THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:
As an international student, there are a few important things that you may want to consider as you prepare to search and apply for internships and full-time employment.

- Making time to gain experience in addition to your studies is VERY important. You can start on campus through involvement in student groups, doing research with professors, volunteering, on campus jobs, or internships. These experiences offer the opportunity to practice U.S. language and cultural competencies that will be beneficial to job searching and working in the U.S. or your home country. Below are some of the most popular ways international students get experience. See the Get Experience handout for more information.
  - **Student Employment**: International students can work up to 20 hours a week on campus without a change in visa status. Working on campus can be a great opportunity to build experience and skills. Use the website humanresources.umn.edu/jobs to search for student jobs on campus.
  - **Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)**: The UROP program helps students gain experience through connecting with professors on campus to conduct cutting edge research: ugresearch.umn.edu
  - **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**: CPT is work authorization which allows a student to work in a job directly related to the student’s major area of study before degree completion. The internship must be for credit and part of your academic program (talk with ISSS and your department). CPT authorization is provided by ISSS and can be granted within 7 business days of application submission. Students can use CPT after two semesters at a U.S. university. CPT does not require sponsorship from an employer.
  - **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**: OPT is work authorization allowing a student to work for 12 months in a job directly related to their major area of study, primarily after degree completion. OPT authorization is provided by USCIS and is usually granted within 2-3 months after the student submits an application. Students with science, technology, engineering, or math related degrees may be granted a 24 month extension. OPT does not require sponsorship from an employer.

- Securing an authorization to work in the United States or elsewhere can be complex. It is important to start early and learn about the different visa options. There is more information below as well as through the International Student and Scholar Services office (issent.umn.edu).

- Being aware of the expectations for getting a job in your home country or culture and how that might differ from those where you’d like to work will make you a better prepared job applicant.

- For more information, visit the CSE Career Center International Student page (cse.umn.edu/career-resources-for-international-students) and the U of M Career Services International Student page (career.umn.edu/international-students)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND SCHOLAR SERVICES (ISSS):
International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is the office dedicated to serving the University of Minnesota’s international community. Its primary mission is to assist international students and scholars in successfully accomplishing the goals that brought them to the University by using all available resources. ISSS is located in 190 Hubert H. Humphrey Center, (612) 626-7100, isss@tc.umn.edu, isss.umn.edu. Students can make an appointment to meet with an adviser or utilize walk-in hours to discuss job search strategies and work authorization. They also offer workshops about work authorization. Visit their website for dates and times: isss.umn.edu.

WORK AUTHORIZATION:
Before working in any position off campus you must obtain work authorization. Below are descriptions of different types of authorizations, but visit International Student Scholar Services (ISSS) for CPT and OPT information and/or if you have any questions about work authorization. To find out more about CPT and OPT go to their website to watch the online workshops and for dates and times of in-person workshops: isss.umn.edu/career.

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**H1B Visa**: The H1B Visa is the official and primary U.S. work visa available to international professionals. To obtain a H1B Visa an employer must be willing to file a H1B Visa Application with the U.S. Immigration Bureau on your behalf and offer paid sponsorship. Approved H1B Visa Applications enter a lottery to determine the professionals who will be given sponsorship based on the number of visas offered that year. A H1B Visa application is typically submitted after a professional has used their OPT authorization.
Visa Resources
- uscis.gov (Information on regulations related to international students and working in the U.S.)
- uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment (Information on student and employment visas)

JOB SEARCH RESOURCES:

GoldPASS: GoldPASS (goldpass.umn.edu) is the U of M’s online database of internships, full-time jobs, and volunteer opportunities. Simply log in with your X.500, upload your resume, search and apply for current job opportunities, find potential employers through the employer directory, and view career events—such as company information sessions. See the GoldPASS User’s Guide for detailed information on how to best utilize GoldPASS.

Going Global: Going Global is a great resource for international students looking for information or work opportunities in the United States. Take a look at the H-1B database, the employer directory, and city guides. Access Going Global by logging into goldpass.umn.edu.

Directories: “The Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries” and “The Directory of Foreign Firms Operating in the United States” can be found in the Wilson Library Reference Room along with many others to help you research organizations. **View the Internship/Job Search Guide for more tips and resources for job searching or visit career.umn.edu/intl for more information specific to international students**

Other Resources:
- internationalstudent.com (Resume posting site; job search information; employment opportunities)
- twolingos.com (Connects bilingual career professionals to employers worldwide)

CONNECT WITH PROFESSIONALS AND PEERS:

- Meeting with professionals who work in your career area of interest, especially people who once were international students, can be a great way to get career advice and find information on jobs. Approximately 70% of jobs are found through networking (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Attending organization meetings can be a way to find professionals eager to help you navigate the world of work. To find professional groups, view the What Can I Do With A Major in... handouts, check out Weddle’s Association Directory (weddles.com/associations/index) or simply Google using key words such as “International Engineers Professional Association.” See the Internship/Job Search Guide for strategies on how to expand your network.
- Create an account on the online professional networking site LinkedIn.com. Don’t know about LinkedIn? Go to this YouTube video for helpful tips.
- Join student groups that relate to your professional goals. This is a great way to network with your peers and many groups bring in professionals in the field to speak with students.
  - CSE student orgs: cse.umn.edu/student-groups
  - U of M student orgs: sua.umn.edu/groups
- Attend career fairs, organization information sessions/networking events, and employer panels to expand your professional network. View campus events on GoldPASS (goldpass.umn.edu)

COMMUNICATING WITH EMPLOYERS

It is common for employers to inquire about the work authorization of potential interns or full-time hires. As an international student, trying to explain your sponsorship needs or work authorization can be challenging. Below are some suggested phrases than can help answer questions like "Do you need sponsorship?" or "Do you need work authorization?"
- "My education visa covers me for X months during which time I do not need authorization or sponsorship from my employer. After that I would need my employer to file for a work visa, but I expect by that time to have really demonstrated my value and my fit for your company."
- "I would not require sponsorship or any additional paperwork or expense to work for you as an intern. If, as I hope happens, I do such a great job that you want to keep me on for full-time, then I would ultimately need sponsorship."

YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS:

As an international student, you may have concerns about experiencing discrimination within your job search or career and how to handle this should it arise. Below you will find some resources to help you understand your rights if you encounter discrimination in a job interview or in the work place. To learn about what constitutes an illegal interview question and how to handle it if the situation happens in a job interview read the article titled Improper Interview Questions and How to Handle Them written by career experts from the National Association of Colleges and Employers. If you experience discrimination once you are in a job, check out Dealing with Discrimination: Tips for Employees (employment.findlaw.com). You can also take concerns to University Student Legal Services on campus (usls.umn.edu).