



F-1 International Student Employment

General Information

The good news is, you are eligible to work on campus on day 1 of your studies, provided you can find an available job! Prospective, new, and current F-1 students should NOT rely on the possibility of employment to meet basic needs during their course of study. F-1 students in their first academic year are, by regulation, permitted to work ONLY on campus, and BHCC policy limits student work hours to 18.5 hours per week. Most positions do not offer the full 18.5 hours per week. On-campus jobs are limited and competitive, and on-campus positions are not promised nor guaranteed.

Tips for Finding a Job On-Campus - Attend a Workshop! You will receive information about workshops in the coming months.

- ⇒ PARTICIPATE - Join clubs, work with student government, participate in events, attend workshops. These activities are fun and will help people on campus get to know you and what you are capable of.
- ⇒ VOLUNTEER - There are lots of opportunities to volunteer all around campus. Serve on the student government; help organize, promote, and/or run an event; serve as a club officer; or volunteer to help with an office project in an area that interests you.
- ⇒ NETWORK - Don't just go to class and go home. Become involved with groups that interest you - like HOPE, the Multicultural Club, the International Center, DISH, etc. There is a group for everyone!
- ⇒ PREPARE A RESUME - The Resume Guide at <https://www.bhcc.edu/media/03-documents/careeradvising/February-2018-Resume-Guide.pdf> can help!
- ⇒ TALK TO PEOPLE - Visit the offices you are interested in working with to inquire about whether they have openings. If they don't, take some time before checking in again. Remember that opportunities are limited, competitive, subject to budget restrictions, and not promised or guaranteed to any particular student.
- ⇒ Create an account on handshake at <https://www.bhcc.edu/handshake/> and look their for job openings.

Off-Campus Work

After completing 1 academic year (a Fall AND Spring term), F-1 international students become eligible **to apply** for some off-campus opportunities under very specific circumstances. Under NO circumstances should international students **EVER** accept unauthorized employment. It is a risk to staying in F-1 status or ever obtaining another visa to come to the U.S. Even if you are not caught immediately, which would result in termination of your SEVIS record, you could be denied a future immigration benefit based on unauthorized work.

Types of Off-Campus Work

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is/can be paid off-campus work that is an integral part of BHCC's establish curriculum. Students must work with the office of [Internships and Career Development](#) **AND** their International Advisor to become authorized to participate in CPT. There is no cost for CPT authorization.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment that is directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study. Eligible students can apply to receive up to 12 months of OPT employment authorization before completing their academic studies (pre-completion) and/or after completing their academic studies (post-completion). However, all periods of pre-completion OPT will be deducted from the available period of post-completion OPT. Students should apply for OPT up to 90 days prior to their program end date and up to 60 days after the program end date, depending on when they want to begin working. Students are required to work with their International Advisor to obtain an I-20 with an OPT recommendation BEFORE applying with USCIS for authorization. USCIS charges a fee to process OPT requests.

USCIS makes case-by-case decisions for off-campus employment for students who can show that new, **unexpected circumstances beyond their control** have created **severe economic hardship**. There is a cost to apply for authorization with USCIS. Students are required to work with their International Advisors to apply for this benefit.

Off-Campus Employment Workshops are held every semester by the International Advisors. Watch for announcements.