Submitting your OPT Application by Mail

- Please review the checklist and collect all application documents
- Make an appointment with the Global Engagement Office to review your OPT application.
- If the application is approved, your advisor will produce an I-20 with the recommendation for OPT. You will sign your new I-20, and the Global Engagement Office will assist you in setting up the shipment of your completed application to USCIS.
- If you are approved, USCIS will send an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to the Global Engagement Office. You will be notified to pick it up.
  - **All correspondence will be through your Samford email!**

Checklist

To apply for OPT, please bring the following to your appointment with the GEO.

- ❑ Completed GEO Optional Practical Training Request form
- ❑ Form G-1145 e-notification of Application (You will receive an email and/or text message 24 hours after USCIS accepts your application)
- ❑ Form I-765, completed and signed with the following:
  - Mailing address (#5 on I-765)

    Attn: Samford University
    Global Engagement Office
    800 Lakeshore Drive
    Birmingham, AL, 35229

  - #27 on I-765

    Make sure you write (c) (3) (b)

- ❑ Personal check or money order made out to: "U.S. Department of Homeland Security"
  - Verify cost at https://www.uscis.gov/i-765 as it is subject to change
- ❑ 2 passport-style photos (2 inches x 2 inches) with your name, date of birth (mm/dd/yr) and SEVIS number written on the back of both photos
- ❑ Copy of your visa
- ❑ Copy of your passport, including biographical pages and copies of any pages indicating an extension of your passport. Passport must be valid to apply for OPT
- ❑ Copy of your I-94 information. Print a copy at https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search
- ❑ Copy (of both sides) of any previous Employment Authorization Documents (if applicable)

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

    a) 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.