F-1 International Student Resources

Office of International Admissions and Services

IT'S GOOD TO BE GOLDEN

KUTZTOWN
UNIVERSITY

Table of Contents

Appendix

The Office of International Admissions and Services at Kutztown University supports incoming, current, and outgoing international students as well as study abroad.

We have developed some resources to help you during your time at KU. Please remember it is your responsibility to maintain your visa status and good academic and disciplinary standing. Regulations do change, so it is important to review the government websites for the most up-to-date forms, instructions, and regulations. All of this information and relevant links are on the KU website at www.kutztown.edu/international.

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Mission Statement

The mission of the Office of International Admissions & Services at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania is to support and enhance the internationalization of the campus community in order to prepare students to meet lifelong intellectual, ethical, social, and career challenges.

Objectives

To fulfill the mission, the office:

- Recruits non-U.S. citizens and processes their application for admission to the university
- Organizes new international student orientation
- Advises current international students & scholars with F-1 and J-1 visa regulations and provides cultural programming before, during, and after their program
- Assists outgoing students studying abroad before, during, and after their program
- Provides support to international affairs and initiatives at Kutztown University

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS AND SERVICES CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (08:00-16:30)

Summer Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (08:00-16:00)

Summer hours are effective from the middle of May through the middle of August.

Email: international@kutztown.edu

Email us at any time of the day and we will respond to your message as soon as we can.

Mailing Address	Shipping Address
Office of International Admissions & Services Kutztown University of Pennsylvania Boxwood House P.O. Box 730 Kutztown, PA, 19530 USA	Office of International Admissions & Services 15200 Kutztown Road Kutztown, PA, 19530 USA

Phone: (484) 646-4256

Toll-Free Phone: 1-844-217-4537

Fax: (610) 683-1356

IMPORTANT DATES

Here is a calendar of important dates that you should know. It is for reference only. Always refer to the KU calendar at calendar.kutztown.edu for the most current information about drop/add periods, withdraw periods for refunds and W/WF grades, registration, and other important university dates.

Spring 2020 Semester

January 14: New international freshman move-in

January 15: Freshman CONNECTIONS orientation program and new International student move-in

January 16: Transfer CONNECTIONS orientation program and new International Student Move In

January 17: Mandatory International Orientation – Multicultural Center 9am to 4pm and Welcome Dinner 5pm

January 21: First day of class

January 22-28: Drop/Add period

January 22-February 2: Required SEVIS Registration Period

February 4: Optional Practical Training information Session - 11:00 am, Academic Forum 103

February 10: First day May 2019 graduates may apply for post-completion Optional Practical Training

February 15: Spring Break Housing Deadline Deadline to request to stay on campus for spring break

March 8-15: Spring Break (No classes for Students, Kutztown University open Monday-Friday)

May 1: Last day of regular classes

May 4 - 8: Final Exams

May 09: Spring 2018 Commencement (Graduation)

MAINTAINING STATUS

As a student who is attending class at Kutztown University in F-1 status, you are considered to be a non-immigrant because you are here to receive an education in the U.S. and have the intention to return home after you complete your studies. You have the sole responsibility for maintaining your own status; the Designated School Official can help you with decisions that affect your status.

You have an I-20. This document gives your program information, such as major, start and end dates, and any authorizations for training, travel, etc. Read the third page of the I-20 for important guidelines.

You are required to:

- Attend the institution listed on your I-20.
- Make normal academic progress towards completing your degree program before your I-20 program end date.
- Maintain good academic standing (no academic probation).
- Enroll full-time every semester.
    - 12 credits for undergraduates
    - 9 credits for graduate
- Take no more than one online course per semester as part of your full-time schedule requirements.
- File tax forms every year.
- Obey laws and university rules. (Review The Key – KU Student Handbook - at www.kutztown.edu/thekey.)
- Follow regulations for employment.
- Maintain required level of health insurance coverage.
- Keep a valid passport for at least six months in the future.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Report to the Office of International Admissions and Services every semester. We must physically see you every semester you are enrolled at KU to report your status in the SEVIS system. To complete your registration, you must report to Boxwood House no later than the first week of class and complete the SEVIS registration form in the presence of one of the staff and get our signature on the SEVIS registration form.

When to contact Designated School Official:

- **Change address or phone number**. SEVIS must be updated within 10 days of an address change.
- **Find out funding source has changed**. SEVIS must be updated within 10 days of this change. You must pay your bill in full every semester or you will not be able to register for classes in future semesters or request official transcripts from the Registrar.
- **Change major**. Your SEVIS record and I-20 must be updated to match MyKU.
- **Find out academic program will take longer to complete than the expiration date listed on your I-20.** Extensions can be granted for valid academic or health reasons; the Program Extension Request Form must be submitted at least 30 days before the expiration date on the I-20.
- **Need fewer classes during your last semester than required for full-time enrollment.** For the last semester you are enrolled, you may take a reduced course load, which must be approved by the Designated School Official. If you need only one class, it cannot be an online class.
- **Initiate transfer to another university in the U.S.** Your SEVIS record must be transferred and grace periods for departure apply.
- **Want to drop a class that will cause you to drop below full-time enrollment.** The Reduced Course Load (RCL) Authorization form must be completed and approved prior to dropping a class.

LENGTH OF STAY IN THE U.S.

Your I-20 and passport should be stamped with D/S, which means Duration of Status. This means that you may stay in the U.S. until your program end date (or post-completion OPT/STEM Extension end date), even if your visa expires. The program end date on the I-20 determines the length of time you will be in status as long as you follow the regulations.

You must continue to enroll in classes every fall and spring semester until you complete your degree to remain in status. You do not have to enroll in classes during the summer break, generally May-August, to maintain status. Any breaks in enrollment could cause you to fall out of status and be terminated. You are permitted to remain in the U.S. during official university breaks and holidays and up to five months when transferring between institutions. You must abide by the grace periods for departure outlined below when you complete your course of study or end your attendance at KU.

GRACE PERIODS FOR DEPARTURE

Program completion/Graduation: 60 days

- Prepare for departure
- Transfer to another school or degree program
- Apply for OPT
- Apply for Change of Status
- Travel within U.S. and continuous countries (Canada, Mexico, and U.S. territories)
- No travel outside of U.S.
- Restricted employment

Withdraws authorized and approved by Designated School Official: 15 days

- Prepare for departure
- No transfers to other college/university
- No travel outside of U.S.
- No employment

Unauthorized withdraw/Failure to maintain status: No grace period, immediate departure from U.S.

REDUCED COURSE LOAD

You are required to maintain full-time enrollment during the academic year to maintain your F-1 status. If you cannot or will not meet this requirement, you must request a Reduced Course Load (RCL). Federal immigration regulations severely limit your ability to be enrolled less than full-time, but it may be allowed in some academic or medical circumstances, explained below. If you drop below full-time enrollment without authorization after the drop/add deadline, Kutztown University is required to report this to SEVIS and you will lose your F-1 status.

If you would like to drop below full-time enrollment, you must obtain the approval from a DSO in advance, regardless what the reason might be. If you drop below a full course of study (after the drop-add period) without prior approval of a DSO, you will be considered out of status. Please be advised that a lack of financial support does not constitute a valid reason to reduce course load according to immigration regulations.

NOTE: If approved for reduced course load, you are still eligible for on-campus employment benefits.

Academic Difficulties

You must apply for an RCL if, due to academic difficulties, you are unable to be enrolled full time. You must first obtain a letter from your academic advisor to verify your eligibility to be enrolled part-time based on academic difficulties.

- Immigration regulations specify four academic difficulty reasons for which a reduced course load may be approved:

- Initial difficulties with the English language (usable only in student's first year)
- Initial difficulties with reading requirements (usable only in student's first year)
- Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods
- Improper course level placement

- You may be authorized for a reduced course load on the "academic difficulties" basis only for a single term during any one course of study at a particular program level, and must resume a full course of study at the next available term (excluding summer).
- A reduced course load for academic difficulties must consist of at least 6 credit hours for undergraduate students and at least 4 credit hours for graduate students.

Medical Conditions

You must apply for a reduced course load if, due to a temporary illness or medical condition, you are unable to be enrolled full-time (or, if necessary, no course load).

- You must provide medical documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist, to the DSO to substantiate the illness or medical condition.
- The letter from the medical provider cannot be dated more than 30 days before the start of the term for which the reduced course load is requested.
- The letter from the medical provider must recommend either that you be enrolled part-time or not enrolled due to medical circumstances.
- A reduced course load for a medical condition can be granted for a period of time not to exceed an aggregate of 12 months while you are pursuing a course of study at a particular program level.
- You must provide current medical documentation and the DSO must authorize the drop below full time for each new term.

Completion of Course of Study

You must apply for a reduced course load in your final term if fewer courses are needed and required to complete your course of study (i.e. less than a full-time schedule). You must obtain a letter from your academic advisor to verify that the current term will be the final term for you to complete your academic program. If you need only one class, it cannot be an online class.

EXTENSION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires that you finish your program of study by the program end date on your I-20. The end date on the I-20 is established by the Office of International Admissions & Services to reflect the average length of time it should take you to complete your degree requirements. If, during the course of your studies it becomes necessary to extend your I-20, the Office of International Admissions & Services can provide an I-20 extension if you are eligible and apply in a timely fashion.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to obtain a program extension, you must show that you have continually maintained status and that the extension is needed for compelling academic or medical reasons, such as a change of major or research topic, unexpected research problems, or a documented illness. Delays in completing your program caused by academic probation or suspension are not acceptable reasons for program extension approval.
Extension of stay can be granted only for documented academic or medical reasons. You may be eligible for an I-20 extension if the following criteria are met:

1. The delay was caused by documented academic or medical circumstances,
2. You have sufficient financial resources to fund your studies and living expenses, and

3. The extension is requested in a timely manner, with sufficient time for processing before the current I-20 program end date

If your program end date has passed or you do not meet the eligibility requirements to apply for a program extension, it will be necessary to file for reinstatement to F-1 status with USCIS, for which you will have to pay a substantial fee or to travel and regain your F-1 status with a new initial I-20. In the case of traveling with a new initial I-20, you will lose any time accumulated towards meeting the one-year eligibility requirement for CPT and OPT. In addition, failure to apply for an extension of stay in a timely manner is a violation of F-1 regulations.

The following are not valid reasons for I-20 extensions:
- To enroll in extra courses or repeat the same course for personal interest or to improve your GPA
- To engage in research on or off-campus
- To finish pending coursework for an incomplete grade
- To engage in non-required Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
- To enroll in course work delayed by participation in non-required CPT

An I-20 which has already passed the program end date cannot be extended.

How to Request an Extension

Meet with your academic advisor to discuss your need for additional time to complete your degree program. You are required to submit the Program Extension Request Form signed by your academic advisor with any supporting documents, such as academic or medical records. Make an appointment with a Designated School Official to discuss your request for program extension.

We strongly recommend that you submit the extension request at least 1-2 months prior to the expiration of your current I-20 form. If approved, keep the new I-20 with the new program end date and all previous I-20 forms that you have been issued. They must be submitted upon request to an immigration officer when you travel outside the U.S. or for future immigration petitions.

NOTE: If you are enrolled in multiple degree/major programs of study, you will need to have your request for a program extension endorsed by all of your academic advisors.

REINSTATEMENT OF STATUS AFTER TERMINATION

Contact the Office of International Admissions and Services to find out what steps you must take if you are out of status and need to be reinstated.

If you fail to maintain your status, you have two options to get your F-1 status back:

1) Travel home and return in F-1 status
- Get a new I-20 with a new SEVIS ID (will require updated financial documents)
- Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee
- Apply for a new visa
- Return to the U.S. with F-1 status

2) Apply to USCIS to be reinstated to lawful F-1 status if you:

- Have not been out of status for more than 5 months at the time of filing the request for reinstatement (or demonstrate that the failure to file within the 5 month period was the result of exceptional circumstances and that you filed the request for reinstatement as promptly as possible under these exceptional circumstances);
- Do not have a record of repeated or willful violations of the Service regulations;

6

- Are currently pursuing, or intend to pursue, a full course of study at the school which issued the SEVIS Form I-20;
- Have not engaged in unlawful employment;
- Are not deportable on any ground other than section 237(a)(1)(B) or (C)(i) of the Act; and
- Establish to the satisfaction of the Service, by a detailed showing, either that:
  - The violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond your control. Such circumstances might include serious injury or illness, closure of the institution, a natural disaster, or inadvertence, oversight or neglect on the part of the DSO, but do not include instances where a pattern of repeated violations or where a willful failure on your part that resulted in the need for reinstatement; or
  - The violation relates to a reduction in your course load that would have been within a DSO's power to authorize, and that failure to approve reinstatement would result in extreme hardship to you.

Excerpt from the Federal Register Publications (CIS, ICE, CBP) \ Federal Register Publications (Legacy INS) - 2002 \ FEDERAL REGISTER FINAL REGULATIONS - 2002 \ Retention and Reporting of Information for F, J, and M Nonimmigrants; Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) [67 FR 76256] [FR 64-02] \ (16) Reinstatement to student status.

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

Part of maintaining your F-1 student status is keeping all of your documents safe and current, including the I-20, I-94, visa, and passport. In addition to keeping the original documents safe, it is a good idea to keep copies of everything, including I-20 forms, to help speed up the process of recovering lost, stolen, or expired documents. Monitor expiration dates of I-20, visa, and passport.

If your documents are stolen, file a police report and contact the embassy or consulate of your home country immediately. Inform the Office of International Admissions and Services as soon as possible.

I-20

If your I-20 is lost or stolen, the Office of International Admissions and Services can easily print a new copy. Email the office for a new I-20.

I-94

The I-94 is an arrival record of visitors to the U.S. There are three types of I-94s:

1) An original I-94 card issued at the Port of Entry (prior to July 2013)

2) On the Change of Status Approval Notice if you changed your status while in the U.S.

3) An electronic entry record (after July 2013)

If you did not receive a hardcopy I-94 when you arrived, you can simply print a copy of the electronic I-94 whenever you need it from www.cbp.gov/I94.

If you lost the paper I-94, you will need to follow these steps to get a new one:

1. Complete the I-102 Form.
2. Obtain a money order for $445 made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The only way this fee is not required is if the I-94 is filled out incorrectly at no fault of your own.
3. Copy your passport, visa, and I-20. Provide a copy of the I-94 if you have one. If your I-94 was stolen, you will need a copy of the police report. If you need a name change on your I-94, please write a brief letter explaining what you would like the I-94 to show.
4. Mail these items to the USCIS Vermont Service Center.
5. You should receive a new I-94 card within sixty to ninety days.

PASSPORT

Your passport should always be valid for at least six months into the future. Please contact your local embassy or consulate to replace or renew your passport. If your passport will expire and you plan to return home, renew your passport at home. If you will remain in the U.S., please contact your country's embassy or consulate for more details. You should be able to locate their contact information online at https://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-in-united-states.

If your unexpired visa is in the expired passport, travel with both the expired and the new passports.

VISA

A visa is a document issued in your home country by the embassy or consulate of the country you plan to visit. You need an unexpired and valid visa to enter the U.S. It is only an entry document. If your visa expires while you are in the U.S., you do not need to renew it until you travel outside of the U.S. again. Visas must always be renewed outside of the U.S. Although the Department of State recommends that you apply for a visa in your home country, you may renew it in another country. Before you travel to a country other than your country of citizenship to apply for a new visa, find out the type of visa you will need to enter that country, if any, and contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate there to find out if they will allow you to renew your visa. This could require a long stay or take a long time to process. If you leave the U.S. without a valid visa, you will not be able to return to the U.S. until you receive a new visa. If your visa is denied, you will not be able to return to the U.S. as a student. The exception to the expired visa rule is travel to Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean islands for less than 30 days. Please review the Travel section of this manual for more information.

Most visas are issued for multiple entries to the U.S., but some visas are only good for a single entry. You can find this information by checking the "Entries" section of your visa - (M) for multiple and (1) for single entry.

If your visa was lost or stolen, report it via fax to the issuing embassy post abroad. Visas cannot be replaced while in the United States. When you return home or travel outside of the U.S., you can apply for a replacement visa. Find the consulate or embassy contact information at https://www.usembassy.gov/.

Applying for a visa

You will need the following items to apply for a visa:

- Letter of Support from the Office of International Admissions and Services
- Visa application, DS - 160
- Current I-20 with valid travel signature
- All previously issued I-20s
- Passport valid for at least six months
- Updated financial support documents
- Proof of home country ties, including but not limited to:
  - Proof of property ownership
  - Bank accounts
  - Significant family relationships
  - A job offer upon completion of your U.S. studies (may or may not be asked)

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING INFORMATION

The primary purpose of you being in the U.S. as an F-1 student is to attend college full-time; however, it is possible to work and get experience in your future career while attending KU. There are different employment restrictions and rules based on certain factors such as academic program requirements and finances, for example. You are permitted to work on campus, up to 20 hours per week during the semester and any amount of hours during official breaks. You will need a social security number and you will pay taxes on the income you earn. Review the following information for more details

about training and employment. To avoid falling out of status and being terminated, you must comply with the regulations for employment for F-1 students. You should consult with the Designated School Official as soon as you are ready to look for a job or internship to find out how to receive authorization.

ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

You may work up to 20 hours per week on campus during the fall and spring semesters. If you have more than one job, you must make sure that you do not exceed a combined total of 20 hours of on-campus work for all jobs in any given week. You may work full-time during official school breaks, including winter, spring, and summer breaks. You will need a social security number to work on campus. Review the information below to learn more about working on campus. If you are not sure if a job opportunity qualifies as being on-campus employment, please ask the Office of International Admissions and Services.

Definition of on-campus employment

- <u>Employment by KU:</u> A job in any campus office that is run by Kutztown University
- <u>Employment on KU property:</u> A job for a company that provides services to students on campus, such as KUSSI (bookstore), Aramark (dining services), or PSECU (credit union)
- <u>Off-campus work that qualifies as on-campus employment:</u> This type of employment must meet the conditions listed below. A letter from the academic advisor or the department head certifying these points must be presented to the Office of International Admissions and Services prior to beginning work.
    - o The location is educationally affiliated with KU
    - o The affiliation is associated with KU's established curriculum or is related to a graduate-level research project, which KU has contracted to perform
    - o The work is an integral part or important part of the program of study

Eligibility requirements

- Have a valid F-1 visa
- Continue to maintain lawful F-1 status
- Continue to take a full course load

Searching for on-campus employment

- Search KU job postings through the KU Career Network (KUCN) – www.kutztown.edu/kucn.
- Search Aramark job postings at careers.aramark.com, location – Kutztown.
- Call, email, or visit an office where you would like to work

Employment Offer Letter

You only need to present an offer letter for your first on-campus job, CPT, or OPT. A sample employment offer letter is available upon request from the Office of International Admissions and Services.

- Your full name
- A description of the employment
- Anticipated or actual start date
- Number of hours you will work per week
- Employer contact information, including full name and telephone number of immediate supervisor
- Verification that you have been hired for the position
- Original signature with signer's title and date

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a temporary internship or practicum for F-1 students to gain practical experience in their field of study. Curricular Practical training may be paid or unpaid and part-time or full-time, depending on the requirement of the curriculum.

Curricular Practical Training must meet one of the following requirements:

1. It is required by the major; or
2. It is for an internship course for which you will receive credit that counts toward your graduation requirements

If it does not meet one of these requirements, the training has to be authorized as pre-completion Optional Practical Training. Check with the Designated School Official to see if you meet the requirements for CPT and if the work qualifies for CPT.

Please note: Twelve months or more of full-time CPT will disqualify you for Optional Practical Training (OPT), however, no amount of part-time CPT will count against the 12 month total for OPT.

Eligibility:

Undergraduate students must be lawfully enrolled in full-time studies for at least one academic year to be eligible for CPT.

Graduate students can participate in CPT immediately if it is required by the academic program; otherwise, the full-time attendance requirement for one academic year applies.

How to apply for CPT

The Designated School Official grants permission to participate in CPT. You must have an offer of employment prior to requesting CPT. Requests for CPT must be made at least 10 business days before you plan to begin the internship or practicum. It is not possible to request retroactive CPT. You will receive a new I-20 authorized for CPT when it is approved and must adhere to the employment authorization detailed on page 2 of the I-20.

1. Complete the CPT request form with your Academic Advisor
2. Obtain a letter from your Academic Advisor. It should include the following information, depending on which requirement for CPT it meets:

CPT that will apply as an internship:

- Verification of full-time student status
- Anticipated program completion date
- Internship course number and title and number of credits
- A statement that, "The internship is an integral part of the student's curriculum." and a detailed description of how it is directly related to and meets the goals of the class
- Confirmation that the internship will count towards fulfilling degree requirements
- Start and End dates of the internship - month, date, and year

CPT that will apply as a practicum or research for graduate thesis or dissertation:

- Verification of full-time student status
- Anticipated program completion date
- A statement that, "The internship is an integral part of the student's curriculum." and a detailed description of how it is directly related to and meets the goals of the class
- Start and End dates of the internship - month, date, and year

3. Obtain a letter from the employer on company letterhead with the following information:
   - Student's job title
   - Student's job responsibilities
   - Start and End dates of the student's employment period - month, date, and year
   - Number of hours per week the student will work
   - Name and contact information for the student's direct supervisor

4. Meet with the Designated School Official and bring the following documents:
   - CPT Request Form
   - Letter from Academic Advisor
   - Letter from employer

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

F-1 students studying at colleges, universities, conservatories, or seminaries may qualify for practical training, which allows them to engage in temporary employment to gain practical experience in their field of study. All Optional Practical Training (OPT) must be directly related to your course of study. You may have up to **twelve months** of OPT at each educational level (Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, etc.), with the exception of STEM degree programs that qualify for the 24-month OPT STEM extension. You do not need an offer of employment to apply for OPT.

There are three types of OPT for which you may apply:

- Pre-completion: OPT authorized prior to your program end date
- Post-completion: OPT authorized after your program end date
- STEM OPT Extension: Applies only to STEM degree programs of study (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics)

Eligibility Requirements

- Lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for at least nine months by the time OPT will begin
- Does not have 12 months total of full-time CPT
- Has not used all 12 months of OPT for the current educational level

Employment Requirements

- Start Date: You can begin OPT employment on or after the start date indicated on the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by USCIS. Work cannot begin before the approved start date printed on the EAD card.
- Pre-Completion OPT: You may work up to 20 hours during the academic year or full-time during breaks
- Post-Completion OPT:
  - Required to work a minimum of 20 hours per week
  - Maximum of 90 days unemployment permitted
- STEM Extension:
  - Required to work a minimum of 20 hours per week
  - Additional 60 days of unemployment permitted during this time (total of 150 days of unemployment for all post-completion OPT)

Types of OPT Employment

The following types of activities are allowable employment on both pre-completion and post-completion OPT, provided that the job is directly related to your program of study.

Regular Paid Employment

You may work for multiple employers, as long as it is directly related your program of study.

Payment by Multiple Short-Term Multiple Employers

You may work for multiple short-term employers (gigs). This is especially applicable to musicians, performing artists, etc. You should maintain a list of gigs with the dates and duration.

Work for Hire

This is commonly referred to as 1099 employment, where you perform a service based on a contractual relationship rather than an employment relationship. If requested, you should be able to provide evidence showing the duration of the contract periods and the name and address of the contracting company.

Self-Employed Business Owner

You may start a business or be self-employed. You should be able to prove that you have the proper business license and are actively engaged in a business related to your degree program.

Employment through an Agency

You should provide evidence all hours worked while employed by the agency.

Volunteers or Unpaid Interns

You should provide evidence all hours worked while employed by the agency. This type of volunteer or unpaid internship experience should not violate any labor laws.

All employment during the 24-month STEM extension must be paid employment.

Applying for OPT

USCIS processes all applications for OPT. Applications may be filed up to 90 days before employment start date or 60 days after program completion date. Applications received by USCIS before or after this period will be denied and fees will not be refunded.

Gather and submit the following documents to the Designated School Official:

- Copies of previous Employment Authorization Documents (EADs)
- Documentation from academic advisor indicating your current academic status and expected date of completion of studies (Please note that USCIS does not view the graduation ceremony as completion of studies; completion of studies means completion of coursework (non-thesis majors) or the date the final thesis has been submitted. A sample letter is available upon request from the Office of International Admissions and Services.)
- Complete Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, marked with the proper code at item 16:
    o (c)(3)(A) for pre-completion OPT
    o (c)(3)(B) for post-completion OPT
    o (c)(3)(C) for STEM OPT Extension
- Check or money order for the Form I-765 filing fee, made payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" (Refer to the Form I-765 instructions for the exact amount of the filing fee.)
- Two identical immigration-style photos
- Copy of Form I-94 (both sides) or printout of electronic I-94 (www.cbp.gov/i94)

The Designated School Official will review all of the documents and make a recommendation for OPT. You will receive a new I-20 with the OPT recommendation on page two, which you must sign and mail a copy with your OPT application

packet. You may purchase express shipping through eShip Global or mail your application using the U.S. Postal Service. You can expect to wait up to three months to find out if your OPT has been approved.

STEM OPT EXTENSION

If you have a STEM Designated Degree that is on the approved list, you may receive an additional 24 months of post-completion OPT, also known as the STEM extension. You must apply for the 24-month STEM extension of OPT before your post-completion OPT employment authorization expires. You may apply for the STEM extension up to 90 days before your current OPT authorization ends.

Employer requirements for STEM OPT Extension:

1. Be registered in E-Verify
2. Agree to report to DSO when the you are terminated or leave employment

STEM OPT Application Process:

1. Complete a Form I-983 Training Plan with employer
2. Send completed I-983 Training Plan to Office of International Admissions and Services
3. DSO requests STEM extension in SEVIS and issues a new I-20 to you
4. You apply for the STEM extension through USCIS with the following documents:
   - Copy of STEM extension I-20
   - Form I-765 [Question number 16 should be marked as (c)(3)(C)]
   - Form I-765 filing fee
   - Official transcript from Kutztown University (email the Registrar's Office - regoffice@kutztown.edu- to request)
   - A statement from employer regarding how the employment relates to STEM degree program (letter can be addressed, "To whom it may concern")
   - Recommended: Copies of all prior issued EAD cards

Denied OPT requests

Bring the denial letter to Designated School Official. Depending on the reason for denial, it may be possible to send additional information, appeal a decision, or re-apply.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS DURING AUTHORIZED PERIODS OF OPT/STEM OPT

Pre-Completion: Provide employer information (see below)

Post-Completion: Current address and employer information (see below)

STEM Extension:

- Employer Information (see below)
- Current Address
- Report to DSO every six months while STEM extension is active
  - Full legal name
  - SEVIS identification number
  - Current mailing and residential address
  - Name and address of the current employer
  - Date the student began working for the current employer
  - I-983 Training Plan Updates

Employer Information to report to DSO while on OPT

- Required Information
    - Explain how employment is related to student's course of study (Max 1000 characters)
    - Employer Name
    - Start Date
    - Full Time / Part Time (Full Time: more than 20 hours/week; Part Time: 20 or less hours/week)
    - Employer Address
        - Street Address
        - Suite/Apt #
        - Other Address Information (if applicable)
        - City
        - State
        - Zip
- Recommended Information
    - Employer EIN (Highly Recommended)
    - Job Title
    - End Date
    - Supervisor Information
        - Last Name
        - First Name
        - Telephone Number
        - Telephone extension
        - Email Address

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT FOR SEVERE UNFORSEEN ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

If you are in F-1 status for an academic year and have good academic standing, you may apply for "off-campus employment based on economic hardship." Documentation would have to show that part-time employment opportunities through on-campus employment were otherwise insufficient. Economic hardship refers to the financial problems caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond your control which arose after obtaining F-1 status. These financial problems may be the result of losing a graduate assistantship, the death of a financial sponsor, inflation in your home country causing the devaluation of currency or exchange rate, etc. If the financial problems are too great, it may not be possible to solve the problem through part-time employment.

You are required to make a good faith effort to locate employment on campus before applying for off-campus employment based on economic hardship. If the economic hardship clause applies to your situation, please meet with the Designated School Official to request a recommendation for authorization to engage in off-campus employment. You may not work off-campus without special authorization from USCIS; unauthorized off-campus employment will result in termination of status. Please note, if you are authorized to engage in off-campus employment, you may only work part-time during the semester, and must continue to maintain a full-time course load. With authorization, you will be permitted to work full-time during regular university breaks.

All off-campus employment must be approved by USCIS prior to job search and job placement.

TAXES

If you earn income in the U.S., taxes will be automatically withdrawn from your paycheck to meet tax obligations. In general, you will be exempt from paying Medicare or Social Security taxes. You are not exempt from paying federal, state, or local income taxes. In addition to paying taxes directly from your payroll, you must complete and submit several tax forms to the government.

You are required to file Form 8843 with the U.S. Federal Government by June 15 every year for the prior tax year, even if you did not earn income. For example, if you were in the U.S. as an F, J, or M student at any time in 2018, then you will have to file Form 8843 by June 15, 2019.

If you earned income in the U.S. in the previous tax year, you might be required to file tax forms based on the amount of income you earned. We recommend that you always file tax forms because you might be entitled to a refund of the taxes you paid. The income tax forms are due on April 15.

The Office of International Admissions and Services purchases licenses for a tax preparation software for every international student to complete their federal tax forms. You must complete their state and local tax forms on your own. Helpful tips and resources are linked on the Taxes website at the Current International Students section of www.kutztown.edu/international.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

If you apply for a driver's license or get a job, you will have to apply for a social security number. It is used for employer payroll, Internal Revenue Service (federal taxes), driver's licenses and credit history.

If you are applying for a driver's license, but do not have a social security number and have never had a job on campus, you will have to apply for and officially be denied a social security number. If you get a job on campus at a later time, you will have to re-apply for a social security number.

Follow these instructions to receive a Social Security Rejection Letter:

Eligibility Requirements:

- Present in the U.S. for at least 10 days
- Registered in SEVIS

Social Security Application Documents:

- Letter from the International Advisor
- Passport
- Visa
- Form I-20
- Form I-94
- Social Security application (get this online at www.ssa.gov)

Process:

- Gather all documents listed above.
- Go to the Social Security Office.
- Keep your rejection letter in a safe place so you have it for your Driver's Permit application.

Social Security Number Application Process (for Employment)

You will need a social security number to receive pay for your employment. You will use the same social security number for your entire stay in the U.S. You only need to apply for a social security number one time, when you receive your first job offer. If you get a new or different job, you will use the same social security number. Keep your social security card safe once you receive it.

There is no fee for the social security application. You must be present in the U.S. for 10 days before applying for a social security number. Social Security offices are located in Reading and Allentown. Allow plenty of time when you plan your trip to the Social Security office, as there may be a long wait time. The Reading location is within a short walking distance of the bus terminal, which you can access by taking the Bieber bus from Kutztown.

You will need the following items to apply for a social security number:

- A job offer, in writing on KU letterhead, from the prospective employer (if seeking employment) which includes the following information (sample letters are available upon request from the Office of International Admissions and Services):
  - Your full name
  - A description of the employment
  - Anticipated or actual start date
  - Number of hours you will work per week
  - Employer contact information, including full name and telephone number of immediate supervisor
  - Verification that you have been hired for the position
  - Original signature with signer's title and date
- A letter from the International Advisor
- Passport
- Visa
- Form I-20
- Form I-94 (www.cbp.gov/i94)
- Social Security application (get this online at www.ssa.gov)

Social Security Office Locations

- Reading and Allentown are closest, but you can go to any Social Security Office.
- Check Social Security Administration website for hours.
- The bus terminal in Reading is within walking distance of the Social Security Office; you can take the Bieber bus to get there.
- Allow a lot of time because there is often a long wait.

Allentown
41 N. 4th Street
Allentown, PA 18102

Reading
201 Penn Street, Suite 200
Reading, PA 19601

SEVIS TRANSFER

If you need to transfer from KU to another U.S. college or university, your SEVIS record must also be transferred to the new institution. You must present an acceptance letter from the school to which you are planning to transfer and any forms required by that school for the Designated School Official to transfer your SEVIS record. Contact the Office of International Admissions and Services if you need to transfer your SEVIS record.

DRIVER'S LICENSE

If you want to drive a motor vehicle while studying in the U.S., you will either need to have an international driver's license, which is obtained in your home country, or a Pennsylvania State Driver's license. The international driver's license is usually only valid for one year.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) oversees the issuing and maintenance of driver's licenses in Pennsylvania. You will need to take a written exam for the learner's permit and then a road skills test in a car with a PennDOT employee to get a driver's license. You must be at least 16 years old and residing/studying in the U.S. and Pennsylvania State for at least one year to apply for a learner's permit.

Eligibility requirements:

- One year presence in the U.S. remaining
- 16 years of age or older
- Physical Examination within 6 months of application (Doctor or provider must complete section on application -- PennDOT Form 180)

To obtain a driver's license, you will need the following:

- PennDOT Form 180
- A physical exam
- Status verification letter from the Office of International Admissions and Services
- Passport
- I-94
- Visa
- Social Security number (ITIN) or Social Security rejection letter
- I-20
- 2 proofs of Pennsylvania residency

Driver's License Application Process:

- Gather all documents listed above.
- First, you will have to get a learner's permit to practice driving in the U.S.
  - You must apply in person for the Learner's Permit.
  - You will be required to take a written test to get it.
  - Study the Pennsylvania Driver's Manual before you take the Permit test.
  - There is no appointment required to take the Learner's Permit test.
- Next, you will take a Road Skills test to get the license.
  - You must make an appointment for this test.
  - You may not drive yourself to the Driver's License Center to take this test unless you have a licensed driver in the car with you.
  - You must provide a vehicle for this test; it is okay to take the test in someone else's vehicle.
  - You must show valid registration and insurance as well as the accompanying driver's unexpired license.

LOCAL DRIVER'S LICENSE CENTERS

Lehigh Valley Driver Center

1710 Hoover Avenue
Allentown, PA 18109

Reading PennDOT Photo & Exam Center

530 East Lancaster Avenue
Shillington, PA 19607

More information is online at www.dmv.pa.gov.

DEPENDENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

You must notify the Office of International Admissions and Services if you plan to have any of your dependents accompany you in F-2 status and provide biographical information (e.g. full name, address, country of birth, etc.) and immigration information (e.g. passport information, visa information, etc.) for each one. For traveling and re-entering the U.S., F-2 dependents need all the same documents as the F-1 student. Contact the Designated School Official for

more information. You can also request a letter to support the application of your family members who are travelling to KU for visits or graduation. Here are some important facts about dependents:

F-2 Dependents

- Maintain separate Form I-20; Duration of Status (D/S) is the same as the primary F-1 student
- May travel abroad and re-enter without the primary; must obtain travel signature from the DSO
- May not be employed within the U.S.
- May not have a Social Security Number
- May study part-time at a SEVP-approved university or enroll in less than a full course of study in an English as a Second Language program or other leisure/recreational study
- Dependent children may enroll in full-time study only in primary or secondary school

TRAVEL

For travel outside of the U.S., you will need valid travel documents with current signatures. Travel within the U.S. does not require these items.

Remember - you will need a valid visa to re-enter the U.S. If your visa is expired or will expire while you're out of the country but you have maintained good F-1 student status, review the information in the visa section to learn how to renew your visa.

For travel to Mexico, Canada, or the Caribbean, except Cuba, your visa will be automatically revalidated when you travel to any of these destinations for less than 30 days and return to the U.S. Automatic visa revalidation does not apply to citizens of Cuba, Sudan, Iran, & Syria. If you traveled to the U.S. before the I-94 card was automated and you have an expired or single entry visa, do not surrender the paper I-94 card when traveling to these locations. It will serve as a substitute for your expired visa.

Required travel documents:

- Passport valid for at least six months into the future
- Visa, valid for multiple entries and not expired
- Form I-20 signed by the Designated School Official within a year of return date

It is also recommended that you travel with the following documents:

- Proof of payment of SEVIS I-901 fee
- Evidence of financial support
- KU transcript and current course schedule
- All previously issued I-20 forms
- EAD card and letter from employer with dates and terms of employment (OPT only)

We hope this information is helpful to you to maintain your student visa status. Please let us know if you have questions about anything at any time and we will be happy to assist you!

APPENDIX

KUTZTOWN
UNIVERSITY
Office of International Admissions and Services

Reduced Course Load
Request Form

I. Student & Academic Advisor

Fill out this form if you would like to be permitted to drop below full-time enrollment (fewer than 12 credits for undergraduate students and fewer than 9 credits for graduate students). Reasons for a reduced course load include: a bona fide academic reason such as initial difficulty with the English language, difficulty with reading requirements, unfamiliar with American teaching methods, improper course level placement, or illness/medical condition.

For the last semester you are enrolled, you may take a reduced course load if all other academic requirements have been met. If you need only one class, it cannot be an online class.

Last (Family) Name:	First (Given) Name:	Student ID:

Major(s):	Minor(s):

Student Statement (attach a separate sheet if necessary and include any evidence to support the reduced course load):

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Academic Advisor Recommendation (attach a separate sheet if necessary and include any evidence to support the Reduced Course Load)

Required credit hours remaining: _____ *(excluding current term enrollment)*

Estimated completion date: _____ *(term and year)*

Reason for reduced course load *(check all that apply)*:

☐ Final Semester   ☐ Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods

☐ Initial difficulty with the English language   ☐ Improper course level placement

☐ Initial difficulty with reading requirements   ☐ Illness or medical condition (provide medical documentation)

By signing this from the academic advisor is certifying that the student is in his/her last semester or has a bona fide academic or a medical reason for requesting the reduced course load.
Advisor Full Name (Printed): _____

Advisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

II. Designated School Official

Date Received:	Date Processed:

Processed by:

Additional Information:

Submit this form with documentation to: Office of International Admissions & Services, Boxwood House
E: international@kutztown.edu • P: 484-646-4256 • F: 610.683.1356

KUTZTOWN
U N I V E R S I T Y
Office of International Admissions and Services

Program Extension
Request Form

I. Student & Academic Advisor

Fill out this form if you find out your academic program will take longer to complete than the program end date listed on your I-20. Extensions can be granted for valid academic or health reasons; the request must be submitted at least 30 days before the program end date on the I-20.

Last (Family) Name:	First (Given) Name:	Student ID:

Major(s):   Minor(s):

Student Statement (attach a separate sheet if necessary and include any evidence to support the program extension):

Reason for delay *(check all that apply)*:

☐ Academic Reasons, please explain:

☐ Health Reasons, please explain and attach documentation:

Student Signature: _____   Date: _____

Academic Advisor Recommendation (attach a separate sheet if necessary and include any evidence to support the program extension):

Required credit hours remaining: _____ *(excluding current term enrollment)*

Estimated completion date: _____ *(term and year)*

Reason for delay *(check all that apply)*:

☐ Change/add major field of study

☐ Change in research topics

☐ Unexpected research problems

☐ Student needs more time due to **the following compelling academic reason(s)**: _____

If none of these apply, please contact an International Student Advisor at 484-646-4256.

Advisor Full Name (Printed): _____

Advisor Signature: _____   Date: _____

II. Designated School Official

Date Received:	Date Processed:

Processed by:

Additional Information:

Submit this form to: Office of International Admissions & Services, Boxwood House
E: international@kutztown.edu • P: 484-646-4256 • F: 610.683.1356

KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
Office of International Admissions and Services

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Request Form

I. Student (Please Print)

Last (Family) Name:	First (Given) Name:
Please Circle:　　Undergraduate **or** Graduate	Student ID:
Academic Major:	Academic Minor:
Date you expect to graduate from KU:	
Internship/Practicum Company Name: Number and Street: City, State, and Zip Code:	
Internship/Practicum Start Date:	Internship/Practicum End Date:
Course in which you will be enrolled while completing internship/practicum: Semester in which you will be enrolled in internship/practicum course:	
Please indicate one of the following: ___ Full-time (20 or more hours per week) ___ Part-time (less than 20 hours per week)	

Please attach two letters to this form – one from your academic advisor and one from the internship/practicum site (see instructions on back of this form).

II. Office of International Programs (Office Use Only)

Date Received:	Date Processed:
Processed by:	
Additional Information:	

Submit this form to:　Office of International Admissions ▪ Boxwood House ▪ Kutztown, PA 19530
E: international@kutztown.edu ▪ F: 610.683.1356

Appendix E

pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FACT SHEET

Identification and Legal Presence Requirements for Non-United States Citizens

As part of a nationwide effort to enhance the issuance of secure identification credentials, Pennsylvania requires the following documentation from Non-U.S. Citizens applying for a PA Driver's License, Learner's Permit and/or Identification (ID) Card, or transferring an out-of-state driver's license. A minimum of one year legal presence is required by Pennsylvania law. PennDOT determines the expiration date of products based on your length of stay documents (typically the I-94) along with information from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). PennDOT verifies immigration documents electronically with DHS. This verification may not be able to be completed on the day of your visit and may require additional verification which can take up to 3 weeks to complete. Please take this time into account when planning to get a product.

Age Requirements for Non-U.S. Citizens

- Individuals must be at least 16 years of age to apply for or, 16 1/2 years of age to transfer a Non-Commercial Driver's License and/or Non-Commercial Learner's Permit.
- Out-of-State Learner's Permits can not be transferred to Pennsylvania.
- Individuals applying for or transferring a Commercial Driver's License must be at least 18 years of age for intrastate driving or 21 years of age or older for interstate driving.
- Individuals must be at least 10 years of age to apply for a Photo Identification (ID) Card.

Acceptable List of Documents for Proof of Residence for Applicants 18 years of age or older

- Tax records
- Lease agreements
- Mortgage documents
- W-2 Form
- Current utility bills (water, gas, electric, cable, etc.)

  Note - For Current Utility Bills: Cellular/Mobile or Pager Bills are not acceptable
  - If you reside with someone, and have no bills in your name, you will still need to provide two proofs of residency. One proof is to bring the person with whom you reside along with their Driver's License or Photo ID to the Driver License Center. You will also need to provide a second proof of residency such as official mail (bank statement, tax notice, magazine, etc.) that has your name and address on it. The address must match that of the person with whom you reside.
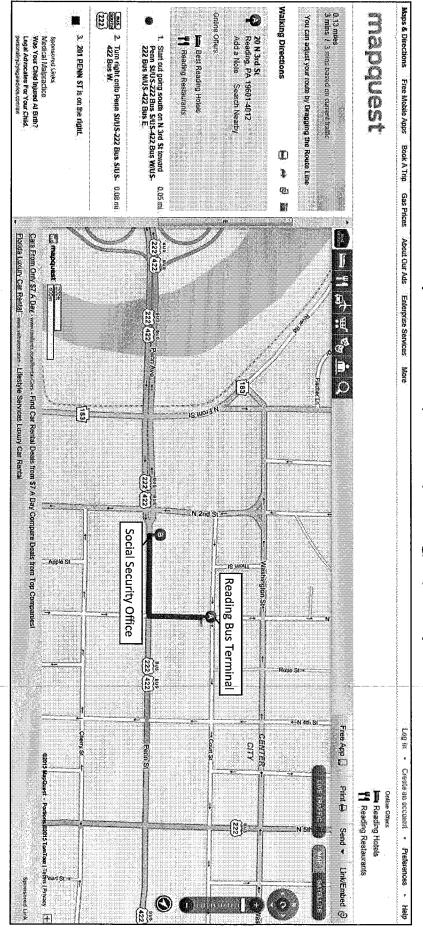
Please note

All documents must show the same name and/or date of birth, or an association between the information on the documents. Additional documentation may be required if a connection between documents cannot be established (e.g. Marriage Certificate, Court Order of name change, Divorce Decree, etc.).

I-797 Receipts for Applications for change in status, employment authorization, or extensions in length of stay will be reviewed and in some cases may be used as proof of a pending action with USCIS, however, not all I-797 receipts are acceptable (such as those for copies of immigration documents, or petitions for relatives).

I-94 HOLDERS — Your I-94 should be stamped by DHS personnel or be issued by appropriate DHS agency.

Immigration Status	Eligible for Product	Required Documents
F-1 Foreign academic student	YES	• Passport • I-94 • Visa or other official evidence as determined by PennDOT • Social Security Card, or letter from SSA indicating that SSA did not make a decision yet, or SSA rejection letter • I-20 • Written verification of attendance at the school listed on the I-20 • 2 proofs of residency
F-1 w/OPT Foreign academic student with Optional Practical Training (OPT)	YES	• Passport • I-94 • Visa or other official evidence as determined by PennDOT • Social Security Card, or letter from SSA indicating that SSA did not make a decision yet, or SSA rejection letter • I-20 with OPT dates listed • Employment Authorization Document (EAD) for OPT time listed • 2 proofs of residency
F-2 Dependent of F-1	YES	• Passport • I-94 • Visa or other official evidence as determined by PennDOT • Social Security Card, or letter from SSA indicating that SSA did not make a decision yet, or SSA rejection letter • I-20 of F-1 with F-2 information listed; I-20 of F-1 • Written verification of attendance of school listed on the I-20 of F-1 • 2 proofs of residency
J-1 Exchange visitor (may be student, trainee, work/travel, au pair, etc.)	YES	• Passport • I-94 • Visa or other official evidence as determined by PennDOT • Social Security Card, or letter from SSA indicating that SSA did not make a decision yet, or SSA rejection letter • Written verification from employer showing proof of employment or written verification of attendance from school • I-797 indicating that extension of status has been filed if stay documents are expired or about to expire (less than 6 months) • IAP-66 or DS-2019 • 2 proofs of residency
J-2 Dependent of J-1 exchange visitor	YES	• Passport • I-94 • Visa or other official evidence as determined by PennDOT • Social Security Card, or letter from SSA indicating that SSA did not make a decision yet, or SSA rejection letter • Written verification from employer showing proof of employment or attendance for J-1 principal holder • I-797 indicating that extension of status has been filed if stay documents are expired or about to expire (less than 6 months) • IAP-66 or DS-2019 of J-1 • 2 proofs of residency

Appendix G

Directions from Reading bus terminal to Social Security Office in Reading
(201 Penn Street, Suite 200, Reading, PA, 19601)

Office of International Admissions and Services
Boxwood House
www.kutztown.edu/international
Phone: +1 484-646-4256
Toll-Free: +1 844-217-4537
international@kutztown.edu