Albion College OPT I-20 Request Form

Completed by the Student:

Student Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Previous CPT and OPT authorization dates, if any: _____

Requested OPT Start Date: _____

Requested OPT End Date: _____

In preparation for submitting this document to CIE, and ultimately submitting an OPT application to USCIS, please do the following:

o **Complete I-765 Form.** *Instructional video:: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AAkFGnOzvE*

o **Compile OPT packet for USCIS.** *Instructional video*: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTBEWTNR_Pc*

o **Prepare documents required for USCIS mailing:**

- **Form G-1145** (Optional). Authorizes USCIS to send you application processing updates via email/text. If this is desired, paperclip completed form on top of application packet.
- **Original Form I-765**. USCIS recently updated Form I-765. As of 12/4/2017 USCIS will no longer accept previous versions of Form I-765. Please use the most recent version of Form I-765 dated 07/17/17 when applying for OPT.
- 2 U.S. size passport photos. No glasses allowed. Lightly write name and I-94 number on back of each photo. Attach photos to top, left corner of Form I-765 (a plastic bag is supplied for your convenience).
- $410 check or money order. Make payable to "Department of Homeland Security," write I-94 number at top. Staple check midway down the left edge of Form I-765.
- Copy of OPT I-20. Pages 1 and 2. I-20 must be less than 30 days old, signed by you and the CIE Director.
- Copy of passport ID page. Showing picture and expiration date.
- Copy of I-94. Front and back of paper I-94, or electronic I-94 print out.
- Copy of F-1 visa. Most recently issued visa, valid or expired.
- CPT printout. Provided by CIE, if you have engaged in CPT.
- Copies of any former OPT EADs.

Once you have compiled the above, attach to this form and bring to CIE for OPT I-20 issuance. After issuance, you will be responsible for mailing your OPT request to USCIS. The CIE Director will provide mailing instructions. Expect 2-4 months for USCIS processing.

Student signature confirms the following: The information provided on this OPT request form is correct and complete; the student has read the Albion College OPT Information Sheet and meets the eligibility requirements for CPT.

*Signature*_____   *Date*_____

Completed by the Albion College Registrar (*Ferguson First Floor. Registrar@albion.edu, 517-629-0217***)**

Program Completion Semester: _____

Major(s) and Minor(s) to be earned: _____

Registrar signature confirms the following: The student is anticipated to complete the program requirements for an Albion College degree in the above term, and in the listed major area of study.

*Signature*_____   *Date*_____

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Information Sheet

Beginning Employment

You may not lawfully begin employment, or pre-employment training, until you receive your EAD and the start date has arrived. If you work during a gap between previous work authorization (for example, CPT authorization, or on-campus work authorization) and the start of your OPT authorization, you violate your F-1 status. Note: The date for which you are approved to start/end OPT may be different from the dates you request, depending on USCIS processing.

Acceptable Employment

DHS has ruled that acceptable employment during OPT can include standard employment, contract employment, self-employment and volunteer positions. All employment must be appropriate to your degree and must be at least 20 hours per week. Please refer to the following chart for more details.

Type of Employment	Instructions
Single Employer	Provide the employment dates and your employer's name and address.
None – Actively Seeking Employment	If you have been unemployed for more than 10 days since your OPT start date, indicate those dates. To remain in the U.S., you must be actively looking for relevant employment. In order to maintain your visa status, you must limit unemployment while on OPT to a total of 90 days or 150 days if you have been approved for the 24-month OPT extension.
Work for Hire (contract employment)	Provide the employment dates and your employer's name and address. If requested by DHS, you must be able to provide evidence that you worked an average of at least 20 hours per week.
Unpaid Volunteer or Intern	Provide the employment dates and your employer's name and address. If requested by DHS, you must be able to provide evidence that you worked an average of at least 20 hours per week and that the work was related to your OPT degree. This option is not available to students in the 24-month OPT extension period.
Self-Employed U.S. Business Owner	List your company's name or print "Self-Employed" and the business address. This location may be the same as your personal address, if appropriate. If requested by DHS, you must be able to provide evidence that you have proper business licenses, the business is related to your degree and that the business keeps you full-time employed.

Unemployment Limits

Students in Initial OPT Period – Maximum of 90 calendar days allowed during the 12-month OPT period. **Students With an OPT STEM Extension** – An additional 60 days applies, for a maximum of 150 calendar days allowed during the 24-month OPT period. NOTE: The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has issued contradictory information regarding whether unemployment periods of less than 10 days count, or do not count, towards the 90 day unemployment deadline. **However, it is crucial that you report all periods of employment to avoid unnecessary accrual of unemployment days.**

OPT Process Overview:

* Determine if and when you will apply for OPT. Make decisions about your OPT start and end dates, and the address you will use for OPT correspondence from USCIS.
* Compile relevant documents, and request an OPT I-20 from the CIE Office.
* Mail your OPT application packet to USCIS, and follow the progress online.
* Once received, use your EAD card to substantiate employment authorization.
* Maintain status while on OPT. Graduate on time; end student employment; seek and engage in appropriate OPT employment; document your job search and keep employment records; learn and follow OPT reporting procedures.
* Learn options available at the end of OPT. After the OPT end date, there is a 60 day grace period in which you can: transfer to another school, and begin a new academic program; change to another visa category; leave the U.S.