



Understanding Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Online Module

Session Plan

Background Rationale

The International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office is the principal office responsible for providing services to more than 1,000 international students who attend American University (AU). Along with cultivating the academic success and personal development of the international students on AU's campus, ISSS is responsible for advising international students on relevant federal regulations governing international education exchange.

One set of these regulations relate to optional practical training (OPT). OPT provides students on F-1 visas 12 months of work authorization in their fields of study. The regulations surrounding OPT are complicated and failure to adhere to them can easily result in an F-1 student losing their legal status in the United States.

To mitigate these issues, ISSS conducts a mandatory workshop on OPT regulations to all F-1 students. The one-hour session covers OPT regulations and proper completion of the application form. Although the in-person session is very successful, the workshop is not easy to attend for certain populations of F-1 students, particularly those in advanced degree programs.

The purpose of the **Understanding Optional Practical Training (OPT) Online Module** is to provide these students a practical option to review the OPT regulations and test their knowledge on generic situations they are likely to encounter.

Course Descriptions

This module is designed to help international students with a F-1 visa who are interested in working in the United States under OPT after graduation. The module provides a brief overview of the regulations surrounding OPT and offers participants suggestions and considerations when applying for OPT. Participants are then guided through a real-world situation that highlights common issues students often encounter during or while applying for OPT. Upon completion, participants will understand what OPT is and how to properly apply for the program.

Target Audience

This online module is designed for new international students with F-1 visas who have or have not attended the in-person OPT Workshop delivered by ISSS. Most users of this module will be Washington College of Law students or other graduate students of American University.

Learner Prerequisite

A participant must be a current American University student who is studying on a F-1 visa.

Learning Objectives

Terminal Objectives: Given the *Understanding OPT [online module](#)* and the *[OPT handout](#)*, an *Understanding OPT* participant should be able to demonstrate full understanding of OPT regulations and procedures and successfully complete a virtual OPT application without error.

Enabling Objectives: Given the *Understanding OPT [online module](#)* and the *[OPT handout](#)*, an *Understanding OPT* participant should be able to...

1. Identify all elements of the OPT timeline without error.
2. Define all OPT-related policies and regulations from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) described in the module without error.
3. Define all OPT-related policies from International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) described in the module without error.
4. Explain what a student can do during OPT without error.
5. Explain what a student can not do during OPT without error.
6. Complete the OPT application without error.

Sections

1. Introduction
2. OPT Regulations & Timeline
3. OPT Authorization Process
4. Scenario
5. Quiz
6. Summary & Certificate

Evaluation Strategy

Level I: A post-module satisfaction survey with no more than 3 questions to gauge both the effectiveness and applicability of the module from the participants' perspective.

Level II: Module 5 (Quiz) will assess whether participants understand the material presented in Modules 2 and 3 and are able to apply that knowledge to a realistic example.

Modality & Deliverables

Modality: Web-based interactive session.

Deliverables:

- ✓ Design plan
- ✓ Course storyboard
- ✓ Web-based training module
- ✓ Level I course evaluation survey