Full-time Status

- Full-time status for graduate students is **nine (9) credits hours**.

- International students <u>must</u> be enrolled full-time to maintain their immigration status.

- Under federal regulations, students must request permission for a reduced course load (RCL) _prior_ to actually withdrawing or dropping below full-time.

- See the Associate Director in CAD Student Services if you think you need to take a reduced course load.

Health Insurance

- https://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/iss/life-at-rit/health-insurance

- All full and part-time international graduate students on A, B, E, F, G, I, J, K, O, Q, R and V visas registered at RIT will be automatically enrolled in the RIT Basic Student Accident and Sickness Insurance Policy.

- Coverage is activated by student's registration status on a semi-annual basis and they will be billed on their student account.

- Students can ask RIT to waive (cancel) their RIT Health Insurance by completing an International Student Insurance Waiver Form (usually available in mid-July). This form can be used before the start of the semester, or, during the _first 30 days_ after classes begin. It will not be honored after that date. The form can be found here: https://go.gallagherstudent.com/Universities/Rochester%20Institute%20of%20Technology/Home

> **International Student Services Office**
>
> **Website:** http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/iss/
>
> **Contact Information:**
> Mezzanine Level –Student Alumni Union
> 585-475-6943 phone
> 585-475-7419 fax
> iss@rit.edu
>
> **Zoom Walk-in Hours:**
> Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2-4pm
> Tuesday, Thursday 10 am -12 pm
> https://rit.zoom.us/j/96181058968
> **To join by phone:** 646-558-8656 (please enter meeting ID 961 8105 8968 followed by #)
>
> **Mailing Address:**
> International Student Services
> Rochester Institute of Technology
> 42 Lomb Memorial Drive
> Rochester, NY 14623

CPT (Curriculum Practical Training)

- CPT is permission to work on co-op before completing requirements for a graduate degree program.

- Co-op is not available to the IMGART-MFA, MEDART-MS and VISART-MST students.

- CAD International students can take a **maximum of two (2) semesters** of co-op.

- Students must be in good academic standing with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA and have completed one academic year (2 academic semesters: fall and spring).

- To qualify for CPT, the co-op must be a temporary position that is directly related to the student's field of study and be an integral part of an established curriculum.

- CAD students are expected to continue working on their thesis documentation while on Curriculum Practical Training (CPT).

- Students must request a CPT I-20 from ISS and cannot work until they have it.

- ISS CPT instructions page: https://www.rit.edu/iss/optional-practical-training-opt

- See the **Co-op Experiential Learning & CPT Minimum Hour Requirements and Registration Process Handout** for more information.

> **Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education**
>
> **Website:** https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/
>
> **Contact Information:**
> Bausch & Lomb Center, 1st Floor
> 585-475-2301 phone
> 585-475-5476 fax
>
> **Walk-in Hours:**
> Monday through Friday
> 8 am – 4:30 pm
>
> **Mailing Address:**
> Office of Career Services and
> Cooperative Education
> Rochester Institute of Technology
> 57 Lomb Memorial Drive
> Rochester, NY 14623

OPT (Optional Practical Training)

- OPT is off-campus work <u>after</u> completing all course requirements for a graduate degree program.
- OPT is defined as "temporary employment for practical training, directly related to a student's major area of study".
- Students _can apply no earlier than 3 months in advance of the end of their last semester_.
- The maximum amount of time granted to work on OPT is 12 months per degree level plus a possible 24-month extension for those who qualify. CAD programs that are eligible for a STEM Extension are: MEDART-MS and VISCOM-MFA.
- To get OPT authorization, students must first request an OPT I-20 from ISS, then they must submit their OPT application United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). OPT approval comes in the form of an Employment Authorization Document (EAD card).

- Students who have not finished all degree requirements and are on OPT *must register for Continuation of Thesis* until their degree is certified.
- Additional information can be found here: https://www.rit.edu/iss/optional-practical-training-opt.

I-20 Program Extension Requests
- If you must remain in the US beyond the date indicated (in section 5) on your I-20, the form may be extended but it must be extended *BEFORE* the I-20 expires.
- Extensions are <u>not automatic</u> and must be approved by your department on the basis that you are *actively working on your studies and legitimately need more time*. They are optional and limited.
- Requests for extensions should be submitted 30 - 90 days prior to the expiration date of the Form I-20 so the extension process can be completed prior to the expiration date on the document.
- **Extension Request Process:**
  1. Student must submit the I-20 Program extension request here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BuiCQaUbC1BCOg8siSzEP6_zj01sg12ijA4l6BcYH7M/edit
  2. The Associate Director in Student Services will request the approval from your graduate director.
     - If the graduate director approves, the Associate Director in Student Services will submit a "Program Extension Form" to ISS and copy you and your graduate director in on the email submission. The ISS Office will contact you when your updated I-20 is available for pickup.
     - If the graduate director does not approve, the Associate Director in Student Services will contact you directly.

Expedited Proof of Degree Completion (for visa purposes)
Students who have finished their degree requirements (including thesis) and are applying for visas prior to the end of the semester.

- **Process:**
  1. Once you have completed/submitted your thesis paperwork and it has been approved, please fill out and submit the following to CAD Student Services:
     - The "Expedited Proof of Degree Completion Form" found on the Registrar's Office Website: https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/registrar/forms.html.
     - You can, if you wish, provide a FedEx shipping label to ensure it is received in a timely manner. If you wish to, please also submit the pdf of the shipping label along with your submission of the Expedited Proof of Degree Completion Form.
  2. The Registrar's Office will then generate the official letter and mail it directly to your attorney, who will send it to homeland security.

Verifications
- All official verifications must come from the Office of the Registrar.
- Enrollment verification requests are made at: https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/registrar/enrollment-verifications.

Inviting your family to graduation
- Should you need an invitation, please visit the ISS Website for an invitation letter template: https://www.rit.edu/iss/dependents-and-visitors#visitors

STEM OPT Extensions
- The 24-Month STEM OPT Extension provides an additional 2 years of work authorization to the year of Optional Practical Training, allowing students to participate in up to 3 years of OPT. In order to qualify for the STEM OPT Extension, the following must be true:
  - The applicant **must** be an F-1 student currently in their first year of OPT.
  - The applicant **must** have earned a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate degree in a qualifying STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) field.
  - The applicant has a job offer from a company enrolled in E-Verify at the time that they apply for the STEM Extension.
- See https://www.rit.edu/iss/24-month-stem-opt-extension for more information
- The following CAD graduate programs are approved as STEM programs:
  - MS Media Arts & Technology: CIP Code: 09.0702 - Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia
  - MFA Visual Communication Design: CIP Code: 09.0702 - Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia