

International Student Services

2500 North River Road | Manchester, NH 03106-1045 | Phone: 603.645.9629 | Fax: 603.645.9603

Part I: SNHU Internal Student Information form (to be filled out by student)

Choosing Your OPT Start Date Following Your Program Completion:

Many students have difficulty choosing the OPT start date. You may ask for your OPT to start immediately or up to 60 days following your completion date. When requesting a start date, think about what you want to do right after finishing your degree. If you are already sending out resumes and actively job hunting, you may want the earliest possible start date. If you want some time off, time to search for a job, or time to relocate to another place in the US then you may want to ask for a later start date. Sometimes employers' hiring patterns vary as well. For example, accounting majors will find more opportunities right before the US tax season and education majors will find more opportunities before the start of a school term. Use this example to help you understand your options for OPT dates and the best time to apply:

Example program completion date: 6/15/2010

Earliest OPT dates: (for any date)	Start 06/16/2010 – end 06/15/2011 (Remember you can ask for any date between earliest & latest OPT dates.)
Best application time:	Between 3/15/2010 – 4/15/2010
Latest OPT dates:	Start 8/14/2010 – end 8/13/2011
Best application time:	Between 5/14/2010 – 6/14/2010
Deadline for applying for OPT:	08/14/2010** (Due to processing & mailing time, apply at least two weeks before this deadline.)

**If you wait this late to apply for your OPT, you will likely end up with less than 12 months of OPT because in no circumstance may your OPT go beyond 14 months following your program completion date. This does not mean that your OPT may be for 14 months, it means that if your OPT is granted more than two months following your program completion date, then you will end up with less than 12 months of OPT.

In our example, if you apply on 8/14/2010 and it takes 4 months for your OPT to be issued on 12/14/2010, then your OPT period will be 12/14/2010 to 8/13/2011. Delaying your OPT application creates a risk of ending up with less than one year of OPT. Generally, you should only delay filing your OPT application if you are uncertain if you will meet your graduation requirements.

Requested OPT start date (no later than 60 days following stated completion on advisor's memo): _____

Requested OPT end date: _____

Email: _____ Phone (including area code) (____) _____

Local address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip code)

Home country address: _____
(street) (city)

(province) (country) (postal code)

List all past periods of CPT (internships) and OPT that you were authorized to engage in (from any school). Write in "none" if you have never used CPT or OPT: _____

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Part II: Academic Advisor Recommendation form (to be filled out by Academic Advisor)

To: International Student Services

From: _____
Academic Advisor

Re: Optional Practical Training

Date: _____

_____ is majoring in
(student's name: first and last) (student number)

_____ and is expected to complete degree
(major and, if applicable, concentration)

requirements for the _____ degree on _____.
(level of education) (month/day/year*)

I recommend Optional Practical Training in the student's field of study.

(Advisor Signature) (Date)

Importance of the Actual Date a Student Completes the Program of Study

Immigration regulations refer to the date a student completes all requirements for a program of study, not to the date he or she participates in graduation ceremonies or receives a certificate or diploma. The USCIS ignores a student's graduation date because it realizes that many students, especially graduate students in thesis or dissertation programs, may complete requirements for a degree any day during the year. This means that the last day of an academic term may not be the date a student completes program requirements.