

# Instructions for filling out the form I-538

There are two sections on this form, SECTION A and SECTION B. SECTION A needs to be completed by the applicant, SECTION B will be completed by our office.

Below we will guide you in filling out numbers 1 through 8 of SECTION A:

- 1. Name:** Be sure to write your name exactly how it appears on your passport.
- 2. Date of birth:** Self-explanatory
- 3. Student admission number:** This is your I-94 number; this was issued to you electronically upon your entry into the U.S. You may look up this number here - <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>
- 4. Date first granted F-1:** This is the date of the very first time you entered the U.S. on F-1 status.
- 5. Level of education being sought:** This is the degree that you will be earning upon completion of your program at LLU (i.e. Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate, etc.)
- 6. Student's major field of study:** Self-explanatory

## 7. Describe the proposed employment for practical training

“Full-Time Post-Completion Optional Practical Training in the field of *Your major filed of study*”

**\*Beginning date: (mm/dd/yr)**

This is the date that you wish to begin your employment

**\*Ending date: (mm/dd/yr) [add one year but minus one day]**

This is the date that your employment will end

\*If you have applied for OPT in a timely manner, you may remain in the country after your program completion date for up to 16 months if you utilize both grace period times. The time period for after your program completion date is listed as follows:

- **12 months of OPT** = time you are allowed to stay in U.S. and work legally
- **2 months of grace period before OPT** = time you are **NOT** allowed to work but legally stay in U.S.
- **2 months of grace period after OPT** = starts the day after your OPT expires if you maintain your status for the whole 12 month OPT work period (you are also **NOT** allowed to work this time as well). If you stop working or exceed more than 3 months of unemployment, your OPT expires and you do not get the additional 2 month grace period.

The purpose of the grace period before OPT starts is to give you some time to look for a job. The grace period after OPT expires is to get ready to leave the country or file a change of status to another visa. Before OPT starts, you may use all or part of the 60 day grace period. Please be advised that if you travel out of the U.S. in the grace period before OPT starts, you must have your *Employment Authorization Document [EAD]* (a.k.a. OPT Card) with you in order to reenter the U.S. If your OPT application has not been approved, we do not recommend traveling out of the U.S. until your application has been approved and you have received your OPT Card.

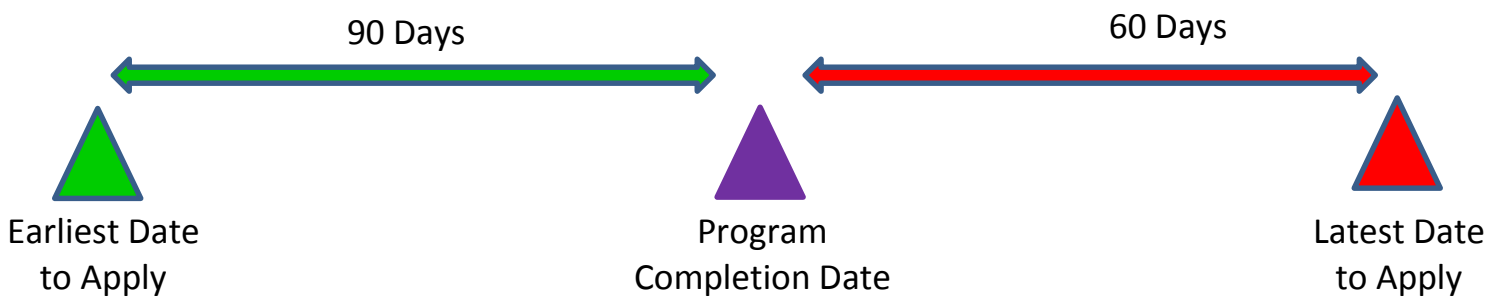
**Number of hours per week:**

Depending on your request (Full-time or Part-time), you may work 40 or 20 Hours per week.

**8. List all periods authorized employment for practical training:** Dates of off-campus clinical training, internship, or field practicum that was a program requirement.

**Signature & Date:** Please do not sign and date until the day of your OPT appointment with ISSS Office. We will review all your OPT application documents before you mail your application to USCIS.

## Applying for OPT



**Example:**

*Program Completion Date = **May 27, 2018***

*Earliest to Apply (Program Completion Date + 90 days before) = **February 26, 2018***

*Latest to Apply (Program Completion Date + 60 days after) = **July 26, 2018***

# OPT Dates



## Examples:

**Program Completion Date = May 27, 2018**

*Option 1:* No Grace Period Used

OPT Start Date = **May 28, 2018**

OPT End Date = **May 27, 2019**

*Option 2:* All Grace Period Used

OPT Start Date = **July 26, 2018**

OPT End Date = **July 25, 2019**

*Option 3:* Partial Grace Period Used

OPT Start Date = **June 27, 2018**

OPT End Date = **June 26, 2019**