



**Optional
Practical
Training (OPT)
Summary**

Optional Practical Training (OPT) gives international students an opportunity to gain employment experience in a field closely related to their academic major. Optional Practical Training can be completed while students are enrolled or during vacation periods, but is most often used following graduation.

KEY POINTS		REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	
You cannot begin working before the date on the EAD card	Your employment must be at least 20 hours per week	Report employment information to Office of Education Abroad Director	The employer offer letter needs to contain the name of the company, title of position, hours per week and address of employer
The position of employment must be directly related to your field of study (major/minor)	Contact with the Office of Education Abroad while on OPT is required	Update your personal address within 10 days of when you move	Report any employment changes (location, position, company)—a new letter is required for a new position
You are only permitted to be unemployed for 90 days of the OPT cycle. If you do NOT have a job by the time your 90th day arrives you must either depart the country, or transfer to another school.	Your I-20 needs to be signed EVERY 6 months.	If you decide to leave the country and stop OPT you must contact OEA to update your SEVIS record	Send I-20 to: Marietta College c/o Office of Education Abroad 215 Fifth Street, Marietta, Ohio 45750.

TRAVEL WHILE ON OPT: If you travel outside the U.S. while on OPT you will need to bring with you: EAD (OPT card), passport, job offer letter, I-20 with OPT listed on page 3 and a valid U.S. visa.

INSURANCE: Students at Marietta College have health insurance coverage through July 31 (December and May graduates) – August graduates will need to EXTEND their coverage if they apply for OPT. The OEA has information on medical insurance options. Your employer may provide you with coverage but it is not required.

DRIVERS LICENSE: Students with OHIO driver’s licenses will EXPIRE on the program completion date on the I-20. THIS DATE CANNOT BE EXTENDED TO RENEW A LICENSE. Students requiring a new license will need to request an OPT start date of no later than 30 days from the program end date listed on their I-20.

STEM EXTENSION: Students who graduate with a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) may be eligible for a 17 month extension of OPT. Contact the OEA if you believe this is applicable to you.

OPT COMPLETION AND NEXT STEPS: Students who have not exceeded the 90 unemployment limitation have a 60 day grace period to leave the country. If you decide to transfer to another school you must contact the Office of Education Abroad so a transfer of your SEVIS record can be processed (you must include in the email the **transfer-in form** and **acceptance letter from the other school**).

REMEMBER: KEEP your EAD card and your I-20 with OPT information if you go to graduate school. You are eligible for multiple OPT periods for each academic education level (i.e. bachelor’s, master’s, doctorate). You will require the EAD and all your I-20s to apply for subsequent OPT periods.