Responsibilities of Participating in Post-completion OPT

While on OPT you are still considered to be in F-1 student status, therefore Earlham College remains responsible for your SEVIS record. It is important that you continue to uphold the requirements of your F-1 status throughout the period of your OPT. In order to maintain your status, you must remember to do the following:

1. Inform IPO of your current address and contact information. The law requires you to report a change of address within 10 days of moving. IPO will update this information in the SEVIS database.
2. Inform IPO of your current employment information. This includes employer’s name and address as well as your start and end dates. Please inform IPO of updates within 10 days.
3. Engage in employment that is directly related to your major area of study and commensurate with your degree level.
4. The OPT authorization is approved for specific beginning and end dates. You must not work prior to the start date or beyond the authorization period (end date).
5. You must not engage in employment prior to receiving the EAD card from USCIS.
6. If leaving the country, an international student adviser must endorse your SEVIS I-20 for travel.

Please note:

a) While on OPT, travel signatures are required every 6 months, rather than every 12 months.
b) You should plan to leave the country while participating in OPT only if you have secured a job and will be re-entering to resume employment. You will need to be able to demonstrate proof of employment and show your EAD at the port of entry. After you are granted OPT, immigration is not likely to allow you to re-enter the U.S. to seek employment.

7. Students granted post-completion OPT are permitted a maximum of 90 days of unemployment during the 12 months of OPT work authorization. To maintain status, students with OPT authorizations are required to report any interruptions in employment to the International Programs Office within 10 days. Students approaching 90 days of unemployment should prepare to depart the country, apply for a change of status, or prepare to begin a new degree program. Students unemployed for 90 days will be considered out of status.

8. Upon completion of OPT you should follow guidelines for the option below that best suits you, being sure to consult IPO as necessary.

- **Option 1** - complete training and return home within the 60-day grace period. This option requires you to inform IPO of your intended departure.
- **Option 2** - complete practical training and begin another degree program. If you intend to enroll directly into another degree program (within 5 months of your OPT completion date) you will need to work with IPO and your new school to coordinate the transfer process in SEVIS. Please note: Enrolling in a new academic program while on OPT automatically terminates your work authorization.
- **Option 3** - continue working in a new visa status. If you have found an employer willing to sponsor you for the appropriate visa, you will need to take the steps to change your status prior to the expiration of your OPT.
- **Option 4** - 17-month Extension OPT- Students who majored in specific Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields may be eligible for a 17-month extension. To be eligible you must be engaged in post-completion OPT, which is directly related to your major and commensurate with your degree level. In addition, you must work for an employer enrolled in the E-verify system. This extension may only be used once in an academic career. If utilized at the undergraduate level, you will be ineligible for future extensions.