



## OPT CHECKLIST

### Office of International Programs

JMAC 6, Suite 23, MSC 5731  
Tel: 568-6119 Fax: 568-8080  
iss@jmu.edu

### DOCUMENTATION:

The following documentation is needed to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT):

1. Photocopy of SEVIS I-20, including OPT endorsement by DSO;
2. Photocopy of your I-94 card, both sides, (*do not send original*);
3. Photocopy of your passport, including identification page and visa;
4. I-538 form (for OIP only – this does not have to be sent to USCIS);
5. I-765 form;
6. \$180.00 application fee in personal check or money order, made payable to US Citizenship & Immigration Services;
7. Two passport photos with SEVIS # lightly printed on back.

Send the above items to:     **U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services**  
  **75 Lower Welden Street**  
  **St. Albans, VT 05479-001**

**Photocopy each item before sending and keep for your records. Send your entire application file by CERTIFIED MAIL WITH RETURN RECEIPT.**

### EMPLOYMENT RULES:

After USCIS receives your application file, they should notify you in 3-4 months at the address used on the I-765. According to USCIS regulations, you **MAY NOT** work before you receive the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card. Under OPT you are authorized to spend a specific period of time working at a position directly related to your field of studies at James Madison University. Other forms of employment are **NOT** included under this authorization. If USCIS authorizes your OPT, the time period cannot be rescinded later if you fail to find appropriate training or choose to stop the training early. At the present time, you are allowed a total of 12 months employment through this form of work authorization, which must begin no later than 60 days following graduation.

### VISA STATUS:

While on OPT, you will continue on F-1 visa status under the sponsorship of James Madison University, and as such, you must follow the same procedures for maintaining your visa status:

- Inform the DSO in the Office of International Programs of a change of address within ten days of a move.
- When leaving the U.S. for a visit, obtain the signature endorsement of the DSO as authorization to re-enter the U.S.
- When leaving the U.S. permanently, inform the DSO.
- Maintain your medical insurance.
- Obey all federal, state and local laws.
- Comply with Special Registration, if applicable.
- Safely keep all immigration documents.