

OVERVIEW OF OPTIONS IN HIRING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) offices of Career Services and International Student and Scholar Services have collaborated on this overview to address common questions regarding the hiring of international students. Enrollment at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln includes over 2000 students from 135 countries. These talented students meet the same academic standards as U.S. students. Many of these students already hold degrees from institutions in their home countries and may also have related experience. Consider hiring an international student from UNL for the cultural and professional benefits offered to your organization.

BEFORE GRADUATION

Volunteer Experiences. Volunteer experiences provide wonderful opportunities for international students to gain knowledge of a career field and specific skills. Organizations cannot hire an international student as an unpaid intern or volunteer if they generally pay a U.S. citizen to do the same work.

Internships or Cooperative Education. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) enables employers to hire a F-1 international student as an intern. The experience must relate to the student's major field of study, be offered for academic credit, not cause the student to drop below full-time enrollment and be approved by UNL International Student Advisers each semester of participation. Additional documentation from Career Services is required. J-1 students can also be eligible for off-campus work called "Academic Training." The criteria for academic training is similar but involves a different application process and does not require any documentation from Career Services.

EMPLOYMENT AFTER GRADUATION – PRACTICAL AND ACADEMIC TRAINING OPTIONS

International students are typically eligible to gain practical work experience to supplement their academic programs. A student must request and receive work authorization prior to beginning any employment.

Optional Practical Training. Optional Practical Training (OPT) is a benefit available to students who are in the F-1 immigration classification that enables them to get experience in their field of study for a period of twelve months (with the option of an additional 24 months in certain circumstances) after completion of their program. Authorization is granted by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Academic Training. Students in the J-1 immigration classification may apply for academic training (temporary work authorization) for a period of 18 months (with an option of an additional 18 months in certain circumstances).

POST PRACTICAL AND ACADEMIC TRAINING OPTIONS

International students who are no longer eligible for student-related training may have other options available to them.

Temporary Worker (H-1B Visa). Employers intending to hire a foreign national may petition U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) for an H-1B visa. Though generally valid for up to three years, it may be extended. USCIS issues 65,000 new H-1B approvals each year (October 1 through September 30). Petitions from academic and non-profit organizations are allowed and are not included in the 65,000 limit. Graduates with U.S. advanced degrees have an allocation of 20,000 H-1Bs above the 65,000.

For more information, please contact:

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