

## Employment for F-1 Students

While studying needs to be the primary focus of your time in the US, there are some limited ways to benefit from employment opportunities as well. You are strongly encouraged to speak with the Office of Global Education about these options before you pursue any employment.

**WARNING:** You must obtain written permission before beginning any type of employment. All off-campus employment must be authorized by the Office of Global Education and/or by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Working without authorization is a serious violation of status that could impact your future ability to live and work in the US.

All employment while school is in session is limited to 20 hours per week or less, all jobs combined. Immigration regulations allow students to work full-time (40 hours per week) during winter, spring and summer breaks; however, institutional policy allows students to work on campus a maximum of 29 hours per week during breaks.

### On-Campus Employment

There is no requirement that employment on campus for Goucher College be authorized in writing. You will need to apply for a Social Security Number, complete a Glacier record and paperwork for Human Resources prior to beginning employment. Please see the handout On-Campus Employment for F-1 Students for additional information.

### Curricular Practical Training

Curricular Practical Training is for a work experience that is “an integral part of a required curriculum.” [8CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i)]. Internships, practicums, co-ops or other work experiences for which you will receive academic credit will qualify. You must be in legal F-1 status for at least nine months or one academic year in order to be eligible. You will need to work with the Career Education Office to complete the steps necessary to obtain academic credit and submit a completed Internship Learning Agreement to the Office of Global Education who provide you with a new Form I-20 that includes the employment authorization. Please see the handout on Curricular Practical Training for F-1 Students for additional information.

### Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Optional Practical Training is for a work experience that is related to your field of study and appropriate to your level of education [8CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii)]. You must be in legal F-1 status for at least nine months in order to be eligible. You may use it before you graduate, after you graduate, or any combination of the two. Part-time pre-completion OPT is subtracted from your allowed time at half the rate. Students must obtain a recommendation from the Office of Global Education and then send a completed application to USCIS. Please see the handout on Optional Practical Training for F-1 Students for additional information.

Students who are majoring in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields (as identified by the Department of Homeland Security) are eligible for a STEM extension which allows students to obtain a 24-month extension of their OPT. See the Office of Global Education to determine if your major is included in the STEM degrees and the conditions that have to be met in order to qualify.

### **Internship with an International Organization**

Students may work for a “recognized international organization” such as the World Bank or United Nations. Students are not restricted as to when they can apply or how long they can work for such an organization; however, they must obtain a recommendation from the Office of Global Education and then send a completed application to USCIS. Please schedule an appointment if you have additional questions about this type of employment.

### **Severe Economic Hardship**

Students who experience a sudden change in their financial situation that is “unexpected and beyond their control” may seek advice from the Office of Global Education regarding this type of employment [8CFR 214.2(f)(9)(ii)(C)]. You must be in legal F-1 status for at least nine months in order to be eligible. It has to be reasonable that being granted the ability to work off-campus will provide enough additional funding to see you through the remainder of your degree. You must obtain a recommendation from the Office of Global Education and send a completed application to USCIS.

### **Social Security Number**

You will need a Social Security Number in order to work in the US. Please see the handout on Obtaining a Social Security Number for additional information on this process.

### **Tax Concerns**

You will need to pay federal, state and local payroll taxes. F-1 students generally do not have to pay Social Security or FICA taxes for the first five years in the US. If you have FICA taxes deducted from your paycheck (as noted on your pay stub), you can file Form 843 and 8316 with the Internal Revenue Service for a refund.