Samford University
Global Engagement Office

Submitting your OPT Application Online

On 4/12/2021, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that F-1 students seeking Optional Practical Training (OPT) can now file their I-765 form online if filling under the pre-completion, post-completion, and STEM extension categories. For the full news release, please visit the USCIS website.

If you choose to file your I-765 online, you should proceed with the application process very carefully. **The system allows you to submit your application without all the required evidence, which can lead to requests for evidence or denials.** This means you must be very careful to ensure that everything that should be uploaded has been prepared before submitting the online application.

The suggestions below are not intended to be legal advice. They are general guidelines for how you might proceed when completing the online I-765 application.

Checklist

- ❑ Complete the GEO Optional Practical Training Request Form
- ❑ Create your online USCIS account: https://myaccount.uscis.gov/
- ❑ Gather the following materials:
    - a) Digital 2 inches x 2 inches color passport photo that meets USCIS specifications
    - b) A scan of your passport photograph page
    - c) A scan of your visa
    - d) Your most recent I-94 form: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home
    - e) A scan of the front and back of any previous EAD cards (if applicable)
    - f) A scan of any previous I-20s (if applicable)
    - g) A credit card with which you can pay the filing fee
- ❑ Make an appointment with the GEO to review OPT application
- ❑ At the appointment, the advisor will issue an I-20 recommendation. The I-20 will be signed by the advisor and student during the appointment
- ❑ **Within 30 days**, go online and access your USCIS account. File the Application for Employment Authorization (I-765) online.