Optional Practical Training Overview

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program

July, 2011
What is Optional Practical Training (OPT)?
Critical Differences

United States

- Student Visa
- Work Authorization
  (Benefit Adjudicated by USCIS)

Other Countries

- Student Visa
- Resident Permit
- Work Permit

(Privileges Adjudicated by USCIS)
## Types of Employment Authorization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Employment Authorization</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>On Campus &amp; Off Campus</strong></td>
<td>Authorized by DSO and hours are limited</td>
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| **Curricular Practical Training** | Authorized by DSO  
Must be integral  
Can be part or full time  
Can be for credit |
| **Optional Practical Training** | Recommended by DSO  
Adjudicated by USCIS  
EAD issued at 12 months  
Pre or post is approvable  
Must be related to program of study |
| **STEM Extension of OPT** | Recommended by DSO  
Adjudicated by USCIS  
EAD issued for an additional 17 months  
Must be related to program of study  
Employer must be in E-Verify |
STEM OPT

Created with April 8, 2008 IFR and provided the following changes:

• 17-month extensions for those students in STEM
• Automatic extension for Cap-gap
• Limits on unemployment
Working With Data
SEVIS Statistics

- 10,271 Certified Schools
- 847,529 Active F-1 and M-1 Students
- 81,820 F-2 and M-2 Dependents
- 1,447 Exchange Visitor Programs
- 186,049 J-1 Exchange Visitors
- 49,293 J-2 Dependents

The Open Doors Survey
Visa Data
Saudi Arabia Example
OPT Statistics

- 530,289 OPT Approvals since 2005
- 17,000 OPT Extensions since April 2008
- 79,890 OPT Approvals in 2010
- 7,669 OPT Approvals in 2011 thus far
STEM OPT Statistics

- 19,146 STEM OPT Applicants since 2008
- 92 Withdrawn Petitions
- 2,347 Requested as of 9/2010
- 276 Pending
- 356 Denied
- 16,636 Approved since 2008
Top Five STEM OPT Countries

- India - 11,432
- China - 3,969
- South Korea - 1,170
- Taiwan - 849
- Nepal - 407
# Top 25 Fields Approved for STEM

- 14.100 Electrical, Electronics and Communications Engineering
- 11.0701 Computer Science
- 14.1901 Mechanical Engineering
- 11.0101 Computer and Information Sciences, General
- 14.0801 Civil Engineering, General
- 40.0501 Chemistry, General
- 14.3501 Industrial Engineering (NEW)
- 14.0901 Computer Engineering, General
- 26.0101 Biology/Biological Sciences, General
- 14.0903 Computer Software Engineering (NEW)
- 14.0701 Chemical Engineering
- 27.0101 Mathematics, General
- 40.0801 Physics, General
- 11.0103 Information Technology (NEW)
- 14.0501 Biomedical/Medical Engineering
- 11.0401 Information Science/Studies
- 14.0101 Engineering, General
- 27.0501 Statistics, General
- 15.1501 Engineering/Industrial Management
- 26.0202 Biochemistry
- 26.1201 Biotechnology
- 14.1801 Materials Engineering
- 11.0901 Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications (NEW)
- 14.0201 Aerospace, Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering
- 52.1304 Actuarial Science
Thank you!
The Student and Exchange Visitor Program
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