



International Students

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS GUIDE TO EMPLOYMENT

This guide is designed to help you with the job search process, given that as an international student you face a few unique challenges if you want to work in the U.S.

EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS

Husson Student Employment

Most F-1 students that are maintaining their status are eligible to work on the Husson campus part-time (20 hours/week) during the semester and up to 40 hours during the summer break. Visit the Student Employment Office in Peabody 105 for more information.

Curricular Practical Training

If your program of study requires an internship or work experience, you may request CPT authorization. You need to have the International Student Advisor, Danielle Beaupre, report your internship and print a new I-20 that shows your authorization for certain dates and a specified employer. CPT authorization requires a signed cooperative agreement and a letter from your employer.

Optional Practical Training

We encourage you to keep all of your OPT for work opportunities after graduation. Because authorization can take up to three months to obtain, it is recommended that you apply before you graduate. You cannot apply for OPT until your final semester begins and U.S.C.I.S must receive your application no later than 60 days beyond your program end date. Technically, you need to stay in the U.S. while the authorization is being processed. If you leave and try to re-enter while your OPT is being processed, you may be denied re-entry. The latest the authorization can start is 60 days after your program end date. OPT does not require company sponsorship and you can change jobs using this authorization. You must work through Danielle Beaupre to apply for OPT authorization. You should start this process at least 3-months before you expect to start working.

H-1B (Non-Immigrant Temporary Work Visa)

In order to qualify for H-1B visa status, you must first have a job offer with an employer who is willing to file an H-1B
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HUSSON
UNIVERSITY

Office of Career Services

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petition on your behalf. H-1B status is reserved for individuals in “specialty occupations” which are jobs requiring at least a bachelor’s degree. The H-1B limit set by the U.S government is always reached very quickly. Usually, there is double the allotted number of petitions filed each year and then those petitions are randomly selected for adjudication. Another benefit to using your OPT post completion is that your employer may decide to sponsor you for an H1-B visa.

TN, H-1B1 and E-3 Classifications

Citizens of Canada, Mexico, Singapore, Chile, and Australia can often use these classifications. If you will work in a specific occupation and are Canadian or Mexican, you may qualify for TN status. People from Singapore or Chile are given an allotment of H-1B numbers that is separate from others and has never been exhausted. Australians who qualify for H-1B status also qualify for e-3 status and this quota has also never been exhausted.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Social Security Number

The only reason to obtain a social security number is if you are going to have a job. Danielle Beaupre or Student Employment will give you a letter of support to request a number from the Social Security office in Bangor.

Driver's License

It could be advantageous to obtain a driver’s license in the U.S. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles will need your I-20 and I-94. If you don’t have a social security number, please see Danielle Beaupre for a letter explaining why you are not eligible for a SSN.

CHALLENGES YOU MAY FACE IN THE U.S.

Hiring foreign nationals is complex: Employers have the perception that it is complicated and expensive to hire international students because they are unfamiliar with the process.

Retention concern: Employers fear that international students will return to their home country after a year or two. Thus, they are reluctant to invest time and resources into the process.

Communication: Employers may be concerned about international students' ability to communicate effectively in verbal and written English with their clients and co-workers.

Employment restrictions: In general, as an international student, you cannot work for the federal government, most state and local government agencies, or private companies contracted by the government. Your visa status will be less of a barrier with other industries or employers.

Common cultural barriers in the job search: There may be significant differences between your culture and U.S. culture. *You do not have to completely assimilate into American culture*; there is a way to stay true to your own culture and values while also meeting the expectations of U.S. employers.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

You may want to focus on organizations that have an international focus, such as:

- The World Trade Organization
- World Health Organization
- World Bank
- And many others.

In addition, you may have more success with U.S. companies that have an extensive international presence. Your international experience, language, and cultural fluency are assets and make you a great candidate for these potential employers. Furthermore, if your U.S. work authorization is delayed, you may be able to work for these employers at one of their overseas branches (i.e., your home country).

HOW TO JOB SEARCH IN THE U.S.

The job searching process in the U.S. may look very different than in your home country. Career Services is here to help you every step of the way.

Resources to Find Job Postings

Career Services

- Start early and meet with us regularly to help you develop the best job and internship searching strategies. We are here to help.

Networking

- Career Services can help you effectively reach out to employers, alumni, and faculty to help you make connections with others. This will help you tremendously in finding a job.

Husson Eagle Career Link

- This is our office's online job board which includes local and national job/internship postings, career advice, and more. Sign up at: collegecentral.com/husson

Husson Career Services Website

- Utilize our website for career assessments and countless resources and tools. Access it at: husson.edu/careerservices

LinkedIn

- We highly recommend that you create a professional profile on LinkedIn to promote your skills and abilities. Many jobs are being shared and posted on LinkedIn before they get posted anywhere else. Career Services can help you create the most effective profile.

Maine Career Centers

The Maine Career Centers are free for all people in Maine. They have a statewide job posting database that you can sign up for as well. Go to: mainecareercenter.gov to start the process

The Importance of Connection

Around 75% of jobs are secured through connections and networking rather than simply responding to a job posting. Meet with Career Services to develop an effective networking strategy.

How to Network

Networking is about establishing longer-term friendships in the professional world and even developing mentors that can help you throughout your career path. See our tip sheet on networking and professional communication to get a comprehensive overview.

Potential contacts:

- Parents, siblings, other family
- Friends/family of friends
- Supervisors
- Professors
- Professionals within the community

LinkedIn

This is one of the best ways to find and make connections all over the world and within almost any field. We can help you build an effective profile.



JOB SEARCHING MATERIALS AND SKILLS

Résumés and Cover Letters

You will need a résumé, cover letter, and professional references for any job application. See our separate résumé and cover letter tip sheets for an in-depth look at how to create these documents. Make an appointment with Career Services to look them over.

Interviewing

Doing your research and practicing interviewing is crucial to your success. See our interviewing tip sheet for a comprehensive analysis of how to prepare for interviews. Schedule a practice interview with Career Services to get feedback and practice your skills.

Following Up

After having an interview it is always critical to send hand written thank you notes to all with whom you spoke. You can reiterate your interest and emphasize briefly one or two skills that you bring to the job. Finally, following up with your networking connections with thank you notes is also critical.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Should I list my visa status on my résumé?

No you shouldn't. Your permanent address, educational background, and work history may hint that you are an international student. Hiring managers should ask appropriate questions during the process to determine your status. Never lie about it, but you do not need to draw unnecessary attention to it.

Aren't there illegal questions in the interview process?

Yes. Employers cannot ask about your nationality, visa type, citizenship, or place of birth. Employers can ask: "Are you legally authorized to work in the U.S.?", or "Will you now or in the future require sponsorship for an employment visa?" They can also ask what languages you speak, read or write if that is a skill related to the job posting.

How do I answer if an employer asks me about my work authorization?

If you are on pre or post degree completion OPT authorization, you have the legal right to work for 12-months in student status and this requires no work on their part. Then you can share that your work authorization can be renewed for another 3-6 years with an H-1B work visa. Avoid the word "sponsor" with the H-1B application process and use the phrase "petition".

When should I reveal that I am an international student in the hiring process?

Broaching this topic is delicate. Some employers have strict policies against hiring foreign nationals and others may be more happy to hire you if you have the requisite skills for the job. We recommend that students address this in either their first or their second interview, once they have had the opportunity to "sell themselves" and feel that the employer is potentially interested in hiring them. And remember: being an international student is an asset, not a burden!

Should I even apply if a company says they don't hire international students?

You should definitely still apply. Most employers who say this just don't understand the process or have never hired international students. You may have the opportunity to convince them with your skills and ability. Make sure you have a complete and accurate knowledge of your work options.

How can I be the best candidate for jobs?

Meet with Career Services early and often. Doing this can help you develop a clear career goal, market yourself, job search, get internships, develop job search materials, do practice interviews, and network.