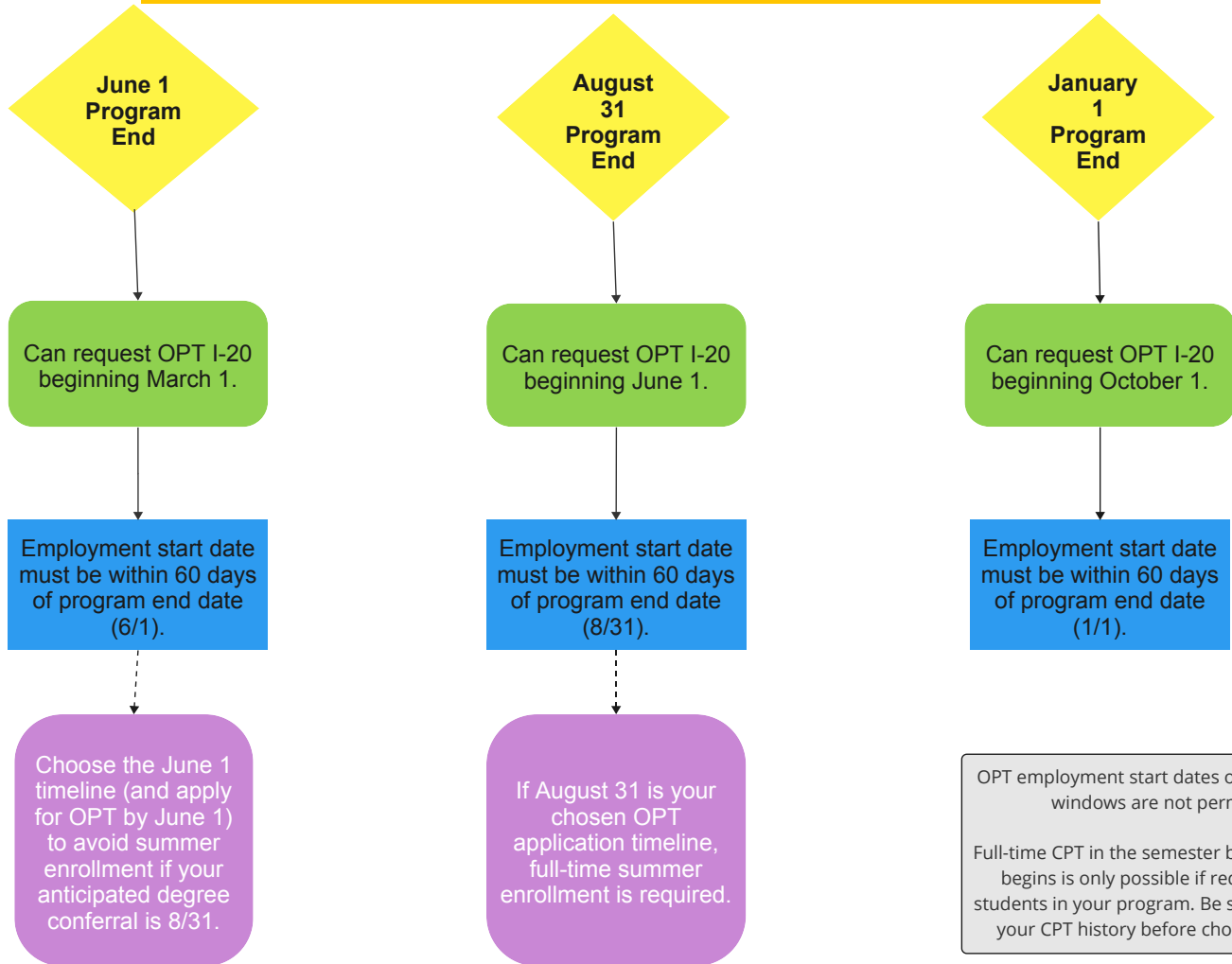


Post-OPT Options for PhD Dissertation Students

PhD students who completed all coursework and have only dissertation remaining may choose any of the Program End Dates below to begin their Post-Completion OPT, even if degree requirements will not be complete at that time. OPT start dates must align with one of the paths below. Be sure to read our guidance on page 2 before choosing a path.



Post-OPT Options for PhD Dissertation Students

Starting Post- OPT employment before your actual degree completion date means:

- You cannot apply for an I-20 extension after applying for post-completion OPT. If you do not complete your degree on the timeline expected, you may continue to work full-time on OPT while completing your dissertation. You must complete degree requirements by the end of your OPT period. We recommend waiting to begin Post-OPT employment until your dissertation is near completion.
- On-campus employment (including assistantships) and Post-OPT cannot overlap. If you have an assistantship and want to keep it, do not start OPT employment until your assistantship has ended.
- You may only choose an OPT employment start date that aligns with one of the program end date paths listed above. Your OPT start date must be within 60 days of your chosen program end date. *An I-20 Extension may be necessary if your current I-20 will expire before the program end date path you choose. Consult with ISS.
- Post-OPT does not waive Fall/Spring semester Graduate School enrollment requirements. Consult with your academic department advisor if you have questions about enrollment requirements.
- If you expect to complete your program requirements on 8/31 and want to start OPT in summer, you may avoid summer credit enrollment if you apply for post-OPT (i.e. submit the OPT application to ISS) by June 1 and request an OPT start date aligning with the June 1 Program End Date (OPT start date between June 2-July 31). Be sure to consider USCIS processing times and apply early!