Packet

4) Filing & Deadlines for PC-OPT Packet

5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

6) Frequently Asked Questions



5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

How long does it take to get my EAD?

- USCIS will process your application within approximately 3-5 months.
- If you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE), USCIS will stop processing your application until you submitted the requested documents. Receiving an RFE will delay your application and it may take a total of 4-6 months to receive your EAD. Please come to the International Office when you receive an RFE.



5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

What is the authorization process?

- 2-6 weeks
 - Within two-six weeks of submitting your application to USCIS, you will receive a text message and/or email with your receipt number. Receiving a receipt number confirms USCIS accepted your application for processing.
- 6-8 weeks
 - Within six-eight weeks of submitting your application to USCIS, you will receive a letter, named Notice of Action. This confirms that USCIS has the correct mailing address on file for you. Check if your name and date of birth is correct.
- 12-20 weeks
 - Within 12 -20 weeks of submitting your application to USCIS, you will receive an Approval Notice and within a few days afterwards you will receive your EAD.



5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

What happens after I received my EAD?

- After you received your EAD, make sure your name is spelled correctly, your Date of Birth and OPT start/end date is correct.
- **If something is incorrect, contact the AAU International Office for next step.**
- If your EAD is correct, you can report your employment to AAU.





5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

What if I do not get an email/ text message with a receipt number?

- If this is the case, you either forgot to mail Form G-1145 or your application was rejected and mailed back to the address on your Form I-765.
- **If your application packet is returned to you**, please **contact** the AAU International Office to request a new Form I-20 with a new OPT recommendation. (Remember USCIS must receive your application and accept it for processing within 30 days of issuing your OPT I-20)



5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

What if I do not receive a Notice of Action?

- If you do not receive a Notice of Action within 6 weeks of submitting your application, but you received an email/text message with your receipt number, chances are that USCIS has the incorrect mailing address on file for you.
- If this is the case, you must call the USCIS Customer Service Hotline and confirm your mailing address.
- You can call USCIS at: 1-800-375-5283
- When calling USCIS you must have your receipt number on hand.



5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

What if I do not receive my EAD?

- If you do not receive your EAD within 12 -20 weeks of submitting your application, but you received an email/text message and approval notice, you should contact the International Office.
- It may be that there is a processing delay or your EAD was processed and mailed out, but for some reason you did not receive it.
- The International Office will work with you on the next steps.



5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

What if I get a Request for Evidence (RFE)?

- Sometimes students will receive a blue letter, named Request for Evidence. This means that USCIS is asking for more documents. For example:
 - Updated passport pictures
 - Your signature on the I-765
 - You forgot to sign your I-20 or forgot to submit documents
 - You were previously authorized for CPT or OPT and did not submit a copy of your I-20 with the CPT or OPT authorization
- **If you receive an RFE**, please **contact** the International Office at AAU.



5) Waiting for your Approval & EAD

What if I move and need to change my address while my application is still pending?

- USCIS does not forward any mail.
- Before moving to your new address, you must contact USCIS and update your old address to the new one.
- You can update your address in two ways:
 - Call the Customer Service Hotline: 1-800-375-5283
 - Update your mailing address online:
<http://www.uscis.gov/addresschange>



1) Understanding PC-OPT

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6) Frequently Asked Questions



6) Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I check the status of my application?

- You can check your application status online at:
<https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard/CaseStatus.do>
- You will need your receipt number to check the status.
- Your application will remain in “initial” status for a while. Remember the authorization process and that the average processing time is 90 days. If you have approached the 90 days and your status is still “initial”, contact the International Office.



6) Frequently Asked Questions

Can I travel outside the US on PC-OPT?

- Make sure to have all the necessary re-entry travel documents before your departure.
- Do not enter the US in a status other than F1, unless you are willing to give up your OPT.
- Time spent outside the US while on OPT will count towards your 90 days of unemployment, unless you are on a paid vacation, company approved leave or business trip as part of your employment.
- While OPT is a legitimate benefit of your F1 status, students who have to apply for a new F1 visa, must consider the risk of being denied and not being able to re-enter the US to continue their OPT.



6) Frequently Asked Questions

Can I travel outside the US on PC-OPT?

Before Program Completion & Before Getting EAD	After Program Completion & Before Getting EAD	After Program Completion & After Getting EAD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPT I-20 with a valid travel signature on the second page.• Valid passport – must be valid for at least 6 months into the future• Valid F1 visa• Print out of Semester Registration from your Student Self Service Account to confirm enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPT I-20 with a valid travel signature on the second page.• Valid passport – must be valid for at least 6 months into the future• Valid F1 visa• USCIS Notice of Action to confirm pending OPT application• Letter from Employer is strongly recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPT I-20 with a valid travel signature on the second page.• Valid passport – must be valid for at least 6 months into the future• Valid F1 visa• Valid EAD• Letter from Employer or contract confirming employment



6) Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to apply for a new F1 visa when on PC-OPT?

- If you are traveling outside the US and your F1 visa is expired, you must obtain a new F1 visa before your return.
- To apply for a new F1 visa, you must have the following documents:
 - Valid OPT I-20 with a travel signature that is not older than 6 months
 - Valid passport – must be valid for at least 6 months into the future
 - Valid EAD
 - Valid Letter of Employment
 - Current Financial Support Documents
 - Visa Renewal Letter from the International Office at AAU
 - Official Transcript from AAU
 - Any other documents required by the US consulate/embassy



6) Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to pay US taxes?

- You are required to file a tax return although you are not a US citizen.
- When employed, taxes are usually automatically taken out of your paycheck unless you are a doing contract or freelance work or you are a self-employed business owner. In this case, no taxes will be taken out of your paycheck and you must pay taxes when filing your tax return.
- AAU does not advise on taxes, but for more detailed information, please visit:
 - <http://www.irs.gov/>
 - <http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/student-resources/international-student-resources>
 - <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Find-a-Location-for-Free-Tax-Prep>



6) Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do, if I did not receive an email/text message with my receipt number, but my check was cashed?

- If your check was cashed, but you did not receive a receipt number, you should contact the International Office immediately and provide a copy of your bank account confirming that the money was taken out of your account. The International Office will work with you on the next steps.



6) Frequently Asked Questions

What are my options after PC-OPT?

Depart the US and Return Home	Apply for a Change of Status with USCIS	Apply for 24 Months STEM Extension	Continue your Education
If you have maintained the OPT legally, the day after your last day of OPT, your 60 day grace period will begin. During the grace period you will not be allowed to work, however, you may travel throughout the US and prepare your departure before your return home.	You may decide to apply for a change of status from F1 to another status with USCIS. You may do so while on OPT or during your 60 day grace period. When applying for a different status, you must ensure to be in valid F1 status.	If you completed your degree STEM qualifying major, you will be eligible for the 24 Months STEM Extension. For more qualification details, review the Info Sheet and STEM tutorial on the Int'l Student Website.	If you want to continue your studies in the US, you can do so by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtaining a Change of Level I-20 from AAU• Transferring out to another school and obtaining a transfer I-20.



6) Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do to apply for a Change of Status while or after PC-OPT?

- Start by taking a look at the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov
- Consult with an immigration attorney. For referrals, contact the International Office or look at AILA:
<http://www.ailalawyer.com/>
- Visa types most commonly used by AAU students after OPT:
 - H1B (Specialty Occupation, Employer Specific)
 - <http://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-workers/h-1b-specialty-occupations-and-fashion-models/h-1b-specialty-occupations-dod-cooperative-research-and-development-project-workers-and-fashion-models>
 - O1 (Individuals with Extraordinary Ability or Achievement, Employer Specific):
 - <http://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-workers/o-1-individuals-extraordinary-ability-or-achievement/o-1-visa-individuals-extraordinary-ability-or-achievement>
 - TN (NAFTA Professionals from Canada or Mexico)
 - <http://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-workers/tn-nafta-professionals>
 - Permanent Residency through family or employment
 - <http://www.uscis.gov/greencard>



6) Frequently Asked Questions

How can I request a transfer to another school during or after PC-OPT?

- Contact the International Office and submit the following documents:
 - Copy of your Acceptance Letter to your new school
 - Transfer Release Form from your new school
- The International Office will process your request within 3 business days.
- Note: The moment your SEVIS record is release to another school, your OPT will end. If you have already completed your OPT, your SEVIS record must be released before the end of the 60 day grace period.



6) Frequently Asked Questions

Can I take classes while on PC-OPT?

- You can take personal enrichment classes at AAU while on PC-OPT, but you cannot take degree seeking classes.
- If you plan to pursue another degree and take degree seeking classes, you have two options:
 - Wait until the end of your OPT and receive a new I-20 to continue your studies during the 60 day grace period.
 - Discontinue your OPT and receive a new I-20 to continue your studies.