

CAREER SERVICES PROFESSIONALS - RESOURCES FOR ASSISTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

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SCHOLARS
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In today's increasingly global economy, international students educated in the U.S. should be considered as a valuable part of the talent pool that universities provide to employers. The population of international students at MSU is growing, and undergraduates continue to top graduate students.

To learn more about the international student population at MSU, please refer to the Statistical Reports provided by the MSU Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS): <http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/about/statistics.htm>. The reports detail, among other areas, the approximate number of students by college and major as well as the number of graduates and undergraduates within the colleges.

The Role of OISS

Within the context of Career Services, OISS provides the following support:

- Advise on international students' U.S. work authorization options
- Member of the *Career Initiatives for International Students* group
- Organize events in conjunction with the Career Services Network
- Serve as liaison to the Global Talent Retention Initiative of Michigan (GTRI), an organization focused on employer education of how to employ international students for short- or long-term employment opportunities.
- Develop and contribute to resources for international students to help them navigate Career Development within U.S. higher education.
- Serve as leaders and collaborators with Michigan's Office for New Americans and Global Lansing.

Career Resources for International Students

- Networking Guide for International Students
- Resume and Interview Guide for International Students
- How to Talk to Employers about Your Immigration Status
- Preparing for the U.S. Workplace
- Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students

Additional resources can be found on page 4

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CAREER ADVISING

U.S. immigration regulations, under certain circumstances, allow international students to pursue part- or full-time employment during the course of their studies. *Please refer to the International Student Employment Table for a comparison of the various work authorization options.*

What does OISS tell international students about finding employment?

OISS expresses the importance of having a partnership between OISS and the Career Services Network. We explain that, to be successful, students must understand both their work authorization options as well as prepare themselves for the U.S. workplace through using the large number of programs and resources that the Career Services Network has to offer.

We help to manage their expectations by explaining the difficulties one may face in finding U.S. employment, especially if the student is an undergraduate or is not pursuing a degree in any of the Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) fields. We urge them to recognize that they, ultimately, must be the best candidate for the job and are responsible for their success.

We have also turned our attention towards assisting students with networking skills. This serves not only to help them build relationships in all aspects of campus life, but we see how this is also an integral part of their career development.

What do you cover in orientation?

Career Services professionals have accompanied OISS to our Pre-Departure Sessions in China to speak with incoming international students during and the Career Services Network attends our Resource Fair during orientation. We are open to exploring a possible partnership on a joint program for first year students in the neighborhoods and/or collaborating on resources and programs that help to make international students aware of the Career Services Network early in their Spartan experience.

What does OISS tell international students about talking with employers?

Because we know this is a sensitive topic for both students and employers, OISS has created resources to address: *How to Talk to Employers about Your Immigration Status* (for students) and the *Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students* (for employers). The resources for employers could be provided from students or Career Services staff to prospective employers. OISS is available to come to career fairs to meet with employers and has hosted information sessions for employers in the past. We welcome further collaboration in this area to assist with employer education.

What can Career Services Professionals do to educate employers?

Career Services Professionals should feel free to circulate any of the documents we have related to international student employment such as the *Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students* or work authorization information. It may be helpful to state that you're not asking them to consider international students instead of domestic students, but just for them to know they are part of the MSU talent pool. For other talking points, you can refer to the **Global Talent Retention Initiative (GTRI)** as just one example: www.migtri.org. OISS welcomes further conversation on this topic.

How can we train ourselves on the cultural "norms" and customs of students?

The best way to find out about international student challenges and what they would like in terms of programs and resources is to hold focus groups. OISS can help you connect with international students. Additionally, we would be happy to collaborate with the Career Services Network to facilitate intercultural communication workshops for Career Services professionals.

What does "sponsorship" mean?

International students may often refer to "sponsorship". They are referring to a company petitioning for them to receive an H-1B visa, which is a temporary worker visa that allows them to work in the U.S. for up to 6 years. Many students hope to transition to this visa type from their student visa.

Do you advise international students to get work authorization if they are volunteering?

Volunteering is defined by the U.S. government as work for which *no one else in that position is being paid*. There should be absolutely no compensation. If students are unsure if they need work authorization, they should be referred to OISS. We suggest for students to always have work authorization – even if unpaid – to protect their future immigration benefits/visa renewals. Please note that once students graduate, unpaid work is still considered employment. This is just one more reason we suggest that students receive authorization.

What if a Student Wants to Start Their Own Business?

You may refer them to OISS. This is a complicated issue and, many times, a student should seek immigration counsel. Please also check our Calendar of Events as we have hosted Entrepreneurship information sessions. Previous presentations on this topic can be viewed here: <http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/resources/elearning.htm>

TIPS FOR ADVISING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If a student is unsure how their immigration status affects their employment options or which U.S. work authorization options are available to them, please refer them to OISS. We have walk-in hours Monday – Friday from 1-3 p.m. in Room 105 of the International Center.

- Be aware of cultural factors – lack of eye contact, projecting self-confidence, networking, speaking directly, or providing strong opinions in the U.S. American style may all be deeply challenging to international students. Sometimes simply acknowledging the root of the challenge helps the student to feel more comfortable.
- Many international students are worried about their communication skills. Reassure the student that you can understand them, but encourage them to practice interviewing with others (in English, if they are planning to work in the U.S.).
- A non-native English speaker may have trouble understanding interview questions – whether it's language, the intent of the question, or sometimes figuring out the right answer. Assure them that it's okay to ask for the question to be repeated, as long as they don't ask so often that the interviewer begins question their language abilities. Provide them with alternative ways to clarify a question or to buy time to think.
- Help students to develop their job search strategies and direct them toward resources that may be more applicable to them such as *GoinGlobal* or *MyVisaJobs*. *GoinGlobal* provides students with cultural guides and employers most likely to sponsor H-1B visas based on state and metro area. Students may also be able to look for positions in their home country. *MyVisaJobs* also provides up-to-date lists of top H-1B employers in the U.S.
- Help students think strategically about the types of businesses or organizations that would be interested in them – businesses trading in their home country or expanding within a geographic region is an obvious example. Others include organizations who have a history of working with international students.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Networking Guide for International Students [Link]

Resume and Interview Guide for International Students

[<http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/documents/students/jobsearch%20strategies.pdf>]

How to Talk to Employers about Your Immigration Status [Link]

Preparing for the U.S. Workplace [<http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/documents/students/workprep.pdf>]

Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students [<http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/depts/employers.htm>]

Complete Employment Information from OISS including OPT, CPT, and AT applications

<http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/students/employ/>

Archived Webinars: <http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/resources/elearning.htm>

Examples: The OPT Application Process, Michigan Employment Initiative: Resources for International Students (how to talk to employers), Career Fair Prep Webinar

National Career Development Association (NCDA) - Resources for Partnering with International Students:

[http://ncda.org/aws/NCDA/asset_manager/get_file/64588/resources_for_partnering_with_international_students.pdf]

NCDA - Cultural Blind Spots in Career Counseling with International Students

[http://associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/12550/PARENT/layout_details_cc/true#sthash.VtaxlpoJ.dpuf]

Provides resources for both Career Services Professionals and International Students from multicultural counseling, to transition support, and international student surveys.

LinkedIn Group: [Career Service Professionals for International Students in the US](#)

GoingGlobal: [<http://www.goingglobal.com/>]

Global job search tool; H-1B Information; Country (and cities) Career Guide for China; Staff and student training

MyVisaJobs.com: [<http://www.myvisajobs.com/>] *Reports for H1B Visas, and Visa Sponsor Profiles*

Global Talent Retention Initiative of Michigan (GTRI): [<http://migtri.org>]

- *Provides list of employers willing to hire or sponsor international students in Michigan*
- *Students can upload their resume for employers to see*
- *Employers can learn about hiring international students, includes webinars for employers*
- *Lists available jobs*

The Office for International Students and Scholars

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Website: www.oiss.msu.edu Social Media: www.oiss.msu.edu/socialmedia Walk-in Hours: Monday – Friday 1-3 p.m.

Some material adapted from resources at the Career Development center at Indiana University, the Institute for International Education and the University of Texas – San Antonio.

F-1 Students On-Campus	F-1 Students Off-Campus (During Degree Program) Curricular Practical Training (CPT)	F-1 Students Off-Campus (Post-Program Completion) Optional Practical Training (OPT)
<p>Eligible: Immediately</p> <p>Work must be related to degree program: <u>NO</u></p> <p>Does student need authorization? <u>NO</u> - as long as they work only 20 hours/week.</p> <p>If a student wants to work more than 20 hours/week, they need to apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT).</p> <p>Cost of work authorization: \$0</p> <p>Maximum time: Students may work part-time (20 hours/week or less) when school is in session or full-time during winter and summer break.</p>	<p>Eligible: Student must be full-time for 1 academic year before they are eligible. (Exception: work is a required part of program)</p> <p>Work must be related to degree program: <u>YES</u> - Employment must be “integral to the established curriculum” of the degree program. Student must also be currently enrolled in a course corresponding to employment. Exception: if work occurs over the summer but the student is not enrolled, they may connect CPT to a fall semester course. <i>CPT cannot be connected to a course that has already been completed.</i></p> <p>Note: Student may use CPT authorization only before completion of studies. CPT is not granted after a student’s defense.</p> <p>Does student need authorization? <u>YES</u> - student must have work authorization <i>before</i> beginning employment.</p> <p>Does the student need to have a job offer to apply? <u>YES</u></p> <p>Who gives work authorization? OISS (they must also meet with their academic advisor)</p> <p>Cost of work authorization: \$0</p> <p>Processing time: with all required documents, 2-7 days.</p> <p>Maximum time: Students may work part-time (20 hours/week or less) when school is in session or full-time during winter and summer break. Note: 12 months of full-time CPT eliminates eligibility for OPT. Part-time CPT employment does NOT affect eligibility for OPT. Exceptions: graduate students who are “all but dissertation” or students in their final semester.</p>	<p>Eligible: Student must be full-time for 1 academic year before they are eligible.</p> <p>Work must be related to degree program? <u>YES</u></p> <p>Does student need authorization? <u>YES</u> – student must have work authorization <i>before</i> beginning employment.</p> <p>Does the student need to have a job offer to apply? <u>NO</u></p> <p>Who gives work authorization? OISS makes the recommendation and United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) must approve.</p> <p>Cost of work authorization: \$380 paid to the Department of Homeland Security.</p> <p>Processing time: 60-90 days. That is why it is important that students apply early. They can apply up to 90 days before their program completion date.</p> <p>Maximum time: Authorization is given for 12 months.</p> <p>Other details: To maintain immigration status, students must work 20 hours a week in their field of study. Work can be paid or unpaid. Students may also be self-employed and/or have multiple employers. They can change employers at any time.</p> <p>Not employer-specific: Student can work for any employer as long as the position is related to his/her field of study.</p>

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EMPLOYMENT TABLE

F-1 Students Off-Campus (Post-Program Completion) 17-Month Extension	J-1 Students and Scholars	Non-immigrant Work Visas Obtained Via Employer
<p>Eligible: F-1 Students in government-approved Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) field – http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/stem-list.pdf Student must also be employed with an E-verify employer to apply.</p> <p>Work must be related to degree program: <u>YES</u> Does student need authorization? <u>YES</u> – however, as long as the 17-month extension application is received by USCIS before the end of their current OPT period, they can continue working (with the official receipt notice) while their application is pending.</p> <p>Does student need to have a job offer to apply? <u>YES</u> – and the offer must be from an E-verify employer.</p> <p>Who gives work authorization? OISS makes the recommendation and United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) must approve.</p> <p>Cost of work authorization: \$380 paid to the Department of Homeland Security.</p> <p>Processing time: 60-90 days. Remember, students may be able to work during this time as long as application was received before their OPT ended.</p> <p>Maximum time: Authorization is given for 17 months. Combined with the initial OPT period, the student is eligible for a total of 29 months of OPT.</p> <p>Additional E-verify information: http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify</p>	<p>On- and off- campus employment: Must receive permission from sponsor before applying for Academic Training (AT).</p> <p>Cost of work authorization: \$0</p> <p>Processing time: Approximately 3-10 business days</p> <p>Maximum time: Students are eligible to work anywhere from 18 to 36 months depending on length of study.</p> <p>If you are serving a large number of J-1 visa holders, please contact a member of the “J Visa Team” in OISS for additional details.</p> <p>OISS is happy to host information sessions for career services professionals.</p>	<p>H-1B (Temporary Worker) Visa referred to as “sponsorship”</p> <p>Eligible: Work visa available to foreign nationals who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have at least a U.S Bachelor’s degree or foreign equivalent - Will be working in a job that requires at least a Bachelor’s degree <p>Who gives work authorization: Employer submits visa petition to USCIS.</p> <p>Employer must post notice for 10 days at the worksite stating they are hiring an H1-B worker, providing information about the position. Note: There is no need to determine if U.S workers are available to fill the position.</p> <p>Processing time: On average 5-6 months. Employer can request expedited processing for an additional \$1,225 and can take up to 15 days to approve.</p> <p>Cost of work authorization: Ranges from \$2000-\$3500 and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base Filing: \$325 - ACWIA Fee \$750 for employer with 1-25 full time employees, \$1500 for 26 or more full time employees - Fraud Prevention and Detection fee: \$500 - Public Law 111 Fee: \$2000 - if more than 50 employees - Attorney Fees if applicable <p>Maximum time: Initially up to 3 years, renewable for up to 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TN Visa</p> <p>Eligible: Temporary workers from Canada and Mexico Maximum time: One year, renewable</p>

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EMPLOYMENT TABLE