OPT APPLICATION
How to File for Optional Practical Training (OPT)
After the Completion of Your Studies

1. Have the Certificate of Completion (on back of page) signed by your Academic Advisor.
2. Make an appointment with our office to process your application.
3. Bring ALL your original I-20s (from Fordham and from any other schools), current I-94 card and passport to the meeting.
4. If you ever applied for OPT in the past, bring any/all past EAD cards
5. Obtain the two (2) required photos (see form attached) to mail with the application. You can have passport type pictures taken at various photo shops or even at convenience stores.

REMEMBER:
- We will return to you your original I-20(s), only copies will be sent to Immigration.
- Your application can be submitted up to 90 days before your completion date on your I-20, and up to 60 days after the degree completion date.
- You must make an appointment on the OIS website to submit your application
- You may not begin working legally before your employment authorization card has been received from Immigration.
- Even though you receive OPT, begin your full-time work, and are no longer registered at Fordham University, you still retain an F-1 student nonimmigrant status while on OPT.
- Your mandatory insurance expires on August 23rd if you graduate in May and January 1st if you graduate in December. Contact us with questions re: health insurance after graduating.
- There is an ongoing reporting requirement so please REMEMBER AND CONTINUE to notify us about the name and address of your current employer(s) as well as any changes to employers and PERSONAL address changes if you move (within 10 days).
- If you travel outside the US, please do not hesitate to call, email or make an appointment with the Office for International Services. Notify us if:
  - You wish to leave the US before you hear from Immigration
  - Three months pass and you have not received your OPT card
To:    Appropriate Academic Officer  
From:  Office for International Services  
Re:    Certification of Completion of Studies  

Student: Name: __________________________ ID# __________________________  
Personal Email to notify you when your OPT card arrives: __________________________  

The above named F-1 international student has requested a recommendation for practical training to gain work experience in his/her major field of study in the United States because upon your best information and belief, employment comparable to the proposed employment is not available to the student in the student’s foreign residence and this student would benefit from a work experience, but a comparable experience to the proposed employment should be available to the student in his/her country of foreign residence.  

Please indicate when the student is expected to complete his/her degree requirements (Note: This is NOT the graduation date):  

(MONTH)  (DAY)  (YEAR)  

If the student is applying for OPT before completion of studies, please list any required courses or projects this student has yet to complete (other than those for which student is already registered) and prospective completion date.  

__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________  

Name (please print)  Title &Department  phone Ext.  

Signature  Date
Important Information Regarding the New Version Form I-765 OPT Application

New version of Form I-765 is required starting December 4th, 2017. As you may notice, the new version of Form I-765 fields 9.a. through 13.b. are newly added questions regarding Social Security Number (SSN). You can now apply for a SSN while applying for your work authorization if you don’t have SSN yet.

While it may save you a trip to the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office to apply for SSN, since it is a newly added practice by USCIS and SSA, it is possible that the new practice could potentially create complications and confusion. **Even though the decision is yours, OIS strongly advise you NOT to request a SSN when applying for OPT. Before making the request when meeting with an advisor at OIS to apply for OPT, please read the following information carefully.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If Applying for a SSN at the SSA Office in person</th>
<th>If Applying a SSN as part of the Form I-765</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OIS will track your OPT application and will email notify you as soon as your EAD card arrives.</td>
<td>OIS will NOT be able to track your OPT application and we will not receive your EAD because everything will be sent to your home address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will get a receipt from SSA when applying in person.</td>
<td>There will be no receipt given from SSA. SSA does not provide any updates when information are forwarded to them by USCIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security card will be sent to your address within 2 weeks. In the case if you did not receive SSN within 2 weeks, you will have receipt to refer to when checking with SSA.</td>
<td>If everything goes well, you can receive your SSN card no later than 7 business days after receiving EAD from USCIS. However, OIS can not advise you on the status of your EAD card nor the status of your SSN card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t need to complete fields of 9.a. through 13.b. on Form I-765.</td>
<td>You will need to complete Form I-765 fields 9.a. through 13.b. on your own. OIS can not advise on how to complete these fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When your EAD card arrives at OIS, OIS will make a copy of the card for our files and to check your SEVIS record for any technical glitches.</td>
<td>It is your responsibility to submit a copy of your EAD card to OIS to avoid any technical glitches in SEVIS. OIS has no way of checking technical glitches on your SEVIS record without a copy of the EAD card which can lead to potential problems when traveling under OPT.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Photograph Guidelines

Your photo must be:
- In color
- Printed on matte or glossy photo quality paper
- 2 x 2 inches (51 x 51 mm) in size
- Taken within the last 30 days to reflect your current appearance
- Taken in front of a plain white or off-white background
- Taken in full-face view directly facing the camera
- With a neutral facial expression and both eyes open
- Cannot have been used in a previous application

Paper Photo Head Size Template
- Make sure the photo presents the full head from the top of the hair to the bottom of the chin
- The head should be fully positioned directly facing the camera
- Center the head with the frame
- The person in the photo should have a neutral expression and be facing the camera
- The height of the head (top of hair to bottom of chin) should measure 1 inch to 1 3/8 inches (25 mm - 35 mm)
- Make sure the eye height is between 1 1/8 inches to 1 3/8 inches (28 mm – 35 mm) from the bottom of the photo

Please consult this website for more information about the photo requirements, including information about glasses and head coverings:
https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/photos.html
Well Composed Photo Composition Examples

Some Suggested Locations for Taking Passport Photos:

**Lincoln Center**
FedEx  
240 Central Park South

CVS  
241 W 57th Street

**Rose Hill**
Walgreens  
406 E Fordham Road

Duane Read  
58 E Fordham Road

Note: These recommendations are valid as of March 9, 2015. Please let us know if one of these locations no longer offers passport photos, so that we can update this information.
HOW TO RETRIEVE YOUR ELECTRONIC I-94 RECORD

The I-94 is an important document which records the date and purpose of your entry to the US, and how long you are allowed to stay. You can go online to an electronic database to retrieve your I-94 record.

The OIS recommends that you bring this document to your OIS check-in after you first arrive in New York, so please make sure to print it ahead of time following the instructions below.

NOTE: If you received a paper I-94 card, or if you have a problem retrieving your electronic I-94 card, please notify us when you check in.

To Retrieve your I-94 Document:

1. WAIT until AFTER you have entered the US, then go to www.cbp.gov/i94 and clicked on “Get I-94 Number Now” (See Step 1)
2. Click “Get Most Recent I-94” (See Step 2)
3. Agree to the terms and conditions by clicking on “Consent & Continue”
4. Enter Travelers Info (See Step 3) as they appear on your PASSPORT
   
   Note: If you have trouble accessing your I-94 record, it might be because of the way you are entering your name. First, you should try your name as it is written in your passport. Then, if that does not work, try other some other combinations, such as given name and middle name together, or middle name and family name together, or, if you have many middle names, try leaving some of them out. Please try ALL combinations of your name before contacting us.
5. Enter your date of birth, Passport number and Passport Country of Issuance
6. Click on “Next” to get most recent I-94 and Print (See Step 4)

The third field on the I-94 is Class of Admission. This should say “F1 or J1”

The fourth field on your I-94 is Admit Until Date. This should Say “D/S”
How to Write a Check

Who it is going to: ex. USCIS

Amount written in words

Date you write on the check - Month/Date/Year

Amount written in US dollars, including cents. (Ex. $8.00)

Make sure you sign it - your signature

Notes about what the check was for