



# **Working in the US**

Berkeley International Office



# On-Campus Employment



# On-campus employment basics

- F-1 students do not need work authorization to work on-campus, but J-1 students do.
- Employment is limited to 20 hours per week during the academic year (Fall/Spring), but during vacation periods there is no limit (with exception of summer if it is your *first* or *final* semester).

\* Did you apply for a change of visa status to F-1 or J-1? You have to wait for your COS approval from USCIS!

- When can you start on-campus employment?
  - F-1: 30 days before program start date
  - J-1: After the start date of your DS-2019 (during dates of authorization)
  - F/J Transfer Students: Once your record has been released to UCB



# J-1 On-Campus Work Authorization

1. Apply through BIO at least 5 business days in advance of when you would like to start work, using the J-1 On-Campus Work Authorization Form:  
[https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/j\\_on-campus\\_employment.docx](https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/j_on-campus_employment.docx)
2. Pick up the signed form after 5 days.
3. Apply for an SSN using the signed form.



For more details:



<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/oncampus>



# Off-Campus Employment



# Off-campus employment basics

- Any job/internship **MUST** be related to the student's major field of study.
- Students must receive authorization **BEFORE** beginning employment.



# F-1 Off-campus employment options

|  | CPT  | OPT                   | STEM OPT  |
|--|--|-----------------------|---|
| When can I use it?                               | Before graduation                                  | After graduation      | Directly after 12-month OPT   |
| Who authorizes it?                               | BIO  | USCIS<br>3 – 5 months | USCIS<br>3 – 5 months   |
| Do I need a job offer to apply?                  | Yes  | No                    | Yes*<br><i>Employer must be registered in E-Verify, have EIN.</i>                       |
| How many hours/week can I work?                  | Max. 20<br><i>except vacation periods</i>          | Min. 20               | Min. 20   |
| Is self-employment allowed? Unpaid employment?   | No/Yes   | Yes/Yes               | No/No   |
| Can I work for more than one employer at a time? | Yes<br><i>each employer needs to be authorized</i> | Yes                   | Yes*<br><i>All employers must be authorized on I-20 and meet all STEM OPT criteria.</i> |





**F-1**

# **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**



# CPT Basics

## What is it?

- F-1 pre-graduation off-campus employment authorization.
- Proof of authorization: CPT I-20

## Eligibility

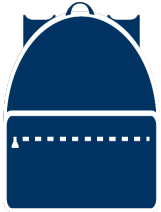
- Completed two full-time semesters in Active F-1 status (unless graduate student completing a degree requirement that must occur prior to 1 academic year)
- Received an internship offer in a field related to major and must be approved by academic department.

## Authorization

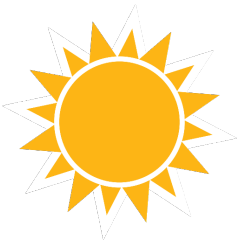
- Approved on a semester-by-semester basis.
- Students must receive authorization BEFORE beginning employment.



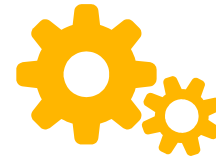
# How many hours can I work?



Fall and spring semesters:  
Part-time (max. 20 hours/week).



Summer:  
No limit. (Exception if summer is first or final term.)



# CPT Application Process

Secure a job or internship.

Complete CPT form with academic advisor.

Enroll in appropriate **course** (unless degree requirement).

Submit complete CPT app form to BIO with Employment verification letter, proof of CPT course enrollment.

Obtain new I-20 from BIO.  
CPT info will be on page 2.

Begin work after authorized.



A separate application is required for each additional job/internship or semester.



For more details...



<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/cpt>



**F-1**

# **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**



# OPT Basics

## What is OPT?

- post-graduation employment authorization - 12 months

## Eligibility

- Graduating upon completion of at least 2 full-time semesters.
- No previous OPT for same degree level.

## Type of work

- Internship or job related to major field of study.
- At least 20 hours/week.
- Paid or unpaid.

## When you can start

- Once you have received Proof of authorization - Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and start date has been reached.

## Reporting requirements

- You are responsible for reporting your contact and employment information to BIO.



# More details for OPT, STEM & Cap Gap:

<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/opt>



<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/stemopt>

<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/cap-gap>





**J-1**

**Academic Training (AT)**



# AT Basics

## What is it?

- J-1 off-campus employment authorization: pre-completion and post-completion.
- Proof of authorization: DS-2019.

## Type of work

- Internship must be related to major field of study.

## Authorization

- Authorization is required for each job/internship.

## When you can start

- Only begin employment after you have received AT DS-2019 and start date has been reached.



# AT Eligibility

- Must be a J-1 degree-seeking or EAP student.
- Must have completed 1 semester.
- Must have a job offer before obtaining authorization. Job must be related to major field of study.
- Must have health insurance for duration of AT.



# How many hours can I work?



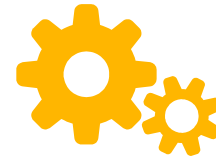
Fall and spring semesters:  
Part-time (max. 20 hours/week).



Summer:  
No limit. (Exception if summer is final term.)



After graduation:  
Must be at least 20 hours/week.



# AT Application Process

Secure a job or internship.

Complete AT application form.

Request approval from academic adviser.

Submit to BIO with supplementary documents\*.

Obtain new DS-2019 & AT Verification letter.

Begin work after authorized start date.



\*Employment verification letter. In addition, processing fee and proof of funds are required for post-completion AT.



# For more details:



<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/at>



# **Social Security Number (SSN)**



# Social Security Number basics

## What is it?

- SSN is a Tax ID number, it is NOT work authorization.

## Do I need SSN to begin work?

- You do not need the SSN before STARTING work, but most employers will want the SSN before they pay you.



Instructions to apply for the SSN:  
<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/living/ssn>





# Who needs an SSN?

## J-1:

- Receiving a fellowship or stipend from the university (with or without employment)
- Working on campus
- Working off campus

\* Prior authorization is required for all of the above.

## F-1:

- Working on campus
- Working off campus jobs (e.g. CPT, OPT)

\* An F-1 student who is not working but receiving a non-service fellowship, scholarship, or grant in excess of tuition and fees must apply for an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN).



<https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/living/itin>



# Berkeley Career Center



# Support for International Students

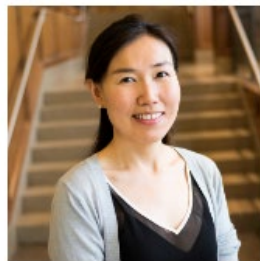
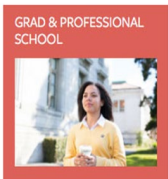
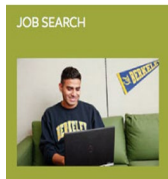
[career.berkeley.edu](https://career.berkeley.edu)



[career.berkeley.edu](https://career.berkeley.edu) >  
Undergrads > International  
Students

Handshake

Your **Career Portal** at Cal! Activate  
your account @  
[handshake.berkeley.edu](https://handshake.berkeley.edu)



Jing Han  
Career Counselor for International Students

