

EMPLOYMENT

ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

International students who are maintaining lawful immigration status are eligible for on-campus employment as long as it does not interfere with full course of study.

Employment is limited to 20 hours per week when school is in session. Full-time on-campus employment is permitted during regular breaks (summer, between semesters, winter break, and spring break). No prior authorization from OIP is necessary to work on-campus; however a U.S. Social Security number is required (see section on Social Security). Information about on-campus positions can be found at the Career Services website, www.clarion.edu/career/parttimejobs/studentindex.html.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

F-1 students must have been in valid F-1 status for at least nine months before obtaining authorization to work off-campus. Work authorization must be recommended by the International Student Adviser and in some cases, approved by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). Students must have approval before working off-campus. The types of off-campus work authorization for F-1 students include:

- **Economic necessity.** If a student shows compelling evidence of unanticipated financial need, the student may be eligible for this type of work authorization. The USCIS applies these standards in a very strict manner, and insists on documented proof of severe and unexpected economic necessity. If they do grant permission, they allow part-time work during the academic year (not to exceed 20 hrs/wk) and full-time work during the summer and other vacation periods. Students who think they qualify for this type of work authorization should contact the International Student Advisor in the OIP.

- **Two types of practical training are available to international students:**
 1. **CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)**
 2. **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)**

CPT – **Curricular Practical Training** allows an international student to engage in temporary employment to gain practical experience related to his/her major field of study prior to completion of program of study. Employment under CPT must be an integral part of an established curriculum for which academic credit is awarded (or degree program requirement) and be directly related to the student's field of study. If degree program requirement, it must be stated in the school's catalog or departmental information describing the program and must be available to all students in the program.

CPT is approved as full or part-time (20 hours per week or less) and for a specific employer, place of employment, and time period. CPT can only be granted for a maximum of one semester at a time and student must be registered for the internship or practicum class during the same semester in which CPT will be authorized. Any changes (employer, location, hours/week) or new period of CPT must be requested prior to the changes taking place or before the new period of CPT will begin. Students who are pursuing part-time CPT are required to continue to remain enrolled as a full-time student during normal enrollment periods. Students authorized to pursue full-time CPT may be enrolled for less than full-time but cannot cease to be enrolled totally during normal enrollment periods. Examples of CPT include co-op programs, internship, or practicum.

NO IMMIGRATION AUTHORIZATION IS REQUIRED for CPT; however, you must complete the application process and be granted authorization by the International Student Advisor PRIOR to the beginning of employment. For details about CPT and information about the application process, please contact the International Student Advisor in the OIP.

RESTRICTIONS:

- Students are eligible for CPT after completion of one academic year
- Students who use 12 months or more of full-time CPT will not be eligible for OPT.
- Students who use fewer than 12 months of full-time CPT will still be eligible for up to 12 months of OPT.
- Part-time CPT will not affect eligibility for OPT.

OPT – Optional Practical Training allows authorization for “temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student’s major area of study.” An international student who has maintained lawful immigration status for at least one academic year is eligible to apply for OPT. Authorization for OPT may be granted before or after completion of program of study; however it is recommended that students not use OPT prior to completion of degree program since any time authorized will be deducted from the period of full-time post-completion OPT. Student applying for post-completion OPT must apply for full-time only, and employment must be directly related to major field of study.

The maximum amount of time for which OPT may be granted is 12 months* full-time per degree level, which means that if you did 12 months of post-completion OPT after completion of a bachelors degree, you would be eligible for another period of 12 months after completion of a masters degree. Please understand that you will only receive one 12-month period of OPT per degree level. **Recent immigration regulations allow students in Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields to apply for a 17 month extension if certain criteria are met. Please see International Student Advisor for more details regarding this issue.*

Applications for post-completion OPT must be submitted NO LATER THAN 60 days after the completion of all degree requirements. OPT applications must be received by the OIP no later than 45 days after completion of degree in order to allow sufficient time for processing and submitting to USCIS. IMMIGRATION AUTHORIZATION IS REQUIRED FOR OPT.

The period of post-completion OPT may begin at any time up to 60 days after completion of all degree requirements. The date that you request as the start date does not necessarily mean that is the start date that will be approved. YOU MUST HAVE RECEIVED THE EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENT (EAD) AND THE BEGINNING DATE ON THE EAD MUST BE REACHED BEFORE YOU MAY ENGAGE IN EMPLOYMENT. Please understand that once you have completed all degree requirements you may not continue to work in any capacity until you have received your EAD.

Students remain in F-1 student status during the period of post-completion OPT, and are required to keep the OIP informed of any changes in your name, address, employer address and employment status as well as any other pertinent information about your stay in the U.S. A travel signature on your I-20 form is required if you travel outside the U.S. (If you plan to travel outside the U.S. and return to pursue OPT, it is not advisable to travel if you have not secured employment under OPT.) Federal regulations require you to keep OIP informed of any change of status by submitting a copy of the Approval Notice (Form I-797).

Upon expiration of the EAD, students have a 60 grace period in which to leave the U.S., change status, or transfer to a new degree program, but are not permitted to continue to work under OPT.

If students choose to begin a new full-time degree program, whether at Clarion University or another institution in the U.S., during the period of OPT authorization, any OPT time remaining on the EAD will be cancelled, and employment must be terminated upon release of SEVIS record from Clarion to the new institution or upon issuance of a new I-20 form for a different program.

For details about OPT and information about the application process, please contact the International Student Advisor in the OIP.

This information specifically applies to F-1 student visa holders. J-1 students should contact the Responsible Office in the OIP regarding details about employment since there is some variation in the regulations.

